From The Universal House of Justice

JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS WORLD CENTER. AFTER MANY YEARS DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS ERECTION OBELISK MARKING SITE FUTURE MASRHIQU’-ADHKÁR MOUNT CARMEL COMPLETED THUS FULFILLING PROJECT INITIATED BELOVED GUARDIAN EARLY YEARS CRUSADE. GARDENS BAHJÍ HAIFA EXTENDED BY DEVELOPMENT QUADRANT SOUTHEAST MANSION BAHÁ’U’LLÁH AND ESTABLISHMENT FORMAL GARDEN SOUTHWEST CORNER PROPERTY SURROUNDING SHRINE BAB.

December 19, 1971

—Universal House of Justice

ON FRONT COVER:

The obelisk marking the site of the future Masríqu’-Adhkár on Mount Carmel was recently erected after many years of difficult negotiations for a permit. The obelisk, which was manufactured in Italy in 1954, is 10.856 meters in height and contains more than 20 tons of marble. Inside one of the facings of the foundation stone is an inscription prepared by the beloved Guardian stating that this stone is placed in dedication of the site. A small formal garden is being developed around the base of the obelisk.

The area of undeveloped land along UNO Avenue, to the extreme southwest corner of the property surrounding the Shrine was cleared and a beautiful garden, patterned after the style of the garden on the slope to its immediate north, was completed in the spring of 1971. The small white iron gate leading from UNO Avenue has been replaced by a new ornamental gate, similar to the one at the approach to the monument of the Greatest Holy Leaf.
The Baha’i World Center

In connection with latest developments at the Baha’i World Center as announced in the cablegram from ‘Abdu’l-Baha, it seems appropriate to reprint the following portions of the very informative article on ‘The World Center’ written by Robert McLaughlin which was published in the U. S. Supplement to Baha’i News No. 118, December 1967.

Any account of the World Center can give only a glimmering of the spiritual potencies of that sanctified spot and only an inkling of the power of the nerve center of the divinely ordained Administrative Order. But, mercifully for us, the Baha’i World Center is a place with quite definite characteristics of natural environment, and with buildings to be experienced, gardens to be enjoyed, history to be learned, and people to be known. It is through these human experiences that we can sense something of the great spiritual and administrative forces that are at once an unfathomable mystery and a bounty, joy and satisfaction in this troubled world.

The World Center lies in the Holy Land, on the shore of the Mediterranean. Its shrines and endowments are within two cities. One is the ancient and medieval stronghold of ‘Akka, to which Baha’u’llah came when its buildings were decayed, its air putrid, and its streets dank. Haifa was then an Arab village nestled at the foot of Mount Carmel, across the crescent-shaped bay from ‘Akka.

Today ‘Akka is no longer a penal colony of untold misery, but a picturesque town whose medieval character is being preserved to a considerable degree by the government of Israel. Haifa has become a bustling, growing metropolis, climbing up the slopes of Mount Carmel. It is the chief seaport of Israel and the center of its heavy industry. Factories and refineries have been built on the arc of white sands that connects the twin cities, so that ‘Akka and Haifa are growing together as one megalopolis.

In ‘Akka, the cell in the Most Great Prison where Baha’u’llah spent the first two years, two months and five days of his imprisonment in the Holy Land has been set aside by the government as a Baha’i Holy Place. Of the four houses within the city walls to which Baha’u’llah was successively moved, only the House of ‘Abbud is now Baha’i property. The Book of Aqdas was revealed here in 1873, where Baha’u’llah spent approximately seven years. It was lovingly furnished by the Guardian and is now maintained and offered as one of the rich experiences given to the pilgrims.

Outside the city walls to the west lies the Ridván Garden, a small island in a river that is now, temporarily at least, dried up because of changes in the drainage system of the area. It was named by the Blessed Beauty in memory of the Ridván Garden in Baghdád and referred to by Him as ‘Our Verdant Isle’.

Mazra’áth is the house to which Baha’u’llah first went in response to the entreaties of ‘Abdu’l-Baha when the rigid confinement within the city walls was relaxed. It stands in the open country, and its grounds are still to be restored or developed.

We know Bahji so well from photographs or from the visits as pilgrims, and we know of the peace, the anguish and the ultimate triumph woven into its Baha’i history. The beautiful gardens designed and built by the beloved Guardian, are only the fore-runner of the environment of the Qiblih of the Baha’i world. Shoghi Effendi contemplated an adequate structure to be built perhaps around or above that delightful and fragrant little apartment where the remains of the Manifestation rest. The architectural development of this most sacred spot lies in the future, whether near or distant, and in whatever form we shall learn from The Universal House of Justice in due time. At this time we must continue to provide the means for the maintenance and development of the gardens and of the Mansion and Shrine.

Baha’u’llah Himself set foot on Mount Carmel four times, once for a period of about three months, and here He revealed the Tablet of Carmel, setting in motion the forces of which the Baha’i World Center is the visible, spiritual and administrative expression. The Master built the Shrine of the Bab while He was a prisoner of the Turks. The Guardian acquired the land up the mountain, virtually alone, with funds, we can assume, from the then tiny group of Baha’is scattered over the planet. His statesmanlike wisdom in making these acquisitions at a time when only rare foresight could envision their importance is apparent as one now sees the city crowding up around them. He executed the delicate design and intricate structure of the mausoleum over the Shrine of the Bab, in a then technically primitive country, and carried on construction in the midst of civil war. He built the nine terraces leading up to the Shrine of the Bab.

The Guardian built the Monuments to the members of the Holy Family and set them in gardens of mysterious...
loveliness. He laid out, built, and commenced the landscaping of the Arc in the environs of the Shrine of the Báb, facing Bahji across the bay. He established the physical as well as the spiritual direction of the World Administrative Center, with its buildings to be erected about the Arc. Of this extensive plan he brought only the Archives Building into being during his lifetime.

In giving us the Nine Year Plan, The Universal House of Justice established as tasks to be accomplished at the World Center: "The preparation of a plan for the befitting development and beautification of the entire area of Bahá’í property surrounding the Holy Shrines" (and) "extension of the existing gardens on Mount Carmel".

The Bahá’í News August 1968 refers to the photogrammetric survey which had been prepared for the development of these two specific tasks in consonance with the wishes expressed by the beloved Guardian. Certain steps essential to the development of the plans had already been taken, such as, the fencing of the Bahá’í property at on Mount Carmel, including the Temple site; the development of gardens and parking lots adjacent to the Pilgrim House; the paving of the Arc; the building of a wall and the extension of the sidewalk along UNO Avenue adjacent to the Bahá’í gardens and adding new soil to higher levels of the gardens where erosion had taken place. The Guardian’s plan for the floodlighting of the Shrine of the Báb and the Monument Gardens had been extended, and all of the electrical circuits in the gardens had been rewired. These were in addition to extensive repairs that were made on the various structures in the preceding five years. All of these developments called for protracted negotiations with Haifa and Jerusalem Municipalities and with agencies of the Government of Israel.

One of the first major acquisitions of important property under the Nine Year Plan was adjacent to Bahji, that of the Master’s tea house announced to the Bahá’í World Community by The Universal House of Justice on November 17, 1969. (See Bahá’í News, January 1970, page 2). The latest in the series of tasks to have been accomplished at the World Center is that announced in the cablegram from The Universal House of Justice which appears on page 2 of this issue of Bahá’í News. In connection with these goals for the development of the World Center it should be remembered that a specific goal given to the American Bahá’ís in 1964 by The Universal House of Justice is to: “Sharply increase the annual allocation to the International Fund, thereby enabling The Universal House of Justice to meet the expanding needs of the Cause throughout the world, accelerate the embellishment of endowments in the Holy Land, and develop institutions at the World Center”.

New Garden in the Vicinity of the Shrine of the Báb—Mount Carmel

The new garden at Bahji—a previously undeveloped quadrant lying south and east of the Mansion of Bahá’u’lláh and adjacent to the garden completed in 1968.
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Ruhiyyih Khanum
By Violette Nakhjavani, Companion
Part five

Just over two years from the inception of Amatu'l-Baha's African Safari in August 1969, we returned to Ghana, West Africa after an absence in Europe of two months. The Universal House of Justice had expressed the hope that she would accept the request of the European Counsellors and attend the first European Bahai Youth Conference to be held in Fiesch, Switzerland; Ruhiyyih Khanum combined this with a period of much needed rest and medical care. As the reports of that exciting conference and the burst of enthusiasm it has released have been already befittingly publicized there is no need for repetition here.

Before going to Europe Ruhiyyih Khanum several times commented that she was at a loss about how to speak to the Youth in Europe. She said all she wanted to say was why are you wasting your time in this spiritually barren continent; go to Africa, go to South America, go where there are receptive souls waiting to accept this wonderful message of Bahau'llah! However, during our brief stay in Germany prior to the conference she felt a marked change in the people, especially the Youth, in Europe. This feeling was later on confirmed by observing a new receptivity in the people in Switzerland and particularly around the village of Fiesch. Encouraged by this Amatu'l-Baha poured her own enthusiasm into the Bahai Youth, and they in turn, stimulated by her example of service to the Cause of Bahau'llah, arose to go on teaching missions and achieved what, as far as I know, no one had yet achieved in Europe.

As we had a deadline to reach Ghana on August 6th and move the car out of that country before its permit expired on the 10th we spent a feverish four days of washing, ironing, airing damp clothes, and repacking the Land Rover. Finally we said a reluctant farewell to the devoted pioneers in whose home we had stayed as well as to the Accra Community—by now, after five visits to that city—our old friends. I remember in particular, how a mother whose non-Bahai daughter had just graduated from medical school, who, in spite of her maternal pride and joy, told us that she could think of nothing more precious to give to her daughter at her graduation than the gift of the knowledge of the Faith in Bahau'llah and that in writing to her she felt the innermost wish of her heart she was trying to give her eternal joy and happiness.

We left Ghana to cross the border to Togo and discovered with horror that the travelling documents of the car had only one more sheet left, which meant we could enter Dahomey but go no further until we received a new Carnet des Passages from the Automobile Club in Nairobi, Kenya. Because of this complication and the fact that it took twenty-six days for documents to reach us by air mail, we were delayed a whole month in Cotonou.

When impatient over this delay and worried over the possibility of the papers being lost Amatu'l-Baha calmly assured me there must be some reason for it and we would eventually find out what it was. She met with believers as well as the pioneers in both Cotonou and Porto Novo, teaching and helping them and on one
particular occasion counselling and guiding a very dear Bahá'í family who otherwise might have fallen into serious disaster. Many times Khánum said, "I feel like a straw held motionless in cross currents of air, there must be a reason for this, we must not s.uggle against it."

In the meantime the Bahá'ís of Nigeria were anxiously awaiting the arrival of their beloved guest. A delegation of some of the members of the Nigerian National Assembly came one afternoon to find out about Khánum's arrival and later on the Secretary of the National Assembly accompanied by the Counsellor Dr. William Maxwell came again to get the latest news. Khánum assured them that the moment the documents arrived she would leave for Nigeria.

During this enforced sojourn in Cotonou Amatul-Bahá was able to meet two of the three Presidents of the Republic of Dahomey which she had not been able to do on her previous visit. On August 17th she was received by His Excellency Souro M. Apithy at his office in Porto Novo and on August 21 by His Excellency Justin Abomadege Tomezin at his office of the President in Cotonou, who was then Acting President during the absence abroad of the Head of State. Dahomey has solved a number of problems through having a triumvirate of presidents, each representing a powerful group in the country, taking the presidency in rotation. Both of these gentlemen were charming to Khánum and her visits lasted about a half an hour during which she spoke of the purpose of this long African transcontinental tour and also of the Bahá'í Faith and its teachings.

The last few days of our long wait in Dahomey were overshadowed by the sad news of my dear father's serious illness and followed by the news he had passed on to the next world. In haste and distress we finally left for Nigeria on September 7 and on that same night I flew to Kampala to attend the funeral of my father, Musa Banâni. As beloved Khánum had been ill with a bad cold, I was very reluctant indeed to leave her at a time when all the pressures of a new tour in a new country would be weighing upon her. However, she was very sure that I must by all means go and pay my last respect to my dear father and be at the side of my mother on this sad occasion. I was away for eleven days. During the nine days Amatul-Bahá spent in Lagos she was able to meet the local believers at a welcoming meeting held at the National Hazíratull-Quds as well as on several other occasions. She visited with three members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Bahá'ís and their friends in the Yoruba town of Ilaro, fifty-five miles from Lagos, where a successful public meeting was held with the Bahá'ís and their friends. A number of students of the Faith enrolled at the end of the meeting. Khánum appeared twice on different television programs and was interviewed on the radio as well as at a Press Conference shortly after her arrival. One of the feature writers in one of the most important national newspapers, the Daily Times headed his article "Princess Feather"—taken from Amatul-Bahá's Sioux Indian name of "Princess Pretty Feather".

As Khánum resents waste of time, when 12,000 newly printed pamphlets were delivered at the National Headquarters where she was staying as the guest of the National Spiritual Assembly she set all the Bahá'ís at one of the meetings to tying the pamphlets up into bundles of fifty so they could be properly counted and distributed to Local Spiritual Assemblies, teachers and so on. In doing this it was discovered about 2,000 were missing. Efficiency is needed in our urgent Bahá'í work in many parts of the world.

Driving the Land Rover Khánum crossed Nigeria from the West to East, visiting Benin for five days, where she was able to secure a very good interview on the national radio. She also visited Enugu, the capital of the South Central State in the heart of Igbo land where she had a radio interview, a public meeting and met with the Bahá'ís and a number of their friends at an informal meeting in the home of one of the Bahá'ís. Her visit to this state was announced over the radio and heard throughout both the Central and Eastern states of Nigeria.

On September 21st Amatul-Bahá, accompanied by the National Secretary arrived in the city of Port Harcourt, where I rejoined her on my return from Uganda. During the one week period of her visit in the South Eastern State she was the guest of Counsellor Dr. William Maxwell and his wife. A reception was given in her honor by the Bahá'í community in the leading hotel. It was attended by a number of prominent people as well as by the Press, who asked her many questions. It ended up in being an animated Bahá'í discussion group. This resulted in favorable articles in the papers, in addition to a dinner party given by the Maxwells for a select group of people interested in the Faith. Khánum spoke to the students at the Teachers' Training College in Port Harcourt, at a public gathering held the
During her first talk she spoke of the importance Bahá'u'lláh has attached to the station of the teacher in human society. She said that to a great extent the destiny of a nation is in the hands of its teachers. The academic subjects they teach are really of minor importance when compared with the influence they should exert in shaping the minds and the characters of the youth. She mentioned that in the Bahá'í society of the future, for people who fail to comply with the advice of Bahá'u'lláh that every one should write a will, an automatic will has been provided in which the great and noble role of the teacher is recognized through receiving a small share of the inheritance.

Rúhíyyih Khánum almost invariably warns her audience of a new and a very cruel prejudice which has come into the 20th Century—the prejudice of the illiterate against the illiterate. She points out that none of our ancestors were illiterate. She says “even my own ancestors in Scotland six or seven generations back may have been illiterate”. She points out that even such great civilizations as those of the Incas and the Mayas and the Aztecs were illiterate. She states wisdom and intelligence are different from the ability to read and write and therefore no one should look down upon his unlettered parents or relatives back in the village. With the present scientific advancement in the world most probably in two or three generations illiteracy will be completely eradicated, but in the meantime we should guard against this unreasonable and cruel prejudice which produces so much hurt and such a sense of inferiority among the villagers.

At the Government Comprehensive Secondary School she spoke to over 400 students on the importance of the influence of the individual in society. She said that the individual is a component of the whole; that if each one of them in that room possessed a better character and became a better human being, the standard of the entire group would be raised. She quoted the words of U Thant, on the tenth anniversary of his General Secretariatship of the United Nations, to this effect that “every year that I get older the more I am convinced of the inestimable importance of the influence of the individual in society.”

At her public meeting Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke on the “Spiritual Destiny of Africa”. This is a theme that she often uses in her public talks. It is a superb résumé of the present state of the moral and spiritual powers of the different sections of the human race. She begins her talk by saying that economically as well as politically “Africa’s star is on the rise, there is no doubt about this, it is the spiritual and moral future of Africa that I am concerned with.” Here she points out that the continent of Africa has a very old, mature and spiritual culture, which has created a deep sense of spiritual values. However, it seems that at present their wisdom and these spiritual values are like the characteristics of an old person, though deep and precious in themselves the vitality and ability to expend them and export them to the rest of the world is lacking. The block of the white race, originally Europe and now most of the Americas, is the seat and source of our modern western materialistic civilization, the fountainhead of our technological development. It is from this area the force of materialism, in spite of all its technological benefits, pours out to the rest of the world. Rúhíyyih Khánum points out that unfortunately this civilization is devouring itself as it seriously lacks moral and spiritual values. It has reached its peak and now it is on the decline. The third block of humanity is the black race, whose cradle is Africa. Its peoples, although very old, are at present among the youngest of all the nations of the world. Africa has the vitality of youth, Africa is coming into its own. However, she must choose the right path in her upward climb, the path of moral and spiritual values, the path which leads her to her brilliant destiny. Amatu’l-Bahá quotes the words of Bahá'u'lláh, likening the black race to the pupil of the eye of humanity.

In describing the relationship of destiny to free will she gives that beautiful example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá who likens the life of man to a loom; the long threads, or warp, are the factor of heredity, over which man has no power of choice. She points out she did not choose to be white or to be born into a Canadian family, to have her particular color of hair and eyes and so on, anymore than her audience chose to be black, to be born in Africa and to have their particular characteristics. These are factors over which man has no control. The woof or cross thread of the loom, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá likened to the force of environment over which likewise a man has little choice or control; most men, all over the world, remain in the environment into which they are born and which they did not select for themselves. What then is due to the individual’s initiative? The pattern he weaves. A man, through the factors of heredity and environment, may have thread of pure gold or silk, yet weave nothing into it but one long, blank, uninteresting piece of cloth. Another man may have the poorest grade of cotton thread yet weave into it a design so wonderful that it is treasured as a work of art for thousands of years and preserved in a great museum for all to see. So individuals and nations must pay attention to the design they weave, for that is the domain of their choice, therein they can fulfill their spiritual destiny. God only desires good and great things for his children.

In addition to these public lectures a unique radio interview of one hour was arranged in which Rúhíyyih Khánum gave four talks of about 15 minutes each, dealing with the history and teachings of the Faith. These were to be broadcast over Port Harcourt radio for one month, each talk repeated twice during a week.

(to be continued)
Raymond Irving Betts was alone in his Volkswagen bus and it was stuck in the mud in the wilds of British Honduras. Darkness was approaching, and this was as far as he could go. There was only one person he knew in this section, and this one was subject to drinking sprees which might last a week. Ray knew the statistics said there were about fifteen persons to a square mile. Darkness, uncertainties and loneliness were closing in on him. What next?

Then Ray was discovered by a Mayan family. Shelter, food and human companionship were once more his. This was the beginning of a friendship which would last for several years, even longer, eternally, for the Lino family became Bahá'ís.

Ray Betts, an American, had, during the thirties, been in business in Peru where he met the Bahá'í pioneer John Stearns. He took John into his home when he became ill. It was in the Betts home that John died, radiant in his suffering. But John had accomplished the aim of his life, for an Assembly had been established and the Betts family became Bahá'ís.

Ray gave up his business in Peru, and, his health impaired, returned to the United States to raise and educate his family. When his children had families of their own, it became unthinkable to remain in the States, a maelstrom; keep up with the Joneses, turn a fast dollar. No, his tired body and his soul cried aloud for the solitude of the forests and the jungle, the heat and warmth of the tropics, the temperament of the Latinas and the indigenous peoples. He felt at one with the poor of the land; their dependence on God was his dependence. He loved these people, who, if they had one chicken, would give you the egg.

So it was natural for Ray Betts to settle, in the winter months, in British Honduras. The Mayans helped him to find a plot of land and to build a house. He was interested in organic methods of gardening and had located in a land where “slash farming” was practiced, cutting down trees, then burning as a preparation for planting, then moving to another location to repeat the process. The result barely sustained life. But Ray took land that was not of the best, and in the same location and out of the usual cultivating season grew varieties which were unknown locally. One was the Irish potato. It was considered a great treat to dig into a hill and bring out a tuber for a visitor.

Mr. Betts was, in effect, a one-man “Peace Corps”, and in addition, regained his health in the process.

When the Lino family first offered to work for him, Ray offered them certain wages, which they refused. Ray thought they wanted higher wages but found instead they wished to give their services to learn from him. Finally they accepted wages and also learned. They were fascinated with new tools, gadgets, and delighted with Polaroid photos of themselves. Neighbors came from miles around to learn from Betts. With nutritious new food, they ceased being “Zombies” and became healthier and more prosperous. The Mayans, a minority in relation to the prevalent blacks, were encouraged to be proud of their ancient heritage and to arise to achieve their potential.

Last year, when the Dreyers came to Corozal, British Honduras and put on a musical performance in which they gave the Message, the Lino family, with hosts of relatives on both sides, came en masse to the meeting.

Mr. Betts will now go to be the resident Bahá'í teacher at the Martha Root Institute at Muna, Yucatan. Again, with his empathy and calm understanding, he will assuredly find new ways of serving the people of the land and his beloved Faith.
Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum's Letter to the Deep South Committee

The news from your part of the world has been thrilling the hearts of the Baha'is everywhere and proves that when, far too long ago, Shoghi Effendi told the Americans if they were not meeting with a response in the North, then they should concentrate in the South, he meant what he said; but we so seldom listened.

"Our whole experience at that gathering was so thrilling and I would not have missed it for the world. It was my first time farther South than Charlottesville and a revelation in many ways. Do keep up the momentum, for such waves are not steady but have to be ridden right in to the shore; I think all over the world there are opportunities right now that are priceless and unique, and if we think they are a new and permanent situation we are fools; whatever is going to come will be such an upheaval that the entire picture everywhere will be changed; so now is the time to run ahead like a grass fire and let nothing stop us but some major change, over which we have no control, and not our own folly or a fit of cautiousness, or 'Let us consolidate before we go any further.' The Guardian said we must never stop the teaching, and the consolidation must just go along with it. I often wonder what we think consolidation is; surely teaching and answering any Questions addressed to him following his desire to learn and understand the Baha'i era. Demonstrated by those participating was a practical approach to problems of living in this day of the Baha'i era. Noted were the inherent strictness of Baha'i life. The conference was structured around the presentation of two topics in each half-day session, each speaker answering any questions addressed to him following his presentation. A short break for the purpose of fellowship, singing, and refreshments was allowed between each set of presentations.

The topics were planned to cover aspects of Baha'i life both from the special viewpoint of youth and as Baha'is in general. Hence, attention was devoted not only to the role and responsibility of youth in the administrative order, but to prayer and meditation, to the Baha'i laws, and to the development of our spiritual lives.

A public meeting was held the evening of the conference in the municipal building in La Vega. Approximately one hundred listened as Auxiliary Board member Felix Ramón Gómez and Julio Torres, a youth from Puerto Rico, spoke about the role of youth in the new world order. A copy of Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah was presented to the Governor of the province, Doña Milagros Mendoza de Cáceres. Two youths who were at this meeting presented themselves at the conference the next morning to enroll in the Faith. Also, a local reporter enrolled who was covering this meeting and the rest of the conference.

At noon of the day the conference closed, a Unity Feast was offered by the Continental Board of Counsellors to those who attended. The closing words of the conference urged everyone to action, to begin immediately by teaching that afternoon in and around the city of La Vega. As a result of the efforts made that afternoon, thirty-one people enrolled in the Faith, bringing the total of enrollees that weekend to thirty-four.

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**Youth Conference in the Dominican Republic**

The Dominican Republic acted as host for the first Baha'i Youth Conference for the Antilles, November 13-14, 1971. Over eighty Baha'is from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic attended the two-day conference held in the Hotel Guarcino in the city of La Vega. Representing the Board of Counsellors for Central America was Mrs. Carmen de Burafato from Mexico. Also present was Felix Ramón Gómez, Auxiliary Board member.

Pervasive throughout the conference was the atmosphere of joy shared by all Baha'is whenever they meet together. Demonstrated by those participating was a desire to learn and understand the Baha'i approach to practical problems of living in this day of the Baha'i era. Noted were the efforts of the teachers to emphasize wherever possible the inherent strictness of Baha'i life.

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**In Memoriam**

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING SYDNEY DEAN HIS SERVICES MANY PIONEER POSTS MEASURE HIS DEVOTION CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLAH CONVEY DEAR WIFE FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM

December 27, 1971

— UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

The foregoing cablegram was sent by The Universal House of Justice on receipt of news of the sudden passing of Dr. Sydney I. Dean on December 25 in Concord, California, where he and Mrs. Dean had been visiting friends for a few days prior to their scheduled departure the following day to settle as pioneers in Zambia. Last summer Dr. Dean had spent a short time in Zambia where he participated in a week of intensive public teaching with the Baha'is of Lusaka. Dr. and Mrs. Dean have pioneered in many pioneer posts, including Hawaii, India, and Singapore.

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**Passing of Charles C. Howard**

Mr. Charles C. Howard, Canon City, Colorado, ascended to the Abhá Kingdom on December 31, 1971 after a long period of failing health. Mr. Howard and his wife Anna pioneered in Mexico for fourteen years, beginning in 1954. Gradual loss of his eyesight necessitated retirement from the pioneer field in 1958.

Dahomey: Mr. and Mrs. Ferdows (left) on the occasion of their visit to Mr. and Mrs. Apithy Sourou Migan, next in line. Mr. Migan is a member of the Dahomey Presidential Council. They are accompanied by three Baha'i pioneers: M. Francois Charles, Madam Francois-Charles and M. Dionet. On this occasion Mr. Ferdows offered Mr. Apithy the book Bahá'ulláh and the New Era and the Proclamation of Bahá'ulláh while Mr. Migan presented Mrs. Apithy a Baha'i Prayer book and Christ and Bahá'ulláh.
The Mayor of the town Vacoas-Phoenix, Mauritius, signing a declaration on the occasion of United Nations Day. Standing: Counsellor Mr. S. Appa, Miss Guida Navidi, Mr. Ramasaamy, Mr. S. Mooten, Dr. H. M. Munje and Mrs. E. Andee. Seated: Mr. Osman, Secretary of the town and Mr. Jubbee, Mayor.

The readers at the special service at the Sydney House of Worship to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of UNICEF’s Universal Children’s Day, October 17, 1971. (Photo by permission of News Limited).

Victoria, Cameroon

Many officials were among the 325 people who attended a United Nations Day program in Victoria, Cameroon. The program included speakers from both UNESCO and the Prime Minister’s office. The guest speaker was Hand of the Cause, Rühjyyih Khánum. Included on the program were a message of Secretary-General U Thant, a talk by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Prime Minister’s office, music and a closing prayer by Mrs. Violetti Nakhjaváni, travelling companion of Madame Rabbani.

Karachi, Pakistan

Over one hundred people attended the celebration of United Nations Day in Bahá’í Hall, Karachi. Lectures dealt with the elimination of racial discrimination. The Bahá’í Declaration of Human Rights submitted by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States to the General Assembly in 1948 was read. The United Nations Information Center supplied posters, flags and literature for free distribution.

Such meetings were held elsewhere in Pakistan with great success.

In connection with Universal Children’s Day, a children’s gathering was planned for late October.

Mauritius

The Mayor of Vacoas and Phoenix received the Bahá’ís in his office and signed the declaration proclaiming the 24th of October 1971 as The United Nations Day of the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

At a tea party, attended by the United Nations Representative in Mauritius, the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of India, Dr. H. M. Munje, talked on the activities of the United Nations and the part played by the Bahá’ís to promote United Nations activities.

The National Spiritual Assembly organized a public exhibition at Ghandi Ashram Hall in Vacoas. United Nations and Bahá’í posters were on display. The Mayor gave the opening speech after which Miss Guida Navidi presented him with a copy of the proclamation book. Dr. Munje spoke on “Man One Family.”

Finland

From Helsinki we learn that about 98% of the Bahá’ís were active on United Nations Day. Twelve public meetings were held in ten towns. Many of these occasions consisted of nonstop programs for several hours with talks, films, etc. In addition, groups and isolated Bahá’ís had special coffee parties and minor activities. Hundreds of people are known to have attended the public meetings. The Finnish United Nations Association was especially impressed by the Bahá’í activity in many localities. They received requests for audio-visual materials and literature.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Local Spiritual Assembly of Addis Ababa sponsored a public talk marking the 26th United Nations Day. The Chamber of Commerce Assembly Hall was full to capacity for the event. Mr. Kingsley Dube from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa was guest speaker. He mentioned the ceaseless efforts of the Bahá’ís and the United Nations towards world law and order and supported his statement by pointing out some of the Bahá’í principles to which he referred as: “Some of the basic things men has struggled to achieve throughout the ages.” Bahá’í and United Nations posters were displayed at the entrance of the Assembly Hall.

Other than the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Bahá’í Community was the only organization that sponsored a public talk to mark United Nations Day.

Australia

A service was held at the Bahá’í House of Worship at Inglewood to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of UNICEF’s Children’s Day in October 1971. The event proved to be an unprecedented success. The young readers and choir were well rehearsed. Some 250 children and adults attended and these included United Nations and UNICEF officials, religious ministers and government and official representatives. Newspaper coverage was excellent and included a charming photograph on the front page of The Australian, the national newspaper.

Universal Children’s Day is the day dedicated by the United Nations to “world-wide fraternity and understanding among children.” This year’s theme was “Young Human Resources. The Key to National Development.” Observances of this occasion were planned by the National and Regional Goals Committees throughout Australia, and in addition, all organizers were urged to plan their own functions. UNICEF posters were given to the headmasters of eight primary schools. Children and adults of the Sydney Bahá’í Community made over 6,000 paper flags which were distributed throughout Australia for Universal Children’s Day by the National Goals Committee.
Successful Universal Children's Day activities also took place in several other Bahá'í communities in Australia. In Port Adelaide, S.A., the Bahá'ís persuaded the management of a shopping center to sponsor a display for United Nations Children's Day. In addition, four members of the Bahá'í community assisted the local United Nations office with its official display, giving clear evidence that Bahá'ís are prepared to actively help with United Nations projects wherever possible. In Devonport, Tasmania, an evening film program included one on Danny Kaye's UNICEF work in Asia, and one relating the story of a Cambodian boy and his elephant.

In Sutherland, UNICEF posters and approximately 100 invitations were given to the headmasters of eight Primary Schools for display and distribution among the teaching staff; while in Randwick, a soccer field was a colorful sight on Saturday afternoon when the children received their brightly colored flags for Universal Children's Day. These flags, bearing a picture of children in many lands, with the inscription, "Children Understand Unity," were distributed by Randwick Bahá'ís. The program featured a number of excellent band performances; and a competition of children's art. In the evening, a public meeting had as guest speakers the Secretary of the New South Wales Branch of UNICEF and the head of the Faculty of Education at Goulburn, who spoke respectively on the work of UNICEF and on education in bringing out the inherent goodness in people, in eliminating prejudice and creating a truly human society. Brisbane, Queensland, in turn, held a successful program with a party for children, featuring games, popular songs, balloons, music and refreshments.

United Nations Day was celebrated by the Bahá'í communities of Orange and Adelaide with programs on the elimination of racial discrimination. In Adelaide a seminar held by the Bahá'ís in conjunction with the United Nations Association stressed the concept of unity in diversity.

The Bahá'í community of Perth, Western Australia, celebrated Universal Children's Day with a comprehensive talk on education, giving particular emphasis to education of the child. In Mudgee, N.S.W., the focal point of the celebration for UN Universal Children's Day was a very favorably received week-long display of UNICEF material in the foyer of the Commonwealth Bank. A complementary display on the Bahá'í theme was mounted in a shop window on premises owned by Bahá'ís. One thousand specially printed UN-Bahá'í flags were distributed to children in three schools and through twenty local businesses. The Bahá'ís received good radio coverage on all activities in a program entitled "This Concerns You," in which the host described events the day before and on the actual day. The Mudgee Guardian also printed the Bahá'í-UN release in full.

In Brisbane, Queensland, fifty people attended a United Nations program, featuring a speaker from the United Nations Association and a member of the Bahá'í community. At an informal buffet supper following the program, the UNA speaker suggested that a closer relationship be established between her organization and the Bahá'í community.

—Bahá'í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
866 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017

CORRECTIONS

Because one aspect of the Bahá'í News is to serve as an historical record, we wish to clarify that the mass teaching team from the United States which visited Barbados (according to the article in the December 1971 Bahá'í News) was not sent, upon request, by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. Rather, the team was sent under the auspices of the Continental Pioneer Committee for the Americas, which is not a committee of the United States. The project was jointly funded by the National Assembly of the United States and the International Deputationiz Fund through the Continental Pioneer Committee.

—Continental Pioneer Committee for the Americas

Errors in November 1971 Bahá’í News: On page 20, the man standing to Dr. Peter Khan's left is not Günter Maltz, but Mr. Richard Backwell of Northern Ireland. He and his wife Vida pioneered for a number of years in British Guiana, and he served on the British National Spiritual Assembly before appointed to the Auxiliary Board.

On page 25, the caption under the picture in the right column indicates that Norman Bailey and Sylvia Schuman Benetar are German Bahá’ís. Both live in England.

Correspondents: Please note the necessity of checking copy before it is sent to the Bahá’í News. Check spelling of all names of persons and places, and all pertinent information. We are dependent upon you. Many times it is difficult or at least time consuming, to check the accuracy of data sent.

Please, when using a quotation give the source. If we are unable to locate the quotation in the Writings, it is omitted. (Editor's note)
Hands of the Cause, Mr. Olinga and Dr. Mülschlagel greet the Mayor of Salzburg, who addressed the conference.

Beautiful faces from the crowd at Salzburg. In this picture are faces from Italy, France, Germany, Austria and England.

Youth Conference

On two days the participants taught the diverse people...
Street teaching extends itself to the drivers of horse-drawn carriages used to carry tourists throughout scenic Salzburg.

The conference went out on the streets of Salzburg.

Salzburg
Austria

This photo identifies the location and the duration of the conference. An American pioneer to Germany is in the foreground.

Photographs by UNIFOTO
Salzburg Youth Conference

The youth of Europe are arising to fulfill the goals of the Nine Year Plan for Europe. From December 26 until January 2, 1972, these youth gathered at the Kongresshaus Hall in Salzburg, Austria, to discuss their successes and failures since Fiesch last summer and to plan their new goals, preparing for the Summer Youth Conference in Padua, Italy this coming July.

Salzburg, the birthplace of Mozart, is one of the most picturesque towns in the world. The entire city nestles below the schloss or castle which dominates the landscape.

The Kongresshaus is the pride of Salzburg. The hall, with a capacity of a thousand people, was crowded at times during the conference. Against the back wall of the mezzanine was a display of pictures of Hands of the Cause, pictures of different groups at Fiesch and Iceland, and a small display of color pictures from the Holy Land.

Another large hall was used for workshop sessions and study classes as well as the perpetual fireside during the Conference. A bookshop did brisk business.

Hands of the Cause of God, Mr. Enoch Olinga and Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel, represented the Institution of the Hands at the Conference. Mr. Olinga was also the representative of The Universal House of Justice and read their letter of welcome which included the following:

"It is now almost nine months since the representatives of European youth gathered in Belgium to consult on the launching of the Two Year Youth Campaign. What were then ideals and hopes you now see as concrete accomplishments. You have with your own eyes seen what can be achieved when the believers enthusiastically and confidently set out to obey the divine summons to teach the cause, and are reinforced by the help of the Hands of the Cause—indeed many of you gathered in Salzburg are no doubt Baha'is now as a result of these stirring achievements.

"The great task has been well begun, but what has happened so far is but a foretaste of what is still to come. Our thoughts are centered upon you and our prayers are with you. May Baha'u'llah inspire your deliberations, aid you to exemplify His Teachings in your lives and unloose your tongues to proclaim His Cause and teach His healing Message to all who have ears to hear."

Dr. Mühlischlegel also welcomed the youth to the Conference as did the Burgermeister of Salzburg.

Members of the Continental Board of Counsellors of Europe present during the Conference were Counsellors Eric Blumenthal, Analiese Bopp, and Betty Reed. Several members of the Auxiliary Board were also present.

Over thirty countries were represented in the roll call of nations during the Conference, with 634 registered participants.

Mass teaching in Salzburg and the surrounding areas was also one of the goals of this Conference with two days dedicated to this end. Over forty groups of ten or more were sent out either to tell the inhabitants of the surrounding areas about Baha'u'llah or to invite them to the two public entertainment evenings at the Kongresshaus.

Many of the groups went into Salzburg to teach the people on the streets. Groups of Baha'i youth were seen sitting in the parks singing and drawing crowds or standing in groups on the sidewalks and bridges and with the aid of simple guitar accompaniment, were singing together of world peace and unity and Baha'u'llah. Others invited the people to the teaching evenings at the Kongresshaus. Even the drivers of the horse-drawn carriages, touring the streets filled with holiday tourists, were included in these efforts.

Tuesday, December 28 and Friday the 31st were the two evenings of proclamation entertainment. Different Dawnbreakers singing groups representing many of the countries of Europe entertained. The group from Austria was popular, also a group of five musicians put together by Reza Rehani and introduced by Reza. The five musicians were from Scandinavia, United States, Indonesia, the United Kingdom and Germany.

For those who did not choose to go to the public events or mass teaching, Counsellor Betty Reed offered a class on "The Hidden Words" and Counsellor Erik Blumenthal offered a class on "Living Together in Modern Society". Both were well attended. Alternative workshops were going on simultaneously on "Baha'i History", "Baha'i Life and Laws", "The Covenant" and "Spiritual Teachings: Prayer and Meditation, Life After Death, Christian Subjects."

Analiese Bopp of the Continental Board of Counsellors, gave a history of the European Youth Campaign from its inception in Namur through Fiesch and now to Salzburg. Reports were heard from all of the different countries on their successes and failures since Fiesch. Counsellor Erik Blumenthal's talk on statistics was fascinating.

Mrs. Eileen Norman, Secretary of the International Goals Committee of the United States of America, addressed the Conference on youth teaching projects planned for six countries in Europe next summer. At least 350 youth from the United States will be coming. She asked that the youth present set their priorities and goals so that they could help these visiting youth to make a success of their summer plans.

During the course of the Conference, one hundred and eleven people declared their faith in Baha'u'llah. Several more declared after the close of the Conference, but are not considered a part of the Conference statistics. Seventy of these new Baha'is are from Salzburg. The National Spiritual Assembly of Austria immediately began very careful plans for consolidation and deepening classes which were begun before the end of the Conference.

Small groups were gathered around the building at the end of the Conference, making plans for Padua next summer. Excitement is growing in Europe. As Mr. Blumenthal said, "Linda (Youseffian) showed us that we can mention the name of Baha'u'llah in Europe and not suffer dire consequences." Now it is up to us to tell all the people about Baha'u'llah.

—From a report by Haynes C. McFadden. Photos by UNIFOTO.

Hartford, Connecticut Hosts First of a Series of Seminars of the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly

Hartford, Connecticut, was the site of the first of forty Local Spiritual Assembly Seminars to be held through this summer to strengthen the authority and influence of the Local Spiritual Assemblies and equip them to handle the affairs of the rapidly growing numbers of Baha'is.

Mr. Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, with the assistance of Mrs. Caterina Kazemzadeh, conducted the meetings and workshops. Local Spiritual Assembly members from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts expressed great enthusiasm for the presentation and felt their Assemblies would benefit greatly from the education they received.

—Northeastern Regional Teaching Committee Newsletter
Public Health officials of the State of Illinois, early in November, visited and examined The Baha'i Home in Wilmette, the first dependency of the House of Worship, for a period of five hours. They found the home beautifully kept, with superior nursing care and superior food served to guests.

The contrast to other homes of a similar purpose in the area is great, as disturbing details about them have recently been exposed in the news. According to George Walker, Administrator of the Home, as the officials were leaving one said: "It really does my heart good to come to a home like this. It restores my faith in humanity."

Recently a new dining room has been opened at the home. There are also new quarters for employees where they can lounge, change clothes, see TV, etc. The officials were astonished to note these quarters as other homes do not usually have such facilities.

A recreation program for residents is in operation. There is a bridge club, movies twice a week. A program on comparative religion, with movies, will soon begin. Entertainers come regularly: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, groups of school children. A hobby and craft class will begin soon. The home is affiliated with the North Shore Senior Citizen's Club.

Open to all races, creeds and colors, the minimum age requirement of the home is sixty-five years. There are three residents in their nineties, but the average age of those who live there is eighty-four. Nursing care is provided but hospital care for a retirement home is forbidden by state law.

The rate, in comparison to other homes, is very reasonable. The monthly rent covers all items. Many homes require an entrance "founder's fee" of $12,000 which is not recoverable.

The management does not keep a waiting list, but a written application is a requirement before a guest is accepted.

The most enthusiastic fans of the home have been found to be doctors. In residence are three family members of doctors.

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Visit of Mr. Cyrus Towfiq to the Gambia

Mr. Cyrus Towfiq has been on a business trip in the Gambia for two weeks (August 26 to September 2), as an economic consultant with the International Monetary Fund to the Central Bank of the Gambia. On arriving, Mr. Towfiq sought out the Baha'is and graciously offered any time available after his working hours to serve the Faith.

Mr. Towfiq's visit brought great joy to the hearts of the friends. He brought news and loving greetings from many friends, especially from Hand of the Cause Ruhiyyih Khanum whom he met in Ghana. He showed a profound interest and concern for the work of the Faith in this country.

On Sunday, August 22, Mr. Towfiq met the friends in Lamin, Churchitown and Serekunda. At this time he arranged for future meetings. Unfortunately, due to sickness, he was unable to return to Lamin, but the following Thursday he visited the communities of Serekunda and Churchitown with great success. The friends were all delighted to meet him and to learn more about the Faith from him.

On Friday, August 27, the Central Bank held a reception in honor of Mr. Towfiq to which he sentenced to invite the four pioneers. Mr. Towfiq made use of this and every other opportunity to mention the Faith. Through his efforts the Faith was proclaimed to some high level government officials. His work added to the prestige of the Faith and reinforced the favorable impression made by the visit of beloved Hand of the Cause Amatul-Baha Ruhiyyih Khanum this past spring.

On Saturday, August 28, Mr. Towfiq visited Sotokoi, a small village about thirty-four miles inland. There, gradually the whole village is coming into the Faith. He spoke to the chief and all present. His talk was followed by a slide program. His visit to this village helped to establish the world character of the Faith and the fundamental principle of unity. His words were cordially received by all.

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NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY Upper West Africa.
Panama Temple Nearing Completion

Friends congregated in the memorial service for Hand of the Cause Musa Banani.

The gates open.

The most recent photographs of the Panama Temple. The Greatest Name in the dome.

The gates closed.
THE PANAMA HOUSE OF WORSHIP

Standing high atop a hill near the Transisthmian Highway, overlooking the green hills to the west and the north, the low plains to the east, the Bay of Panama, with parts of the City of Panama and the Canal Zone on the south, is the Baha'i House of Worship, the Mother Temple of Latin America.

The structural portion has been completed and the silhouette is already a focal point magnetically drawing the attention of the local populace and tourists alike, making them aware of the Bahá'í Faith. The structure stands out prominently for miles around.

Ever since the start of construction of the House of Worship, rather, since the start of construction of the access road to the site, a certain spiritual "presence" has been growing steadily stronger in Panama. This spiritual growth is characterized by the exuberance with which the friends forge ahead in the many tasks before them, and more especially the exaltation shining in their faces.

Among the visitors to the construction site have been several groups of engineers, architects, professional societies, women's clubs, and innumerable individuals who have braved the steep and rocky access road to reach the sanctified spot. All are awed by the architectural balance and symmetry portrayed here of the design by the world-renowned architect, Mr. Peter Tillotson of London, England.

The work continues steadily to progress on the adornment of this magnificent structure, including the tile surfacing, which will accent the simple beauty of the sparkling, parabolic dome resting majestically on the formidable buttress walls—yet to be clad in rust-colored, Verona marble chips. The final stages of the decorative portion require the highest quality of workmanship.

The opening in the dome near the apex of the parabola does not detract from the form, but rather gives the impression of a crown on the dome. The light which it emits will give a soft elegance to the Greatest Name, resting high in the apex of the dome, which is otherwise darkened except for the natural light from the unglazed arches and decorative iron gates at the nine entrances. This opening is so cleverly designed that rain, which is plentiful in tropical Panama, will be excluded.

The interior of the thin-shelled concrete dome is accentuated by nine prefabricated concrete arches reaching up to form a nine-pointed star encircling the Greatest Name. The wide gallery serves as a promenade, circling the auditorium, thus permitting access to the ramparts of nine buttresses, where one has breathtaking views in all directions. Circular arches have been designed in two of the alcoves formed by the buttress walls for access and egress to and from the gallery.

The completion of this consecrated edifice will be evidence of the self-sacrificing devotion of the friends throughout the entire world who have contributed towards its erection. Prayers are urgently needed in order to bring into the material world, at its appointed time, and without a burden of difficulties, this portion of the divine Nine Year Plan. Dedication of the House of Worship in Panama is April 29 through May 2, 1972.

The following article was taken from Baha'i News, February 1932, #59, just forty years ago.

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP: Some American Bahá'ís were visiting 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the old prison city of 'Akka in 1908 and he said to them: "To have it (the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar) built is most important. Some material things have spiritual effect and the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is a material thing that will have great effect upon the spirits of the people. Not only does the building of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar have an effect upon those who build it, but upon the whole world."

"Again and again have we Bahá'ís been called to unity by the beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He explained to us the dormant forces hidden in this unity, waiting release by our united efforts.

Since the beginning of history no people have had in their grasp the power to so benefit mankind as have the Bahá'ís. Theirs is the most glorious opportunity—to fail, the greatest ignominy.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar was designed by Bahá'u'lláh, a perfect outer expression of the inner reality, the form indicating the meaning. He commanded the Bahá'ís to construct such institutions in all countries, and make them the focal points for the development of the religious, philanthropic, educational and charitable life of the people. 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote: "The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar will become the center around which all these universal Bahá'í activities will be clustered. From that point of light, the spirit of teaching, spreading the Cause of God and promoting the teaching of God, will permeate to all parts of the world."

The voice of the appointed Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, is calling the Bahá'ís, in the most earnest tones, to unite and establish this center. Nothing succeeds until it has an established center around which to revolve. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says: "Know thou that there is in the world of existence a center for each great matter and bounty shower from that center."

Clearly then, the Bahá'ís of America have within their power, through their united sacrificial efforts, the opportunity to construct a material edifice that will affect the whole world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote: "When the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar with its accessories is established in the world, aside from its religious or spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization. Aside from the religiousists who will feel its influence, materialists will not be exempt therefrom. Moreover, it contains divine wisdom, spiritual effects upon the intellects and thoughts. Subsequent to its erection these will become evident." 'Abdu'l-Bahá has unfolded to us the great potentialities of this Mashriqu'l-Adhkar so that the Bahá'ís might work with the divine enthusiasm which comes from first knowing and then doing. If this spirit of co-operation and sacrifice should be sustained it will indelibly affect all the other phases of our activity and usher in a new era in the history of the progress of the Movement in that country."

In early winter a Bahá'í friend invited me to drive to Chicago "To Pray in the Temple." Needless to say we went.

Readers, the wish of my heart while there was that every believer on this Continent might have that experience, and privilege. Words cannot express the 'Power' that reaches down to the depth of heart and soul as one steps inside the upper part of that Divine House of Worship. Turning eastward toward "That White Spot, from which all regions have been perfumed" one may glimpse the significance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophecy regarding the mighty tumult that would be set in motion upon its completion.

Standing outside the building quite a different reaction
was realized. Beautiful as it is even in its unfinished state, these words rang in my heart—"I am naked. Will ye not clothe me?" If every believer in America could see it in its present stage there is no question that added sacrifices would appear in each individual life—"ere it is too late."

Shoghi Effendi views the great sacrifice the friends are making to complete the Temple with great admiration. He, however, hopes that this will be continuous and not spasmodic. We have to show the world that though our number is small, our spirit of service is beyond measure and we can face any emergency with absolute assurance, as to the final victory. That the Temple edifice should arise under such circumstances, that its elaborate and exquisite ornamentation should be carried out, through the efforts of a mere handful of Bahá’í followers despite the gloom, the uncertainty and the dangers which surround them is but another evidence of the mysterious all-compelling power of Bahá’ulláh whose blessings will be bountifully vouchsafed to all who arise to carry out His purpose.

On December 18th the National Spiritual Assembly sent to its Local Spiritual Assemblies the third in its series of letters devoted to the Plan of Unified Action. In this letter the Assembly stated its "firm confidence, that every true believer will also arise in full devotion and sacrifice, based upon the conviction that the completion of the beloved Temple of Bahá’ulláh is not merely an economic but far more a spiritual task. We are convinced that the apparently overwhelming obstacles on the path leading to that success are the means of discipline, purification and unity given us all from the wisdom and mercy of the Manifestation Himself.

On January 14th the fourth letter was sent, "... for consideration at every Nineteen Day Feast, that all the believers may concentrate their minds and hearts on the success of the Plan of Unified Action. No one can estimate the full measure of that blessing which shall be poured out upon the co-workers of Shoghi Effendi when the mysterious power of unity takes effect in all the local gatherings of Bahá’ís... Only what we give—of love, devotion and wise counsel, as well as of material wealth—will be saved in this Great Day of God. What we hold back will be lost."

Shoghi Effendi has directed me to write this... As to material sacrifices toward the welfare of the Cause, he wishes you to understand that the general interests of the Cause take precedence over the interests of the particular individuals. For instance, contributions to the welfare of individuals are secondary to contributions to the National and Local Funds and that of the Temple.

This is a general instruction...

The chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of New York City has received from Shoghi Effendi a letter and also a cablegram which indicate his approval of the Local Declaration of Trust recently adopted by that body.

The first portion of the letter was written through his secretary: "It is surely very important to give to the Local Spiritual Assemblies some legal standing, for as the Cause progresses and its adherents increase, they will be confronted with duties they cannot even imagine at present. ...

"For such duties that will naturally devolve upon the Local Spiritual Assemblies there will be an increasing need for a legal standing. They will also be considered as a legal person with the power of making binding contracts. . . ."

The Guardian added the following words in his own handwriting:

"It (Declaration of Trust) will serve as a pattern for every Bahá’í Local Spiritual Assembly in America and a model for every local community throughout the Bahá’i world. This document, being the first of its kind, should, I feel, be published in its final form and in its entirety, in The Bahá’í World."

Distinguished Malaysian Visitors to Wilmette

Among the many foreign visitors to the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette in November were Mr. and Mrs. Appu Raman of Malaysia (center) shown here with the Coordinators of the House of Worship, Mr. Caswell Ellis (left) and Mr. Albert King (right). Mr. Raman, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Malaysia, had just completed a Bahá'í teaching mission to Hong Kong and Taiwan. After visiting Bahá’í friends he had made while in Michigan several years ago, he and Mrs. Raman planned to continue around the world, stopping in New York and Washington to consult with persons in health and welfare education and service to the handicapped, thence to London to visit the resting place of the Guardian and the Bahá’í House of Worship in Germany. Since 1965 Mr. Raman has been the principal of a rehabilitation center for the physically handicapped which not only provides vocational training for physically handicapped persons but also aids them to whatever extent is possible to find employment.

In speaking of their visit to Hong Kong Mr. Raman referred to that city as "the doorway to China" through which the Message of Bahá’u’lláh would soon be carried to the teeming millions of people living in that vast land. He stated that at Ridyán 1971 The Universal House of Justice called upon the Bahá’ís of Malaysia to concentrate on teaching the Chinese in Hong Kong. It is his belief that this is an important task to be shared with all Bahá’ís throughout the world, especially the youth, and he strongly recommends that they start now to learn to speak Chinese and thus be ready for the opportunities that very soon will arise for mass teaching in the mainland of China.
The First Latin American Bahá'í Club

On August 4, 1971, the first Bahá'í Club in all of Latin America was officially approved and recognized by the presiding Student Senate of the University of the Americas, located in the pueblo of Santa Catarina Mártir, adjacent to the fourth largest city in Mexico—Puebla, and an area which is the center and focus of the most conservative, the most Catholic stronghold in all of Mexico.

Beginning this fall quarter the Club, consisting of nine members from both nationalities, those of Mexican and those of United States origin, determined to establish the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh upon a firm, stable and secure foundation at this University, undertook to initiate activities which would, on the one hand, create an awareness of our origin, aims, and purposes within the student body, and on the other hand, lay the groundwork and gain the support of the Administration. We have been compelled from the outset of our program to exercise the utmost tact and caution (in the midst of the audacity of which our beloved Guardian speaks) because of the strict division of church and state which exists in the Mexican Republic.

The former has and is being accomplished through regular, sustained weekly Wednesday night informal presentations of the principles of the Bahá'í Faith. Working carefully and with discretion, the first of these was the presentation of a talk on Hinduism; the second, the history and social aspects of the Philippines; the third, a discussion with the newly installed President of the University; the fourth, a general overview of the Bahá'í Faith; the fifth, a discussion of the equality of women and men; the sixth, another, deeper presentation of the overall Bahá'í Program; the seventh, a discussion on prejudice; the eighth and last of this quarter, a discussion, in Spanish, on the possibilities of a world government.

The second aim is being fulfilled through repeated and close contact with the office of the President of the University. The Club presented the book One in All* to the newly appointed President of the University, with a letter from the Club stating our aims and purposes, and offering to his office any assistance which we might be capable of rendering. Thereafter, we had the bounty of serving as ushers at his inauguration and receiving a letter from him.

* Club Bahá'í membership, fall quarter 1971, University of the Americas, Puebla, Mexico. Left to right, Back row: Ann King, California; Carlos Enrique Martinez, Mexico City; Fred Cooperider, Oregon; Paul Vaughn, New Mexico; Middle row: Roberta Graham, Illinois; Lois Biebly, Ohio; Cherie Tagg de Martinez, New Mexico; Front row: Fred Frazelle, Indiana; Amy Black, Pennsylvania.
Music Lends Prestige to the Faith

By Maud Grasselly

Costas and Auxiliary Board members Maralynn Dunbar and Ramón Moreira. Board member Sr. Moreira was instrumental in making arrangements in every city where proclamation concerts were held, in the three countries mentioned. Sr. Costas and Mrs. Dunbar spoke to several audiences on the Bahá’í Faith prior to the concerts themselves and through this means hundreds of people heard about the Faith. He has given about 1,500 concerts in Europe and South Africa.

In addition to the proclamation concerts Sr. Speranza appeared on at least ten television programs during his stay in Uruguay, and in this way many thousands heard about the Faith. On August 25, 1971, Sr. Speranza returned to Italy and shortly thereafter went to Iceland to perform during the Oceanic Conference held there.

We quote from Sr. Speranza’s own words regarding his desire to promote the Faith through music:

“Tt was thus that the ‘Poema Bahá’í’ was born, which visualizes Bahá’u’lláh, addressing His followers, and these same believers carrying His words around the world—words of brotherhood, of peace, of happiness, of the complete unity of man. The ‘Poema’ ends in a triumphal march, visualizing all men marching hand-in-hand toward the Supreme One, full of great happiness in their knowledge of the truth...”

“I beg of God to give me the strength to continue with my work and thus enable me to carry the Bahá’í Faith, through music, to all corners of the world.”

Announcement from India

The Bahá’í Publishing Trust of India has announced a Bahá’í Book Subscription Plan whereby any Bahá’í institution or individual can become a member of the plan by paying $10 annually. Each member of the plan receives one copy of each publication brought out by that Trust, in English, during the year in which the subscription is purchased.

Send in your name, along with a certified check or money order for ten United States dollars ($10.00), payable to: Bahá’í Publishing Trust
F.O. Box 19 New Delhi—1, India

Scandinavian Summer School

Announcement

A Scandinavian Summer School will be held in Norway, the first week of July 1972. The location of the school is at a special beautiful place, Ringsaker Folkhøyskole, three hours by train from Oslo, not far from Lillehammer, one of our goal cities. A program with details will be announced as soon as possible.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF BAHÁ’ÍS OF NORWAY
A Letter from a Pioneer

Japan has been given the goal of trying to achieve their 60 Local Spiritual Assemblies (the Nine Year Goal) by this Ridvan, then spend the last year of the Plan for consolidation and deepening. This was presented to the Bahá'ís by Dr. Mubájir about three weeks ago during a two-day visit to Tokyo. Since then small teams of Bahá'ís have been going each Sunday to another town to support firesides. For various reasons (such as custom and very small homes) most of the meetings are held in rooms, rented or leased, that occupy a small corner of a business establishment. In Kofu, we meet in a nice little room.

Another fireside that I've attended on Wednesday evenings is at a Tea Room in Toyota, another suburb of Tokyo. We meet around three little tables pushed together—have tea and sandwiches and talk in English and Japanese. Since the group is diverse in looks and language we do attract attention from the other diners. No one has come over to question us yet—maybe we should have some pamphlets and at least tell the owners and waiters.

Jack Davis (a long time Philippine Bahá'í) is here in Japan for six months to set up a National Information Center—to begin a gigantic mailing operation all over Japan. Lists are being compiled from all possible sources, so that eventually about three million letters will go out. The mailing consists of a general information pamphlet—a short letter from the National Spiritual Assembly Secretary saying that the world is in chaos and this pamphlet will give a new direction and answers to the world problems. (I have not seen a literal translation of letter or pamphlet so am vague re exact information given). There is also a reply card, stamped and addressed to the Center here with boxes to check off for: more information, visit, membership card, etc. This type of proclamation has worked very well in the Philippines and the hope is that it will help to fulfill the Guardian’s promise that “Japan will turn ablaze”, the words said by Abdu'l-Bahá.

A young Japanese man stopped in—for a few minutes that turned into an hour. He's been here twice for firesides, has read some little pamphlets and wanted more—in English. He reads and understands spoken English well and speaks it fairly well but haltingly. He wanted Bahá'í material in English as the Japanese translations are hard to understand”. He questioned: I think that the Bahá'í library, sale and loan, of English books needs strengthening. That may be something I can tackle—we shall see . . .

So there is a stress of helping the Japanese perfect their English. They all are exposed to English in school, so can read it fairly well—often when I go into a store if I write down what I want (in English) the shopkeeper can understand, but if I try to say it in English he's lost. Once they leave school, often there is very little contact with English and in school it's taught by Japanese with emphasis on grammar and reading and little conversation. So I try to speak slowly with my best diction and watch the face for comprehension. No one likes to admit they don't understand so I usually repeat or say it a different way until the light dawns. Occasionally the same thing is done for me in Japanese, but it's a slow and challenging way to talk. Stretches my brain to think of synonyms.

I mentioned Jack Davis and his “project”. Well, inadvertently he's also taken on a remodeling job of Bahá'í Centers. When he was in Hokkaido, he and two other Americans repainted and refurbished the little Center there—they had no one to do this and no money for several years. Word got around that it really looked great now so he was asked to tackle this Center—and tackle is the right word. For nearly two weeks we painted, repaired, cleaned out closets, cleaned in general, moved furniture—offices changed around. I'm at the other end of the building now in a cozy little newly painted room, right next to the kitchen and bathroom and separate from the offices and activity centers. The work is nearly finished—painting all done, but two ceilings need plywood panels . . .

The young American airman doing the work had to go back and work for Uncle Sam for a few days—but he's back for three days later this week. He's a carpenter, electrician and painter by avocation—how fortunate! There is a lovely garden in back of the Center and in the Spring he has promised to put his landscaping talents to work there! So you begin to see what my days are like—the life of a pioneer: stuffing envelopes, painting, cooking, serving coffee, traveling and meeting lovely new friends, struggling with the language, always something new and challenging, but then when the new things get a bit wearing I do something old and familiar.

Today I took my courage in both hands and walked alone about one mile to a park—it had been pointed out to me about a week ago by my red-haired and bearded American grocery store acquaintance. Well, the park is lovely—broad lawns, trees, pavilions, ponds and people doing just what they'd be doing in parks in the United States, children climbing the trees, parents and children playing ball and flying kites, couples strolling along the paths, sitting on the benches, rolling on the grass (a little chilly but they didn't seem to notice), taking pictures. This was the last day of the New Year holiday and many young ladies were out in their gorgeous kimonos—like the Easter parade—and just like the pictures of traditional Japan—bright colors, brocades and satin, hair up with flowers and long fancy pins through the buns. Unfortunately I didn't have my camera—but then I'm not sure how to ask for permission to take a picture so it's just as well I forgot it.

I must finish this up and get back to my studying. I've nearly memorized the pre-kindergarten set of fifty Japanese characters now must get on to the other fifty Japanese characters, then start on the 1850 Chinese characters. If I live long enough and stay here long enough I may be able to read the signs! There's no time to worry or fret or wonder what I'm doing 8000 (or so) miles from home. I'm really very happy and content and feel at home. I do the prayers really to make a difference—home becomes anywhere you are with the Greatest Name.

This was written by Jean Goss. You will see her photograph included with those who attended the Pioneer Institute in Wilmette in December, which is in the January issue of Bahá'í News. Jean spent six weeks at the Bahá'í national headquarters in the United States before receiving her permission to go to Japan. While in Wilmette she volunteered for every kind of service from guiding in the House of Worship to addressing envelopes. To her surprise, when she arrived in Japan she was situated in the national headquarters of Japan, and with one other staff member, she assists again, in whatever needs to be done. Her letter was dated January 5, 1972.

MISSISSIPPI

The momentum gathers as operation "Lazarus" begins to awaken masses. One hundred and fifty near Jackson responded to the call in two weeks.
Mass Teaching in Wanganui, New Zealand

In Wanganui, New Zealand, mass teaching over Labor Weekend was fantastic. The Baha’is started arriving Friday afternoon, believers from Napier, Hastings, Wellington, New Plymouth and Lower Hutt. Many communities whose members could not come had prayers for the success of the effort. First declarations started with a trickle of two on Saturday morning and Monday they were accepting in groups, three, four or five at a time. The group ran out of declaration cards and had to beg or borrow some more from another team.

Baha’i Week got off to a good start with a photograph of Auxiliary Board member Gertrude Blum and Shirley Charters. A window display in a central shop and a pamphlet table in the center of town were well patronized, thanks to the efforts of a certain Babil’ who walked up and down the street asking if people would like to read about the Baha’i Faith. Flowers made of paper, each with a quotation tied to its stem, were popular and 2,000 were distributed. The Mayor was presented with The Proclamation of Baha’u’llah, also a bowl of flowers with Baha’i quotations.

Pre-teaching preparation was stressed: “It is important that everyone be enthused before going out to teach—to hurry is silly. We went out too quickly on Friday with the result that there were many enquirers but no declarations. However, on Saturday morning we made a point of singing and praying ... and having a pep talk ... and results came. There was much love and laughter and many people were attracted by the different nationalities and accents—American, Persian, English, Fijian, Austrian and Kiwi.”

Wanganui now has a community of thirty-nine believers, most of them youth and about one-third Maori, with seventeen adults.

New Zealand Baha’i Newsletter, November, 1971

Newly established Baha’i group of Lyngby, Denmark present Proclamation book to Mayor (from left to right) Mrs. Johanne Høeg (first Danish believer who accepted the faith in 1925 on Hawaii), Mr. S. Payman, Mayor P. Fenneberg and Miss Else Holdt.

Iranians in Togo

Mr. Ahyi presenting Mr. Ferdows to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Togo, General Etienne Eyadema.

Mr. and Mrs. Q. Ferdows, of Iran, recently toured Togo, where they were granted written permission from the Ministry of Education to visit primary schools throughout Togo, speaking to faculty and students. Mr. and Mrs. Ferdows took full advantage of this wonderful opportunity and were enabled to give the Message to many students and teachers whom they met with on their tour.

On 6 October a Baha’i delegation which included Mr. and Mrs. Ferdows was invited to meet with the President of Togo. The delegation was warmly and graciously received by the President and enjoyed an interview of thirty minutes. Press photographers were present at the meeting and the leading newspaper of Togo carried the report on the front page of the paper with an accompanying photograph.

A radio interview was also arranged at which the Faith was introduced and the Teachings were spoken of at length. The interview was broadcast at 8:00 p.m., an hour when a great majority of the people of Togo were enabled to listen to the radio, and undoubtedly will have a great effect.

First of Her Tribe

The picture is of Mrs. Irene Harris, who is the first believer of the Kitwancool tribe and is 92 years old. She was also elected to Prince Rupert’s Assembly. Mrs. Harris was presented to the Queen when she visited Prince Rupert, as she is a celebrity herself in these parts. She likes the Baha’is to call her ‘grandma’ because she says she is “grandmother to all people—Chinese, Japanese, white people — to everyone!” Most stirring to all of us is her persistence in learning how to pronounce the Greatest Name which we shower upon her as a greeting.

Canadian Baha’i News August—Sept. 1971
First Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Bethel, Alaska, Ridván 1971. Front row: Blu Mundy, Maynard Eakan, Sandra Etageak, Andrea Baumgartner. Also, left to right: Natalie Baumgartner, secretary; Ernest Baumgartner, chairman; Bud Revet, vice-chairman; Ken Sue, and Jim Baumgartner, treasurer.

Patient Effort Results in Alaskan Assembly

The culmination of sixteen years of intermittent teaching activity and pioneer settlement resulted in the establishment of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Bethel, Alaska, last Ridván, 1971. This Assembly was composed entirely of Bahá’í pioneers who converged there beginning in the summer of 1970.

The first to move there were Ken and Beth Sue, from the Matanuska Valley, who established residence in the spring. Blu Mundy of Fairbanks went in early fall to teach in the State Operated School. That same fall, Bud Revet went in the last part of August from Mekoryuk; then Margie Revet in December from Eek. They were followed in December by Jim and Andrea Baumgartner of Fairbanks who went for the Teacher Corps; next by Sandra Etageak and Maynard Eakan in January; then by Ernie and Natalie Baumgartner of Klawock, and David and Nathana Rhines from Anchorage.

Before and after the formation of the Assembly, the Bethel Bahá’ís were extremely active in spreading the Faith. They had radio programs, firesides, children’s programs, and carried on much individual teaching. Ken and Beth, residents of the Receiving Home, the Revets at the Bethel Heights Housing Development, Maynard Eakan in the program to combat alcoholism, Blu Mundy with her music lessons and social studies programs in the State Operated School, Sandra Etageak working with the Family Social Services at Welfare Office, Ernie and Nat Baumgartner with the telephone utility and in the housing area, Jim and Andrea in an educational program—all spread the Faith by their daily lives.

November—December 1971—Alaska Bahá’í News

In Zambia—an Outstanding Event

On 10th August at 7 p.m. there was a seven-minute radio interview that had been recorded in the afternoon, while at 7:20 there was a live interview which lasted eight minutes. On 12th August there was a public meeting attended by approximately fifty non-Bahá’ís. All this activity was organized by the Local Spiritual Assembly in Lusaka, and the response came through personal invitation and poster advertising.

The interviews were made possible by the arrival of Dr. S. I. Dean from Singapore where he and his wife assisted with the Oceanic Conference in January. The public meeting also involved Counsellor Shidan Fathe-ázam, who shared in the question and answer period. The speaker was not perturbed by the barrage of questions following his talk on the development of man under the title “6,000 Years from Adam.” So interested was the Program Manager of Zambia TV that he requested a recorded interview for release at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, 21st August. This interview, a full half-hour, appeared under the title “The Bahá’í Faith.”

This has been our most outstanding proclamation achievement so far.

—National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Zambia

Northernmost Local Spiritual Assembly

The first Local Assembly of Inuvik, the northernmost Assembly on the shores of the Arctic Sea. From left to right, sitting: Paul Jones, Arthur Peel, Diane Jones, Willie Thrasher. Back row: Don Cole, Cliff Peters, Bill Watson, DiAnn Watson, Chris Cole. Photo at right.

—Canadian Bahá’í News

August—September 1971
international distribution of bahá’í news

bulk orders and shipments of bahá’í news to national spiritual assemblies are now being handled by the publishing trust in wilmette. it will continue to be necessary for each national assembly to provide for the distribution of bahá’í news within its national area of jurisdiction. local assemblies, groups, and individuals outside the continental united states (with the exception of canada) must request subscriptions from their national spiritual assembly.

the subscription price for bahá’í news is $6.00 a year, and it is for bahá’ís only. changes of address for the mailing of bahá’í news and/or world order should be marked to the attention of:

subscription service
415 linden avenue, wilmette, illinois 60091

have you ever heard of child's way?

have you seen child's way recently?

some children like it. we don't hear from the others.

youth like it.

adults like it.

adolescents wouldn't be caught dead with it—it says child’s on the cover.

why?

children enjoy having their own bahá’í magazine.

they love to have their elders read it to them, or to read it themselves, if they can read.

they memorize illustrated prayers.

they like the stories.

they look at the pictures.

adults are happy to have simple answers to difficult questions.

they enjoy excerpts from unpublished gems, such as mahmúd’s diary informally translated by marzieh gail, or from ramona brown’s memoirs.

they are glad to find reprints from out of print books and magazines.

they feel young again.

sometimes, they share child's way with children.

teachers are delighted to have materials for children.

the editor is frustrated because so much is available, but who will re-write it for children? and there isn’t enough space to print it, and too few bahá’ís contribute original stories and games and songs. but a few wonderful people do.

it is the only bahá’í children’s magazine published on this continent.

won't you subscribe?

$4.50, with your name and address, for 6 issues per year.

a group can get together to obtain a subscription also.

if you want only one copy, the cost is 75¢.

child's way magazine
box 551, amherst, mass. 01002

honduras: the legal committee has been given the go-ahead to proceed with incorporation of the six additional assemblies to fill the goal of the nine year plan. it seems assured that they will elect far beyond the number of local assemblies required in the plan.

—national spiritual assembly of honduras

bahá’í news is published for circulation among bahá’ís only by the national spiritual assembly of the bahá’ís of the united states, as a news organ reporting current activities of the bahá’í world community.

bahá’í news is edited by an annually appointed editorial committee: mrs. evelyn hardin, managing editor; miss charlotte linfoot, national spiritual assembly representative; mr. rexford c. parmelee, mrs. sylvia parmelee.

material must be received by the twenty-fifth of the second month preceding date of issue. address: bahá’í news editorial office, 112 linden avenue, wilmette, illinois 60091, u.s.a.

change of address should be reported directly to membership and records, national bahá’í center, 112 linden avenue, wilmette, illinois. u.s.a. 60091.
The Universal House of Justice
Makes Joyous Announcement

OVERJOYED ANNOUNCE FRIENDS EVERY LAND NUMBER LOCALITIES NOW 50645 EXCEEDING BY OVER 2500 ORIGINAL GOAL NINE YEAR PLAN. OFFERING PRAYERS THANKSGIVING SACRED THRESHOLD FOR DIVINE BOUNTIES SURROUNDING SACRIFICAL EFFORTS LOVE INTOXICATED SUPPORTERS HIS BLESSED NAME. URGE BELIEVERS THOSE AREAS WHOSE TEACHING GOALS ARE STILL OUTSTANDING EXERT UTMOST EFFORT COURSE SWIFTLY PASSING REMAINING MONTHS PLAN WIN THEIR GOALS ENABLING THEM JOIN RANKS THEIR VICTORIOUS BRETHREN WHO ARE URGED CONTINUE THEIR VIGOROUS BRILLIANT EXPLOITS IN SERVICE GODS INFINITELY GLORIOUS CAUSE.

— THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa, Israel
February 14, 1972
Nineteen thirty-nine—it was a terrible year, a wonderful year! Storm clouds of ominous portent were soon to unleash a fury which would plunge practically the entire "civilized" world into a flaming, churning holocaust of hate, carnage, blood-shed and mass destruction. God's Army of Light was galvanizing its forces to burst through the darkness, resplendent and glorious, to gather together a suffering mankind, amalgamated by the tests of a firey ordeal, into a vibrant, vital, pulsating organic whole in which the little country of Panama was destined to rise to a position of world importance and a point of unity for "the North and the South, the East and the West." Here is the story of its beginnings.

'Abdu'l-Baha's Divine Plan

In 1919 the devout followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the United States gathered in New York City for their Eleventh Annual Convention and Bahá'í Congress. During the sessions, a series of Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Baha, now known as the Tablets of the Divine Plan, were unveiled. Among them there was one which mentioned, in order, each one of the Latin American countries. It continued: "All the above countries have great importance, but especially the Republic of Panama, wherein the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is a center for travel and passage from America to other continents of the world and in the future it will gain great importance."1 "... now is the time . . . Become angels of heaven and travel and teach through all these regions."2 Again He said, "... That place (Panama) will become very important in the future. The teachings, once established there, will unite the East and the West, the North and the South."3

First to Arise to the Divine Summons

While many of the assembled friends were overwhelmed by the message conferring upon that enviable nation (the United States) its great spiritual mission, only one arose in immediate obedience to the challenging summons of Latin American conquest contained in it. Martha Root, extolled by the beloved Shoghi Effendi in 1939 as "the first, finest fruit which the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has as yet produced . . ."4 responded at once. This "foremost Hand of the first Bahá'í century"5 blazed her historic trail throughout Latin America and then around the world. Among the many honors she won was that of being the first Bahá'í to carry the news of God's great redemptive Message to that small country "wherein the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans come together."6

Arriving at the port of Balboa, October 25, 1919, she exerted herself to the utmost during her stay of one week. The first articles placed by a Bahá'í appeared in the local press, public talks were given at the Ancon Club House and the Union Church in Balboa, and the "doctors of the Canal Zone ports, . . . the British Minister, and several . . . of the American Governmental officials"7 received the Message directly from her. While it was impossible for her to visit the leper colony of Palo Seco, she sent literature and candies to these unfortunate souls. From the date of the first tilling of the soil until May, 1939, the land lay fallow except for a sprinkling of Bahá'ís who tossed out a few handfuls of seed as they passed through Panama enroute to South American countries.

First Seven Year Plan in the United States

Meanwhile slowly and patiently the beloved Guardian during a sixteen year period, guided the highly favored North American Community in the erection of the machinery of their Administrative Order and set it into motion. By 1939 the first phase of the first Seven Year Plan (1937-1944) had been successfully executed through its instrumentality. That year Shoghi Effendi called upon the friends assembled in the Annual Convention to arise to the second stage of the Plan—the "systematic penetration of Latin America," through a "methodical advance along the line traced by the pen of 'Abdu'l-Baha."8 He urged them to bend their energies employing the newly constructed machinery in accordance with the primary purpose for which it was designed and erected, "promoting the growth and consolidating the pioneer movement."9
First Pioneer Teacher in Panama

Of the many assembled friends, again one soul heard the call for Panama and arose at once. Thus, Mathew Kaszab won the enviable distinction of being the first (though temporary) pioneer teacher to Panama. He plunged into the arena with a fever of activity and dedication typical of his "unforgettable" service to the Cause during the few remaining years of his gloriously tragic life.

The Arrival of a Group of Pioneers

Immediately upon his arrival in Panama (May 18, 1939) Mathew launched a vigorous proclamation campaign through the press, radio and public talks. Interested souls were attracted and by October the first permanent pioneers, Louise Caswell and Cora Oliver, arrived along with John Eichenaur (enroute to El Salvador). The first Bahá'ís in Panama had been found and the story which future history will record had begun to unfold.

The first two weeks of October, 1939 were a feast of "joyous spiritual association of five Bahá'ís" in Panama. John Eichenaur continued to his proposed destination and Mathew Kaszab departed for Nicaragua, the final phase of his pioneer service and life of selfless dedication to Bahá'u'lláh. Louise and Cora began to implant their roots deep in the soil of the lives of the people, to become an integral part of their new homeland.

The first step of the new pioneers was to enroll in the National University to learn the language, make valuable friends and exploit all possibilities such associations had to offer. During the ensuing months the range of their activities was wide, cutting across all levels and strata of society. Regular study classes were organized and pursued relentlessly. A center was established. Opportunities were seized for mass proclamation. The Message of Bahá'u'lláh was carried to all levels, from the President of the Republic to the humble, the meek and the lowly. Lasting bonds of personal love and affection, and sentiments of warm sympathy for the Faith were quickly gained. However, the excitement of the entry into the Faith in great numbers was destined to be the portion of others who followed in their wake, and Cora and Louise toiled in other Central American countries. While the winning of new souls was slow, it was, nevertheless, a sure process, as time has proven by the record of service and dedication of the group of first believers.

Steady Growth of the Faith

In a very short time the significance of the Guardian's observation: "Though politically unsettled, religiously intolerant, socially backward and climatically inhospitable, these unexplored territories hold forth inestimable prizes for audacious adventures in the path of Bahá'í service."11 assumed new dimensions. Cora and Louise reported shortly after their arrival: "We see all races mingling in apparent harmony and on a footing of equality. However, deeper investigation has revealed that the attitude of superiority of the Zone people is subtly influencing the Panamanians in favor of light skin. Recently we saw a school parade of medieval splendor, of much formality, priestly robes, artificial flowers and a statue of the Virgin. The educators, priests and nuns belong to an age that has passed. The solemn faces of the children testify to this. The different races were grouped together and the white superiority was implied by the chosen angels who were of the white race. At the University, preference is shown, as only two members of the staff are of Negro background while the majority of the students are on the dark side. We have also learned that no dark skinned people hold high political offices. The presence of two white women attending the University exemplifies the teaching that deeds are more powerful than words. . . ."

"Driven by the unforeseen forces of a benign destiny the people of Panama are as yet unaware of the fact that they are being welded into a body politic evincing the oneness of humanity."12

The pioneers developed "those qualities of renunciation, tenacity, dauntlessness and passionate fervor that can alone brave the dangers and sweep away the obstacles with which an infant Faith, struggling against vested interests and face to face with the entrenched forces of prejudice, of ignorance and fanaticism, must needs contend."13

Cora and Louise grew; the Faith grew, new pioneers came. By April 1944, the Second World War was well into its darkest hours with pain and suffering gripping the vitals of the major part of the world. In the Western Hemisphere, the light of Bahá was increasing in intensity. The Faith had been firmly launched and the direction of its course in Panama had been set. A firm group of loyal and steadfast believers had been established.

Inter-American Conference Celebrating Centenary of Declaration of the Báb

Upon Alfred Osborne fell the honor of representing Panama at the Inter-American Conference commemorating the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb (May, 1944). The curtain was being lowered on the first stage...
of the first epoch of the unfoldment of the Divine Plan. God’s slowly advancing army was gaining strength and preparing its associates for its future tasks of radiating the new Light, and of fanning it into new fields. With the convening of the All-American Teaching Conference (May 1944) in Wilmette in association with the Centenary Celebrations, the first chapter of the Panama story came to an end and a new chapter was about to begin. The first part of this chronicle dealt with Panama as an isolated unit. The second part knelt her fate together with her sister republics with which the next seventeen years was to be intimately associated. It was a period of internal development and external collaboration during which her star began to arise in fulfillment of her destiny.

The goal for this period as set forth by Shoghi Effendi for the deliberation of the assembled delegates was as follows:

...to deliberate on the measures to reinforce the ties binding them to their Sister Community, unitedly devise means for the inauguration of teaching campaigns in their respective Republics, the dissemination of Bahá’í literature, the multiplication of administrative centers as preliminary steps in the formation of Bahá’í National Assemblies, and lend impetus to the prosecution of any enterprise launched for the inauguration of teaching campaigns, further the work so received by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for the American Bahá’í Community.”

As a direct result of the consultation which followed, the Literature Distribution Committee for Central America, was appointed to facilitate the flow of literature being published in Chile. Its members were Alfred Osborne, Cora Oliver, and Edelberto Torres, Assistant Editor. The difficult task of gathering news from each country was begun and the first Bahá’í News Bulletin in Spanish appeared in March, 1945. Panama, along with its sisters began to contribute its share to the slowly growing volume of translations and pamphlets suitable for wide distribution. The Inter-American Committee geared itself for a fresh outpouring of pioneers and itinerant teachers.

Growth of the Administration

As for Panama, its first and most important task still remained—the establishment of the first of the bedrock institutions to sustain the weight of yet another of the pillars buttressing the future Universal House of Justice. Already Local Spiritual Assemblies had been established in the capital cities of Mexico, Guatemala, San Salvador, Tegucigalpa and San Jose. Panama lagged behind. Through a concerted effort on the part of pioneers, native Bahá’ís and traveling teachers, the goal was won at Ridván 1945 with the formation of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Panama City. It was further consolidated by legal incorporation in 1947 through the voluntary assistance of a non-Bahá’í friend, Dr. Javier Laso de la Vega.

The newly established Local Spiritual Assembly arose to prove its strength in the field of extension teaching. While Louise Caswell moved to Colon where before the end of the year the first Bahá’í group was organized. A group was also formed in the Canal Zone Southern District.

While the main field of action was in Latin America, predominating roles were played by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, the Inter-American Teaching Committee, the International Spiritual Assembly of Colorado Springs, Colorado (the generous gift of Mrs. Loulie Mathews by pioneers and traveling teachers, and in fact, the entire body of believers from that country.

The newly enrolled servants in Bahá’u’lláh’s path responded. Teachers began to arise to swell the ranks beyond the frontiers of their local communities. There was need for deepening and for broader association so essential to a fuller appreciation of the power and magnitude of Bahá’u’lláh’s great design.

First Latin-American Teaching Conference

The Inter-American Committee called for the first Latin-American Teaching Conference, January 20-26, 1946. In consultation with the Guardian, the honor of hosting this first important gathering was bestowed upon Panama.

Later the account of the Conference was published in the Bahá’í World, Volume X from which the following excerpts are quoted:

"Like an echo of the historic 1944 Bahá’í Centennial Celebration, similarly significant in the creative force it released and in the wide-spread repercussions it caused, the First Latin American Bahá’í Teaching Conference, held in Panama City from January 20th to 25th, 1946, will ever stand out as one of those portentous and definite milestones in the unfoldment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan, a marked stage in the expansion of the Cause and in the growing strength and harmony of its already established units."

The idea of this Conference was conceived in the summer of 1945 and enthusiastically stimulated, especially by Mrs. Loulie Mathews, whose contribution to the Inter-America teaching work, since its very beginning, has been unique.

"The National Spiritual Assembly (of the United States) and Inter-America Committee were represented officially at the Panama Conference by Mrs. Amelia Collins, a member of both of these bodies. At one of the sessions of the Conference, Mrs. Collins spoke especially on Bahá’í Administration, stressing its vital importance and clarifying many of its functions and institutions. Native believers from ten of the Latin American Centers, and eight of the North American pioneers gathered in Panama City, and in a marvelous spirit of brotherhood and unity each contributed his or her part to the well-rounded program of this Conference. Morning sessions were devoted to informal sessions during which an intensive study was conducted of the Guardian’s latest book, God Passes By, of administration and of teaching methods."

"In the evenings public lectures were arranged with talks on some of the basic Teachings of the Faith, such as ‘Unity of Religion,’ ‘Progressive Revelation,’ ‘Oneness of Mankind,’ and ‘Divine Art of Living.’ The largest and most impressive public session was held Friday evening, January 25th, in the main auditorium of the Inter-American University which had been graciously placed at the disposal of the Conference Committee. Participating with two Bahá’í speakers, Dr. Octavio Mendez Pereira, Rector of the University and Delegate from Panama to the San Francisco Conference for the establishment of United Nations Organization, gave one of the principal addresses. Under the all-over theme of ‘Peace,’ Dr. Mendez Pereira spoke on the ‘Problem of Peace in the Light of the San Francisco Conference’ and brought out the need for a pact both more universal and more spiritual than that embodied in the U.N.O. Charter. Miss Elizabeth Cheney followed, delineating for her audience the ‘Lesser Peace,’ spoken of by Bahá’u’lláh. As a glorious climax and fitting close to this important public meeting and to the Conference itself, Mrs. Gayle Woolson, in her address on ‘The Most Great Peace’ unfolded the vision of that time when the ‘Lesser Peace,’ achieved mostly through the statements and the activity of Bahá’u’lláh’s followers, is to be followed by the Golden Age of Bahá’u’lláh."

"Once more, in a measure unapproached since the Centenary, was the bond of unity between the followers of Bahá’u’lláh throughout the Hemisphere reinforced and
a new impulse given to the Cause as a whole, creating in all those present fresh determination to join their forces to coordinate their activities and efforts, and with radiant spirits to re dedicate themselves to the advancement of the Bahá’í Faith, in all of its aspects, throughout their native lands.

"To a degree far exceeding the hopes and expectations of those instrumental in its planning, this unprecedented event aided, and contributed to, the growth of the Faith in Latin America, giving a fresh impulse to the coinciding processes of consolidation and of the expansion of the Cause. In the months immediately following it became increasingly evident that a firmer bond of understanding and fellowship had welded together the component parts of the Western Hemisphere, into a unified whole." 16

(To be continued)

Hawaiian Mass Teaching

Mr. Poova Murday spoke to over 1,000 people who attended a meeting on August 6, 1971, at the Molokai Fair in Kaunakakai, Hawaii, at which the entertainment was "The Bahá’í Aikanes," a singing group. The gathering resulted in forty-three declarations. Over a four-week period, mass teaching activities in Hawaii resulted in 700 declarations. These activities established the twenty-eight goal communities.

Brussels Greets Singer

When the Bahá’ís of Brussels heard of the impending visit of the famous Bahá’í jazz trumpeter Dizzie Gillespie, they saw at once a chance for proclaiming the Faith in a new strata of society.

Some twenty Brussels Bahá’ís awaited Dizzie at the airport. On his arrival they welcomed him by shouting "Dizzie" and waving posters inscribed "Bahá’ís." Of course the attention of many by-standers was caught and questions were asked about the Faith. On accompanying Dizzie to his hotel, they distributed Bahá’í pamphlets and a publicity leaflet for the concert with the added notation "Dizzie is a Bahá’í."

Many friends attended the concert. Afterwards, when autograph-hunters besieged Dizzy the friends were surprised to see that Dizzy only signed his name to the Bahá’í leaflets.

Notes:

(1) Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 10
(2) ibid. p. 11
(3) ibid. p. 28
(4) Messages to America, p. 30
(5) ibid.
(6) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Advent of Divine Justice, p. 59
(7) Star of the West, Vol. XI, No. 12, p. 21
(8) Messages to America, p. 20
(9) ibid. p. 22
(10) History of Bahá’í Pioneers in Panama 1939-1946
(11) Messages to America, p. 20
(12) Notes of Interest to Bahá’ís, Panama, Oct. 1939
(13) Messages to America, p. 21
(14) ibid. p. 73
(15) Bahá’í World, Vol. XI, p. 708

"Bahá’í Aikanes" sing at the Molokai Fair, Kaunakakai in August, 1971. Poova Murday is at the extreme right.

Welcoming Dizzie Gillespie at the Brussels airport are: Dizzie in center, Jean-Pierre Verhulst, left, from the back are Ismail Foroughi and Mrs. Leo Nye, while Higou Pailahzedeh and Arlette Matheus hold posters high.
South Carolina Victory Conference Launches Operation “Gabriel”
January 28-30, 1972

From Canada, from New Hampshire, from Washington State, from the Midwest, from all over the North American continent, over 500 followers of Bahá'u'lláh gathered in response to Gabriel’s trumpet call to service. In Charleston, South Carolina, only a half mile from the old slave market, black and white, Indian and Oriental met in loving diversity.

Graced and inspired by the presence of Hand of the Cause Dr. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájjir, Auxiliary Board members Jenabe Caldwell (from Alaska) and Thelma Thomas, National Spiritual Assembly representative Dr. Dwight Allen and the National Teaching Committee, this historic assemblage of Bahá'ís heard the secretary of the South Carolina Regional Teaching Committee, Mrs. Alberta Williford present the major goals and objectives of Operation “Gabriel”. They are:

1. Form again all the Local Spiritual Assemblies established at Ridván 1971,
2. Establish 100 new Local Spiritual Assemblies, and
3. Increase the total number of localities where Bahá'ís reside to 250.

To win these goals, each of South Carolina's five District Teaching Committees had formulated plans. Since a major focus of the conference was the recruitment of Bahá'ís to work with Operation “Gabriel” for as long as possible, the District Teaching Committees also operated booths so that potential volunteers could come and talk personally with people from the district where they might be assigned to serve. There were also information booths on pioneering and Bahá'í Child Education and an incredibly complete Bahá'í bookstore. There were special children's classes on both Saturday and Sunday, the latter being graced by a special performance by the “Northern Stars” and their “cookie munter”. Blue hairy “cookie”, the star of the Minnesota based “Northern Stars” Bahá'í puppet show, was one of the surprise hits of the conference.

By Saturday night the songs and plans of the District Teaching Committees, the presentations of the Regional Teaching Committee and the Deep South Committee and the words of Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájjir moved some nineteen Bahá'ís to volunteer for full time service in Operation “Gabriel”. The call for volunteers was given again on Sunday morning with even more positive results, seventy-one Bahá'ís volunteered for some kind of service—this makes a total of ninety.

—From The American Bahá'í, February 1972
“Gabriel” book sales and exhibits.

First Spanish Summer School building, Liria, near Valencia. It was inaugurated on August 16, 1972.

Spanish Bahá'ís attending their first summer school in the new building at Liria, near Valencia. More than nineteen Bahá'í communities of Spain were represented and also some were from abroad.
UGANDA

Zylpha O. Mapp, United States pioneer to Uganda, Director of Guidance at the Tororo Girl's School, is on leave of absence from the public school system of Springfield, Massachusetts. She is working with the Uganda Ministry of Education in developing a guidance program in other schools of the nation. On home leave recently for a short visit, she was the speaker at the New York Bahá’í observance of World Religion Day. She was interviewed by the city’s leading newspaper and addressed a public meeting sponsored by the local Bahá’ís. Miss Mapp reported that the United States is building a number of schools in Uganda, and that United States National Spiritual Assembly member Dr. Dwight Allen is participating in the development of their educational methods.

On her visit to the House of Worship in Wilmette Miss Mapp shared recent news of Uganda in the form of the Uganda National Bahá’í Newsletter, Number 2, of which she is editor.

The President of Uganda

On Thursday, 11th November at noon a telephone call was received advising the National Spiritual Assembly that the President of Uganda, General Idi Amin Dada had accepted our invitation to attend the one hundred and fifty-fourth anniversary of the birth of Bahá’u’lláh at the Mother Temple of Africa.

Announcements were put on the radio in six languages and all arrangements were co-ordinated with the office of the President.

The people started to gather at the House of Worship at about three o’clock. The number estimated was close to 1000. The President arrived at 5:30 p.m. and was cheered with loud shouts of “Dada oyee!” He was very charming and kind and extremely humble. The people crowded into the Temple with the overflow standing in the aisles or squatting in the doorways.

Prayers were read in English, Luganda, Persian, Swahili and Arabic. After a truly memorable service dignified in its presentation and befitting in its content, the Religious Affairs Secretary and the Press Secretary both commented on the wonderful words and Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh.

Upon completion of the Temple service, the President and his party were escorted by the Chairman and Secre-
Health and the Strain of Study” held at the Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Education, Makerere University last month. In the Group Sessions Edith Senoga and Zylpba Mapp were able to throw some light on the problem. Vida Abbasi and Forough Ehsani also supported the meeting.

Lessons on Elections

Irene Bennett and co-workers have just completed a compilation on Bahá’í elections entitled: “Six Lessons on the Procedure and the Spirit of Bahá’í Elections.” This material was prepared at the request of the Continental Board of Counsellors. It is to be studied at Nineteen Day Feasts and at courses given locally or in larger conferences in the districts.

All this is in preparation for the forthcoming election of convention delegates to take place by the end of February. It was inspired by The Universal House of Justice and is taking place all over the world to improve the general conduct and standard of Bahá’í elections.

Teso

Literacy Classes have begun at the Kobwin Bahá’í Women’s Union held every Sunday at the Tilimb Bahá’í Primary School. The classes are well-attended and are for both men and women. The women also continue with their embroidery work.

The President of Uganda and friends leaving the House of Worship and en route to the Hápiratu’l-Quds.

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The President of Uganda and friends leaving the House of Worship and en route to the Hápiratu’l-Quds.
Kadoke Local Spiritual Assembly is also engaged in this important work of teaching the friends to read and write Ateso.

Information has been received, a copy of a letter written by 'Abdu'l-Baha to the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bombay, India, giving them information about the layout of their Baha'i Cemetery.

"Which to outward appearance should look like a paradise."

The Baha'is of Kampala are making arrangements to develop their cemetery along the lines recommended.

Bukedi

The Lumuli Local Spiritual Assembly on October 30 met to consult upon the teaching work in their area. The need for a team of nine people who know how to teach about Bahá'u'lláh and His life to go for a period of a week around the villages nearby this Local Spiritual Assembly was discussed. It was agreed that they would be willing to become that team.

Buganda Youth in Action

All during October the Youth of Kampala have been holding well-attended meetings with up to seventy-five persons present. The spirit is high, the friends are happy and the seekers are learning more about the Bahá'í way of life.

The National Education Committee urgently needed teachers for the Gulu Youth Institute which had been formed to meet the needs of the students there. On Saturday Nov. 20th they were told of the situation. On Sunday Nov. 21st, Vida Abbasi, Bakojja Musoke, Patrick Senoga, Christopher Senoga, Samuel Kabali, Lon Duncombe and Brian Rhodes left by taxi for Gulu.

Without hesitation the Kampala youth arose and answered the call.

Acholi Youth

On November 20, Bahá'í youth spoke about the Faith to twenty-five people and the Minister of Christ Church about Bahá'í. The minister is worried because his congregation is leaving him for Bahá'í.

Busoga

Two Bahá'í friends Nabuti Kyakulaga and Yonosan Nugweri of Bujagangula Bahá'í Community went on a voluntary teaching trip for five days. They visited Nakatokwe Local Spiritual Assembly and two new villages were opened by them, one in Bulusga, Busiki County and the other at Busenbatya in Bugweri County. During their trip thirteen people became Bahá'ís.

Bunyoro

District Teaching Committee met on September 25th, 1971 and heard the reports of the friends who had gone to the Teaching Conference in Kampala. Reference was made to the Lake Victoria Plan of Dr. Muhajir "to be jointly achieved by the National Spiritual Assembly, Local Spiritual Assemblies and all the Bahá'ís of the world." In addition, plans outlined by Mr. Enoch Olingo, Hand of the Cause of God and the Continental Board of Counsellors at the recent Victory Conference were consulted upon.

BAHA'I YOUTH CONFERENCE—LA VEGA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC—NOVEMBER, 1971
Louis G. Gregory Institute—Hemingway, South Carolina

Showing the dormitory building under construction at the Louis G. Gregory Institute, at Hemingway, South Carolina. It is planned to give housing and camping facilities for forty people.

The building at the right is the auditorium and administrative building for the Louis G. Gregory Institute to be dedicated in the summer, 1972. At the left is the dormitory, nearing completion. Due to mass enrollment, it is estimated that now about one-fourth of the believers in the United States live in South Carolina.
HAND OF CAUSE VISITS BOTSWANA

In the three short days of his visit to Botswana, Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga, accompanied by Board of Counsellors member Shidan Fatheazam and traversing the country from north to south, travelled nearly 500 miles over dirt and sometimes rain soaked roads, visited three of the youngest and most active Bahá’í communities in Botswana and gave a public talk and a radio interview in the nation’s capital.

To a country suffering under the influence of a firmly established, discriminatory, fundamentalist belief, the visit of an African Hand of the Cause gave healthy, tangible evidence of the truly universal and non-discriminatory character of the Bahá’í Faith. At the same time Mr. Olinga’s talks were, for Bahá’ís raised in the theories of a materialistic and literal-minded church, a much needed clarification and re-explanation of the basic Bahá’í principles.

Visit to Ratholo

On Wednesday afternoon, November 17, Enoch Olinga arrived in Ratholo, a small, isolated village with a sizeable Bahá’í community which has sprung up in just the past few months. In a meeting with some forty-five Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís the Hand spoke about Progressive Revelation and mentioned many of Bahá’u’lláh’s social principles. Always, in his talk, he sought to broaden the minds of his audience—to carry their thoughts beyond Ratholo and Botswana; to give them a picture of a Faith universal in its Teachings and universal in its appeal. He brought love and greetings from the Bahá’ís of Rhodesia and Malawi, from the Bahá’ís of his home country of Uganda, and from The Universal House of Justice in Haifa, Israel. “Everywhere there are Bahá’ís—the Bahá’í Faith has spread to every part of the world, even to Ratholo!”

During the question and answer period one of the audience, a teacher from the nearby secondary school, said that he had read extensively about Islam, and could accept it as being one of the world’s great religions—“but why,” he asked, “is Bahá’í, which also claims to be a great world religion, never mentioned in the history books?” Mr. Olinga, answered that the people who write history books have been unaware of the Bahá’í Faith. However, when historians become Bahá’ís, it will be a different story altogether!

It is hard to convey in words the wisdom of the Hand of the Cause. He never argued, he never challenged, he never overburdened his audience—on the other hand, he never watered down the Teachings to please his listeners. His talk was deep enough for the most intellectual, but clearly stated the basic Bahá’í truths which are understandable by the most simple and uneducated. It was wonderful to hear.

A few days later the head-master of the primary school declared his Faith in Bahá’u’lláh. He said that after hearing Mr. Olinga’s explanation of religion, he had no choice—he had to become a Bahá’í!

Bonwapi tse and Palla Road

The next day, Thursday, was the busiest day for Mr. Olinga. He held meetings in the morning and early afternoon in Bonwapi tse and Palla Road, two young and especially spirited Bahá’í communities. In Bonwapi tse, a village which six months earlier had been visited by Hand of the Cause Dr. Mühlischlegel, the Bahá’ís had recently organized the first child-education class in the country. Now, during the visit of Enoch Olinga, they pledged to build their local child-education center by Kiývan 1972, in order to fulfill the Nine Year Plan goal for Botswana.

In Palla Road the Bahá’ís killed a cock, insisting that their visitors enjoy a meal before speaking. At the meeting, attended by over thirty Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís, Enoch Olinga again spoke on Progressive Revelation, and reviewed the basic Bahá’í principles.

Inside main room of the National Hadrutul-Quds of Botswana.
Public Meeting in Gaborone

The climax of Mr. Olinga's visit was his Thursday night talk in Gaborone. Speaking to more than seventy people, the great majority of them non-Bahá'ís—and present at their first Bahá'í meeting—the Hand of the Cause first introduced himself and then explained the meaning of the word "Bahá'ís". He then went into the history and nature of the Faith, and into its central teaching of Progressive Revelation. The audience had mixed reactions to his message, but virtually all were impressed with the speaker himself and with the quality of his talk. One member of the audience later said that he had never before heard such an intelligent speaker, using such good English.

The questions ranged from Christian subjects, to the subject of South Africa—difficult questions, but ones which Mr. Olinga handled admirably, and which he used to expand upon his original talk.

Later that evening, in an intimate talk with the Gaborone Bahá'ís and some of the National Assembly members, Mr. Olinga, said that he had seen wonderful Bahá'ís in the villages, and hoped that the administrators of the Faith would care for them; would nurture and strengthen them in the new religion which these villagers had so recently embraced.

Friday morning, the Hand of the Cause gave a radio interview, and then left Botswana for South Africa.

Progress Report of Botswana

The month of August 1971, for Bahá'ís in Botswana was spectacular in that they accomplished many goals and had historic "firsts". They held the first public talk in the capital city of Gaborone, given by Counsellor Bahyiyih Ford at the Town Hall, which was also broadcast over Radio Botswana. She spoke on "African Traditional Beliefs and the Unity of the World's Religions." The National Spiritual Assembly members were all present when incorporation papers were filed and accepted in September, thereby accomplishing one of our most difficult goals. Five Local Assemblies are now going ahead with incorporations, another Nine Year Plan goal.

In August the National Spiritual Assembly became legal owners of the National Ḥażíratu’ll-Quds and celebrated the first Feast in the building. The main building of the Ḥażíratu’ll-Quds has a large meeting room, guest bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, etc. A smaller house at the back contains space for the national offices, a stock room, shower.

Other goals won by Botswana in the last eighteen months are the opening up of over sixty-seven localities (the goal was fifty) and translating some Bahá'í Writings into one of the Bushmen languages.

Botswana was not one of the countries planned to have its own National Spiritual Assembly during this Plan, so these goals are in addition to the initial Plan, due to the loving foresight and guidance of The Universal House of Justice.

Last year the National Spiritual Assembly was overwhelmed with all the work before it in its infancy and concentrated on spreading the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to as many places as possible and also writing suitable pamphlets in the Tswana language, these to be given away.

The result of teaching among the masses was startling when analysed at Convention: over forty Chiefs were reached by the National Spiritual Assembly and told about Bahá'u'lláh. This included Paramount Chiefs, sub-Chiefs and Headmen. Over fifty-seven villages were visited and meetings were called and literature distributed. Over sixty mass meetings were held in the village Kgolasi (Chief's meeting place). Over 5,200 were given the Good News. The number of localities opened to the Faith was almost doubled.

This year the teaching has not been so widespread but consolidation has been the major theme and it is hoped that many more Local Spiritual Assemblies will be formed by next Ridván.

Botswana is mostly desert and the people tend to congregate along the main railway line. However, teaching is difficult; as they are mainly farmers, they spend nine or ten months at their "lands"—a portion of land which belongs to the tribe or family they must cultivate to live. Crops are poor due to long droughts and late, or sometimes too early rains.

There are only four pioneers and they must travel great distances in order to cover the areas needing attention. More pioneers are needed.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF BOTSWANA

"Bahá'í village" of Boneapitse, Botswana where the majority of the people are Bahá'ís including the Chief and his family.
As the friends are beginning to realize from other reports that are trickling in, doors are opening and opportunities for successful teaching in Europe are being discovered everywhere. The youth activities have been sparked with a new fire—especially since the all European Youth Conference in Switzerland in August with the Hand of the Cause of God Rúhíyyih Khánum—and for the first time in France campuses and youth centers were pursued with regularity throughout the year. Whereas before it was difficult to find even a few truly interested people, now numbers of youth have begun frequenting the meetings. Everyone is encouraged and uplifted by the new wave of successes, and the whole French Bahá'í Community is being more deeply welded together. Pioneers and native believers who have been holding down their posts for ten and fifteen years, often isolated and without many results in their teaching efforts, are finding to their joy that their steadfastness, prayer and effort are finally bearing the cherished fruits of new declarations, new Local Spiritual Assemblies, and other achievements. This summer a number of French youth, on hearing of the Faith while vacationing in Italy, England and Switzerland, have joined the ranks of Baha'u'llah. As we have been lacking in native French believers, this is of particular importance. All this leaves us with the feeling that His Hand is decreeing now as the time for the great move forward, and is lovingly guiding us toward the completion of our goals.

The French National Youth Committee devised a very challenging six month teaching program, designed to reach the different levels of society from factory workers to grape pickers to university students to Gypsies to vacationers—all residing in the different geographic areas of France. Numbers of youth were mobilized and set out on the various teaching projects. The results were declarations and a more unified and uplifted Bahá'í Community. Among those who declared their faith in Baha'u'llah were a number of Gypsies in the Paris area. This has been of particular importance as the Guardian mentioned this minority group as a special goal for France.

A very short stopover after their Pilgrimage by Seals and Crofts and their wives was a thrill for all the French Bahá'ís of the Paris area. The decision of the wives to remain and help out with the newly launched youth program was a wonderful one and gave us insights into how to mass teach as well as concrete results in new declarations.

The effect of the American Project in Switzerland has been felt all over Europe. The example has been set—it has been proved possible to have large scale enrollment in Europe (not only in Switzerland) and many of the European friends are more encouraged than ever before to push ahead for total victory by the end of the Nine Year Plan.

Music has been a particularly successful method for teaching. Recently many doors have opened to singers and instrumentalists that were closed before to someone who wanted to give a talk or public meeting with a religious theme. New levels of publicity through the radio, T.V., newspapers etc. have also been reached. In two months there were fifteen different proclamation events in ten different cities or towns of France—sometimes in youth centers, sometimes in universities, and other times in rented hotels and halls. There was much publicity by the friends for the evenings—especially direct street handouts on the day of the event. And then a panel or directed discussion usually followed the musical presentation. Thus, musicians are especially welcome to come and help us—singers, groups, individuals—someone who can give us that spiritual nourishment of the soul that 'Abdu'l-Bahá speaks of in a passage on the importance of music. It has helped to reach down through the intellectual layers and crusts to the very hearts and souls of the French people and especially the students.

Now many more French youth are learning to play, and with the help of Switzerland we have even distributed our first songbook and cassette in both French and English so the friends can learn the songs in their own language. This will be a very good aid for anyone preparing to pioneer or travel teach in a French-speaking country.
Newly declared Gypsy friends with pioneers and traveling teachers in France. In the group are Al and Joany Lincoln, Billie Crofts and Ruby Seals.

Panel presentation at Dijon University, Dijon, France.

BOLIVIA

A recent teaching trip in Campo, south-east of Sucre, Bolivia. Left to right in back: Manigeh Cannon, Sra. Barrientes, Al Cannon, Sr. Barrientes, and traveling teacher Facundo Cardoso with the children of the Señor and Señora.

In the village of Sudanez, Bolivia. Left to right, in back: Sra. Barrientes and Manigeh and Al Cannon with children of the Señora. The Señor is one of the city officials and the couple are the first Baha'is in the area which is near the southern end of Bolivia.

At the Amelia Collins Baha'í School at Liancourt, Haiti on the occasion of the visit of Hand of the Cause, Dr. A. M. Varq, in August, 1971. Pioneers and friends are attending a conference on pioneering held by Dr. Varq.
NEWS FROM LAOS

The National Spiritual Assembly of Laos worried over the damage to the airport of its capital city, Vientiane, caused by the disastrous flood last September. All aircraft had to be transferred to neighboring towns for safety, and there was uncertainty as to when operations would be resumed. The reason for concern was the intended first visit of Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone to Laos. The alternative route would be by air to Bangkok, then to northeast Thailand, Udorn, and then travel with a pioneer.

The miracle happened, and Mr. Featherstone was able to arrive by air on October 2, from Saigon and was met by several Bahá'í friends. He spent the afternoon visiting the recently purchased Temple site, accompanied by National Spiritual Assembly members and an Auxiliary Board member. A dinner was given for him and pioneers that evening at the National Hazíratu'l-Quds.

Mr. Featherstone flew the next day to Savannakhet to attend a Post Oceanic Conference. Representatives and friends from eighteen villages were present at this meeting and heard Mr. Featherstone speak on “Progressive Revelation and Bahá'í Administration.” Although there was a Buddhist Lunar festival going on, in addition to the conference, small firesides were held.

There were other meetings for Mr. Featherstone on his return to Vientiane, and he was able to consult with the National Spiritual Assembly concerning the Nine Year Plan goals. The visit exhilarated and inspired the friends.

Pioneering in India

Where else on this earth could a Bahá'í walk on a college campus and tell the President he had a great and glorious Message to give him and the students and within thirty minutes be telling 700 students and professors of our beloved Faith? After the talk the President, five professors and seventy students declared, Yes, this happened recently to Dr. Ray Johnson in Nagpour, India.

A Family of Mass Teachers

The Roths of Miami, Florida have been actively mass teaching in Colombia, according to a letter from daughter Dana Roth, received by her father, Martin Roth, who, after mass teaching there at intervals, returned to home base. Mrs. Roth, daughters Dana and their fourteen-year-old Lisa, with the assistance of dedicated Colombiano Leandro Cuberos and other Bahá'ís, found 434 waiting souls in Sta. Lucia from December 18 to 23, 1971. They had plans for teaching in Cartagena and Aracataca, opened to the Faith in September.
First Teaching Institute in Madina Village, New Ireland

Two hundred persons attended the official opening of the first Teaching Institute in New Guinea on December 28, 1971, held in Madina Village, New Ireland.

Interspersing speeches were choral selections given by the Madina Bahá'í Children's Choir, and by choirs from a number of village church groups in New Ireland.

The opening ceremony was performed by Auxiliary Board member Rodney Hancock, and Elti Elias, a leading Madina Bahá'í renowned for her work among the women of New Ireland. Representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Papua and New Guinea were Tamun Kosap and the Chairman, Noel Bluett. Speeches were also given by the member of the Assembly for New Ireland, and a representative of the United Church, both of whom spoke of the need for unity, and the work of the Bahá'ís towards this end.

After the Teaching Institute had been opened by cutting the palm fronds stretched across its front doors, a feast of taro, kau kau, banana, pork, beef and chicken, was provided for all of those attending. These delicacies had been cooked in island fashion using hot coral stones to cook the food, which had been wrapped in banana leaves and buried beneath the sand.

An outstanding feature of the party was the dancing groups. These dancers were believers from all over New Guinea who have become Bahá'ís while working on a nearby plantation. They demonstrated by the variety of their costumes that they came from different tribal areas, and that the Bahá'ís of Madina have been working as a Teaching Institute in reality before the building was erected.

For the two days after the opening of the Institute three seventy-five Bahá'ís attended the seventh summer school to be held in New Ireland. Most of the classes were taken by New Ireland Bahá'ís whose knowledge of the Faith has been considerably deepened by the series of summer schools held since 1964.

Auxiliary Board member Rodney Hancock conveyed love and greetings from the Continental Board of Counsellors. The National Spiritual Assembly Chairman, Noel Bluett, gave a talk on Bahá'í Administration and marriage laws. An added bounty for the School was the presence of Barbara Wild, a Canadian pioneer, who had come to New Ireland after spending two years teaching in the Solomon Islands. Miss Wild presented a session on Bahá'í History.

During the closing session of the school, the attendants were thrilled by the declaration of a university student, Margaret Elias, the daughter of Elti Elias. Margaret will be returning to her university studies in 1972 with the aim of bringing the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh to her fellow students.
Peace in the Midst of War: A visit to Vietnam

By Elizabeth Gibson

There I was—straddling the back of a motorbike—bumping along the ribbon of a road that cut through the rice paddies outside of Bien Thuy, South Vietnam. We made a right angle turn smack through a puddle and onto a road that bisected a village of orderly compact grey dwellings surrounded by well-kept vegetation. Shy, smiling faces appeared everywhere, and laughing squeezing children ran out from their yards. As I looked to the right and left and right—there it was! Above every door—the Greatest Name. (Was I in the Abba Kingdom? I never imagined I would enter the next world on the back of a motorbike.) Then we stopped before a house with a sign that indicated it was the Bahai Center for this Cham village. The Chams, an ancient and noble people with a proud heritage, had accepted Bahai'u'llah and were now constructing their world in His pattern. How wonderful it was to stroll through that spot and admire their handiwork. I looked up and saw a large white nine-pointed star shining, and knew the entrance was flanking the entrance large white and red banners and mountains by Reuben E. Busby, His in fellowship and unity of thought?

His fellowship and unity of thought?

West Meets East in Travel Teaching

Some of the guests arriving to attend World Religion Day meeting in Saigon, January 16, 1972. Photo was taken by Reuben E. Busby, U.S. civilian employee, stationed in Vietnam, Reporter for the English Language Committee of the National Teaching Committee for Vietnam. His wife, Beatrice Busby, on the staff at the U.S. National Center in Wilmette, recently visited with him in Thailand.

While in Thailand they participated in a Bahai conference in Chiang Mai, where Mr. Busby was one of the speakers. Mr. and Mrs. Busby were the speakers at the memorial service for the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá held at the Bangkoek Bahá'í Center. Mrs. Busby spent two and a half weeks in Germany on her way to Thailand and had the bounty of travel-teaching and assisting in the preparations for a Youth Conference held in Dortmund, Germany.

HONG KONG NEWS

On November 24th the Baha'is put together a nine-poster exhibition that was shown in the community center of Tsuen Wan, a city near Kowloon. The exhibit was viewed by about 350 persons. A total of 3,000 pamphlets and invitations to the exhibit and evening's public meeting were also distributed throughout the area on the three days preceding the exhibition. The evening talk was lightly attended, but two local residents joined the Faith, bringing to four the total number of believers in Tsuen Wan.

On November 31st a slide show and talk were presented to just one department of a far flung Hong Kong University campus. Twenty-five students were introduced to the Faith, and four of these were very interested and expressed a desire to investigate further. It was a very friendly and encouraging meeting.

The last several days special consideration has been given for the organization and carrying out of consolidation to go hand in hand with the continuing efforts of teaching and proclaiming the Faith to the population of Hong Kong. Early this morning the friends gathered for prayers and readings to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This day marks the end of the forty-day teaching effort in Hong Kong; but the last forty days have been just one more stage in the continuing growth of the Faith in Hong Kong.

—Letter of November 28, 1971—Ray Cooprider
Progress in Trinidad and Tobago

The National Teaching Committee of Trinidad and Tobago, with the assistance of three Area Teaching Committees, has embarked upon a plan of opening at least one new locality a week in order to accomplish their Convention pledge for the formation of at least one-hundred and fourteen Local Spiritual Assemblies by the end of the Nine Year Plan.

To put this plan into action, the National Teaching Committee held a One-Day Teaching Seminar in Central Trinidad in which forty selected local teachers, plus other believers were invited to participate. The program topics were Methods of Teaching through Visual Aids, The History of the Faith, and Baha'i Elections. Songs and music were interspersed with the sessions.

Teachers came from over twenty towns and villages throughout Trinidad. When the call came for volunteers for teaching, the response was overwhelming. Now volunteers have formed teams under the guidance of their respective Area Teaching Committee and have started opening up new areas.

Their method is first to contact the Chairman of the Village Council, introduce the Faith to him, and obtain permission to use the Community Center. After this, door-to-door invitations are extended to villagers to attend a Baha'i lecture and slide show at a given time. Results have always been good, with many persons accepting the Faith. Children are attracted to Sunday Classes. More man-power is needed.

Library Presentations

The Chief Librarian of the Central Library was contacted for the purpose of placing Baha'i books in the various branches throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The offer was eagerly accepted, so ten copies of each of these books have been presented: Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, Some Answered Questions, Divine Art of Living, and Paris Talks. The book presentation was photographed and received good newspaper publicity.

Meeting the Mayor of San-Fernando

A courtesy call was paid to the Mayor of San-Fernando, Mr. Carlyle Kangalee, at the Town Hall. He was officially presented with Baha'i literature. In an hour visit, he was cordial and sympathetic. He expressed his willingness to assist the Bahá'í Faith in whatever way he could do so.

Interfaith Meeting at Holy Faith Convent

An Inter-Faith meeting organized by the youth groups of Caroni County and chaired by a Senator, was held at the Holy Faith Convent. Comprising the interfaith meeting were Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Bahá'í. Each religion was represented by a speaker. The Bahá'í speaker was Miss Shamsi Sedaghat who gave a forty-five minute talk on progressive revelation and the beauties of the Bahá'í Faith. Her talk was so convincing that the entire audience, in one voice, expressed its willingness to hear more. Mr. Leopold Fraser and Mr. Lawrence Coward contributed toward answering many questions. The teacher at the Convent who spoke on Christianity was impressed with the principles of the Faith and requested literature on the subject, then invited the Bahá'í speakers to give a series of talks on Comparative Religion to her students.

This request has been carried out and a second lecture was delivered by a new and brilliant young native Bahá'í, Mr. Junior Nickolas, and another lecture delivered to the Muslim Young Group, which was cordially received. The lectures will be continued.

Bahá'í Sunday School for Children

In more than five villages throughout Trinidad. Sunday Schools are conducted for the children, both Bahá'í and others. Classes are held regularly and attendance varies from twenty-five to eighty. Children are eager and enthusiastic. Recently the father of a brilliant boy of ten (Hindu background) embraced the Faith through the child who carried the spirit of the Faith home with him. Now we realize the wisdom of the Message of The Universal House of Justice to our first National Spiritual Assembly of Trinidad and Tobago to concentrate upon teaching activities for youth and children. The results have been excellent.

Bahá'í Week-End School

The South Area Teaching Committee has planned a week-end school to be held on the Mayaro Beach for three days in February. The program will include Bahá'í History, Administration, Principles and Laws with recreation and prayer sessions. There will be classes and entertainment for children and a public meeting and slide show in the Village Hall.

Weekly Radio Broadcast

We are happy to announce that after two years of communication with the officials of two broadcasting units in this country, we have obtained permission to present Bahá'í principles on the air. This consists of a six minute talk given every Wednesday at 9:25 a.m. over Radio Trinidad. This program is receiving a tremendous public acclaim and has served to make known the name "Bahá'í".

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
A three day program took us to villages and towns of the East Central State, the land of the Ibos. In the village of Bende, over 200 adults and children, Bahá'ís and their friends gathered to welcome their beloved and long awaited guest. In almost all of these village meetings the Chief was present out of respect for Amatul-Bahá. The Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly would read a beautiful address of welcome and a detailed program for the meeting had been written out. Indeed, this is the custom throughout both Nigeria and the Cameroon. The addresses were beautifully composed and very moving.

In Bende they told of donating a piece of land for the erection of their Bahá'í Center or any other Bahá'í institution. They proudly informed Ruhiyyih Khánum that the number of believers in this year had increased from eleven to sixty-five. As many ladies and children were present at this meeting, Amatul-Bahá spoke at length on the greatness of the station of women in society and also of the importance of the spiritual education of children.

At the time set aside for questions and answers a fanatical voice loudly protested against the Teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, claiming that the only way to salvation is through Jesus Christ. This excited the local Bahá'ís but the wise and dignified non-Bahá'í Chief of the village lifted up his cane and roared an order of silence to all! He said: "No pressure has been placed on anyone to come to this meeting or to accept this religion; anyone who objects to it should leave and go; the rest of us who want to hear more of the Teachings and came to welcome this distinguished guest would like to remain in peace and order." With these words the meeting returned to order and happiness.

In the town of Umuahia, although it was raining and restrictions on night meetings keep many people indoors, eighteen people turned up to meet Ruhiyyih Khánum and listen to her beautiful words. She spoke on life after death, which always fascinates the African people. They like to hear her tell that the life of this world is as different from the world to come as the life of the embryo in the womb of its mother is different from its world after birth.

Ruhiyyih Khánum's explanations of matters such as the existence of ghosts and spirits, whether they can harm us in this world, the power of "juju" or witchcraft, and other such topics are so vivid and clear that one can see the joy and relief on the faces of her audience.

A Story by 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Often she tells this beautiful story of 'Abdu'l-Bahá which is an example of the relation of the soul of man in this world to the next world, or eternal life. It is the story of a stranger who arrives in a strange city and finds all of its inhabitants gathered in the market square looking anxiously up at the sky. He inquires the reason for this from a man standing nearby and is told: "It is the custom in this city that, once a year, a bird comes out of the sky, circles about and alights on the head of one of the men and this man then becomes the king for a year." The stranger looks up and soon sees a bird appear which circles and then alights on his own head. At this point all the people acclaim him as their King and carry him off to the palace.

The man who had given the information said to the new King, "Since it was I who told you about our custom and now you have been chosen King, make me your Prime Minister." The King agrees to this. As the Prime Minister watches him and finds he is a just and good man, doing his duty to his subjects, he comes to the King one
day and said: "Come with me, I have something to show you" and takes him down to the seaside. There, far out, the King sees a desert island where an old and miserable man, naked and starving, is crying out and begging for help. The King asks who this wretched creature is and the Minister answers: "That is our King of last year. At the end of the year we take our old King and throw him away on an island. This is our custom."

The King is distressed and bemoans his fate and says that he never chose to be King and doesn’t want to end in such a terrible condition and terrible place. The wise Minister then tells him: "Now, while you are King, you have the power, you have the money, you have the men to obey you; so choose an island and bring your people and cultivate your island. Dig wells for water and build yourself a palace there. Then when the day comes for you to be cast off, you will go from one palace to another and be even better off than you were before." The King heeds him and does this.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá uses this beautiful example to teach us that each one of us, when born into this world is like a king, and has power and means of building a future palace, a shelter against the day one leaves this earthly kingdom and goes to the heavenly kingdom. With deeds and virtues developed in this world, each man builds his heavenly home and prepares for his eternal future.

The Village of Umuosu

In the village of Umuosu Amatúl-Bahá was received by a large number of enthusiastic Bahá’ís. Under a huge tree she addressed the friends and spoke of the great power of unity. She reminded the friends that they were good judges of seeing the truth of this, having experienced the strife and disunity that led to their recent civil war from the effects of which they were still suffering.

The Village of Ubaha

In the village of Ubaha we met with only a few of the Bahá’ís as most of them had gone away in search of work. The National Spiritual Assembly of Nigeria had printed special posters of welcome, giving a photograph of Amatúl-Bahá on her historic tour of Nigeria and including their address. Some 2,000 of these handbills were printed and displayed in remote villages by local communities all the way from Lagos. On our route we could see these posters nailed to trees and on the walls of huts.

The Villages of Umukwe and Itungwo

In the square of the village of Umukwe under a gigantic tree a group of Bahá’ís and their friends gathered to welcome Amatúl-Bahá and listen to her words of love and wisdom.

The village of Itungwo was not on the itinerary but the friends sent an appeal and begged their beloved guest to stop at their village also, and bless their village too, with her presence.

In this village they had erected a very beautiful shelter from palm branches and decorated it with flowers. They presented Rúhíyyih Khánum with an official address of welcome and showered her with their love and affection. As there were quite a number of women present at this meeting, Ruhiyyih Khánum spoke mostly on the importance of the role of women in society. She spoke of the great blessings and bounties that Bahá’u’lláh showed upon the female sex. She spoke of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s statement that the first educator is the mother, therefore to educate a woman is of great importance.

She also spoke on the importance of prayers and devotions in every family and for every individual, giving the example of the Master, likening the heart to a mirror. If you turn this mirror earthward you only reflect the darkness of the earth but if you turn it to the heaven you will reflect the heavenly light. She likened the cares and the attachments of this life to the dust which covers the surface of a mirror and pointed out that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that through prayer we polish and remove the dust of everyday life from the mirror of the heart.

By this time Amatúl-Bahá was so exhausted that her voice was broken with fatigue. She had spoken to five large gatherings in less than twenty hours, yet she was unwilling to cut any of these meetings short or to show any sign of haste. This is one of the most beautiful qualities of Rúhíyyih Khánum. She always said "When you do something, do your best, give all of yourself and not just part of it."

In the town of Aba a meeting was arranged to welcome Amatúl-Bahá where she spoke to the Bahá’ís and some of their friends on the importance of service and devotion to the Cause, relating some unforgettable incidents associated with the martyrdom of the early believers. She reminded us that we today are the spiritual descendents of those heroes of the Faith.

Port Harcourt

The last of this unbroken chain of meetings, eight in
The City of Calabar

On September 28 we left the city of Port Harcourt and drove to the capital of South Eastern State, the city of Calabar. The week of our stay was packed with activities. Amatu’l-Bahá spoke at a public meeting on “The Spiritual Destiny of Africa”. She met with some of the elite of the city at a dinner-reception given in her honor at the home of the Auxiliary Board member, Mr. Friday Ekpe and Mrs. Ekpe. She had an excellent radio interview on the Faith conducted by the head of the radio station who was deeply interested in the Teachings. In addition to this she met, on more than one occasion, with local believers and addressed a large gathering of students at one of the commercial colleges.

The Village of Akpabyo

One day and night were spent in the village of Akpabyo, which was a highlight of her visit to Nigeria. Her arrival coincided with the national celebration of Independence Day. A troupe of Bahá’í men dancers from the village, attired in colorful skirts and feather headaddresses, accompanied by drummers and followed by over one-hundred believers, young and old, met their guest at the junction with the main road and walked, dancing and drumming, through the jungle noonday heat for about a mile. It was a glorious and befitting welcome such as they reserve for visits of the highest personages in their land. As this procession made its way, in house after house as we went by a Bahá’í woman would come out, sometimes an old lady or a mother with her babe on her back, and dance around ceremoniously, joyfully shouting “Alláh-u-Abhá”.

The Village of Iktuba

At last the procession reached the village of Iktuba, the first spot where the Bahá’í Faith penetrated into Nigeria from the Cameroon and where today they have a teaching institute as well as the largest number of adherents. In this day, however, literacy is the common property of all. Within a few generations illiteracy will have been completely abolished from the face of the earth. Because of this, in this new day in which we are living, it will be possible and it will be the duty of every man to study the scriptures of his Faith, and follow and propagate it himself.”

Rúhíyyih Khánum pointed out that the world is full of words today and they all resemble one another,
whether coming from the mouth of a priest, philosopher or scientist; therefore, it must be largely through deeds that we Baha'is can distinguish ourselves and demonstrate the effect of the Words of Baha'u'llah on our lives.

Until late that evening the dancing and music continued and the activities were repeated the next day.

In a neighboring village a new Baha'i Center had been constructed and Ruhiyih Khanum was requested to visit it and pray in it. So we went there on foot. When we returned we attended a meeting held at the Teaching Institute where Ruhiyih Khanum spoke to a large group and several accepted the Faith. The occasion ended with a luncheon to which all were invited. As nearly every local meat or fish dish in this part of Africa is liberally spiced with red pepper it is fortunate that both Ruhiyih Khanum and I learned to eat hot food during our trip to India.

On October 5, we left for the Republic of Cameroon, after a twenty-eight day visit to Nigeria. A Cameroon believer, one of the first to carry the Faith to Nigeria, and who is still a most active and dedicated traveling teacher, accompanied us to Mamfe. He regularly visits this area where he has been instrumental in forming over ten Local Assemblies. It took us over six hours to travel a distance of ninety miles stopping at many of these villages to greet the Baha'is. In some places Ruhiyih Khanum would get out and say a few words of encouragement and distribute pamphlets to inquirers.

We were touched by a young man who greeted us in one village then jumped on his bicycle, rode ahead of us so fast we could not catch up with him, and carried the news of the coming of Ruhiyih Khanum—then he would be there when we arrived, ready with a speech he had written for the occasion.

These precious gems of Baha'u'llah, hidden in the remote jungles and deserts, islands and prairies are our beloved brothers and sisters in great need of our love and encouragement. If we only knew the joys and blessings we receive from visiting them and loving them—far greater than anything we can give them in return—we would all hasten to this field of foreign service and partake of the infinite blessings Baha'u'llah has reserved for those who arise to spread His Message.

(To be continued)
French Language Publishing Trust Has New Headquarters

An outstanding event of the last months was the transfer of the Bahá’í French-language Publishing Trust to its new headquarters located in the rearranged ground-floor of the Belgian Baha’is’ house in Brussels. All book stocks (valuing some $36,000) have now been transferred there and an office is on a permanent basis.

Since its foundation in 1962, the Publishing Trust has expanded considerably. Its turnover of $6,000 in the year 1962 doubled in 1972. Its shipments go to all quarters of the French-speaking world, i.e. France, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Canada, Haiti, Martinique, both Congo republics, Dahomey, Vietnam, Polynesia, etc.

Its catalog lists some 40 titles, comprising some 20 basic works. Several manuscripts are being prepared for printing and will be published as soon as funds are available. Next to appear will be a revised edition of Bahá’u’lláh et l’Ere nouvelle; its increased number of copies will allow a cheaper price and a wider distribution.

Mrs. Nanny Rizzardi is manager of the French Publishing Trust.

Human Rights Day in Sierra Leone

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of West Africa sent two of their National Public Relations Representatives to Sierra Leone for a proclamation program during Human Rights Week. It turned out to be a very successful assignment for Mrs. Georgia Sanchez and Mr. Jamiil Fanniyin.

The news broadcast after Mrs. Sanchez arrival announced a special visitor. This was made possible by Mr. Cole, Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Ministerial Association was helpful in approaching both editors of Government newspapers, which gave the fullest cooperation. The Daily Mail, on Friday, Dec. 10 had a headline “Bahá’ís Observe Human Rights Day.” The editor, a Muslim just recently returned from his pilgrimage to Mecca, asked for a personal interview. The Nation published a similar article under the caption “Let’s Pray for Peace.”

Auxiliary Board member Shidan Koucheckzadeh and Mrs. Sanchez were separately interviewed for broadcasting twice. Mrs. Sanchez was also interviewed on the “Women’s View Only” program. Questions were timely and difficult, and successfully answered.

Mr. Fanniyin and Mrs. Sanchez were interviewed on the news TV about their visit and their connection with the Faith. The interviewer’s opening comment was that he had just visited the beautiful Bahá’í gardens in Haifa.

The National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa was pleased with the results in Sierra Leone.

The subscription price for Bahá’í News is $3.00 a year, and it is for Bahá’ís only.

Write to:
Subscription Service
415 Linden Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois 60091
Riḍván—April 21 - May 2

'He that was hidden from the eyes of man is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!' This is the Paradise, the rustling of whose leaves proclaim: 'O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth!... He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come.'

Gleanings, page 31

The photograph below shows the entrance to the Garden of Riḍván, on the east bank of the Tigris, where Bahá'u'lláh declared His mission to the world. The twelve days of His stay there are commemorated by the Feast of Riḍván. Surely the use of this spot as a hospital is a symbol of the Divine Physician. Successive governments continued its use and now it is the site of the National Medical Center of Iraq.
By now the war had ceased and the hour was ripe for the next epoch in the evolution of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Master Plan. War-ravaged Europe was drawn into the scene for spiritual conquest, but not at the expense of the forward march in Latin America. The goals for Latin America under the new Seven Year Plan included a broadening of their administrative bases, fuller participation in both teaching and administrative fields in preparation for the formation of two independent Regional Spiritual Assemblies, one in Central America and the other in South America.

Measures destined to facilitate the change-over were developed and gradually put into practice. The first Regional Teaching Committees for Latin America (eight in number) were appointed. One of the eight regions grouped Panama, Costa Rica and Nicaragua together, with its seat in San Jose, Costa Rica. By 1947 it had become an active adjunct to the teaching work. The next step was the appointing of the first National Teaching Committee for the Territory with its seat in Panama. At first the effects of the National Teaching Committee were felt only in Costa Rica, but gradually the influence was extended as contact with each one of the Regional Committees was established in an effective working association. Little by little the balance began to shift from North American guidance and Latin cooperation to Latin guidance and North American cooperation. This important forerunner of the elected National Spiritual Assembly confidently began to fulfill its trust.

By 1950 the process was nearly completed, although according to explicit instructions from the beloved Guardian, the United States would continue to exercise responsibilities in the supervision and guidance of these new Regional National bodies until the end of the Seven Year Plan at which time these fledgling Assemblies would be expected to assume their full share of the load in the execution of the next plan to be launched immediately as mature associates of the Mother Community.

**Panama Teaching Conference**

In January, 1947 the first Teaching Conference for Central America and the Antilles was held in Panama. Again this highly favored Latin country was singled out by Shoghi Effendi to serve as the host. From then until 1950 conferences of this nature were held annually, growing in depth and quality. The friends of the Territory gathered successively in Mexico City, Guatemala City and finally in San Salvador where, under the supervision and planning of the National Teaching Committee, both the Conference and the Committees came into full bloom.

All contributions to the Faith from the Territory were now handled through the National Teaching Committee. Proclamation of the Faith through the radio and press was pursued, more literature was distributed among both believers and friends, efforts were made to secure legal incorporations for the remaining capital city assemblies, and an all out effort was exerted to hold all existing gains.

While these developments were taking place throughout the Territory, there were changes also within the boundaries of Panama. In response to the Guardian’s reminders of the importance of the Indians, Manuel Gorgas (now deceased), the first Kuna Indian—in fact the first Indian of Panama to embrace the Faith—had been enrolled and was elected as the delegate to represent Panama at the Mexican Conference (1947). Later that same year he began to work with Louise Caswell in extension teaching in Santiago. At least four other Panamanian believers had arisen as traveling teachers. A Local Spiritual Assembly had been formed in Colon.

By 1949 the National Teaching Committee which had been transferred to Panama City was now composed almost entirely of Panamanian believers. There had been much shifting of Bahá’í teachers and pioneers. Stout-hearted Louise Caswell was now in Costa Rica and except for Cora Chaves from Honduras who labored as an American pioneer had returned to their homes. This loss, however, was offset by the arrival of Elizabeth Cheney, at the request of the Central American Teaching Committee, to assume duties as its secretary. In November, she was replaced by Raquel de Constante. Natalia Chaves from Honduras was now serving in the pioneer field in Panama and was joined by Mathi Kultra, also from Honduras, who settled for a brief period in Colon. These teachers were assisted by a growing group of loyal and capable local teachers which included Alfred Osborne, Raquel de Constante, Blanco de Campos, Manuel Gorgas, James and Mazie Facey and Iola Edwards.

**Growing Pains**

Whereas the Teaching Conferences had contributed greatly to the progress of the Faith and the raising up of native teachers and administrators, its immediate effects were limited primarily to those few who attended as the elected representatives of their respective countries. Because of distances and expenses involved, few others had been able to attend these highly stimulating and spiritually rewarding gatherings as visitors. Hence a special corps of teachers was trained to carry the material to all Local Assembly Communities throughout the territory in month-long institutes. In May, 1950 the first institute of this nature for the training of teachers was held in Panama, directed by Mrs. Dorothy Baker. The material was collected, arranged and prepared for publication by those teachers in attendance and served as the basis for the local institutes. The work was entitled El Plan Divino. It dealt with the majesty and greatness of the Cause, the Covenant and Divine Institutions of Bahá’u’lláh’s slowly evolving World Order.

The accomplishments in this short period of time were truly astounding, and perhaps no one is more capable of appreciating this than those who labored as pioneers in virgin areas around the world. Great as the accomplishments were, it should not be imagined that it was achieved without severe tests and at times near overwhelming reversals. From 1948 until shortly before the actual birth of the Regional National Spiritual Assembly, there were many times when the issue was in doubt and except for the promises of Bahá’u’lláh and the confirmation of the Divine Plan some might have been tempted to concede defeat. The whole territory was in a state of crisis. Growing pains became acute. Assemblies were lost, regained and lost again. There was the inevitable falling away of certain elements. Spurred on by the beloved Shoghi Effendi, in their deep love for him, the spiritual fighters charged on. As the zero hour approached, excitement and activity reached an unprece-
dented peak. Functioning Local Spiritual Assemblies were established in each country. The goal was assured! By the time the delegates to the first Annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Central America, Mexico, Panama and the Antilles assembled in Panama, the tree of the Faith had been greatly pruned and was beginning to regain new vitality. During this difficult period, Panama probably fared much better than some of her sister countries where the Faith had arisen with meteoric splendor during the initial phases. In contrast, Panama's gains, for the most part, had been modest but the roots of her foundation had been deeply and firmly fixed in preparation for her future role of leadership as the Mother Assembly for Central America and the Antilles.

Because of her unique geographical position, from the outset, Panama was blessed by numerous visitors, pioneers enroute to their posts and traveling teachers between the Americas. Except for them, it is doubtful that the banner of the Faith would ever have been firmly planted.

Regional Assembly Formed

By 1951 when the conflict between East and West had settled into the "Cold War," North America and Latin America had drawn closer together. The Community of the Greatest Name was jubilant. Preparations had been well laid. The Plan had been consummated and was about to give its predestined fruit. Some twenty-seven delegates representing the eleven countries of the Caribbean area victoriously assembled in Panama City April 22 to enter into deliberations which would be climaxed in the election of that first Regional Spiritual Assembly which would, within another ten years, divide into completely independent units.

As representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, in order to witness the birth of a daughter institution, were Dorothy Baker and Horace Holley. On this occasion the hearts of North America and Latin America were fused together more strongly than ever and linked to the Source of their mutual love through the inspiring message from that descendant of the Twin Holy Trees, Shoghi Effendi, to whose patience, wisdom, constant encouragement and infallible guidance they all owed so much gratitude. Listen how he lifted them up!

HAIL (WITH) JOYOUS HEART CONVOCATION (OF) FIRST TWIN HISTORIC CONVENTIONS (OF) FOLLOWERS (OF) FAITH (OF) BAHÁ'ULLÁH (IN) CENTRAL AMERICA, MÉXICO, (THE) ANTILLES (AND) SOUTH AMERICA, ASSEMBLED (TO) ELEcT TWIN NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES CONSTITUTING SUSTAINING PILLARS (OF) DIVINELY APPOINTED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER (IN) LATIN AMERICA CONGRATULATE ASSEMBLED DELEGATES (FOR THE) CULMINATION OF THE FOURTEEN YEAR OLD PROCESS LINKING (THE) CONCLUDING YEARS (OF) THE) FIRST WITH (THE) OPENING DECADE (OF) THE) SECOND BAHÁ'Í CENTURY. ACCLAIM FULLFILLMENT (OF) THE) VITAL OBJECTIVES (OF) THE) TWO MOMENTOUS CAMPAIGNS SUCCESSIVELY LAUNCHED BEYOND (THE) CONFINES (OF) THE) NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT BY (THE) AMERICAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY (IN) CONFORMITY (WITH) ABDUL-BAHÁ'S DIVINE PLAN. GRATEFULLY RECOGNIZE IN THESE EPOCH-MAKING ASSEMBLAGES HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY (IN) PERU (AND) PANAMA, REPRESENTING WELLNIGH FOUR SCORE LOCALITIES SPREAD OVER (AN) AREA STRETCHING (FROM) MÉXICO (TO) THE) MAGALANES, EMBRACING INCORPORATED COMMUNITIES (IN) ALMOST ALL CAPITAL CITIES (OF) LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS (THE) INITIAL REPERCUSSIONS (OF) THE) CLARION CALL VOICED EIGHTY YEARS AGO (BY) BAHÁ'ULLÁH (IN THE) MOST HOLY BOOK ADDRESSED COLLECTIVELY (TO THE)

RULERS (OF) THE) REPUBLICS (OF) THE) WESTERN HEMISPHERE, (I) APPEAL (TO) THE) INCOMING ASSEMBLIES STANDING (ON THE) THRESHOLD (OF) THE) SECOND EPOCH NOW UNFOLDING (IN THE) EVOLUTION (OF) THE) FAITH (OF) BAHÁ'ULLÁH (IN) LATIN AMERICA (TO) ARISE (IN) COMPLETE EXEMPLARITY FIDELITY, GREATEST WISDOM, UTMOST DEDICATION, UNSWERVING RESOLVE, HEROIC SELF-SACRIFICE (TO) BEFITTINGLY DISCHARGE (THEIR) THREE-FOLD, SACRED, INESCAPABLE RESPONSIBILITIES; FIRST, (TO) CONSOLIDATE (THE) TWO NEWLY-ERECTED PILLARS (OF) THE) WORLD ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER (OF) THE) FAITH; SECOND, (TO) STIMULATE (THE) PROPAGATION (OF) ITS TEACHINGS; THIRD, (TO) ENRICH (THE) SPIRITUAL LIFE (AND) DEEPEN (THE) UNDERSTANDING (OF) ITS AVOWED SUPPORTERS (I HAVE) DISPATCHED THROUGH (THE) DISTINGUISHED CO-WORKER, AMELIA COLLINS, TWO LOCKS (OF) THE) BLESSED HAIR (OF) BAHÁ'ULLÁH AS INAUGURAL GIFTS (TO) THE) LATIN RACES, ATTAINING MATURITY (AND) ACHIEVING DISTINCTION THROUGH (THE) FORMATION (OF) INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES, TO BE DEPOSITED (IN AND) PRESERVED (FOR) POSTERITY (IN) TWO SPECIALY-INSTITUTED NATIONAL ARCHIVES DESIGNED (TO) COMMEMORATE (THE) TWIN, OUTSTANDING SPIRITUAL ADMINISTRATIVE VICTORIES WON (IN THE) COURSE (OF) THE) FORMATIVE AGE (OF) THE) BAHÁ'Í DISPENSATION (AND) SHEDDING GREAT LUSTRE (ON THE) ANNALS (OF) THE) OPENING DECADE (OF) THE) SECOND BAHÁ'Í CENTURY.

Site of Panama Temple from highway below.
The members of this historic first Assembly were: Sra. Raquel J. Francois, Chairman; Mrs. Cora H. Oliver, Vice-Chairman; Sra. Elena Marsella, Secretary; Sra. Natalia Chavez, Recording Secretary; James V. Facey, Treasurer; Sra. Zenaida Jurado C.; Mrs. Louise Caswell; Dr. David Escalante; Artemus Lamb.

Even before the Convention closed, these highly honored chosen representatives and "Trustees of the Merciful" turned their faces towards their difficult task of administering in conformity to the Guardian’s instructions, the affairs for an area almost as vast as in its extension as continental United States, much of it separated by expanses of water with its attendant transportation problems, widely varied in the ethnic groups, cultures and languages of which it was composed, extremely poor, much of it illiterate or semi-literate but united by a common bond, the healing Message of Bahá’u’lláh; strengthened by the power of the Covenant; and unerringly guided by the Guardian Shoghi Effendi.

Family Life Institutes Stress Application of Bahá’í Laws

The effectiveness of weekend institutes on Bahá’í family life and how to deal with the problems of Bahá’í youth has been amply demonstrated by the interest shown by both adults and youth in a number of such institutes sponsored in recent months by Local Spiritual Assemblies and District Teaching Committees in various parts of the United States. The agenda for these institutes usually includes such subjects as: Know Thyself through Study of the Bahá’í Sacred Writings; Marriage and the Bahá’í Family, and covers such topics as youth and the drug problems; teenagers in the home; respect for parents, and the spiritual solution to the general problems resulting from the disintegration of American family life. The Bahá’í Laws and Writings bearing on these subjects are discussed in depth and occasionally a well-advertized meeting for the public is offered as part of the weekend program. For these meetings special efforts are usually made to attract the non-Bahá’í parents of Bahá’í youth.

In connection with this general subject it has been gratifying to note the increasing number of Local Spiritual Assemblies that have made known to the local law enforcement agencies the Bahá’í Laws prohibiting the use of narcotic drugs and alcohol. In one particular community the police department in dealing with youth arrested for use of marijuana recommends contacting the local Bahá’ís as one of three alternatives in correcting this offense.

Pioneer Institute, Wilmette, Illinois, January 28-30, 1972

Stanwood Cobb—A Life Dedicated to Service and Learning

Mr. Stanwood Cobb is one of the early American Bahá'ís who had the bounty of visiting 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akká in 1908, and again in Haifa in 1910. Still active travel-teaching and writing for the Faith, he finds great joy in sharing these precious experiences, and telling of the Beloved Master's advice given to him so many years ago: "Be on fire with the love of God. BE ON FIRE WITH THE LOVE OF GOD!"

It is difficult to believe that Mr. Cobb has passed the 90-year mark. Ageless, he is at home with the youth as well as college professor, and is much loved by everyone. It is only because the planet earth revolves around the sun that we are aware that he is getting any older.

Making his home in Chevy Chase, Maryland, Mr. Cobb considers no place too far to travel if he can be useful in teaching the Faith. In September 1971 he taught at the Alaskan Bahá'í Summer School; in October he participated in the annual Wisconsin Green Lake Bahá'í Institute. Following the lectures at Green Lake, he spent a week in the northwoods of Wisconsin at Rhinelander. In early November several days were spent teaching in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia; and in December he was scheduled to be in Washington state!

Stanwood Cobb's regulated daily regime is a good example for all of us to follow. He starts out with eating a good breakfast (one of his familiar words of advice to others), refuses to rush, practices deep breathing during his daily walks, and always finds a couple of hours each day to get lost in meditation—a must he says for everyone's spiritual development.

When at his summer home in Eliot, Maine, there is the daily swim. When in northern Wisconsin, there is the courage to ride the snowmobile—Yes, at 90!

A lover of nature, Mr. Cobb never misses noticing a tree, or even a rock. A lover of knowledge he is a storehouse from which so much is abundantly shared, yet he eagerly seized every opportunity to absorb more.

A recent week in Rhinelander, Wisconsin is but one example of his activeness in the path of service for our beloved Faith:

Monday he was guest speaker at the local Rustic Riter's Club which resulted in many friendships and an editorial later in the newspaper.

Tuesday, a two-hour visit and tour with Dr. Richard Brown, Director of Nicolet College. Here, he not only shared much of his stored up wisdom, but delighted in learning of the new "open concept". Tuesday evening—home fireside.

Wednesday, Mr. Cobb accompanied his hostess on an hour and a half interview over the local radio which started out with a hostile attack on the Faith, but ended up much to the credit of "Bahá'í."

A public meeting on Thursday attracted the largest audience ever experienced in Rhinelander.

Friday was reserved for a day of much needed rest before proceeding to Burlington on Saturday for another speaking engagement and then homeward bound on Sunday to Washington, D.C.

In his spare time, Mr. Cobb is busy filling the many orders for his books, which he packages and mails himself. Of the twenty-six books written over the years, many are still very popular among Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís alike.

Founder of the first progressive school in 1919, he is still regarded as a progressive thinker in 1971.

Russell Mosley, Director of Programming for Education in the state of Wisconsin, is presently writing a biography on this noted writer and teacher of religion, education and philosophy. Verily his has been a rich and abundant life.

Speaking to the elderly Bahá'ís hesitating to pioneer, Ruḥḍiyih Khánum was heard repeating the advice of the Guardian: "Don't be afraid to bury your bones elsewhere."

But as for Stanwood Cobb, it appears that he has no intention of burying his bones yet, but to continue to make them useful wherever needed in the field of action for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh!

—Cordelia A. Norder
Los Angeles Baha’is Present Four Annual Human Rights Awards

For the third year the Baha’is of Los Angeles County, California, on Human Rights Day paid special tribute to individuals in the County who had made significant contributions during the past year in the field of service to mankind. At a public meeting chaired by Judge James Nelson and addressed by Hand of the Cause of God William B. Sears, Human Rights Awards were presented to the following individuals:

Margo and Eddie Albert of the movie industry, well-known in the United States for their involvement with ecology and improvement of natural environment, as well as locally for their work with the Spanish-American Community;

Walt Baker, director of programming for television station KHJT, who without concern for popularity, has aired subjects of community interest and has worked actively for equal opportunity of all ethnic groups in the television industry;

Rozzel and Roderick Sykes who founded St. Elmo Village which is made up of ten 80-year-old houses and garages now transformed in an artistically beautiful environment where children and adults work together in unity in creative programs and projects.

This year a special institutional award was given to the Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School, represented by its dean, Dr. Mitchell Spellman. This school is associated with the Martin Luther King, Jr. County Medical Center and offers postgraduate studies in medicine to doctors of all races in an effort to improve the medical care and health of the people it serves.

Robert Quigley, Ayeshaw Lewellen, Joan Bulkin, and Dr. Alfred Neumann introduced the award recipients. The program was concluded by Roberta Linn singing a number especially appropriate to the occasion, “To Dream the Impossible Dream.”

FROM THE AMERICAN BAHÁ’Í, February 1972

IN MEMORIAM

CARL HANNEN

GRIEVED LEARN PASSING CARL HANNEN HIS STEADFAST DEVOTION CAUSE SINCE DAYS MASTER LONG PERIOD DEDICATED SERVICE HOUSE WORSHIP WARMLY REMEMBERED CONVEY FAMILY ASSURANCE PRAYERS PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

—UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Carl Anthony Hannen was born in Washington, D. C., in 1895. He was in the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá when He was in America in 1912. His father, Joseph Henry Hannen, and his mother, Pauline Knoblock Hannen, were among the early believers in this country, as were his aunts, Alma and Fanny Knoblock, and his grandmother.

In 1918 Carl married Mineola Barnitz. They met in the Baha’i children’s classes in Washington, D. C. She also had met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. After their marriage they lived in Cabin John Park, Maryland, then moved to Milwaukee and Shorewood, Wisconsin, where they lived for many years. They had three children: Sohayl, Joseph and Barbara, and nine grandchildren.

In 1932, Carl and his family moved to Wilmette where he took over maintenance duties at the House of Worship, which was then in the early stages of construction. He served on the Maintenance Committee for many years after leaving that position. Mr. and Mrs. Hannen served on the National Archives Committee and Mr. Hannen was frequent reader at the Sunday devotional services at the House of Worship.

In 1949 the Hannen family moved to Glenview and after a few years helped to establish the Assembly in that village, where they continued to serve until Mr. and Mrs. Hannen moved to Orlando, Florida in 1967. Here again they assisted in establishing the Assembly. He passed away on February 4, 1972 following several weeks of illness.

FROM THE AMERICAN BAHÁ’Í, February 1972

TANZANIA ASSEMBLIES

Many members of the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Moshi and Arusha, Tanzania are pictured below, at a recent meeting, according to a letter written in February by the National Spiritual Assembly of Tanzania.
Panchgani, India—Winter School

Mala's Hotel in Panchgani was full of activity and cheers on the evening of the 25th of December 1971. The Bahá'í youth had gathered there to live the Bahá'í community life at the Winter School to be held through the 30th of December.

The youth had also come to deepen their knowledge of the Faith. The imparting of this knowledge was ably done by learned and distinguished teachers such as Counsellor Mr. S. Vasudevan, Auxiliary Board member Mr. B. Afshin, Dr. H. Munje, Dr. and Mrs. Ray Johnson, Dr. Dabestani, Mr. Sohailiyan, Miss Martha Schallie, Mr. M. Azami and Mrs. Zena Sorabjee. These conveyed many important aspects of the Faith so ably and simply that even the youngest child could grasp the meaning.

After early morning prayers and breakfast, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and then again from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. topics such as Bahá'í Love and Unity; The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh; The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; The Covenant; Prayer and Fasting; The Spiritual Solution to the Economic Problems; Life After Death; Huququlláh; Non-Interference in Politics; Sex, Love and Marriage; Drugs, Drinking and Smoking; Funds; etc., were taken up. It was surprising how much knowledge could be imparted in such a short time.

Daily, during lunch and dinner time, it was heartwarming to see that people from different social, religious and national backgrounds got together and mixed with each other as though they had been put into one of those electric mixers and churned to produce a homogenous essence of all the fruits in it.

After dinner each night entertainment was held, sometimes lasting until midnight. Youth from different places presented interesting programs in turn.

The atmosphere which prevailed was that of freedom and spontaneity. A bond fire was held on the last evening of the school. In so short a time, lasting friendships had developed, which gave the promise that they would all be able to see the day when the whole world would benefit from such harmonious existence which would elevate the nature and spirit of human kind.

Group photograph of those who attended Winter School at Panchgani, India.

Bahá'í youth at a luncheon during the Winter School.
TEACHING CONFERENCE, BIRMINGHAM, THE BRITISH ISLES

The Teaching Conference held on January 7-8, 1972 in Birmingham, the British Isles, had a number of activities new to the area. The area committees, when presenting their reports, also presented their singing groups which rendered their newest Bahá’í songs with guitar accompaniment.

The children had a full program of their own. This had been arranged by the Child Education Committee for three age groups, each with a Bahá’í activity, not just something to keep them occupied. The eldest group produced a short play which they later presented to the adult audience. It demonstrated with simplicity, the effectiveness of the Bahá’í attitude in solving problems.

Several pioneers from afar who were present were called upon to give talks. Mrs. Ursula Samandari, Knight of Bahá’u’lláh, who had been stationed in Africa since 1953, told of experiences in those African countries.

The Midland Teaching Committee arranged to present in a nearby hall a “Bahá’í Happening”. This began the weekend before when a large group in Birmingham began having prayer sessions. Then they went into the streets, talking to people, giving pamphlets to those who showed an interest. These efforts were continued during the weekend of the Conference.

Area reports presented with song, Teaching Conference, Birmingham, British Isles.
A British Isles “Happening”.

Then effort was focused on a well advertised stage show in which the evolution of mankind was told by pantomime, song and speech, bringing out the part of Divine guidance on this evolution. At the end of the performance the people were entertained with a mammoth fireside with a slide show and refreshments which lasted into the late hours. Several declarations resulted. This gave new impetus to the teaching efforts of the

Birmingham community.

This Birmingham Teaching Conference was the largest ever held in the British Isles, the culmination of the surge of teaching activities in this area for the last two years. Declarations for this year are more than double those of last year, which was double the numbers of declarations of the previous year.

West African Summer School, Bomi Hills, Liberia

The ringing of a bell, the chanting of prayers, the lectures of the instructors, the joyful talk, the laughter, the rhythm of dance music made Bomi Hills a scene of lively activity for nine days. About forty to fifty friends of eight nationalities came for the Summer School from different parts of Liberia and Sierra Leone and South Africa. Four of the regular students of the school who were not Bahá'ís made their declarations of belief in Bahá'u'lláh.

One afternoon the friends divided into five groups, each group going to a selected area to teach the Faith. They invited the townspeople to a show at the school which had been organized by the youth. This gave everyone a very interesting evening.

One joyful event during the course of the Summer School was the dedication of the new large and beautiful building in the Bahá'í compound at Bomi Hills. It was named the ‘Wesson Building’ after Mrs. Vivian Wesson, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, one of the earliest pioneers in West Africa. This was a token of appreciation of the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa for the continuous, sincere services of a Bahá'í who left her home and comforts to carry the Divine Message of Bahá'u'lláh to a distant part of the world.

A spirit of love and an atmosphere of unity dominated the whole course of the Summer School. At the public meeting which ended the sessions, many arose and expressed their feelings and impressions. As the friends departed, there were tears in their eyes.

Group photo of those attending the Summer School, December 24 to January 2, 1972 at Bomi Hills, Liberia. Eight nationalities are represented, including South African. The newly dedicated Summer School building is in the background. Mrs. Vivian Wesson is holding the plaque of the Greatest Name.
Six countries are represented in this group of students, from Sierra Leone Fourah Bay College. Three American girls pictured are new Baha’is. One declared during the Summer School.

Mrs. Vivian Wesson pioneer to West Africa for over fifteen years, putting up sign on the Summer School building which was dedicated to her at Bomi Hills, Liberia.

Conference in Iran

A conference of Local Spiritual Assemblies located in rural areas of Iran. On the left are Counsellor Dr. Salmánpur and Auxiliary Board member Mr. Ebrahim Khalili. Similar conferences are being regularly organized in all parts of Iran.
We left Nigeria on October 5th, accompanied by Oscar Njang, a Cameroon pioneer long resident in Nigeria. Our arrival in the Federal Republic of Cameroon was not without excitement. It seems the closer you get to a frontier the wilder and more neglected the roads become.

We passed through the small and rarely visited border post of Ndu and drove eighteen miles on one of the worst roads you would ever want to encounter anywhere, a road so rarely used it consists of two faint tracks with a high growth of weeds in the middle and bushes that lashed the car on both sides as we bumped in and out of deep holes every few yards. At the end of this nightmare of a road we had to stop at an army check post and were taken before the commanding officer, an arrogant, half drunk, disagreeable man who told us we could not drive after six o'clock and must spend the night there. In the yellow light of a lantern, with a few other equally drunk soldiers about, we were very alarmed at this prospect and insisted we must go on. Indeed, we did not believe a word of what was told us but thought it a pretext to detain, and for all we knew, rob us! We later found out there was such a curfew in the frontier district. As the officer spoke only in French, Ruhiyyih Khanim was obliged to do all the explaining, telling him who we were, where we had come from, the purpose of our long trip and how tired we were after nine hours driving on such bad roads, that our friends were anxiously waiting for us only thirty miles away in Mamfe, etc. We were three people there was no place to sleep in the car and no place to spend the night there except in the army barracks. We were really alarmed and did not know what to do. As Oscar’s passport was found to be lacking an entry visa which he required, this enraged the officer even more than our own insistence we should be allowed to proceed at once; we all three felt very distressed.

**Difficulty Removed by Prayer**

In desperation we decided to pray quietly for help and guidance. For about ten minutes we sat facing this man’s desk with our eyes closed; there was absolute silence in the room. Although at the beginning we were angry and distressed during this period of prayers we felt quieter and calmer and beloved Ruhiyyih Khanim later on told us how as she prayed she felt waves of love in her heart for this man who had treated her with so much disrespect. It was as if her heart opened and took this man in and she felt perhaps this delay was meant in order to stamp the name of the Faith on his mind. This wonderful quality of Ruhiyyih Khanim, the quality of returning love in the place of unkindness and through waves of positive and loving vibrations winning the cooperation and help of her opponents, is a quality often shown by her in the course of this trip. The beautiful part of it is the fact that it is spontaneous and not forced and that is why it wins the hearts and opens the doors. At length we opened our eyes and the officer was informed we had been praying. He had been ostensibly filling out reports! He was quite startled but it became clear he had decided to let us go on and only had to work up to it gradually so as not to lose face in front of his subordinates. After more discussion, he escorted us to the car.

Ruhiyyih Khanim asked him if he was married. When
he said “yes” she said. “Then you must be used to the obstinacy of women and will excuse my being so obstinate and insistent!” To which he replied with feeling "Madame, you are not obstinate at all compared to my wife!” We parted with handshakes all around and on the best of terms.

At Mamfe

On our arrival in the town of Mamfe we met with the Bahá’ís and made our plans for the next few days. Mamfe is the area where there are the largest number of believers in the Cameroon. In the days before Independence this used to be a very active and busy town as it was the crossroads between West Cameroon and Nigeria, but now there is very little traffic between the two countries. For the Bahá’ís, however, it will always be remembered as it has a unique position in the history of the Faith in that country. It was from this town of Mamfe eighteen years ago on October 15, 1933 that Enoch Olinga, a pioneer from Uganda who became the Knight of Bahá’u’lláh for British Cameroon and was called by our beloved Guardian “the Father of Victories”, and later made a Hand of the Cause of God, eighteen years ago on October 15, 1933 sent his cable informing Shoghi Effendi of his arrival at his pioneering post. Indeed Rühíyyih Khánum and I stayed at the same Rest House my husband and I had stayed in on that memorable trip when we accompanied Enoch Olinga to the Cameroon.

In a meeting with the Bahá’ís of Mamfe we met with many of the veterans of the Faith in that country. One of them, the Knight of Bahá’u’lláh, Edward Tabe, had been a new believer only one week old when he left Victoria in Ridván of 1954 to open the virgin territory of what was then British Togoland. The community of West Cameroon, only one year after receiving the Light of Bahá’u’lláh contributed five Knights of Bahá’u’lláh during the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade. The heart of the continent of Africa, so newly enlightened with the Cause of God, gave eight Knights of Bahá’u’lláh of which no less than five came from the Cameroon. This is truly the best indication of the extraordinary capacity and receptivity of the Cameroon nation.

In this meeting Amatu’l-Bahá spoke a great deal on the importance of teaching the Faith to the women and the value of Bahá’í women in their community. Mamfe has some very strong and outstanding women. She also spoke of the importance of spiritual education for the Bahá’í children. She told them two stories about Bahá’í children in different parts of the world.

One was about an eight year old girl in the city of Baghdad, whose parents were Jewish, and her uncle, who lived with them, a Bahá’í. She loved the Faith and

Amatu’l-Bahá with the Fon of Mankon, in West Cameroon, Oct. 9, 1971.

considered herself a Bahá’í like her uncle. During one of the periodic Muslim attacks on the Jewish community an angry mob incited by religious fanaticism broke into the house of this family shouting “Jews, Jews!”; the little Bahá’í girl courageously stood in front of the mob and pointing to a photograph of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the wall shouted, “We are not Jews, we are Bahá’ís!” The mob halted, astonished, listened to her, looked at the picture of the Master and left the house undamaged. This extraordinary demonstration of faith on the part of their child was so overpowering that the parents themselves became Bahá’ís.

The other story was that of a nine year old girl, the daughter of a devoted Latin American pioneer family in Colombia, who went out with an illiterate local teacher on April 21st to Gwahiro Indian villages and helped form four Local Spiritual Assemblies. The village Bahá’ís were devoted and eager to form their Assemblies but were illiterate and could not write the ballots. This little girl was taught how a Bahá’Í’s election is conducted and helped the formation of four of them!

Bamenda

It was decided that the first part of Amatu’l-Bahá’s visit be scheduled for the town of Bamenda and its surroundings. This is nearly 100 miles north of Mamfe, in one of the most beautiful and picturesque mountain areas in the whole of West Africa. Bamenda itself is perched up on the top of a mountain, surrounded by rolling hills and mountains from which cascade a number of waterfalls sparkling in the brilliant sunshine like white plumes amid the lush green vegetation. The whole place is a joy to the eyes. The climate in this area is perfect, cool, dry and healthy. There are a few Local Assemblies as well as groups in small townships very close to each other.

Nkwen and Mendankwe

In the town of Nkwen Amatu’l-Bahá met with the Bahá’ís of that community as well as the Bahá’ís of Mankon itself which is a large town within view of Bamenda.
Meeting house in Eyunomok village with Ruhíyyih Khánum seated next to the Chief, Oct. 11, 1971.

The next day she met with some of the Baha'is of Mendankwe, a village beyond Bamenda high up on the mountain. From the town below where most of the Baha'is reside there is a distance of two miles straight up the mountain to this village. It was so steep that we could only get up in low gear and yet one of the dear Baha'is of Mankon, who had been instrumental in teaching and forming the Local Spiritual Assembly of this village, had pushed his bicycle up this road to inform them of our coming. To reach the home of the Baha'is we all had to walk the last half-mile as the so-called road progressively deteriorated until at the side of a mountain brook it ceased to exist.

The chairman of the Local Assembly in a written address, which was read by his young son, welcomed Amá'tul-Bahá and expressed their joy and pride in receiving such a distinguished guest. Like so many of the villagers these Baha'is asked for a Baha'i Center, but their story had a very interesting side to it. Apparently they had donated a piece of land and built a small mud building for their center, but they could not afford the price of a tin roof and the National Spiritual Assembly had no money available for the purpose—such a roof costs about 100 dollars. They were very upset when the rains came and the walls began to fall down; their neighbors came to them and said: "All right, then build it yourself, let us see if you can manage alone without our help!"

Now months had passed and the walls began to crumble and the Baha'is had become the object of ridicule in the area. They were very distressed and appealed to Rúhíyyih Khánum to do something about this as "No one now would listen to the words of God". Amá'tul-Bahá promised to investigate the matter when she met with their National Assembly. Through the help of one of the friends money for the roof of this local center has now become available and the Baha'ís of Mendankwe will be able to hold their heads up in front of their neighbors.

She also told the friends that they should truly pray for God's assistance and a way to open doors. One of the dear village Baha'is answered, saying that he had seen miracles from the prayers of Bahá'u'lláh and related an incident in his life. He said he lived on the little his land produced and contracts he could some times get. One day he heard of a small contract the government offices had and immediately applied for it but was almost turned down as there were many more applicants. That night he called his nine children and told them of his problem and asked them all to join him in ardent prayers, so that if it was the Will of God the door might open for him. They prayed all night and the next morning, and then he went to the office and to his surprise was offered the contract. He said this was a direct miracle of Bahá'u'lláh as the other bidders had a much better chance and advantages over him. He finished his story by saying: "I went and bought some meat and made a rich food for my family in thanksgiving for God's grace and we prayed again to thank Him for His bounties." This partaking of food as a solemn thanksgiving is an African custom. This man's nine children are such devoted Baha'ís that all on their own they have started a Baha'i study class attended by twelve of their young friends.

MANKON

In the town of Mankon Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke to a group of 200 students in Longla Community College on the effect an individual can have on the community. She gave an example: Suppose that you have a measure full of corn which you are going to plant, suppose half of the grains are only hollow seeds; naturally only half of the quantity will yield a harvest. It is the same with the quality and the number of morally and spiritually healthy individuals in any given society: the greater the number of distinguished individuals the more outstanding the sum total of any group will be.

The highlight of this trip was Amá'tul-Bahá's visit with the Fon of Mankon who is the paramount chief of a large area, as well as a big town of the same name. He is a fine, outstanding man of about fifty with a great deal of tolerance towards others. He is also a very active and distinguished member of the Council of Chiefs in West Cameroon. We had gone to visit him in his home, about eight miles from the city, and he received us formally but graciously and had a long talk with Amá'tul-Bahá. Somehow they got on the subject of the sufferings of the Indian race of the Americas and of the Bolivian Indians. He showed a keen interest and understanding of the subject and asked for something to read on the Baha'i Faith. Rúhíyyih Khánum then gave him an inscribed copy of Prescription for Living.

Return to Mamfe

Upon our return to Mamfe—over a mountain road so bad it begs no description, Amá'tul-Bahá paid a courtesy visit to the Senior District Officer. Later in the day she spoke on the "Spiritual Destiny of Africa" at a public meeting to which this same officer came as well as a number of prominent people of the town. When she was asked, during the question period after her talk, what the Baha'ís believe on the subject of the resurrection she gave the beautiful example of the recurrence of this phenomenon in the world of nature; how, at every spring, the characteristics and qualities of the previous year come back to life. Similarly at the time of the coming of each spiritual springtime all the characteristics and qualities of the bygone springtimes reoccur and that with the coming of each Manifestation of God, men, individually as well as collectively, are judged; with the acceptance of that new Manifestation of God, an individual spiritually is resurrected.

Amá'tul-Bahá also met with the Baha'ís of Mamfe and friends who had come in from several other nearby communities. The officers of five Local Assemblies were ceremoniously introduced to her. It was interest-
ing to see how often the treasurer of the Local Spiritual Assemblies in many communities of Cameroon are women. Indeed, we met in that country some outstanding Bahá'í women with deep convictions who are very active in the affairs of the Faith.

Foremost Problem, Alcoholic Drinking

In that meeting the friends openly discussed and asked questions on what is the foremost problem of that country, the common and widespread habit of drinking alcohol. Rúhíyyih Khánum in her loving and very tolerant way explained the reason for this prohibition in the Bahá'í Faith and the words of Bahá'u'lláh on this subject. She said “Bahá'u'lláh always gave us a reason for whatever He exhorts us to do or not to do; on the subject of drinking He said “Do not approach it, as it destroys the mind”. Now, a full century later, science has confirmed His word. She then cited an article in the Reader's Digest of June 1970 “Alcohol and your Brain” by Albert Q. Maisel, in which article it was stated that alcohol produces blood sludging in the capillaries thus depriving surrounding tissues of the oxygen supply they require; deprived of oxygen, cells die; brain cells, unlike most body cells, once killed never re-grow so that the intake of alcohol, even in small quantities, has a permanent effect on the cells of the brain; in direct ratio to the degree to which alcohol is taken the number of brain cells, irreplaceable in the body, are destroyed. Even a single glass of beer kills off a quantity of brain cells. “At last we Bahá'ís,” she said, “can quote science in support of Bahá'u'lláh's command not even to ‘approach it’.”

Eyumojok and Ejagham

We were able to visit two nearby villages and hold meetings with the Bahá'ís. In Eyumojok—where on the night of our arrival in West Cameroon we had our unpleasant encounter with the commander of the military check point—Rúhíyyih Khánum met with some of the Bahá'ís from different villages and a large number of non-Bahá'ís who came to hear about the Faith, including the village chief. In Kembong one of the older Bahá'í communities in that part of the country, a good number of believers from several villages eagerly welcomed their beloved guest. Once again the officers of the different Local Assemblies represented were ceremoniously introduced to Amátu'l-Bahá and then a very beautiful and touching speech of welcome was read to her, as follows: “We the few Bahá'í believers of Ejagham do welcome you in our midst. Blessed are we for God has graciously blessed us to see the eyes that had once gazed on our beloved Guardian at the gate when he was crossing to the realm of Abhá Kingdom.”

The Bahá'ís of this area who had come from several villages had prepared a very delicious meal for their dearly loved guest and invited all the friends present to partake of it. As this was one of the old and tried communities of Cameroon Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke on the importance of teaching and serving the Cause. She said: “At the beginning of the rainy season the rain drops are large, few and far between but as it continues it falls faster and becomes torrential. It is the same way with the Cause of God; at the beginning the believers are few and far between but as the Cause of God penetrates, multitudes join in and soon they cover the face of the earth.”

(To be continued)
Southern Africa—Youth Summer School

The first Bahá'í Youth Summer School for Southern Africa was called by the Continental Board of Counsellors for that region and held in Swaziland at their Bahá'í Institute from the 25th of December, 1971 through the 2nd of January, 1972.

Attendance—Sixty-seven people of approximate youth age attended. They represented the following countries: five from Botswana, three from Malawi, ten from Rhodesia (all Salisbury area), one from Zambia, thirty-one from Swaziland, three from Lesotho, four from South West Africa, and ten from South Africa from the following localities: two from Rustenburg, one from Pretoria, five from Johannesburg, one from Cape Town and one from Mafeking. In addition, three Counsellors and six Board members participated along with several adults.

Classes—The program was arranged so there were concentrated courses in the morning.

On the first morning all were welcomed by Counsellor Shidan Fat'h-‘Aazam. He presented a letter which was a message to the School from the Hands in the Holy Land. In it, the Hands said: “The quest of youth for truth and values they can understand and identify with, resulting from disillusionment and rejection of established patterns of life, offers those youth enrolled in the army of Bahá'u'lláh an unparalleled opportunity to bring His healing Message to their contemporaries, and in so doing give meaning and purpose to their lives.” They urged: “If Bahá'í youth heed this call and meet this challenge they assuredly will win great victories and by such deeds contribute their share to the triumph of the Cause of God.”

Among the subjects covered in the classes were: Youth and the Bahá'í Faith, the Historical Background of the Nine Year Plan, the Formative Age, the Role of Youth in Bahá'í Administration, Various approaches to Teaching, the Essentials of our Faith, Visual Aids, and the Remaining Goals of the Nine Year Plan.

In his course on Youth and the Bahá'í Faith, Mr. Fat'h-‘Aazam stressed four points to which the youth should apply themselves 1. study the teachings, 2. the spiritualization of their lives and thus the forming of their character to the standard of Bahá'u'lláh, 3. teach the Faith, especially to youth and 4. preparation of their lives for the future.

Bahá'iyyih Ford emphasized several points ‘Abdu'l-Bahá gave in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. Among them were: 1. Speak the languages. 2. All souls are ready. 3. Send fluent teachers who are detached from all else save God. 4. Books and pamphlets must be either translated or written in the language of the country. 5. The circle of your effort must be widened. 6. Travel in groups. 7. Gather youth in schools of instruction and teach them. 8. Sing the song of the love of God. 9. In all meetings eliminate the unimportant talk, only that under discussion is important.

Mr. Appa very ably covered the reasons for Bahá'í Administration and why it was so important that the youth supported and became experienced in it. Some of the questions he asked and had answered through the discussion were: 1. Why is Bahá'í Administration different? 2. What is the true aim of Bahá'í Administration? 3. Why do the Bahá'ís give of their time, money and energy...

Mr. Mooten gave greetings from Mauritius and then spent the time in covering questions which contacts might ask the Baha’i teacher. Mrs. Wilks fascinated the friends with the many visual aids she showed them, from posters to puppets. Mrs. Ford also gave two felt talks which the enjoyed tremendously.

In the discussion of the remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan it appeared that the majority of the youth present were not well aware of what remained to be done. Emphasis was placed on how they could help to see that the goals were won.

Afternoons—The afternoons on the first two days were devoted to general discussions groups. On the third day there was a “Work is Worship” session in the gardens of the Institute where the youth dug 18 holes for trees, chipped drains for repainting and pulled weeds.

Teaching—The next five afternoons were spent in actual teaching work. The youth were divided into 11 teaching groups and assigned to certain areas around Swaziland. Each teaching afternoon they came back with interesting stories to tell, one group perhaps somewhat disappointed, another very jubilant. As a result of this teaching effort, a total of thirty-seven declarations were achieved during the time covered by the school. Of these thirty-seven, thirty-five were Swazi; one was the driver for the young people from Lesotho who stayed to take them back again, and the other was a young man from Botswana who out of curiosity had accompanied one of the friends to the school.

Evenings—The evenings were devoted to entertainment and fellowship. One evening slides and a film were shown. Another was “ Talent Night” where the young people sang solos, played guitars and piano and drums; each one contributing to the entertainment.

One night a campfire with barbeque was held. On this night some Swazi believers had arranged for about twenty-four Swazi Tribal Dancers to entertain the young people. After eating everyone moved into the light close to the Institute buildings and the dancers delighted everyone present. When they had finished, the youth, wishing to repay them for the enjoyment quickly arranged for one of the Swazi-speaking young people to stand and tell the dancers about Baha’u’llah and the Baha’i Faith and why we were all there, and to explain they wanted to repay them by singing some Baha’i songs for them. Then the youth stood with their arms interlocked and swaying they sang several Baha’i songs with all their hearts for the dancers. It was an evening of great youth activity.

A public meeting was held on one evening to which the youthful teachers could bring the friends they had made during the afternoons in order to learn more about the Faith. Whatever the program for an evening it usually ended up with the group singing some Baha’i songs.

Organization—At the beginning of the School two committees had been appointed by the Continental Board of Counsellors completely of youth for the running of the School. One was the All-Purpose Committee and the other the Evening Committee.

The All-Purpose Committee truly took things into their hands when necessary and acquitted themselves well. All youth attending were assigned to groups and each had its task to do. Though the lunch and dinner were taken care of, the youth did their own breakfasts, cleaned dorms, meeting hall, etc. The Committee saw to the registration of youth and the selling of meal tickets. The All-Purpose Committee was comprised of: Rosemarie Auff, Beth Fathe-Aazam, Sebena Silawada, Genevie Hope, Dave Garcia, and Billy Lee Marple.

Cables—After a few days of the School, the youth decided to send a cable to Haifa. They were inspired and pleased to receive this cable in answer a few days later:

DELIcIeD EXCeellENT ATTENDANCE YOUTH SUMMEr SChOoL PRAyINg SHRIীES SPIRIT ENTHU­SIASCISM GENERATEd BY SCHOOL WILL STrENGTHEn GIVE NEW DIRECTION EFFORTS YOUTHFUL MEM­BEERS COMMUNITY ASSIST FULFILLMENT ALL GOALS PLAN

— UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

The youth sent a cable to the Youth Conference being held in Salzburg. To this, came the following reply:

OVER 800 YOUTH ASSEMBLED SALZBURG EXCHANGE LOVING GREETINGS YOUR CONFERENCE BLESSED PRESENCE HANDS FAITH ENOCH OLINGA LINKING OUR TWO CONTINENTS AND ADELBERT MULL­SCHLEGEL INSPIRING MASS TEACHING EFFORTS SPIRITUAL AWAKENING EUROPE

On the last afternoon a Farewell Party was held. At this time the youth were asked to write briefly what the School had taught them. Two prizes were given for what the Counsellors felt were the best answers. Rahma Noor of Cape Town won first prize and Sebena Silawada won second prize. These were a Baha’i ring and a Baha’i pin.

Along with the exchange of thanks on that afternoon, the youth were urged to return home and do their best to stimulate the youth back home into activity, and to bring about and encourage youth activity in their own home areas.

With a great deal of tears, the youth returned home. The final request was that a Youth School like this be held annually. One of the great accomplishments of the School was that youth from various backgrounds lived together in the spirit of the Faith and, in spite of difficulties, Baha’i belief became a reality.
Activities in Blenheim.

Dunedin Local Spiritual Assembly.

NEW ZEALAND—SOUTH ISLAND

New Zealand's South Island was for many years a Bahá'í backwater with just a handful of believers to spread the Glad Tidings. At Ridván 1969 it could boast only four Bahá'ís, and the goal of one Local Assembly in each of its five provinces seemed a monumental task. But the next year saw the entry of pioneers and the island received the kiss of life. One declaration followed another and Ridván 1971 saw three of the Assemblies formed: Nelson, Christchurch and Dunedin. Now Blenheim is ready to form its Assembly, leaving only one of the goal locations to be achieved—Westland.

Nelson held a proclamation week, armed with a report on mass teaching techniques used in South Carolina. The result was fourteen new Bahá'ís the first week and a steady influx ever since.

Christchurch, busily preparing its own proclamation week and blessed by a two hour visit of Hand of the Cause Mr. Furutan en route to Auckland, found itself teaching in many ways. Having just welcomed a young Chinese student from Malaysia to the Faith, the community was alerted by the Hawkes Bay friends they had made, Chinese sailors who had shown an interest in the Faith but spoke no English. Their ship from Taiwan was on route to Christchurch. Three of the Christchurch Bahá'ís were welcomed on board and the Message was delivered to them.

On another occasion several believers arrived at a school, expecting to talk to about twenty pupils and found over a hundred waiting, an exhilarating experience. This session lasted for over an hour and included answering a battery of questions. Can you say "Bahá'u'lláh?" they asked, and all chanted back "Bahá'u'lláh!"

One believer felt impelled to travel-teach on the Chatham Islands, 500 miles east of New Zealand, the first recorded visit of a Bahá'í to those shores.

During the nine days of summer school in the little town of Kaikohe there were thirty-six declarations. In another small town, Taumarumui, there were thirty-eight as a result of a teaching conference over a weekend. In Greymouth the first two declarations have been made, and two pioneers have come; fruits are beginning to appear—at last.

Local Spiritual Assembly of Christchurch: back row, Dave Toohey, Treasurer; Kit Baxter, Jeff Hughes, Vice-Chairman; Carole Church, John Lester, Corresponding Secretary. Front row: Jenny Platt; Kayleen Morrison, Nguyen Huu Hanh, Chairman; Margaret Hilton, Recording Secretary.
The first West Indian Mass Teaching team pauses long enough for a picture before boarding an airplane for St. Vincent. Standing before the Barbados, W.I., airport are, left to right: Patricia Paccassi (co-ordinator of the project), Richard Miller, Monica Brathwaite, Myraelen Moore, Leroy Wharton, Burleigh Eastmond, Errol Sealy, and Lynn Paccassi. (The Paccassi family are pioneers on Barbados.)

New Barbados Believers form First West Indian Mass Teaching Team

A group of new believers from Barbados, West Indies, ranging in ages from 17 to 20 years, served as the teaching team for the first mass teaching effort on the island of St. Vincent, sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward, Windward, and Virgin Islands. This was the first West Indian mass teaching team. (The mass teaching team on Barbados in August and September, 1971, was comprised of believers from the United States.)

The youthful group found 570 waiting souls in two and a half weeks, from December 26 to January 12. Despite the heavy downpours of the rainy season, they went out, over mountainous terrain, for eight to ten hours daily. They held two hour prayer meetings were also held. They formed their own singing team, calling themselves "The Bajan Singers."

The teaching effort was coordinated by Mrs. Patricia Paccassi, a pioneer on Barbados and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly. A follow-up program was started immediately by the National Teaching Committee of the Windward Islands.

Travel-Teaching in Korea

Terry Riggins, author of the following article, with his wife, Kathleen, are now pioneering in Sapporo, Japan. Their travels in Korea included seven cities and fifteen villages.

During the month of January we had the opportunity of travel-teaching in South Korea. The National Spiritual Assembly of Korea provided us with an experienced interpreter and enthusiastic Bahá'í, Mr. Kim Kwan So. Traveling by train and bus, we visited the Hyangmyung Middle School in Yeosan, operated by Bahá'ís for children who can't afford tuition at the government schools. One of the school buildings was built by the school children. The land on which the school stands has been donated to the Bahá'ís to be used as a Teaching Institute, fulfilling part of Korea's goal in the Nine Year Plan of three Teaching Institutes. There are over thirty Local Spiritual Assemblies in the area of Yeosan; however we had time to visit only two of these locations.

After three days we took a train to the port city of Mok-Po in the southern tip of Korea. We were accompanied by Mr. Kim and Mr. Suh Chul Min, Auxiliary Board member.

One of the highlights of the trip was a two-day stay in the village of Ko Jih Lee near Mok-Po. There are sixty-five Bahá'ís in a village of 250 people. The first night we were there the Vice-Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly described their activities: "We have a special Bahá'í room in the home of one of the Bahá'ís where we have our meetings. On Feast Day we fly a flag which reminds everyone to attend Feast that evening. We have regular deepening sessions on the first and fifteenth of the month. We study Hidden Words.

When people are ill we pray for them and visit them if they are in the hospital. We have formed an area teaching committee and have a plan to open surrounding villages, where there are Bahá'ís in two of them. We have a community service project to help clean the village. The village headman was impressed with our activities and told the provincial head about Bahá'ís. He had one question: "What do the Bahá'ís in America do?"

After returning to Mok-Po we visited four nearby villages, sometimes traveling by ferry boat to small islands. On one of them we talked to over a hundred Bahá'ís gathered in a classroom. Because there are so many Bahá'ís in this area, the National Spiritual Assembly bought land for a Teaching Institute. Construction on it will start in February.

Next, we went to the East Coast city of Kyong-Ju, ancient capital of Korea and the site of a Bahá'í Institute. We had lunch at a Chinese restaurant operated by a Chinese Bahá'í family. We visited five Bahá'í communities in this area. In the town of Tonsung-Ri, there are several barbers who are Bahá'ís and because no other room could be found, we had a fireside in a barber shop.

Our travels ended in Seoul with a public meeting and an interview with a reporter for a religious weekly newspaper.

Everywhere we went, we found the Bahá'ís very friendly, loving and enthusiastic in their teaching activities.
Tour of the New Era Trio

The New Era Trio, composed of three singing travel-teachers from the United States, made an eventful trip from Miami, Florida through points in Central America and islands in the Caribbean from August 6 to September 30, 1971. It is estimated that as a result of their efforts there are 2000 believers.

The Trio consists of Jeanne Rebstock of Redwood Falls, Minnesota who has since married and added Murday to her name; Charles Bullock and Mrs. Bullock (Sandi) from Henderson Point, North Carolina. All three are experienced mass teachers and participated in the never-to-be-forgotten South Carolina teaching activities of December 1970.

The program for proclamation used by the trio consisted of about ten songs which told of the historical figures of the Faith and Teachings, interspersed with narration, using much of the Creative Word. Some of the songs were in Spanish and others were added during the trip.

At the first stop, Belize, in British Honduras, there had been advance publicity by means of radio, front-page newspaper stories and the distribution of flyers which brought out about 500 people to greet them at the meeting arranged in Central Park.

The second day brought three presentations in the morning, a youth session at the Bahá'í Center in the afternoon and in the evening a public meeting with singing and slides. After this busy day, they met with the National Spiritual Assembly. This will give an idea of the pace of their trip at the many locations visited. In Honduras they were met by Counsellor Dunbar who narrated in Spanish at many meetings. He was enthusiastic over the reception by the people.

The Trio accompanied Mr. Dunbar to an island where he had taught the Faith about ten years before. Believers there were severely persecuted and told they could leave the Faith or their homes. At the presentation, the Trio did not give the usual invitation but the people came to them and asked to be enrolled, saying they had not forgotten what they had been taught. As a member of the Trio expressed it: "Our new sisters and brothers went with us to the water's edge to say goodbye. So we kissed the children, embraced . . . the sun was setting . . . they waved from shore, and we all sang 'God is forever' with mixed emotion . . . knowing that in spirit we are always together."

In Grenada about 500 people heard the presentation. At the conclusion they wanted more songs, which were given. Leaving the park, about 200 followed the Trio to their temporary quarters at the home of a pioneer. On arrival they realized they had no key and stood puzzled, facing the shouting crowd, knowing little Spanish, and the crowd no English. When the pioneer arrived, they learned more songs were expected, which brought calm.

Next, a prayer session was held inside, followed by a fireside for about fifty. Outside, enrollments continued, and meanwhile Bahá'ís still at the park accepted additional members.

In Bluefield, again, after a day-long institute and a night meeting with about 600 attending, they were followed through the streets. Time and again they would stop on street corners and give the Message to souls eager to listen. Many of the new Bahá'ís were touched by the spirit and were enrolling their friends.

In Panama they learned a newspaper had announced their appearance at a gym that evening. Around 200 were present with several making their declarations. They visited the Panama House of Worship under construction several times for prayers.

Arriving in Barbados in the fourth week of successful mass proclamation they share with us some of the indications of the spiritual atmosphere: "A young believer, eleven years old, out teaching, enrolling adult and pre-youth; old people teaching with great spirit and true understanding of their new revelation from God; new believers, approximately ten, enrolled 200 believers during the project, some teaching practically every day; a blind believer, out teaching and consolidating."

In Santo Domingo the Governess of the Province enrolled. (See the story in the December Bahá'í News, pp. 17-18). The Trio reported, "There was a big rush for enrollment cards . . . seventy-nine enrolled. They were pleading to join the Bahá'í Faith." On a return trip, thirty-eight more enrolled.

At Kingston, Jamaica, where in January the members of the Trio had attended the Oceanic Conference, in addition to planned presentations, they stopped to buy fruit and thirty-eight enrolled. They stopped in a street, and thirty-eight more declared. They stopped for a soda in a store and a bystander mentioned publicity, so the Trio gave their presentation and five more declarations were made.

At Wiliamstown, in the Bahamas, in addition to two days teaching, they learned that the "Bahama Star", the ship chartered for the Caribbean Conference was in port. So the Trio visited several Bahá'ís still aboard and arranged for them to meet with the Island Teaching Committee.

The Trio concluded: "From this tour we see the urgent, immediate need to teach this Faith as never before. The people are there—waiting . . . And we saw some of the most beautiful, happiest people on the earth—the pioneers; surely they are the ones who desire especially to be nigh unto God."

The New Era Trio were sponsored by the Continental Pioneer Committee for the Americas.
First believers of Sta. Lucia, Colombia, Sr. and Sra. Janero.

Sta. Lucia—A Success Story

On September 12, 1970, Sta. Lucia del Atlantico, Colombia, was another tranquil town in this northern Colombia area. But one could discern the movement, however slight, prior to its awakening through the desperate call from its first two believers.

These new Bahá'ís, longing for the momentary company of their fellow believers, wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly, requesting that they send visitors to spend a few hours with them in this isolated town which has no direct line of communication with the rest of the country.

Barranquilla, the nearest city with an established Local Spiritual Assembly, sent two pioneers to answer the call. They left for Sta. Lucia at the first opportunity, not knowing, even after some investigation, exactly where it was located, nor which of the many bus lines afforded transportation to this town.

On the day of departure, a single bus, which made a daily trip, was located, and the two ventured off to Sta. Lucia. After five hours and twelve breakdowns of the bus they reached their destination on the Canal Dique, a tributary of the Magdalena River, some sixty miles from their home. It should surprise no Bahá'í that Sra. Janero just happened along at the right moment as the bus discharged our two friends who recognized each other immediately.

She escorted them to her tiny mud and thatched-roof hut that stands on a tiny finca (farm) on the river. Sr. Janero (Pua) was at home and added her gracious welcome and they all sat and conversed as old friends. They exchanged news of mutual interest and agreed to visit their neighbors to bring them the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

While the Señora prepared the dinner, the three set out to visit neighbors. Using the basic method recently used with much success in the Deep South, they found four new believers.

During and after dinner several neighbors began to congregate in the unlighted garden of the Janeros. As no electricity was available, crude kerosene lamps were burned. One of the pioneers delivered a short but inspired address carrying the love and Message of the Blessed Beauty. No less than seventeen more declared bringing the count to twenty-three.

Within a few months, friends from Barranquilla visited, when time permitted from other Bahá'í activities and enrolled some fifty more.

By Ḥidván 1971, when it was time to form their first Local Spiritual Assembly, the mayor and his wife and his mother had also enrolled. All eligible members of the community participated in their first election.

Little by little, more believers were found in this little town with the dirt streets and thatched-roofed houses and only recently with any electricity at all. The visits continued as before and deepening was included.

In January 1971, two pioneers, one adult and one pre-youth, and a local youth, went from Barranquilla to Sta. Lucia. Their plan was to spend five days there and enroll 400 through direct teaching and at least one public meeting. Four hundred and thirty-four were enrolled. Since that time, another twelve have joined the ranks of the Faith.

At the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, the Regional Committee sent a representative to meet with the Local Assembly to encourage them to establish a children's class and appoint at least one messenger to deliver deepening materials to the friends as there was no mail delivery to this town. To the class already established, two new ones were added. All other goals were accomplished as requested: messengers, Regional Convention and Teaching Institute.

Those who are unable to leave their homes to travel as pioneers can do much to reinforce these noble souls: contribute to the Funds, deputize others who are able to go but need financial assistance, offer prayers, and encourage new pioneers to arise to serve.

A Bahá'í children's class at Sta. Lucia del Atlantico, Colombia.
World Religion Day was celebrated on January 16, 1972 in the United States and in many countries around the world. It is the twenty-second such annual observance. The day is being increasingly recognized by the public as evidenced by its being widely listed in calendars.

The Public Information office of the National Center in Wilmette plans the theme, sends out suggested news releases, radio spot announcements and proposed wording of a proclamation to be presented to an official. Fifteen to twenty National Spiritual Assemblies have requested these aids for special Bahá’í proclamation events.

The suggested theme for the occasion this year was: “World Religion, Basis for Universal and Lasting Peace.” Assemblies, of course, were free to use other themes and plan any kind of observance they consider most useful in their location. From replies returned to the Public Information office, many communities followed the suggestions closely. Special proclamation days give an occasion for local publicity and a stimulus for local teaching. It is hoped that there will be an increased use of these Bahá’í sponsored days as there is an accumulative effect on public thinking in associating the Faith with themes such as “World Religion,” “World Peace,” etc.

Publicity

Excellent publicity was reported and many newspaper clippings sent in. World Religion Day was announced in Clearwater, Florida in a bold headline across the top of the religion page. The same treatment was received in the publicity from the Lake Havasu City, Arizona Bahá’í group. A front page top streamer was given to the Bahá’ís of Laramie, Wyoming and just below was a large photograph of three Bahá’ís presenting the Proclamation of Bahá’u’lláh to the Mayor.

Dupo, in St. Clair County, Illinois, featured a classified ad under “Coming Events,” along with a chatty, personalized long article illustrated by the photo of their speaker for the Day, Mrs. Naomi McCord. Yonkers, New York, used the “Thought for the Day” column for an appropriate quotation from Bahá’u’lláh.

The suggested proclamation was signed by many officials. The Largo, Florida, Bahá’ís succeeded in having the wording of the proclamation published along with a photograph of the Mayor and a Bahá’í.

Two communities reported receiving newspaper stories with photos by making book presentations. The Athens, Georgia, community presented Some Answered Questions to the public library. The Bristol, New Hampshire, Bahá’ís presented books to Belknap College Library.

In Kansas City, about 2,000 invitations to a public meeting were delivered door-to-door. One man found an invitation in the street, looked up the Bahá’ís and asked if he could attend a fireside.

Miami, Florida, Bahá’ís are to be congratulated for sustained effort for their window display in connection with World Religion Day. This year it was shown for two weeks in the window of the Florida Power and Light Company’s downtown office. A similar display has appeared for the occasion in the same location for more than twenty years, always lasting for a week, sometimes two. The display consisted of Bibles from the religions of the world: Christian, Hebrew, Buddhist, Islamic, open at appropriate passages, prophetic words about the new age or coming of the Promised One. These texts were picked out by a color overlay of tinted plastic. A gold ribbon led from these passages to a copy of Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh, open to page 66:

“...And since there can be no tie of direct intercourse to bind the one true God with His creation, . . . He hath ordained that in every age and dispensation a pure and stainless Soul he made manifest in the kingdom of earth and heaven. Unto this subtle, this mysterious and ethereal Being He hath assigned a twofold nature; the physical, pertaining to the world of matter, and the spiritual, which is born of the substance of God Himself.”

Large letters announced World Religion Day and the window was completed with an announcement that the display was sponsored by the Miami Bahá’ís.

Public Meetings

Many public meetings used Bahá’í films. Such was the case of the gathering sponsored by the community of South De Kalb County, Georgia; a Professor of Religion attended and requested the use of the film for his class.

Mrs. Marion C. Lippitt, who had just returned from Pilgrimage, was the speaker at York, Maine, using as her topic “The World’s Holy Land, Past and Present.” At Bozeman, Montana, the George Galinkins showed slides of shrines of religions of the world gathered in their trip around the world and Pilgrimage of three years ago.

In Peterborough, New Hampshire, instead of a public meeting, they arranged for daily interviews on the Faith by a local radio station. At Kirkland, Washington, in addition to a public meeting, a Bahá’í speaker was sent.
to the Unitarian Church, an excellent opportunity to inform a whole group of seekers about the meaning and purpose of the Faith.

In Freeport, Bahamas, the Bahá’í pamphlet Seven Thousands Years in Retrospect gave the keynote, tracing the development of religion from age to age, to the Day of God.

In Saigon, Vietnam the eleventh annual observance of World Religion Day was held.

Other big cities of Vietnam which held celebrations this year are Can-Tho, Da-Nang, Pleiku, Phan-Thiet, Bihn-Tuy, and other district towns. The event was prominently reported in over twenty Vietnamese daily newspapers, the radio, television and in movies throughout the country. This annual occasion has become a means of demonstrating religious fellowship.

Columbus, Ohio arranged a three-day observance, a community gathering and film showing before the World Religion Day meeting. The Tukwila, Washington, meeting began with a pot-luck supper for forty, then speakers, ending with an international dance. The international flavor was evident in the well-planned observance at Aguana, Guam where publicity included posters and an information booth for distributing pamphlets in various languages, all related to the theme of universal and lasting peace. The program included talks, prayers and musical selections by children and elders, in various languages; Japanese, Tagalog, Persian and English.

A talk was made by a Palauan. Hostesses gave each visitor a flower with a personal greeting. Decorations included twenty-five hand-painted posters, as well as flowers and palm leaves. As a surprise ending to the meeting, balloons were released, carrying a variety of Bahá’í quotations, then refreshments were served.

An “Open House” at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur C. Ioas was given by the Orinda, California Bahá’ís. It carried out a detailed, phased plan. Beginning a month in advance, beautifully printed invitations were sent to individuals which included the program, space for others to be invited on a response card and stamped.

At Largo, Florida, Mrs. Ingrid Lanier is shown with Mayor T. S. Madison who signed the World Religion Day proclamation. The photo was published in the local paper, along with the text of the proclamation.

At the speakers’ table on World Religion Day in Saigon, Vietnam. Mr. Tran Thang, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, is on the extreme right.

dressed reply envelope. During the month there were local and inter-community meetings to organize and practice a children’s pageant of religion and assign duties; also to personally phone all who responded, and those who did not. A note of reminder arrived a day ahead for those who accepted. The program announced luncheon, an afternoon of slides and discussion, an evening with the pageant, an informal talk and social hour, with refreshments served all during open house. A follow-up letter was sent to all receiving invitations, giving information about firesides.

Proclamation
Town of Largo
State of Florida

WHEREAS, religion is the motivating force for the establishment of order in the world and of tranquility amongst its peoples, and

WHEREAS, religion is a mighty bulwark for man and the basis for universal and lasting peace, and

WHEREAS, the harnessed power of the atom and other advances have made the world a neighborhood and joined the destiny of all peoples and nations in a common future of universal annihilation or of creativity beyond the grandest dreams of man, and

WHEREAS, it becomes imperative that mankind learns to live together as a world community, and

WHEREAS, religion can strengthen the bonds between peoples, provide us with the values establishing world peace and world unity, and

WHEREAS, the members of the Bahá’í Faith of the Town of Largo are joining in the twenty-second annual national observance of World Religion Day,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, T. S. Madison, Mayor of the Town of Largo, do hereby proclaim Sunday, January 16, 1972, as

WORLD RELIGION DAY

in the Town, in the fervent hope that it will focus the attention of the members of this community on the indivisibility of human well being stimulate them to a renewed interest in religion and motivate them to make religion a dynamic force to advance civilization toward the goal of universal and lasting peace.

T. S. Madison
Mayor
Dear Adults:

Have you seen CHILD'S WAY recently? Have you read it? Did you find simple answers to difficult questions? Did you enjoy the reprints from Star of the West, the passages from Mahmud's Diary or Guy Murchie’s original contributions? Were you glad to have interesting and informative printed matter for your children and your friend’s children? Were you delighted that illustrated stories are now available for your community children’s classes? Have you felt the urge to encourage a child to be creative and to send his contribution for publication in CHILD’S WAY?

All this is possible when individuals or communities subscribe to CHILD’S WAY.

Special offer, this month only: With a new subscription, 9 past issues of CHILD’S WAY for $5.00 additional only.

A one year subscription is $4.50, single issues still 75¢.

Just send your check with your name and address to:

Child’s Way Subscription Service
P.O. Box 551
Amherst, Mass. 01002

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

December 10, 1971, Baha’i communities throughout the United States celebrated Human Rights Day. On this day, 24 years ago, 48 nations of the world community adopted, at the United Nations, the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” a document elucidating fundamental principles of freedom for all the peoples of the world. With public meetings, concerts, panel discussions and international dinners 44 Baha’i communities suggested this day. Hand of the Cause William Sears spoke to an audience of 850 people in Los Angeles on the subject of human rights. At this meeting, the Los Angeles Baha’i community also distributed Human Rights Day awards to outstanding citizens of that city. Newport, Rhode Island and Gallup, New Mexico also presented awards on Human Rights Day.

At Northwestern University, “The Children of Time,” a well-known singing group, gave a concert on Human Rights Day for an audience of over 300 people.

This year, the theme for Human Rights Day suggested by the National Spiritual Assembly, “Equality—A Divine Standard,” was the topic of discussion at twenty-three Human Rights Day meetings. Other topics included “Women’s Rights in Africa” and “Individual Potential—A World View.”

In order to create a better awareness of Human Rights and the United Nations, many communities distributed literature on these two subjects. Where possible, Baha’i communities participated in activities sponsored by the United Nations Association and other groups interested in the UN. All communities received excellent publicity for their programs. In addition to free newspaper and radio announcements several communities received television time, participated in radio talk shows and were interviewed about Baha’ism.

Baha’i communities which celebrated Human Rights Day, 1971 contributed greatly to spreading the Teachings of Baha’u’llah and creating a better awareness of the work of the United Nations. Most of these communities plan to follow up this activity with firesides, public meetings and further meetings with the United Nations Association. Some are already preparing for Human Rights Day 1972.

—Mary Sawicki, U.S.-U.N. Observer
The Bahá'í World Community Poised for Overwhelming Victory

Ridván Message from The Universal House of Justice

To the Bahá'ís of the World

Dearly-loved Friends,

The opening of the final year of the Nine Year Plan sees the Bahá'í world community poised for overwhelming victory. With grateful hearts we acknowledge the continuing confirmations which have attended its efforts and the Divine bounties which have never ceased to rain down upon this blessed, this ever-developing embryonic world order.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of Panama, the Mother Temple of Latin America, will be dedicated this Rídván. Three beloved Hands of the Cause, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum representing the Universal House of Justice, Ugo Giachery and Zikru'lláh Khádem will attend this historic ceremony. The imaginative and inspiring concept of the architect, Peter Tillotson, has been wonderfully realized and we extend to the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama on behalf of the entire Bahá'í world, loving congratulations on their achievement.

Although the dissolution of the National Spiritual Assembly of 'Iraq has, unhappily, resulted from the persecution of the Faith in that land, the thirteen new National Spiritual Assemblies which will come into being this Rídván will bring the total number of these pillars of the Universal House of Justice to 113.

The goals requiring acquisition of properties and establishment of Teaching Institutes are well in hand and, in those countries where legal circumstances permit, incorporation of Assemblies and recognition of Bahá'í marriage and Holy Days are making good progress.

It is the teaching goals which must engage our attention and effort. Although more than 260 territories have achieved their assigned goals of localities where Bahá'ís reside, and in some cases have exceeded them, enabling the Bahá'í world community to rejoice in having outstripped on a world scale the total number of localities envisaged in the Plan, there are still some 60 territories where this goal is yet to be won and where its attainment must be given absolute priority between now and Rídván 1973. It is expected that a large number of new Local Spiritual Assemblies will be established at Ridván and immediately the position of this goal is ascertained a detailed listing of all territories throughout the world which have not yet won their goals for localities and Local Spiritual Assemblies will be sent to every National Spiritual Assembly for urgent release to the friends.

It is hoped that during this last year of the Plan...
the principle of collaboration between National Spiritual Assemblies will be extended far beyond the special tasks set in the Nine Year Plan. Those communities which have already attained their goals or are in clear sight of them should consider the world picture as disclosed by the listing mentioned above and do everything they can, without jeopardizing their own success, to assist their fellow communities with pioneers and travelling teachers, or in any other way possible. Such a process will greatly consolidate the unity and brotherhood of the Bahá'í world community.

In the meantime we call on all believers everywhere to prayerfully consider their personal circumstances, and to arise while there is yet time, to fill the international pioneer goals of the Plan. There are 267 pioneer needs still to be answered—75 in Africa, 57 in the Americas, 40 in Asia, 30 in Australasia and 65 in Europe.

The extraordinary advances made since that Ridván of 1964 when the Nine Year Plan was begun, continuing the organized and purposeful process of teaching on a world scale instituted by our beloved Guardian when he launched the Ten Year Crusade, force upon our attention new requirements of this ever-growing world order both for its own organic life and in relation to the disintegrating world society in which it is set. The divergence between the ways of the world and of the Cause of God becomes ever wider. And yet the two must come together. The Bahá'í community must demonstrate in ever-increasing measure its ability to redeem the disorderliness, the lack of cohesion, the permissiveness, the godlessness of modern society; the laws, the religious obligations, the observances of Bahá'í life, Bahá'í moral principles and standards of dignity, decency, and reverence, must become deeply implanted in Bahá'í consciousness and increasingly inform and characterize this community. Such a process will require a great development in the maturity and effectiveness of Local Spiritual Assemblies. The purposes and standards of the Cause must be more and more understood and courageously upheld. The influence of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and the work of their Auxiliary Boards must develop and spread through the entire fabric of the Bahá'í community. A vast systematic program for the production of Bahá'í literature must be promoted.

Our immediate and inescapable task, however, is to ensure that every attainable goal of the Nine Year Plan is achieved. This must be done at all costs. No sacrifice, no deferment of cherished plans must be refused in order to discharge this "most important" of the many "important" duties facing us. Who can doubt that one last supreme effort will be crowned with success? Even now the national community to bear the laurels of first achieving every task assigned to it, Fiji, leads the procession of rejoicing and victorious communities within the Army of Light. We may well emulate Bahá'í youth whose recent surge forward into the van of proclamation and teaching is one of the most encouraging and significant trends in the Faith, and who storm the gates of heaven for support in their enterprises by long-sustained, precedent and continuing prayer. We are all able to call upon Bahá'u'lláh for His Divine, all-powerful aid, and He will surely help us. For He is the Hearer of prayers, the Answerer.

— THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
Bahá'í World Center
Haifa, Israel
Ridván, 1972

At the dedication of the site of the Mother Temple of the West, May 1, 1972, 'Abdu'l-Bahá waits for a shovel to dig the hole to place the foundation stone.
‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived in Chicago on the evening of Tuesday, April 30, 1912 and on the same evening addressed a public meeting, which was the concluding event of the annual Temple Unity Convention. This was held in the Drill Hall of the Masonic Temple in Chicago and heard by several hundred persons. He spoke, in part, as follows:

“The real temple is the very Word of God; for to it all humanity must turn and it is the center of unity for all mankind. Temples are the symbols of the divine uniting force, so that when the people gather there they may recall the fact that the law has been revealed for them and that the law is to unite them. That is why His Holiness Bahá’u’lláh has commanded that a place of worship be built... that all religions, races and sects may come together within the universal shelter... It is the Mashriqu’l-Adhkar (the Dawning-Point of the remembrance of God)... For thousands of years the human race has been at war. It is enough... For thousands of years the nations have denied each other, considering each other as infidel and inferior. It is sufficient...”

He closed with a prayer for the American nation: “O thou kind Lord!... Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world...”

Then the next day, on the windy shores of the Lake, at Wilmette, they had pitched a tent, large enough for five hundred persons, and had made a special entry way to the grounds for the carriage of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; but He entered on foot, walking briskly, a long line of Bahá’ís following Him. Within the tent, seats had been placed in three circles, with a broad space at the center, reached by nine aisles. At high noon, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá advanced to the inner circle and spoke.

At the dedication of the Temple site in Wilmette, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, after having dug the first shovel full of earth, watches while others take their turn.
Address of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the Dedication, Chicago, May 1, 1912

Today you have endured considerable difficulty in coming out, withstanding the cold and wind; but the Power which has gathered you here is truly a colossal Power. It is the extraordinary Power. It is a Divine Power which gathers you hither. It is the Divine Favor of Bahá’u’lláh which gathered you together. Therefore we praise God that this Power does assemble people in this fashion.

Thousands of Mashriqu’l-Adhkárs, which means the Dawning-Points of Praise for all religionists, will be built in the world. In the Orient and in the Occident of the world they will be built. But this being the first one in the Occident, has great importance. In after years there will be many Mashriqu’l-Adhkárs and even in this city of Chicago there shall be numerous ones established. In Asia there shall be many. In Europe there shall be many. Even in Africa there will be many. Even in Australia and New Zealand; but this is of great importance. In ‘Isqábád, Caucasus, Russia, the Mashriqu’l-Adhkárs has the same great importance, being the first one built there. In Persia there are many. Some have been houses which have been rented for that purpose. Others have given their homes entirely for that purpose, and in some places temporary and small places have been built thereon. In all the cities of Persia there are Mashriqu’l-Adhkárs, but the great Mashriqu’l-Adhkár was founded in ‘Isqábád. Because it is the first, hence it possesses the superlative degree of importance. All the friends of ‘Isqábád, agreed and put forward the greatest effort. His holiness the Afnán devoted all his wealth to it. Everything he had he gave for it. Hence such a tremendous edifice was built. A colossal effort was put forward. Notwithstanding their contributions to that, they have, as you know, contributed to that Mashriqu’l-Adhkár here in this city. Now that one is almost complete, that is to say, with all its gardens.

That Mashriqu’l-Adhkár is centrally located. 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 center, very lofty, surrounded centrally by gardens, variegated flowers, with nine avenues interfacing nine gardens, nine ponds and nine fountains, and see how delightful it must be! That is the way it should be. It is matchless, most beautiful! Such is the design. And now they are at work building a Hospital and a School for Orphans and a Home for Cripples and a large Dispensary and a Hospice. They are now planning, thinking of these things. When that, God willing, shall be completed, it will be a Paradise! There will be no greater geometry than this, and I hope that in Chicago it shall be like this. It will be even so. Therefore endeavor to have the ground circular in shape. If possible even exchange certain parts in order to have a circular piece, not to have a triangle. The Mashriqu’l-Adhkár could not be triangular in shape. It must be circular.

Outside the tent, in the woods and fields along the Lake Shore, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá prepared for the breaking of the Temple ground; using first a golden trowel presented by Irene C. Holmes of New York, He then slipped this back into its leather case, and called for other implements; an ax was brought, then a shovel; with these, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and members of every race and nationality present, excavated a place to hold the dedication stone. As each man or woman came forward, his race or nationality was announced: Persia, Syria, Egypt, India, Japan, South Africa, England, France, Germany, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Jews of the world, and the North American Indians, were of those represented; at the end ‘Abdu’l-Bahá set the stone in its place, on behalf of all the peoples of the world. And He said, “The Temple is already built.”

Editor’s Notes: The description of the dedication of the House of Worship is from The Bahá’í Centenary page 87. The complete text of the talk of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the occasion of the dedication is given in Star of the West, Volume 4, No. 3. It is also included in Proclamation of Universal Peace.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá with the foundation stone at His feet.
Eyewitness Impression of the Dedication
By Sophie Loeding

On May 1, 1912, an important date in American Bahá'í history, 'Abdu'l-Bahá laid the foundation stone of the building in which we are today gathered.* I remember it well. One of the Chicago friends had provided a beautiful golden trowel for preparing the place in which the stone was to be imbedded. The trowel was ceremoniously given to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and He tried to break the ground with it; however, the lovely but frail instrument proved wholly inadequate to make more than the merest dent in the hard-packed earth, and the Master very practically called for a spade. It had never occurred to anyone to give such a work-a-day thing as a spade to the Center of the Covenant! Heaven forbid! So no spade was at hand. The trowel was useless—and the Master wanted a spade! There were no houses anywhere near where one could be borrowed. What to do?

Then young Herbert Anderson remembered that workmen had brought the Elevated tracks as far as Isabella Street, near where one could be borrowed. What to do?

'The relationship between the Center of the Covenant and one's self cannot be described. It can only be felt, and it is a very awesome feeling.

*Editor's note: The above impressions by Miss Loeding were extracted from a talk given by her in Foundation Hall of the Baha'i Center, Wilmette, Ill., at the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In reply to a question about the location of the golden trowel, she said that it was in the possession of the Holmes family (non-Bahá'í).
The Mother Temple of Latin America, located seven miles north of the center of Panama City, Panama, is to be dedicated April 29, 1972. The original site of 25,804 square meters (6.37 acres) was purchased by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the Republic of Panama in 1954. An additional 92,160 square meters (22.36 acres) was acquired in 1967, making a total area of 117,964 square meters or 28.73 acres.

In 1965 the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the Republic of Panama, at the request of The Universal House of Justice, solicited architects from all over the world to submit their designs for the Temple. Fifty-four architects responded. After careful deliberation, the design of a young British architect, Peter Tillotson, was selected and a contractual agreement was executed. At the architect's recommendation the firm of Flint & Neill, London, was selected and a contractual agreement was executed. At the architect's recommendation the firm of Flint & Neill, London, was engaged to do the structural engineering work. The specifications were completed in August 1969. Five of the outstanding contractors in Panama were asked to submit bids for the construction of the Temple. On October 20, 1969, before T.V. cameras, a contract was signed by Diaz y Guardia, S.A. Construction began on December 1, 1969, with a completion date of December 1971.

Temple Statistics

Normal seating capacity—550 people
Diameter at base—61 meters (200 feet)
Overall height—28 meters (92 feet)
Diameter of Auditorium—25 meters (85 feet)
Diameter of Dome Base—23 meters (92 feet)
Height of Dome—20 meters (65 feet)
Height of Balcony—5 meters (16 feet)
Opening each (9) entrances—Height 4.8 meters (15 feet)
Width 5 meters (16 feet)

The building is composed of two distinct units. One is the base which is an elongated nine-pointed star in the center of which is located the auditorium area. Connecting the nine-pointed star at its inner diameter are nine ornamental iron gates which provide nine entrances to the Temple auditorium. A balcony covers the nine-pointed star and also connects the areas in-between so that visitors can on the one side, look down on the auditorium and on the other side, enjoy the panoramic view of the surrounding area for considerable distances in every direction.

The second unit is the parabolic dome which begins at the balcony level and covers both the auditorium and balcony areas.

The whole Temple, except for the decorations, is constructed of reinforced concrete. The concrete for the dome was applied by the gunite process; that is, where dry sand and cement are forced through a rubber hose to the nozzle where just enough water is added to get a barely moist concrete mixture. This is the first time that this method has been used in Panama. The advantages over normal concrete casting are that there is no shrinkage, it is extremely strong and compact and minimizes the danger of cracks and leaks.

The beauty of the Temple is achieved by two methods—one, through the use of geometric patterns in the design and second, by the application of fabricated materials.

The geometric beauty and harmony is achieved through the curves of the perimeter arches, the curves of the outer balcony ballustrades, the angles of the starpoints, inner balcony ballustrade, entrance stairs and gates, and outer boundaries of the auditorium. The geometric harmony is again used in the eighteen interconnecting ribs which rise from the balcony level to a
nine-pointed star suspended from the interior dome apex. The use of a harmonious decorative motive is used in the outer facing of the star points by using exposed Verona Red marble chips to create a relief pattern based on pre-Columbian design. The nine gates again are unique in that a three-dimensional geometric design is used. The underside of the dome will be covered with acoustical plaster while the surface of the outer dome will be covered with mosaic tile. The floor area, both auditorium and balcony, will use a unique cast-in-place terrazzo design except for the seating area where terrazzo tiles will be used. There will be no windows as all open areas will remain without restrictions of any kind, thereby making the indoor and outdoor one unified complex.

Because of the extreme uniqueness and complicated geometric pattern of the structure, construction was very difficult and it taxed the engineering and construction capacity of the contractor to the utmost. However, they have constructed a building of the highest quality. Mr. Flint of the London engineering firm, after a recent visit, had this to say: "... the contractors have produced work of high quality by any standard."

Hands of the Cause of God Rúhíyyih Khánum and Dr. Ugo Giachery will represent The Universal House of Justice at the formal dedication of the newest Bahá'í House of Worship on April 29, 1972.

**PANAMA CITY INTERCOMMUNITY CONFERENCE**

The National Spiritual Assembly of Panama and the National Teaching Committee, the generals of the orientation plan for the Temple Dedication and Conference, met with their staff and aids at the Chamber of Commerce Hall, Panama City, all day Sunday, February 20, 1972.

Hand of the Cause Dr. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir had flown in the evening before to stimulate action and widen horizons. He opened his address by referring to the greatness of a Bahá'í Temple:

"I cannot tell you how important the Temple is! 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Himself, said that even He could not explain how important is the Temple. Therefore, I cannot explain it, except to say that the Temple is the most great foundation of the Faith."

"The Temple is like a tent," he went on, "a tent of unity. Many races, and colors and generations will meet beneath the dome of this House of Worship of Latin America. It will do great things for the Faith in the world. It will teach the people of South Africa, Iceland and New Zealand as well as those of Latin America!"

Dr. Muhájir spoke of the swiftness of our times, and of how many great changes have come within a single life span. For instance, Hand of the Cause Mr. Samandari in his life time saw Bahá'u'lláh, then 'Abdu'l-Bahá, then Shoghi Effendi, also The Universal House of Justice—so rapid has been the progress of the Faith in our country that one man has been privileged to witness such tremendous expansion.

"Now, a new major change has come to the Faith: the entering of the masses in troops. Many of the dark-skinned races are already entering in troops; soon, will the Latin and the white race join them."

"What will happen then?" he asked. "According to the prophecy of Shoghi Effendi, then, the older religions will arise against the Bahá'ís. There will be persecution; and this will publicize the Faith far better than the Bahá'ís can do it."

"The Orientation Plan and Committees for Temple Dedication and Conference" was passed out to the Bahá'ís present. There are committees for: audio-visual materials such as banners for buses and airport, posters and decorations for the halls; the banquet for local dignitaries; bus transportation; children and baby-sitters; devotions; entertainment at the gym; flowers; physical arrangements at the gym; hospitality at airport; infirmary: a nurse and doctor will be on call at all times; Lions Club arrangements; literature; photography; program; publicity; public meeting; reservations & registrations; taping of programs; temple coordinating of seating, parking, ushers, etc.; translators; Unity Feast; ushers; visé; writers; reporting the Conference.

The National Assembly Secretary called for manpower and dedication to accomplish all the work to be done before the Conference and during the nine days of its duration.

"Let us do it," she challenged the friends, "for Bahá'u'lláh! For the Universal House of Justice! For Panama! For ourselves!"

The Chairman of the National Teaching Committee gave a detailed résumé of the goals for all the Provinces and of the needs of each location in preparation for the 1972 elections of Local Assemblies.

The goal for Panama is 81 Assemblies by Ridyán. Much stimulation and teaching is needed in all areas. Manpower is the greatest essential. Visitors in teams must go to the rural areas to aid the pioneers, many of whom do not have cars. Especially will this help be necessary on election day and evening, April 20-21, for distances are so great that in some cases the friends cannot come together in one place to vote. Cars and volunteers will be imperative.

The National Treasurer presented a graphic chart of financial needs. He called for sacrifice in giving to the Conference Fund. The Budget has not been made final, but it will be largely based on the number of visitors.
and delegates expected to be present, housed and entertained in Panama City. More than $1,000 was donated the day of the Conference.

In the afternoon session, Dr. Muhajir spoke on methods of teaching and proclamation, as witnessed in other parts of the world. He displayed a number of attractive color pamphlets published in Hong Kong, Korea and Japan for Expo '70. These had brought many responses. He called them "boomerang pamphlets" because they returned to the sender, asking for more information. This was due to the detachable postcard on each pamphlet.

Follow-up mailing was a small booklet with another card attached or which was printed: 1. I have read this book. 2. I want more information. 3. I want to be a Baha'i.

These cards were returned by the thousands. Dr. Muhajir urged that Panama print such a pamphlet of the Temple and mail out as many as possible. The goal is 5,000 new believers by Riqvim.

"Plant one seed," Dr. Muhajir said, "and leave the increase to God!"

"In the presence of God is a mirror," he said, "one drop of water on the mirror shows up as an ocean." In India, he reminded us, at first there were only 200 believers. Then, in one year, there were 8,000.

"Everyone in Panama is curious about the Temple. Only Baha'is can answer their questions," said Dr. Muhajir.

The friends were called upon to redouble their commitment of time to be given to teaching the Faith during these next months. "With LOVE and UNITY all the goals can be won!"

Design of the folder for materials which will be given to visitors to the Panama Temple dedication.

Counsellor Alfred Osborne assured the Conference that his schedule will allow his participation in all the teaching work up until the Dedication. He offered to speak at the first meeting in Panama City.

A Day of Prayer was called for to bring to our aid Divine Assistance. A cable was to be sent immediately to Haifa requesting this bounty on the first day of the Fast.

The stupendous efforts that must be exerted during the two months before the Dedication ceremonies by Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Baha Ruhayiyih Khanum, the Inter-Continental Conference, and the National Convention, is calling out all the latent strength and faith of every Bahá'í upon whose work success depends.

Indiana Holds Intercalary Days Party

From all over Indiana, Bahá'ís gathered at 1:00 p.m. Saturday February 26 at Butler University, Indianapolis for an event to continue until Sunday at 3 p.m. Auxiliary Board member for the area, Miss D. Thelma Jackson, and Mrs. Ruth Hampson, Administrator for the Regional office for the twelve central states, were both present, contributing stimulating talks.

A hit with the children and the young-in-heart alike was a professional clown show "Lolly-Pop", performed by Mrs. Judy Bryan, Bahá'í from Fort Wayne, bringing out many Bahá'í principles. Assemblies and groups presented skits, both humorous and instructive.

The second day was more serious in tone. Discussions centered on teaching in the state and general discussions about the Faith.

The Ayyám-i-Há state-wide party was such a success that the opinion was expressed that such gatherings should be planned again.

Miss Lolly-Pop and friend at the Intercalary Day party.
A Prisoner for His Faith Gains Freedom

After four years of imprisonment for his Faith in Morocco Mr. Allal Rouhani has been released. He was one who raised high the standard of the Faith in this country.

In honor of this happy event, on January 30, 1972, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of North-West Africa held a luncheon attended by about sixty Bahá’ís and friends from all the Local Assemblies in the area. The Universal House of Justice was represented by Mr. Salim Nounou from France.

South America Holds Conference for Counsellors and Board Members

First row seated, from left to right: Knight of Bahá’u’lláh Katherine Meyer, Chile; Counsellor Donald Witzel, Venezuela; Counsellor Mas’ud Khamsi, Peru; Counsellor Hooper Dunbar, Argentina; Counsellor Athos Costas, Argentina; Eve Nicklin “Mother of Peru” now residing in Paraguay. Second row: Habib Rezvani, Colombia; Jamshid Arjomandi, Suriname; Touba Maani, Brazil; Andres Jachakollo, Bolivia; Mercedes Sanchez, Peru; Natalia Caballero, Paraguay; Carlos Martinez, Chile. Last row: Peter McLaren, Venezuela; Manucher Shohi, Bolivia; Ramon Moreira, Uruguay; Charles Hornby, Ecuador; Edmund Meissler, Brazil; Maralyn Dunbar, Argentina.
Counsellors Sponsor Two Deepening Conferences

The Continental Board of Counsellors for the North American Continent sponsored two Deepening Conferences held simultaneously from March 31 to April 2, 1972. Believers in the West gathered at Reno, Nevada, while in the midwest and central states, they gathered at Fort Wayne, Indiana, meeting on the campus of the Indiana Institute of Technology.

In charge of the Nevada session was Counsellor Mrs. Florence Mayberry, ably assisted by Auxiliary Board members Mrs. Margaret Gallagher, Mrs. Velma Sherrill, Anthony Lease and Paul Pettit. Miss Charlotte Linfoot represented the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States.

At Fort Wayne, Indiana the session was in charge of Hand of the Cause of God Zikru'llah Khidem and Counsellor Miss Edna True, with Auxiliary Board members Dr. Peter Khan, Mrs. Javidukht Khidem, and Miss D. Thelma Jackson assisting, and Mr. Glenford Mitchell representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. Believers from eleven states attended the Reno Conference, while fifteen states were represented at Fort Wayne, from as far away as Texas, Kansas and Pennsylvania.

At Reno, Nevada

The Governor of Nevada, Mike O’Callaghan sent a letter of greeting. Saturday morning the Mayor of Reno presented a key to the city to Mrs. Mayberry who in turn presented him with a copy of The Promised Day is Come.

Bahá'ís and their guests browse through the extensive display of books during fellowship hour. The display was set up by the Chico J.D. Bahá’í library.

Meetings were held at the Pioneer Theatre in downtown Reno. An oil painting of 'Abdu'l-Bahá provided inspiration, and was enhanced by flowers and a large streamer proclaiming “Baha’u’llah Architect of the New World Order.”

Mrs. Gallagher spoke on “The Covenant”. Mr. Lease spoke on “Guidance by the Guardian”. “What are Baha’u’llah’s Institutions?” was the topic chosen by Mrs. Sherrill. Paul Pettit developed the theme “Teach Ye the Cause of God”. Miss Linfoot reviewed “Divine Laws and Standards to Live By” and also gave a special
presentation on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly on Sunday morning.

After each session there was a question and answer period. Miss Linfoot was available to answer questions related to the National Spiritual Assembly and these sessions were presided over by Mrs. Mayberry. Sunday evening Mrs. Mayberry was the featured speaker for a public program sponsored by the intercommunities of Northern Nevada.

During the sessions there was music by The New Dawn Chorus Group, also the New World String Quartette led by Jody Graham and Pianist Marilyn Rabitschek.

At Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Conference began with music by the Central States Singers, a group of young people from St. Louis. Dr. Khan, Chairman of the opening session, commented on the meeting being held in a chapel where over the many years many people had prayed “Thy Kingdom Come.”

When introducing the speaker, Hand of the Cause of God Mr. Khadem, he stated that the Bahá’ís had exceeded the accomplishments of the Apostles of Christ in that Day.

Counsellor Miss Edna True spoke on the Covenant, pointing out that the line of authority from Bahá’u’lláh through ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then Shoghi Effendi and lastly The Universal House of Justice is unique in religious history.

On Saturday morning Mr. Khadem spoke on the Twin Manifestations, the Bab and Bahá’u’lláh. Later Mrs. Khadem spoke on the Mystery of God, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and some of His accomplishments.

Discussions on the Formative Age of the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh were conducted by Dr. Khan. Mr. Mitchell discussed The Universal House of Justice and the infallible guidance it provides for accomplishing the purposes of Bahá’u’lláh. Miss Jackson told of the establishment of the Continental Boards of Counsellors in 1968 to assure the continuity of the Institution of the Hands into the future.

Mrs. Khadem told of the achievements of the Guardian while Mr. Khadem spoke movingly of his memories of Shoghi Effendi and reminded the friends that the Central Figures of the Faith are not separated from us. At one point Mr. Khadem sang a number of songs in Persian.

When the friends gathered in the Student Union Building a number of students began asking about the kind of gathering which could bring together such a diverse group of people in such joy and harmony. A reporter for the school newspaper wanted to write an article about the Faith. A number of Bahá’ís with the Central State Singers visited a coffeehouse in town and attracted people there.

A separate children’s conference was held in the Student Union building. At one point they came to the Deepening Conference and sang songs they had learned.

Each session had a question and answer period, always an important part of the meeting which gave an opportunity for the believers to learn the application of Bahá’í laws and Teachings to their daily lives.

Mr. Khadem closed the Conference by chanting a passage of praise written by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about Shoghi Effendi. The friends felt the very presence of the Central Figures of the Faith as they joined hands to sing “Alláhu’Abhá” and departed.

We may be sure the Cause is strengthened and the believers who attended gained in deepening so they could radiate the glow of love to others who could not be present.

Group photograph of those attending the Conference at Fort Wayne, Indiana.
On the 14th of October we left Mamfe and proceeded Southward spending two days in the Tinto Tale district, where the largest number of Bahá'ís in Cameroon reside. The National Teaching Committee had arranged meetings for Amatu’l-Bahá in several villages to which Bahá'ís from as many nearby villages as possible were invited. In the village of Bachuo Akagbe over forty Bahá'ís came from four different villages. We visited with the friends for over an hour. As in all these meetings the officers of the different Local Assemblies were introduced, prayers said, songs sung and then Amatu’l-Bahá spoke to them showering the friends with her loving words of encouragement and wisdom.

From there we motored on to the village of Nbinjong, where friends from three other communities had come to receive their beloved guest.

Joyous Welcome at Bakebe

By the time we ended that meeting and went on to the third meeting in the village of Bakebe, it was quite late in the afternoon. We found over a hundred Bahá'ís from five different local communities waiting to welcome Amatu’l-Bahá. The Bahá'ís of Bakebe are known for their beautiful singing and have a very wonderful choir with powerful voices who sing many beautiful songs they have written and composed on the different aspects of the Faith. The afternoon was rainy and the roads terribly muddy, yet from the home of one of the distinguished Bahá'ís to the Community Hall, where the meeting was held—a distance of about a half-mile—the sides of the road were decorated with newly cut palm branches stuck in the ground and the Bahá'ís who had come to attend the meeting walked this distance through the village rejoicing and singing at the top of their lungs. The Fon of Bakebe, whom we had already met in the Rest House at Mamfe, an old distinguished gentleman dressed in his best ceremonial robe, attended this meeting and in a talk of welcome encouraged the Bahá'ís to remain firm in their belief. He said he was an old man and had no intention of changing his religion, but now that they had changed theirs and accepted this one, to stand fast in it and live up to its wonderful teachings. By the time this meeting was over, and a delicious meal had been served us in the home of the Bahá'ís, it was almost dark and we reached our fourth and last meeting of the day in the village of Tinto quite late.

The meeting was held in the “New Era Teaching Institute” where a large crowd of Bahá'ís from many different villages had been patiently waiting to receive their guest since the early hours of the afternoon. The torrential rain did not help matters as the noise of it on the corrugated iron roof drowned out any other sound. Beautiful palm branches were made into arches at the entrance to the Institute. Messages of welcome were read, prayers said and Ruhiyyih Khanum in a short talk thanked the friends for their loving welcome. As it was too late to hold a long meeting it was decided the next evening to meet again at an earlier hour. We spent two nights in this Institute and as we carry all our own camping equipment were very comfortable.

The next day they had arranged a very long pro-
The Land Rover crosses into Upper Banyang under palm arches erected by the Baha'is.

gram. Four or five miles from Tinto a Baha'i was waiting on the road and motioned us to stop. Although no meeting was scheduled in this village the friends were gathered and requested Amatu'l-Baha's presence to bless their home and their community. This was a newly created village called Etokombatop. All the inhabitants had been brought over from another area, where the community had been overcrowded. The chief of the village was also a Baha'i.

In the whole of this part of the Cameroon a great number of the Baha'is are women and very active in the local Baha'i work. Indeed, there were five women on this Local Spiritual Assembly. This surely indicated the potentialities of these women in Cameroon and their capacity to shoulder the responsibilities and work of the Faith. In this village Ruhyyih Khánúm spoke on the importance of regular classes for the Baha'i children and daily prayers and devotional periods in every home.

On our way to the next meeting we were once again stopped on the road by two of the Baha'is who said the Headmaster of the Beagwa Government Primary School was expecting Amatu'l-Baha in his school. There were over 200 students between the age of six and fourteen and several teachers who listened with deep interest to Ruhíyyih Khánum's words of wisdom on the responsibility and importance of each individual in society.

This whole area is divided into two sections, Upper Banyang and Lower Banyang, separated by a bridge. In Upper Banyang twenty-one Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed last Ridván. As we left the bridge and passed the boundary to Upper Banyang there was a beautiful and impressive arch of palm leaves and along the road covering the whole distance of nearly one and half miles from the bridge to the village of Ebeagwa, where our meeting was held, both sides of the road were decorated with palm branches. The friends were waiting on the road and with shouts of "Allah-u-Abhá" greeted their guest and took her into their meeting where over eighty Baha'is from several villages had gathered.

Ebeagwa, Almost All Baha'i

This village is one of the outstanding Baha'i communities of Cameroon. We were told that daily, every morning, a number of the believers gather and have a devotional period before starting their daily duties. On Sundays they have regular Baha'i children's classes and the clear evidence of this was the many prayers recited from memory by many of the children in this meeting. Several of the women from this area have attended Baha'i training courses in different parts of the country and are among the active teachers. An item on their program was the introduction of traveling teachers who had been trained at the Teaching Institute and at the end of their course were given a written certificate. Each one spoke of how he had accepted the Faith and what his method was of teaching it. We were told that this village is almost wholly Baha'i. Amatu'l-Baha in her speech encouraged the friends to teach and to live according to the teachings of Baha'u'lláh, as living the life is the greatest means of attracting not only the blessings of Baha'u'lláh, but also the attention of people around us. Each Local Assembly had brought some food and we all shared it together. It was a very wonderful meeting and one could feel the strength and depth of conviction of the believers.

The next meeting was in the village of Akatati where a good number of Baha'i's from different villages had gathered to meet and welcome their guest. The last meeting that day was in the evening, again in the Teaching Institute in Tinto. Over fifty Baha'i's and some non-Baha'i's eagerly listened to Ruhíyyih Khánum talk over two hours on the different aspects of the Faith and answer numerous questions, not for a moment showing any sign of fatigue or exhaustion, even though this was at the end of a very tiring day and the fourth meeting within a period of about ten hours.

Kumba, a Teaching Conference and a Wedding

The following day, on our way to Kumba to attend the Teaching Conference called for by the Continental Board of Counsellors, we stopped at the village of Eyäng where a large number of Baha'i's were waiting
for their guest. A large sign at the side of the road proclaimed their welcome to Amatu'l-Bahá as well as many freshly cut palm branches which decorated the path leading to a good sized and very nice looking building in the center of the village. When Rúhíyyih Khánum asked what this nice looking building was where we had been allowed to hold our meeting the friends informed her it was their own center which they had built, one of the nicest and the largest we had seen, though they are a relatively new Baha'i community.

A young man, the chairman of their new Local Spiritual Assembly, in his introduction of Amatu'l-Bahá said: “This lady is the wife of our beloved Guardian. Do you know what is the meaning and the function of a guardian? When a father dies he appoints a guardian to take care of his children and so before 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away he appointed Shoghi Effendi as our Guardian so that when our father 'Abdu'l-Bahá left us, Shoghi Effendi became the Guardian and the protector of the orphaned children of the Faith”. The directness and clarity of many of the explanations given by the African Bahá'ís are so beautiful and to the point that one is always thrilled by them. Amatu'l-Bahá spoke on the various teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, especially on the subject of life after death. This subject always is of great interest to the friends as it touches some of the deepest aspects of their traditional beliefs, all too often bound up with superstitions and fear.

One of the friends who was a professional cook provided a delicious lunch for us, after which ladies with a traditional dance bade farewell to their distinguished guest. The roads in West Cameroon have to be seen to be believed. The fact that it was the rainy season contributed to their condition.

We reached the city of Kumba in the late afternoon and went directly to the City Hall where the Teaching Conference had already started that morning. Two of the Counsellors were present, Mrs. Isobel Sabri and Dr. Mehdi Samandari, as well as over 120 Bahá'ís, mostly active teachers from all over Cameroon. Two devoted young pioneers, Thomas Rowan and Shahin Pezeshkhazad were planning to marry and wanted it to take place during this Conference. As the next day was Sunday the government registrar required to legalize the marriage would not be available. So the immediate question was would Rúhíyyih Khánum agree to have the marriage that evening and would she perform it? In other words would she be the one to see that they repeated the simple verses of Bahá'u'lláh which alone, in the presence of two witnesses, constitute the Bahá'í marriage ceremony? She gladly accepted and amid considerable rush and excitement, first the civil and then the Bahá'í marriage took place. Rúhíyyih Khánum hastily picked the few flowers the hotel gardens afforded and made a beautiful flower arrangement for the bride's hair. This is typical of Amatu'l-Bahá, whatever she does it is with a touch of perfection and deep love. As the Cameroon marriage form required the signatures of a sponsor for the groom and a sponsor for the bride, Rúhíyyih Khánum volunteered to take on Tom, as she said he deserved to have an American stand up for him; and I undertook to represent the bride's family, which was, after all, equally appropriate! Later the Bahá'í marriage ceremony at the Conference was a great joy and source of interest to all who attended. The simplicity and spirituality of this union of an Eastern and Western believer affected all of us deeply.

The following day Amatu'l-Bahá spoke to the friends on one of the most fundamental aspects of the Bahá'í Faith—obedience to the Laws of Bahá'u'lláh. She said that the laws are like the bones of the body of God. She spoke at length and with great force on the evils resulting from breaking these laws about drinking, polygamy, and the need for strict obedience to the government of the country we live in, and so on. For more than an hour the friends asked questions, particularly...
on the subject of marriage and monogamy. This is one of the major problems in the traditional society of Africa where polygamy is still an important aspect of the economy of the entire tribe and nation. However, Ruhiyyih Khanum pointed out that a new way of life based on a different economy is changing the old customs. The Bahá'ís find themselves caught between their old customs, especially in the village way of life, and the law of God for this day which all must obey. To openly discuss these matters in such conferences as this one; to draw strength from such discussions and consultations, and above all for the believers to help each other to cling firmly to the Laws and Ordinances of God for this day is the logical way to overcome our difficulties and problems during period of transition.

Amanu'l-Bahá was able to meet during that week-end with the Counsellors and Board members as well as a short meeting with the National Spiritual Assembly to work out the full program of her visit to the rest of Cameroon. The five days stay in Kumba was extremely fruitful.

At Schools and Colleges

Ruhiyyih Khânúm spoke to a select group of teachers attending an advance course at the Community Development College. Her audience was greatly impressed and the Principal of the College requested further lectures on the Bahá'í Faith to be given in his College. In the Government Teachers' Training College she spoke to more than 150 students on “The Spiritual Destiny of Africa”; this thought-provoking subject always stirs up her audience, particularly the young people. We were told that last year ten of the final year students had accepted the Faith and now are scattered to all the different parts of the country as school teachers as well as Bahá'í teachers.

Amanu'l-Bahá's last lecture in Kumba was at the Cameroon Commercial College, where one of the Bahá'ís teaches and had arranged this meeting. Over 500 students attended this lecture, asked many questions and requested further study of the Faith. The Principal of this College was a very fine young man who shyly informed us that he had never heard of the Bahá'í Faith, that this was his first post since he left the University and today the first day he had come to his school. What a blessing for him to start his career in life as the host of Amanu'l-Bahá in his college; if he only knew that the first day of his first job in life began with the name of Bahá'u'lláh, the Blessed Beauty, the hope and desire of mankind!

In Kombani, a neighboring township seven miles from Kumba, Amanu'l-Bahá spoke to a small number of believers and their friends. As this meeting was held in a classroom of the local Primary School Ruhiyyih Khânúm used the blackboard to explain with a chart the relationship of God to Man through His Manifestations and the development of the soul of man after death. She told us many of the early Western believers used this and her mother told her this chart was drawn by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for Lua Getsinger during one of her visits to Him in the Holy Land.

A Little Namesake

On our way to Victoria, the capital of what was once British Cameroon, where the Faith was first established by Enoch Olinga, we stopped at the town of Muyuka where the believers from three different communities had gathered to meet Amanu'l-Bahá. This was a very joyous occasion for among those who had come were some of the oldest Bahá'ís of Cameroon. The Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly, a distinguished Bahá'í, proudly introduced his very active wife, who regularly goes on teaching tours accompanied by the young Persian girl who is a pioneer in that neighborhood. They
had two beautiful children, Qudus and Vahid.

Another young man, devoted and very active, brought his adorable doll-like little girl to greet Rúhíyyih Khánum introducing the child as “Rúhíyyih Khánum” after whom she was named! When I asked him what were the names of his other children he proudly said: “The eldest is ‘Tahirih’, the second is ‘Sitareh’ and the third is ‘Rúhíyyih Khánum’; our little boy ‘Hussein’ passed away last year. You see the names used in this country are all Biblical names. I have finished with the Bible, now I have moved a step forward and I want my children to be blessed and inspired by the names of our great heroes and heroines in the Bahá’í Faith.”

The Danger of Imitating

While waiting for the Bahá’ís to gather, Rúhíyyih Khánum addressed the students of the Fess Technical College on the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and the purpose of the Bahá’í Faith. In her talk to the Bahá’ís later on she mentioned a very important point which is all too often overlooked. She warned the Bahá’ís against the danger of imitating in their meetings the customs and ways of other religious groups and thus giving the impression that what went on in the Bahá’í meeting was almost the same thing as what went on in the church next door, with only an apparent difference in name, but the same kind of singing and praying! She said we are inviting the people of the world to come and enter the new room Bahá’u’lláh has built for us: supposing a Muslim looks into this room and sees us Bahá’ís using the same pattern of worship and meeting the Christians have in their churches, he will immediately say this is not new, it is a Christian sect. They say they are Bahá’ís but there is no difference for they are doing all the things the Christians do! This will naturally prejudice the Muslim and he will turn away from the Faith. Exactly the same thing is true for the Christian. If he sees us Bahá’ís worshipping in the same form as the Muslims do in the Mosque he too will turn aside and not enter the Faith. The Hindu, the Buddhist, the Jew, all people of other religions, will turn away from this room Bahá’u’lláh has built for all mankind to worship in if they see us practicing in it the old forms of worship, such as all standing up to pray or kneeling down, or all singing a kind of Bahá’í hymn together, or performing some other form of worship associated with the forms of worship of other religions because these forms have not been given by Bahá’u’lláh and do not exist in the Bahá’í Faith.”

Four Regional Youth Conferences in the United States

The Regional Bahá’í Youth Conferences, sponsored by the National Teaching Committee, which took place on four consecutive weekends in February in the Central, Western, Northeastern, and Southern regions, respectively, were most successful. The focus of each conference was upon improving the quality of Bahá’í life and directing the youth toward a method of study which would help them to deepen in their knowledge and understanding of the significance of Bahá’u’lláh’s stupendous Revelation.

The Conference in Beloit, Wisconsin, attended by 360 youth, was blessed by the presence of Hand of the Cause of God Zikr’u’lláh Khádem who spoke on the role of Bahá’í youth, and who challenged the youth to perform great deeds of service for the Faith; Auxiliary Board member Peter Khan spoke eloquently on the Covenant, the quality of Bahá’í life, and the three fields of service open to Bahá’í youth; and about 600 people attended the public proclamation on Saturday night and heard the “Children of Time” and the “Northern Stars” road shows give exciting and entertaining performances.

Beautiful, balmy weather greeted over 250 believers in Huyward, California, where Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Margaret Gallagher lovingly, but firmly explained to the youth how firmness in the Covenant should be reflected not only in their loyalty to the Institutions, but also in their personal conduct, manners, and dress. Saturday evening’s performance by Bob Gundry and Steve King of “Wednesday’s Children” was enthusiastically received by the audience, and the spirit intensified after a number of declarations.

In spite of the worst snow storm of the year, some 400 youth attended the conference in Storrs, Connecticut. The session on the Covenant by Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Adrienne Reeves lasted for an hour-and-a-half and would have continued, so eager were the youth to learn what “firmness in the Covenant” really means! At the public meeting Saturday night, the “Downbreakers II” road show joined forces with a group from Amherst for an exciting evening of entertainment.

The presence of black, Mexican, Indian and white believers, with a nice sprinkling of Persian, set a harmonious tone throughout the Arlington, Texas, conference, a tone which was accentuated by the talks of Auxiliary Board member Paul Petit. Two unexpected highlights were, 1) a beautiful song by a young Meschlera Indian believer who had written it himself; and 2) a spontaneous and humorous group presentation by the Persian believers.

The spirit of the conferences can be summed up by the words of a campus newspaper reporter in Beloit who had been observing the Bahá’ís: “. . . the most extraordinary thing is that they came . . . to study, to deepen, to learn about the Laws of Bahá’u’lláh, and they all had a remarkably good time doing it!”

—from the American Bahá’í
ENSENADA, MEXICO — EXTENSION TEACHING

Ensenada, Mexico — a charming, romantic town of 115,000 people nestled as its name "cove" implies, at the base of foothills along the beautiful Pacific Ocean lies 80 miles south of California. Long since for decades this coastal seaport has long been a fishing village and vacation resort. Gradually awakening as a major tourist attraction, Ensenada has become a center of interest for people from all over the world. Although its nearest neighboring cities of Rosarito, Tijuana and Tecate, Mexico near the border of the United States have been opened to the Faith and Local Spiritual Assemblies formed in the latter two in 1967 and 1968, respectively, Ensenada has lain dormant.

On the last day of October, 1971 members Esperanza Herrera of Tijuana, Mexico and Kay Patton of El Cajon, California of the small team which had previously worked together with Julia Bulling of San Diego to establish the Baha'i Faith in Tijuana and Tecate, went to Ensenada in an attempt to open it also. Without any entree or place to commence, the pioneers went to Parque Revolucion and sat near the shade of a magnificent old tree on two of the many benches. The park was filled with local citizens out to enjoy the refreshing afternoon air, and warm sunshine streamed down upon bright and relaxed faces of men, women and children. A large bandstand in the center of the park reflected its lively colors of blue, white, yellow and green tiles which decorated the sides of a musicians' platform and formed a support for the stalls of food vendors beneath. As various townspeople came to sit on the benches and later exchanged places for others to rest awhile, the team conversed with many and made friends rapidly. The spirituality and receptivity of the people of Ensenada soon became evident and in three hours, still seated on the same two benches, seven men and women declared their desire to become followers of Baha'u'llah. Succeeding visits to Ensenada every several weeks on Sunday afternoons brought more believers and by early March the seventeenth person had declared.

The new believers are like lights to the city of Ensenada spreading the Teachings themselves from the very beginning. Reading the literature brought by the team and deepening in the Writings of the Faith, the new Baha'is are radiant and excited, greeting each other like true brothers and sisters whenever they are together. Their first Feast, the Feast of Masa'il, was held in mid-December. Gathered in the sunny atmosphere of the park prayers and selections from the Hidden Words were read, then refreshments served using as a table the cart of one of the believers who is a fruit vendor in the park. It is this beautiful soul who helps spread the word of the next meetings while another acts as group correspondent. Three homes have been opened for Baha'i gatherings and a Naw-Ruz celebration is planned to which the Baha'is of Rosarito are invited. Now that there are homes in which to assemble, meetings among themselves will be encouraged and study classes arranged with the assistance of the pioneers. The team is currently holding weekly deepening classes in Rosarito which the group attends to strengthen themselves and their teaching effort.

It is hoped that both Ensenada and Rosarito will be able to reach Assembly status by Ridván of this year. The pioneering effort is planned to continue until the areas are stabilized and self-sufficient, bringing about a spiritual awakening to an entire city of beautiful waiting souls.

Other such localities can be awakened by the efforts of just a few believers if they are willing to leave their homes for the purpose of teaching the Faith. Such opportunities are among the most precious experiences any Baha'i can have and the source of enduring, cherished memories in the service of the Cause of Baha'u'llah.

Study and deepening class at Rosarito, Mexico, which meets weekly. The charts in Spanish, made by Kay Patton, were useful as visual aids. A group was formed in 1967 and since then there have been thirteen declarations. This picture was made on March 3, 1972.

First teaching trip to Ensenada, Mexico by team on October 31, 1971. Esperanza Herrera on bench, second from left; Kay Patton standing, third from left. The third member of the team was a Mexican youth who took the picture.
Commemoration of the Anniversary of Faith in Australia

To mark the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Bahá’í Faith in Australia, members of Sutherland Bahá’í Community, on 28th August 1971, met at the beautiful E. G. Waterhouse National Camellia Garden, overlooking picturesque Yowie Bay, for a tree planting.

The President of the Camellia Research Society, Mr. Harris, welcomed the Bahá’í friends warmly and said he hoped their gesture would stimulate other groups to honor such occasions with tree planting.

Councillor Mrs. Jean Manuel, Deputy President of the Sutherland Shire, who performed the tree planting ceremony, has a very good, close association with the Sutherland Bahá’í Community. From the book, Divine Art of Living given to her previously, she said she had noticed how often flowers were mentioned as well as happiness, which seemed to typify Bahá’ís. She observed how much the Faith had progressed in the past fifty years and was positive of even greater progress in the next fifty. Her remarks about the friends’ involvement in local community work were most appreciative.

The Curator, Mr. Uteck, had chosen an American variety of camellia and said he felt this was quite significant when he learned later that the two pioneers responsible for bringing the Faith to Australia were Americans. As he had formerly worked on the construction of the Australian House of Worship he was especially interested.

Mrs. Manuel was presented with a bouquet featuring a camellia, by Mrs. E. Biles, and a copy of To Follow a Dreamtime which was published by the Australian National Assembly to mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bahá’í Faith in Australia, giving an account of the early history, before and during the formative years with Mr. and Mrs. Hyde-Dunn, the spiritual conquerors of a nation.

A number of the friends later went to the Hyde-Dunn Memorial at the Woronora Cemetery where prayers were read by all. Present was a member of the original Local Spiritual Assembly of Sutherland, Mrs. Gertrude Muller, now their oldest believer, over ninety, who has continued to play an active role in the affairs of the community.

At the Hyde-Dunn Memorial, Woronora Cemetery in Sutherland, New South Wales, Australia, following the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Bahá’í Faith in Australia. Mr. and Mrs. Hyde-Dunn, fondly called “Father” and “Mother” were the original pioneers in Australia, and from the United States followed the summons of Abdu’l-Bahá to leave their homes to establish the Faith.

Left to right are: Miss M. Lomé, Mrs. N. Rose, Mr. T. Curwen, Mrs. Muller, Jr., Mrs. A. Curwen, Mrs. G. Muller, Sr., and Mrs. E. Biles.
Activities of Hand of Cause Robarts and Teaching Team of Sydney

At 5 a.m. on the 12th of January 1972 Minoo received a telephone call that the teaching team "was here!" This was the beginning of a whirlwind of activities which lasted eighteen hours a day for more than a week.

The teaching team from Sydney, which consisted of Paul, Beverly and Scott Stafford, Munira, Samira and Farah (only six years old) Sohail, and Munira Yaganegi, had arrived. The Perth believers were caught by surprise but hurriedly arranged accommodation in the homes of Marcia and Hugh Walker and Minoo and Marjorie Fozdar. We thought that after a strenuous drive from Sydney the teaching team would want to rest for a day or so but after a couple of hours they were insisting that the teaching work begin. Together with a few local Bahá'ís they set out for Victoria Park and began mass teaching along the streets. The local believers who were with the Teaching Team were at first diffident but soon got over their shyness as they saw the veterans in action. Each day from then on the teaching team was out on the streets, in shopping centers, in parks, at the University and along the beaches, spreading the message of Bahá'u'lláh. A public talk was arranged for Hand of the Cause Mr. John Robarts on the 19th of January and this talk was greatly publicized by the teaching team. Posters were made and put out in numerous shops and thousands of handbills were distributed.

On January 15 the younger members of the teaching team attended a youth fireside held at the home of Barbara and Charlie Pierce.

As it was emphasized that the fruits gained by mass teaching had to be consolidated and the new believers deepened, it was decided to hold a teaching and deepening institute in the home of Minoo and Marjorie Fozdar on January 16. About thirty believers attended this institute. The session on deepening was conducted by Mrs. Beverly Stafford and the one on teaching, by Mrs. Munira Sohail. In order not to waste any time, it was decided to listen to Mr. William Sears' tape "Wake Up, America" during the lunch hour and then at the Institute, some believers went mass teaching to King's Park while others stayed back and said the Remover of Difficulties 500 times.

Beloved Hand of the Cause, Mr. John Robarts arrived on Monday January 17 and though he was tired and unwell he agreed to address a fireside at the home of Delphine and Sohail Tahiri. Though there were some non-Bahá'ís in the gathering Mr. Robarts' address was mainly for the Bahá'ís. He stressed the need for Bahá'ís to say prayers and particularly emphasized the efficacy of saying the Remover of Difficulties. He told us a number of stories of how success in teaching had taken place after the believers had said the Remover of Difficulties 500 times (as mentioned on page 119 in God Passes By). On the 18th, at noon, Hand of the Cause Mr. John Robarts, Paul and Beverly Stafford and Miss Ottile Strempel, paid a courtesy call on the Lord Mayor of Perth, Sir Thomas Wardle. They were well received and Sir Thomas remembered that he had previously been presented with the book, The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh.

On Tuesday evening a Unity Feast was held at the home of Marcia and Hugh Walker. Mr. Robarts again stressed the importance of prayer and advised the Bahá'ís to try to say the Long Obligatory Prayer.

The climax of the activities for the week took place on Wednesday when a public talk was given by Mr. Robarts at the Builders Exchange Hall. Minoo Fozdar chaired the meeting. The Hall was packed to capacity with almost eighty people present, the majority of whom were non-Bahá'ís. Mr. Robarts gave an inspiring talk on the Faith and questions were asked after the talk. An hour and a half after the meeting, enquirers were still discussing the Faith with Bahá'ís and there were three declarations at the meeting from two adults and one youth. On Thursday the 20th Mr. Robarts left for Melbourne and the teaching team proceeded to the goal towns of Pinjarra, Collie and Bunbury from where they will go back home to Sydney. Perth will never be the same again after their visit! During the short time over 450 leaflets and reply-paid cards were distributed. One Bahá'í from Mauritius and one from Canada who had not previously contacted the Bahá'ís in Perth were found and invited to participate in the activities here. Four adults and one youth accepted the Faith and a great number of friendships were made. The Bahá'ís of Western Australia have every intention of keeping up the pace set by the visitors. Deepening evenings have been arranged for the new believers.

When the teaching team was in the heart of the City a TV team took pictures and interviewed the Bahá'ís. The telecast on the Faith was presented in a dignified manner during the news on Wednesday the 19th. A small item about Mr. Robarts' visit and about the teaching team also appeared in the newspapers, The Western Australian and The Independent.

FOOTBALL TEAM PROCLAIMS FAITH

A Bahá'í football team of Yasothon, Thailand is a winner. This team played against Yasothon Police, Bangkok Bank (Yasothon branch) and Thai Farmers Bank of Yasothon, defeated all three and won three cups. The Deputy Governor of Yasothon is shown in the photo, standing fourth from the left, in white. The success of this team created unusual interest in the Faith and was the means of many people asking for literature.
Bolivian pioneers who attended the Peru International Summer School held in January 1972 with Continental Counsellor Sr. Athos Costas, standing at right. Next to him is Auxiliary Board member Manucher Shohai and standing, second at left, Bolivian Board member Andres Jachakollo.

Peruvian Summer School

Peruvian Bahá’í Summer School held near Lima took on international flavor with classes given by Counsellors of South America and Auxiliary Board members.

A social gathering of Bahá’ís of Lima, Peru, with some pioneers from neighboring countries and participants of the All Counsellors—Auxiliary Board Members Conference. Dr. Carlos Martinez, Board member from Chile, (with white hair in center back) is talking to the youth.
From America to
Malaysia With Love

Charming, gracious and radiant Florence Mayberry, Continental Counsellor from the United States won the hearts of the Baha’is of Singapore and Malaysia when she visited us in September 1971. Fresh from the heights of Sapporo, her spirit and enthusiasm was felt by all the friends at the meeting arranged for her throughout the country......

Florence shared with friends the highlights of her teaching experiences in many countries and left them with simple analogies and beautiful stories which they can continue to use themselves when giving the Message to others.

To quote one which she had used in Sapporo:

“*It’s like breathing in and breathing out. . . . If a person were to inhale and then hold his breath and not ever breathe out, (if such a state is possible) he would first turn blue then fall into a coma, and eventually die. When we receive the message and accept Baha’u’llah, it’s like breathing in; when we teach and give to others, it’s like breathing out. The one has to follow the other or we remain in a coma, of no use to ourselves or anyone else. Then eventually we die a spiritual death. . . . All the deepening that Bahá’ís receive at conferences and meetings and through the Holy Writings, all this corresponds to long deep breaths of pure air that refresh and gladden our spirits—but beware lest we don’t follow through with a pouring out to others. . . .*

October 1971 MALAYSIAN BAHÁ’I NEWS

The Kedah Peak Experiment
(Malaysia)

It was Counsellor Florence Mayberry who introduced the germ of a new idea in deepening. A group of Bahá’ís from Kedah were among the over a hundred friends who had gathered in Butterworth to listen to her talk. Mrs. Mayberry described a new kind of institute being held in Canada and Alaska, . . . wherein a limited number of Bahá’ís gathered together for intensive deepening, using the Holy Writings exclusively, and involving a hundred percent participation.

The Kedah friends had been toying with the idea of a spiritual “retreat!” up Kedah Peak. Now they knew what shape it would take. On the evening of October 14th, 1971 three cars packed with twenty-one friends went up the hill. Included in this group was National Teaching Committee member Seelan on an official visit from Kuala Lumpur. Seelan was quite unprepared for the heights he was to climb in the company of this group of Northern Bahá’ís!

The long and narrow road wound its way for six steep miles up to a solitary bungalow (the Kedah Sultan’s winter palace) on the top of the hill at a height of 3,200 ft. above sea-level. It was winter up there! The dew was falling like rain and the atmosphere created an ideal mood for prayer. The group felt quite out of this world.

After dinner, the friends were briefed on their unique program. A forty-hour non-stop prayer vigil was launched for the Nineteen Days of the Second Valley of the Qawl Plan goals and Kedah’s Qawl Plan.* Six groups of person recited prayers in one hour shifts around a real fire, and this went on throughout the night.

Early in the morning the deepening class began on the Hidden Words. Everyone read the same paragraph, then expressed his understanding of the verse and also stated his personal reaction to it. The counsellor did not explain or comment. After each round, everybody there had acquired a much wider understanding of every line, through the thoughts of the other friends. This session went on for four hours in two groups with a lunch break in between. The vastness of the hidden treasure that they discovered in the Hidden Words, amazed everyone of the participants.

The next session was on the Gleanings. As they had already warmed up to the readings, the Gleanings proved even more exciting and inspiring. The study class only broke up for dinner and then the friends celebrated the Nineteen Days of the Qawl Plan, the friends gathered round for the final prayers of the forty-hour vigil which had been a source of unexpected inspiration to all the participants.

After the Feast, they attempted to enter the first valley in the series of seven — but though their spirits were willing, most of the friends were too exhausted to go beyond the second valley, and they dropped off to sleep one by one! The prayer circle of course continued throughout the night.

The next morning’s program was more informal with tape-recordings by Hands of the Cause William Sears and Ruhiyyih Khanum. At about noon, the friends gathered round for the final prayers of the forty-hour vigil which had been a source of unexpected inspiration to all the participants.

The whole experiment turned out to be even more successful than they had hoped. Having floated for almost two days on cloud nine, the general opinion was that everyone felt 3,200 feet closer to God!

During the fortnight following this prayer vigil about one hundred and fifty declarations were received in Kedah, and the friends were amazed at the spirit released in the area. The Qawl Plan goals were fulfilled a hundred percent.

*Under the Qawl Plan, the current National Teaching Committee teaching program for Malaysia, Kedah State had fulfilled all its goals except one—the required increase in believers.

October 1971 MALAYSIAN BAHÁ’I NEWS

New Center in Freeport, Grand Bahama Island

New Center in Freeport, Grand Bahama Island. Henry Wigfall, pioneer, is assisted by Mr. Thompson to erect a sign.
Deepening Conference in the Philippines

Bahá'ís from Mindanao who attended the December 1971 Deepening Conference for the Bahá'ís of the Philippines at the National Headquarters in Manila. Counsellor for Northeast Asia Vic Samaniego is in the front row, center. In the center row, left to right are Auxiliary Board members Miss Toni Mantel, Mr. Anunsacion and Mr. Fred Ramirez.

The Deepening Conference held in Manila, Dec. 23-30, 1971, was planned and prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly and the National Teaching Committee of the Bahá'ís of the Philippines. The theme of the Conference was “A New Way of Life—the Role of a Bahá'í Teacher.” The keynote of the Conference was discipline. It is encouraging to note that this Conference was attended daily by sixty Bahá'í representatives from various Islands of the Philippines, perhaps indicating the growing need of the Bahá'ís themselves to become deepened in the teachings of our beloved Faith.

Continental Counsellor Mr. Vic Samaniego, who recently returned from Japan and Taiwan honored the Bahá'ís with his presence. He spoke at various times during the week-long Conference advising and encouraging the friends. The three Auxiliary Board members of the Philippines were also present: Miss Toni Mantel, Mr. Dominador Anunsacion, and Mr. Fred Ramirez.

During this Conference, lectures and discussions were held every morning. Topics concerned: History of the Bahá'í Faith, the Meaning of Bahá'í Teacher, Developing a Functioning Bahá'í Community, Foundation of a New World Order, Bahá'í Faith in Relation to Present Day Conditions in the Country, Universal Participation, and the Bahá'í Code of Conduct.

The first few afternoons were planned group teaching trips to parks, local and international airports, train stations—places where we could have actual teaching experiences. This proved to be very successful. Hundreds of people were given a friendly introduction to the Bahá'í Faith and several enrolled under the banner of the Blessed Beauty! While these teaching efforts gave so many people the opportunity to hear about Bahá'u'lláh, at the same time it gave the Bahá'ís who taught, in groups of three to five, more confidence in their own teaching ability.

The last half of the conference, the afternoons were given to group consultation, evaluation of the Conference, and teaching plans for various areas of the Philippine. At the beginning of this Conference it was mentioned that during these few days together we would be learning from each other—that we are all teachers and at the same time we are all students. This was very noticeable during this special week as the Bahá'í friends freely participated in consultation, discussion, and teaching plans and activities.

Beginning the morning of December 25, prayers were continually offered at the Bahá'í National Headquarters during a twenty-four-hour period involving the help of Bahá'u'lláh for unity of the Bahá'ís and for teaching progress in the Philippines.

The highlight of the Conference was a brief and fast-moving skit written and directed by Mrs. Orpha Daugherty. Everyone readily agreed that this type of learning is most enjoyable and memorable! Mrs. Daugherty said the idea for this skit was taken from the teaching of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and shows the need for individual independent investigation. The Bahá'í actors for this skit came on stage holding cardboard shapes resembling houses. The windows of each house were a different color from the windows of the neighboring houses. The 'owners' of each house insisted the color of the sun was the same as the color of their windows, until one owner decided to go outside his home and then discovered for himself the true color of the sun! With quite a bit of overacting on the part of the actors, the center rang with laughter—and a new lesson in consolidation was learned!

The main concern at this time was how to consolidate the newly enrolled Bahá'ís, especially in the schools in their areas. Following the guidance of a letter from The Universal House of Justice dated Nov. 10, 1971, the National Teaching Committee met with individual groups of Bahá'ís who were representatives of their area and suggested that Regional Student Affairs Coordinating Councils be established as well as local Coordinating Councils for a particular locality, and in turn Coordinating Councils in each school where there are Bahá'ís. Unity groups consisting of five Bahá'ís would
be formed in each school for the purpose of deepening and teaching. Also it was suggested that the Regional or Local Council prepare mimeographed deepening material for individual students and Bahá’í books be placed in the school libraries. This plan for consolidation had recently been put into motion in the Bikol area of Luzon and the Bahá’ís in that area felt that with continued attention, this is a very workable plan. The Bahá’ís attending this Conference were anxious to return to their post and put this plan into action.

Meeting for seven consecutive days for a deepening Conference, one couldn’t help but learn a great deal. The friends were encouraged by the chairman of the ‘steering committee’, Mrs. Fe Samaniego, to take notes at every session so that we could better remember our newly acquired knowledge and after the Conference, share it with our friends who were unable to attend. The speakers, who were asked by National Teaching Committee to speak on the chosen topics frequently quoted from the Writings and gave the name of the book and page number, making it easier for those who wanted to do further research on that particular subject. At the end of the Conference notes of the topics given, including sources of the material used, were mimeographed and distributed to the Bahá’ís.

Concerning the first part of the theme of this Conference, “A New Way of Life,” Counsellor Samaniego said, “The Bahá’í Faith can produce special people.” He went on to say, “In the Bahá’í Faith personality does not count—if it does, the more the Bahá’í Faith is diminished. One requirement of the Faith is to be humble.” He said, “We should develop within ourselves the qualities of a Bahá’í, ‘Beware lest ye give good counsel, but forget to follow it yourself.’” Counsellor Samaniego suggested that we should think of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Exemplar of our Faith, and try to think what He would do in a particular situation in which we may find ourselves.

The last part of the theme of the Conference, “The Role of a Bahá’í Teacher”, Auxiliary Board member Miss Toni Mantel asked the Bahá’ís what they thought was expected of a Bahá’í teacher. Their responses included such qualities as kindness, love, thoughtfulness, humility, honesty, devotion, wisdom, courage, resourcefulness—only to mention a few, but their answers indicated a keen understanding.

This Conference was planned as a week of intensive learning; but since we are able to absorb only so much at a time, all the Bahá’ís enjoyed frequent singing sessions, Bahá’í slides and tapes, periods of free time—and always an abundance of loving fellowship and happiness!

It is my impression that the Bahá’ís left this Conference for their respective posts with a much deeper and undoubtedly a more thoughtful outlook concerning their individual Bahá’í responsibilities.

— By Sara Lewis

Prayer Power

The efficacy of the Remover of Difficulties said 500 times, and also of the Long Obligatory Prayer have been frequently pointed out to Bahá’ís by Hand of the Cause John Robarts. Many persons especially in Canada and Australia, have written to him, telling him of their individual experiences with these particular prayers. In the March 1972 Australian Bahá’í Bulletin a believer wrote: “I’m happier and more able to talk about the beloved Faith than I was before” and was thankful that after using these prayers had received the blessing of being able to sleep without the usual sleeping pills.

Another wrote of using the Remover of Difficulties, commenting: “It has been, without doubt, the most significant thing in my whole life, one verse, revolutionizing my whole life!”

Another suggests a way to keep count for 500 times: “The simplest means we have used is to sit with a book on one’s lap and turn the pages until one reaches page 500, saying the prayer twice for every time one turns the page. The obvious book to use is The Daembrkeakers—it is ideal and on page 503 is a picture of the Báb’s prayer beads, His signet ring and His Qur’án.”

Volunteer Bolivian Indian teachers from the Department of Cochabamba who attended an intensive three-day deepening study course, February 29 through March 2, 1972, held at the National Bahá’í Institute.

Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Muhájir with the Bolivian friends on March 5, 1972 in front of the National Bahá’í Institute in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Dr. Muhájir is seated in front with a child in his arms.

In Liberia Holy Days Are Recognized

The Education Ministry in the Republic of Liberia has officially recognized the observance of Bahá’í Holy Days. The Minister of Education has instructed the Supervisors and Principals of schools to give leave to Bahá’í students if they request it. A list of the nine Holy Days was attached to the instructions sent out by the Education Department. It will be necessary for each parent to send in a letter, explaining that they are Bahá’ís and want their children to celebrate a Bahá’í Holy Day.
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**Thousands Visit Liberian Bahá’í Exhibit**

At the national celebration on January 7, 1972, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first pioneers who came to Liberia on Providence Island, the Bahá’ís of Monrovia decided to take advantage of the opportunity to have a Bahá’í exhibit on the Island. The Bahá’ís were the only religious groups represented.

Thousands of people from all over the world and from all strata of society came to the booth and received information about the Faith. Several hundred pamphlets were distributed. Non-Liberians promised they would try to find Bahá’ís when they returned home.

The design of the booth was approved by the Secretary of Information and Cultural Affairs. The designer was not a Bahá’, but young and old worked side by side until late at night to complete the exhibit in two days.

The booth brought favorable comment from the radio and was a project which brought enthusiasm to the believers.

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Mother Temple of Latin America
View from the Air
The Nature of the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors

Letter from The Universal House of Justice

To the Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies

Beloved Friends,

Recently we have received queries from several sources about the nature of the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors and its relationship to the Institution of the Hands of the Cause, and we feel it is timely for us to give further elucidation.

As with so many aspects of the Administrative Order, understanding of this subject will develop and clarify with the passage of time as that Order grows organically in response to the power and guidance of Almighty God and in accordance with the needs of a rapidly developing world-wide community. However, certain aspects are already so clear as to require a proper understanding by the friends.

In the Kitáb-i-'Ahd (the Book of His Covenant) Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "Blessed are the rulers and the learned in Al-Bahá", and referring to this very passage the beloved Guardian wrote 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.)

The Hands of the Cause of God, the Counsellors and the members of the Auxiliary Boards fall within the definition of the “learned” given by the beloved Guardian. Thus they are all intimately interrelated and it is not incorrect to refer to the three ranks collectively as one institution.

However, each is also a separate institution in itself. The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God was brought into existence in the time of Bahá'u'lláh and when the Administrative Order was proclaimed and formally established by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1912 it became an auxiliary institution of the Guardianship. The Auxiliary Boards, in their turn, were brought into being by Shoghi Effendi as an auxiliary institution of the Hands of the Cause.

When, following the passing of Shoghi Effendi, The Universal House of Justice decided that it could not legislate to make possible the appointment of further Hands of the Cause, it became necessary for it to create a new institution, appointed by itself, to extend into the future the functions of protection and propagation vested in the Hands of the Cause and, with that in view, so to develop the Institution of the Hands that it could nurture the new institution and function in close collaboration with it as long as possible. It was also vital so to arrange matters as to make the most effective use of the unique services of the Hands themselves.

The first step in this development was taken in November 1964 when The Universal House of Justice formally related the Institution of the Hands to itself by stating that “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.” At that time the number of members of the Auxiliary Boards was increased from 72 to 135, and the Hands of the Cause in each continent were called upon to appoint one or more members of their Auxiliary Boards to act in an executive capacity on behalf of and in the name of each Hand, thereby assisting him in carrying out his work.

In June 1968 the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors was brought into being, fulfilling the goal of extending the aforementioned functions of the Hands into the future, and this momentous decision was accompanied by the next step in the development of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause: the continental Hands were to serve henceforth on a world-wide basis and operate individually in direct relationship to The Universal House of Justice; the Hands ceased to be responsible for the direction of the Auxiliary Boards, which became an auxiliary institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors; the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land were given the task of acting as liaison between The Universal House of Justice and the Boards of Counsellors; and the working inter-relationships between the Hands and the Boards of Counsellors were established. Reference was also made to the future establishment by The Universal House of Justice, with the assistance of the Hands residing in the Holy Land, of an international teaching center in the Holy Land.

In July 1969 and at Ridván 1970 further increases in the numbers of Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members were made.

Other developments in the Institution of the Hands of the Cause and the Institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors will no doubt take place in future as the international teaching center comes into being and as the work of the Counsellors expands.

We have noted that the Hands, the Counsellors and the Auxiliary Boards are sometimes referred to by the friends as the “appointive arm” of the Administrative Order in contradistinction to the Universal House of Justice and the National and Local Assemblies which constitute the “elective arm”. While there is truth in this description as it applies to the method used in the creation of these institutions, the friends should understand that it is not only the fact of appointment that particularly distinguishes the institutions of the Hands, Counsellors and Auxiliary Boards. There are, for instance, many more believers appointed to committees in the “elective arm” than are serving in the so-called “appointive arm”. A more striking distinction is that whereas the “rulers” in the Cause function as corporate bodies, the “learned” operate primarily as individuals.

In a letter written on 14 March 1927 to the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Istanbul, the Guardian's Secretary explained, on his behalf, the principle in the Cause of action by majority vote. He pointed 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". "But praise be to God" he continued, "that the Pen of Glory has done away with the unyielding and dictatorial views of the learned and the wise dismissed the assertions of individuals as an authoritative criterion, even though they were recognized as the most accomplished and learned among men and ordained that all matters be referred to authorized centers and specified Assemblies. Even so, no Assembly has been invested with the absolute authority to deal with such general matters as affect the interests of nations. Nay rather, He has brought all the Assemblies together under the shadow of one House of Justice, one divinely-appointed Center, so that there would be only one Center and all the rest integrated into a single body revolving around one expressly-designated Pivot, thus making them all proof against schism and division." (Translated from the Persian).

Having permanently excluded the evils admittedly inherent in the institutions of the "learned" in past dispensations, Bahá’u’lláh has nevertheless embodied in His Administrative Order the beneficent elements which exist in such institutions, elements which are of fundamental value for the progress of the Cause, as can be gauged from even a cursory reading of the Guardian’s Message of 4 June 1957.

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. 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 recognized.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,

—The Universal House of Justice

April 24, 1972

Message to Panama from The Universal House of Justice

To the Beloved of God gathered in the Conference called on the occasion of the Dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

With praise and gratitude to God the whole Bahá’í world acclaims the dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, an edifice which glorifies the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh at that point where, the beloved Master asserted, "the Occident and the Orient find each other united through the Panama Canal," where "the teachings, once established . . . will unite the East and the West, the North and the South."

This historic project, in a hemisphere of infinite spiritual potentiality, fulfills one of the most important goals of the Nine Year Plan, and brings untold joy to the hearts of the friends in every land. Privileged are they who shared in the raising of this glorious Bahá’í Temple with deeds of loving generosity and sacrifice. A crown to the labors of all those who have striven to establish the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh in Latin America, this Mashriqu’l-Adhkar, the rallying point for the Bahá’ís of those lands, whether they are of the blessed Indian peoples or represent the other races whose diversity enriches the nations of that hemisphere, will be a fountainhead of spiritual confirmations, and this mighty achievement will endow the Bahá’í Community with new and greater capacities, enabling the friends in Latin America, and particularly in this privileged land of Panama, to win victories that will eclipse all their past achievements.

The three-fold task to which your attention is now directed comprises the proclamation, expansion and consolidation of the Faith. We urge you to concentrate your deliberations not only on the exchange of ideas for the prosecution of this task, but on ways and means for fostering collaboration among the Bahá’í Communities of Central and South America so that the most fruitful harvest may be gathered in all three aspects of the teaching work and enable you to achieve your remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan.

Our loving, ardent prayers will be offered at the Sacred Threshold, that the Almighty may inspire your discussions in this historic Conference and crown all your efforts with victory.

—The Universal House of Justice

March 19, 1972
CABLE TO HAIFA FROM PANAMA CONFERENCE

HEARTS OVERFLOWING JOY GRATITUDE GLORIOUS DEDICATION MAGNIFICENT MOTHER TEMPLE LATE IN AMERICA. PRIVILEGED GREAT SPIRITUAL BOUNTY VIEW PORTRAITS TWIN MANIFESTATIONS BLESSED BY PRESENCE YOUR DIGNIFIED REPRESENTATIVES HANDCAUSE AMATUL-BAHA RUPHYH KHANUM GIAHERY KHADEM ETHERIAL BEAUTY TEMPLE ATTRACTING SOULS PROCLAIMING CAUSE Baha'u'llah YOUR INSPIRING MESSAGE GALVANIZED OVER 4,000 FRIENDS GATHERED CONFERENCE REPRESENTING 26 COUNTRIES 16 INDIAN TRIBES REDOUBLE EFFORTS FULFILL REMAINING GOALS HONORED PRESENCE 7 COUNSELLORS 22 BOARD MEMBERS 10 KNIGHTS 26 NSA REPRESENTATIVES CONFIRMATIONS EVIDENT 103 PIONEER OFFERS TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS OVER 700 DOLLARS 2400 ENROLLMENTS FOUR WEEKS PRIOR AND DURING CONFERENCE SUPPLICATE PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD ENABLING BELIEVERS ACHIEVE RESOUNDING VICTORY FINAL YEAR NINE YEAR PLAN.

PANAMA CONFERENCE

Some of the audience at one of the four Dedication services on Saturday, April 29, 1972.
During the Dedication a reading is presented by a Cuna believer.

The Greatest Name in the center of the dome of the Temple.

Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum, as she took part in the Temple Dedication service.
Dedication Program
Saturday, April 29, 1972

8:00 A.M.  11:00 A.M.
2:00 P.M.  5:00 P.M.

Choral Selection
Message of Dedication of the House of Worship
Hand of the Cause of God
Amatu'l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánúm

Prayer of the Báb  Báb
Day of God  Baha’u’lláh
Prayer for Humanity  ’Abdu’l-Bahá
Prayer of Thanksgiving  Baha’u’lláh
Prayer for Unity  Baha’u’lláh
The Tablet of Visitation  Baha’u’lláh
Choral Selection

Presentation of the Sacred Pictures
Choral Selections by
National Conservatory of Music Chorus
Coro Polifonico

Readers for the Dedication service on Saturday, April 29, 1972 were: Hand of the Cause of God Rúhíyyih Khánum; Manuel Flores of El Salvador; Helen Hornby, Ecuador; Octavio Hernandez, Guatemala; Adelina de Leon (in Cuna) San Blas Islands; Clarissa Bryan, Panama; Foad Izadinia (Persian pioneer), Panama; Marcie Porter, Mexico; Rodrigo Tomas, Costa Rica; James Facey, Panama; Elias Zohoori, Jamaica; Jane Czerniejewski, Panama; Frederic J. Berest, Panama.

A group of believers outside the Temple waiting to enter the Dedication service.
Who Built the Temple?

Only the National Assembly of the Baha’is of Panama know the whole story of the building of their impressive House of Worship out on Cerro Sonsonate, six miles from the city. Since 1964 when they accepted the challenge of their World Center in Haifa, Israel, to “Build a Temple in Panama!” theirs has been the burden and privilege of the staggering decisions and administrative labor.

This is the first or Mother Temple of Latin America. Its erection is of international concern. Though locally the membership was few in numbers and resources, it knew that the whole Baha’i world community of over 3,000,000 in 313 countries would rally to its assistance.

The National Treasurer tells that story:

“The money has all come from Baha’is—every cent of the $1,000,000 it will cost after the nine gardens have been landscaped. Funds are never solicited nor accepted from the public for our Institutions. They are a free gift to humanity.

“Generous gifts from our wealthy members and other National Assemblies have come, but the greater portion has been sent by individuals who have sacrificed until it hurt. We are taught that the spiritual reward of giving is in proportion to the sacrifice involved. Some have even taken this literally, and given all.

“Like the Guaymi Indian who walked up to the speaker’s table when the call went out for funds, emptied his pockets of every cent he had (49 of them) and said, ‘For the Temple!’ Or the old lady in Africa who brought an egg to be sold and we received the 28 cents ‘for the Temple.’

“The money has come from the $2 and the $5 saved from the budgets of teachers, housewives, laborers, professionals, farmers. The most regular contributor we had was a man in Texas who has sent a check for $10, sometimes $20, on the first of every month for all these years.”

It has come from Canada and Switzerland, from Brazil and Japan, from Hawaii and Germany and Vietnam. And the San Blas Islands, where the Cuna women sold their beautiful molas and proudly presented $93 “for the Temple!”

Countless services have also been rendered. Three Baha’i engineers hurried to Panama to assist. The secretarial load has been tremendous with correspondence going out to so many individuals and 94 National Assemblies; progress reports, letters of acknowledgment, articles for magazines, public relations jobs. One local family has nurtured thousands of saplings and shrubs until they could be transplanted to the gardens. Artists and typists, printers and writers, photographers and carpenters and many, many others have lent their time and talents “to the Temple!”

From the selection of the unique architectural design so beautifully suited to the contour of the mountain setting, to the Dedication Conference, April 29-May 2, all has been team work, freely donated.

Some of those who worked for the Panama Temple and to make the Dedication and Conference a success: Panama National Spiritual Assembly members (left to right) Mrs. Elsa Campbell; Mrs. Femaline Dunbar; Mr. Harry Haye; (fifth) Mr. Arthur Krummel, Treasurer; Mrs. Leota Lockman, Secretary; Alan Pringle; Mrs. Raquel de Constante, Chairman. The man behind the shoulders of Mr. Haye and Mr. Krummel is Mr. Woody Chastain, in charge of the print shop. At the extreme right is Mrs. Mary Macdonald who assisted Mr. Chastain and is Secretary of the Audio-Visual Aids Committee. Additional members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama, not in the photo are: Cirilo Sanchez, Luis Cuevas and Kenneth Francisco.
Blessed and inspired by the presence of the representative of The Universal House of Justice, Hand of the Cause Collie Featherstone, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the North West Pacific Ocean was formed in a corrugated iron movie theater on the island of Ponape in the Caroline Islands at its national convention April 22nd and 23rd.

Geographically the assembly embraces the Mariana, Caroline and Marshall Islands. Politically this area consists of Guam, an American territory, and Micronesia, a trust territory of the United Nations administered by the United States.

Mr. Howard Harwood, of the Board of Counsellors for Australasia, accompanied Hand of the Cause Featherstone on visits to each of the districts of this vast area. They assisted the Convention and the new National Assembly with wise counsel. Auxiliary Board members Miss Virginia Breaks (Australasia), Knight of Baha'is to the Caroline Islands, Dr. Jane McCants (North America) and Mrs. Kazuko Hayashi Bray (North East Asia) also participated. The representative from the "parent" National Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands was Mr. Katsugi Tamanaha.

In spite of a disruption of plane schedules just before and during the Convention, all nine of the delegates were present, gathered with some eighty observers.

In the past year the teaching work in the area had been greatly assisted by the introduction of mass teaching efforts with the visit by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhajir, and the extensive travels of a team led by Knight of Baha'u'llah Poova Murday. Eighteen new Local Assemblies were formed this year, bringing the total to twenty-six. Especially inspiring was the arrival during the Convention of those who had gone to these new Assembly areas and assisted in the formation of Local Assemblies.

The dedication of the believers was reinforced by the statement of Mr. Featherstone that he has seen in Micronesia a potential for mass enrollments, which, if tapped, could rival the victories in India and Bolivia.

North West Pacific Ocean newly elected National Spiritual Assembly members. Standing, left to right: Harlan Lang (Secretary), Francis Reimers (Vice Chairman), Yowakim Francis, and Saimon Rehobson. Sitting, left to right: Richard Benson (Treasurer), Joy Faily Benson (Chairman), Rose Makwelung, Cynthia Olson, and Stem Salle.
Newly elected members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Puerto Rico, left to right: Mrs. Maull; Josephine Comacho, Assistant Treasurer; Sunni De Var; Rachael Barick, Secretary; David Hunt, Vice Chairman; Ken Kalentar, Assistant Secretary (Spanish); Jose Monge, Chairman; Tom Burke, Zelma Arce, Treasurer.

First National Convention of Puerto Rico

First National Convention of Puerto Rico. Representative of The Universal House of Justice, Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery is seated at the right of Mrs. Giachery, at the corner of the table. Representative of the United States National Spiritual Assembly, the sponsoring Assembly, is Dr. Dwight Allen, second from the left at the table.
First National Convention of Singapore. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Shirin Fozdar is seated, second from left; Counsellor Mr. Yan Kee Leong (in dark suit) is standing to her right; Hand of the Cause Mr. Jalal Khazeh is holding the Greatest Name; standing at the extreme right are Counsellors K. H. Payman and Counsellor Dr. C. J. Sundaram.

Singapore Elects First National Assembly

Newly elected members of the Singapore National Spiritual Assembly, with Hand of the Cause Mr. Jalal Khazeh. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Lena Tan, Mrs. George Lee, Mr. Jalal Khazeh, Mrs. Rose Ong (Chairman), Miss Nita Sundram (Secretary). Standing: Mr. Kenneth Mak, M. Teo Geok Leng (Treasurer), Mr. G. Machambo (Vice-Chairman), Mr. Edward Teo, Mr. Henry Ong.
The First National Convention of Singapore

The Convention for electing the first National Spiritual Assembly for Singapore was held at the Y.M.C.A. on April 22, 23, 1972, in two air conditioned rooms adorned with flowers and welcoming banners. Prayers in English, Chinese and Tamil opened the session.

Honored guests were Hand of the Cause of God Mr. Jalâl Khážeh who was the representative of The Universal House of Justice; Counsellors for South East Asia Mr. Yan Kee Leong, Mr. K. H. Payman and Dr. C. J. Sundram; Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Shirin Fozdar from Thailand; Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Shant-a Sundram from Penang, West Malaysia and Mr. Imbun Chinniah from Kuala Lumpur.

Mr. Henry Ong was elected Chairman of the Convention and Mrs. Rose Ong was elected Secretary.

Greetings from eighty countries were received and read by Mrs. E. Gibson. After the reading of the message from The Universal House of Justice a committee was appointed to send a reply cable. A message from the Mother Assembly of Malaysia was read by Dr. John Fozdar.

There were five Local Spiritual Assemblies to elect the Singapore National Spiritual Assembly; Jurong, Bukit Panjang, Serangoon, Katong and City (Singapore). A newsletter kept them informed of activities. The Assembly of Bukit Panjang speaks Tamil, and possibly a future activity will be a newsletter in that language.

Before the election the writings of the Guardian on "Nature of Bahá’í Elections" was read.

After the election, a special Message to Singapore from The Universal House of Justice was presented. In it it was mentioned that two intercontinental conferences not originally meant for Singapore were held there, one in 1958 and in 1971. Goals assigned to Singapore to be completed by Ridván 1973 were:
1) Extensive translation and publication into Chinese
2) Teaching the Chinese people
3) Recognition of Bahá’í Holy Days and Bahá’í Marriage
4) Teaching the various ethnic groups
5) Incorporate the Local Spiritual Assembly of Singapore
6) Convert the local Bahá’í Center into the National Házíratul-Quds. Most important were the first two goals.

The Universal House of Justice sent a gift of a hand-woven carpet using the Greatest Name. Dr. Fozdar gave photographs of earlier believers of Singapore. Hand of the Cause Mr. Khážeh praised the Convention as the best he had attended.

PIONEER INSTITUTE, WILMETTE

Pioneers attending the Pioneer Institute at Wilmette on March 22-23, 1972 and their posts where they will serve the Faith. Left to right, rear: Thomas Richards, Southwest Africa; Monsell Laury, Leeward, Windward & Virgin Islands; Dan Salter, Zaire; James Selph, Latin America; Robert Altork, Colombia; Henry St. Gelais, Kenya; Alan Fryback, Ecuador; William Thompson, Norway; Stephen Stogre, Ecuador; Mark Murphy, Europe; front: Jacqueline Richards, Southwest Africa; Jeanne St. Gelais, Kenya; Ann Miller, Ecuador; Joyce Thompson, Norway.
Oh, how I long to announce unto every spot on the surface of the earth, and to carry to each of its cities the glad tidings of this Revelation... Gleanings, page 16 Bahá'u'lláh

These words of the Blessed Beauty reverberated around the world on April 21, 1972 as Bahá'í's on every continent and on the most remote islands celebrated the first day of Ridván. This was the anniversary of the declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, God's chosen Manifestation for the Age of Fulfillment. This was the season of planning as more than 4,000 Bahá'í's from around the world prepared to attend the dedication of the House of Worship in Panama, the heart of the Americas, the link between East and West. And this was the time of the sixty-third annual convention of the Bahá'í's of the United States.

Held one week earlier than usual because of the Panama Temple dedication, the National Convention of 1972 was preluded by the celebration of the Ridván Feast on Friday, April 21 in Foundation Hall. Among the highlights of the program was a talk by Mr. Jalil Mahmoudi on the monumental significance of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration, fulfilling the Lord's Prayer as prayer and prophecy, closing the Adamic Cycle and leading mankind into a new cycle of an unprecedented vista.

The focal point of the first session and throughout the Convention was the Message of The Universal House of Justice. An inspiration and challenge, the Message presented teaching and pioneering as the primary concerns of the world community and called for a distinction in Bahá'í life that must demonstrate to an increas-
"Poised For Overwhelming Victory."

ingly decadent world the path to its redemption.

Also highlighting the opening session was the presentation of members of the Board of Counsellors for North America: Miss Edna True, Mrs. Florence Mayberry, and Mr. Lloyd Gardner. Mr. Gardner shared the loving Message of the Counsellors; Miss True stressed the spiritual nature of the responsibilities which face the Baha'i Community and the assurance that practical goals can be achieved through spiritual means. Mrs. Mayberry painted an analogy between the inevitable season of spring and the inevitable season of God as the Kingdom of God on earth is coming into fruition.

This first session was closed dramatically as the first of twenty-five soldiers in the Cause of God streamed forward in response to the call of The Universal House of Justice to the field of pioneering.

The afternoon session opened with the report of the National Spiritual Assembly. The twin focuses of growth and challenge were again keynotes as the National Spiritual Assembly reported spiraling enrollments and called again for accelerated efforts in the divine tasks.

It noted the fiftieth observance of the passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha with two preeminent works: *Memorials of the Faithful* and the Fall 1971 issue of *World Order*. It cited the regional deepening conferences held in Little Rock, Fort Wayne and Reno, sponsored by the Continental Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members and referred to the South Carolina campaign which galvanized the world community in its phenomenal concentration, thrust, and results.

The increasing number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the United States was reported—the growth from 800 last year to over 940 this year. The spiraling number of localities where Bahá'ís reside was given—the mark from 4,600 to 4,800 in one year. And Bahá'í Clubs were reported as functioning in 277 colleges and 52 high schools and junior high schools.

Among other indications of the progress of the Faith in the last year were the eighty-two pioneers who ventured to foreign posts to fill goals in fifty-seven countries; the sixteen new American Indian tribes represented in the Faith, bringing the total to over one hundred tribes; and

*[Photo by Oscar and Associates, Chicago]*
the more than a quarter of a million persons from all over the world who visited the House of Worship in Wilmette last year.

"Operation Gabriel", as the South Carolina campaign was called, was the subject of much attention especially by delegates from areas where mass teaching has not yet gained momentum. Various participants in this historic endeavor described the operation of the campaign, its basis in prayer, its grounding in strong planning, and its vigor through concerted effort.

The South Carolina delegates, most of them attending the National Convention for the first time, poured out their hearts with sincerity and love, enabling other delegates to enrich their understanding of the conditions, the triumphs and opportunities now open in this and other states.

The evening session of April 22 focused upon the budget as National Treasurer Dr. Dorothy Nelson presented her report. After lengthy discussion of various facets of the financial picture, the delegates voted to approve the proposed budget of $2,500,000.

This session was also marked by the announcement of the results of voting by the delegates for the National Spiritual Assembly a few hours before. In a spirit of prayer and as an indication of support, the delegates elected the same National Spiritual Assembly as last year: Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Dr. Dwight Allen, Miss Magdalene Carney, Dr. Daniel Jordan, Mr. Franklin Kahn, Miss Charlotte Linfoot, Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Dr. Dorothy Nelson, and Dr. Sarah Pereira.

The session of Sunday evening, April 23 was one of international focus as the secretary of the International Goals Committee, Mrs. Eileen Norman, called for pioneers and for deputation of pioneers. The Baha'i representative to the United Nations, Dr. Victor de Araujo, cited the increase in opportunities to make known the goals and growth of the Faith throughout the world.

Focus beyond the Continental United States was again accented when Dr. Dwight Allen, fresh from the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of Puerto Rico, shared the excitement of this event. And the scope was again broadened when Mr. Salvatore Pelle, director of the Baha'i Information Office, was presented as he prepares to move to Hawaii to assist in the work there.

The evening was concluded with a late night showing of three new films: "It's a New Day," a musical film from Hawaii; "Give Me That New Time Religion," a film of commentary by Bahais of show business renown; and "Have You Heard the News, My Friend?" a film on the Jamaican conference, and three new television spot announcements.

The morning session of April 23 was sparked by the message from Hand of the Cause William Sears stressing the significance of the ninth year of the Nine Year Plan. Quoting the beloved Master in the call to arise, the Message resounds, "O ye servants of the Sacred Threshold! The triumphant Hosts of the Celestial Concourse, arrayed and marshalled in the Realms above, stand ready and expectant to assist and assure victory to that valiant horseman who with confidence spurs his charger into the arena of service."

The message from Mr. Sears was followed by a return to consultation on the Message of The Universal House of Justice and by a resounding unanimity of support for a recommendation to the National Spiritual Assembly that a plan of national scope be devised to draw upon the wealth of insight of experienced teaching teams and to inspire a monumental nation-wide thrust radiating from South Carolina.

Weekend retreats for prayers, study, and fellowship to prelude the national effort; a film strip-cassette aid to share teaching methods; and an unprecedented vigil of prayers were among the recommendations voiced by various delegates as the large scale effort caught the imagination and won the allegiance of the body of delegates.

The afternoon session turned attention to implications of living the life as Dr. Daniel Jordan, Vice-Chairman of

At the National Convention of the United States. Left to right: newly appointed Auxiliary Board member Eunice Braun; Auxiliary Board members Paul Pettit and Mrs. Javidul Khadem; Continental Counsellors Miss Edna True and Mr. Lloyd C. Gardiner; Auxiliary Board members Dr. Peter Khan and Miss Thelma Thomas. Not in photo were Counsellor Mrs. Florence Mayberry and Auxiliary Board member Miss D. Thelma Jackson.
the National Spiritual Assembly, stressed that there will be no New World Order if our understanding of teaching does not include "transformation of our inner lives." In consultation, the need for considering children in community life, the need for vitalizing the Nineteen-Day Feast, the need for overcoming the deadening influence of gossip and backbiting, the need for patience with each other's frailties, the need for unceasing effort toward the spiritual life were all cited among the considerations in making the Bahá'í life a reality.

The exigency of mass teaching was voiced from the Writings, from Messages of The Universal House of Justice, by members of the Board of Counsellors and by various delegates. The urgency of reaching the waiting masses was stressed as it is accepted that the world becomes increasingly marked by "disorderliness, lack of cohesion, permissiveness, and godlessness." As The Universal House of Justice stated in its Message of July 13, 1964 accenting the need for regeneration, "When the masses of mankind are awakened and enter the Faith of God, a new process is set in motion and the growth of a new civilization begins."

Through all these recurring convention themes were the call to the realization of the urgency of the fulfillment of our spiritual role and the assurance that the American Community will arise to its destined station. Repeatedly was heard the theme of universal participation in the vital realization that all elements of the Bahá'í Community are important—the young and the old, those committed to direct teaching and those committed to the indirect method, the friends who serve by cooking and opening their homes and those who serve by deputizing pioneers or by baby sitting. The cry was one for heightened love and unity among the friends. Emphasizing the point that every believer has a part to play, Dr. Kazemzadeh, Convention Chairman, commented "It is the nature of the individual to have his predilections. Two ethoses are in operation—immediacy and caution. We must have elements of both, thus mobilizing the resources of the whole community. We should exploit each other's strengths. We must recognize the integrity of our differences in styles."

Consultation on various aspects of teaching needs and the exigencies of deepening and consolidation captured the attention in the closing hours of the convention on Monday morning. The recommendation of a film for teaching Indians in their languages, and a comment on the need to share the Writings with illiterate believers were but two of the points made by delegates. References to the Covenant in its all encompassing nature, to the Cause in our commitment to serve it, to the urgency of our mission, to the essentiality of the Divine institutions were emphasized in the brief remarks from the several members of the Auxiliary Board as they were introduced by the Continental Board of Counsellors.

Miss True vividly painted a word picture of the conception of the Mother Temple of the West and of the struggle led by her mother, Mrs. Corrine True, to bring it into reality under the infallible guidance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Mrs. Mayberry called for the believers to become beacons to carry the Message to all souls of this lovely earth.

Following the approval of loving messages to be sent to Amatu'l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánum, to the new National Spiritual Assemblies, and to the Canadian and Alaskan Conventions, the Convention was closed with a taped message by Hand of the Cause Mr. Sears. "As we leave this convention," he said, "let us carry into every part of our country and region the 'spirit' of this gathering when the very air is throbbing with a potential of undreamed of victories. Bahá'u'lláh is the Sole Redeemer of mankind. His Administrative Order is the one agency that can rescue and revive an upshepherded, disillu-

National Spiritual Assembly members just as their re-election was announced: Dr. Piruz Kazemzadeh (Chairman), Miss Magdalene Carney, Dr. Dorothy Nelson (Treasurer), Dr. Sarah M. Perete, Mr. Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary, Miss Charlotte Linfoot (Assistant Secretary), Dr. Dwight W. Allen. Two others had already left the Convention when this photograph was taken: Dr. Daniel C. Jordan (Vice-Chairman) and Mr. Franklin Kahn.
sioned and suffering humanity.”

As the delegates took leave of each other they made such comments as these: “Of all the conventions I have attended, this one I have enjoyed most of all.” “This Convention has been different; it is as if we have turned a corner and are never going back.”

At the non-delegates session.

Mrs. Janet Rubenstein of the International Goals staff assisting prospective pioneers to fill out applications.

Chairman of the Convention, Dr. Kazemsadah confers with the Convention Secretary, Mr. Glenford E. Mitchell.

BERMUDA GOALS MET

On April 25, 1972 a letter was received from the Teaching Committee of the Baha’is of Bermuda that goals have been met there. There are two Spiritual Assemblies, Devonshire and Pembroke, as well as ten centers—the goal was five. Only one area here out of eleven is not opened, the town of St. George.

Hand of the Cause of God Ruhiyih Khanum paid a surprise visit to Bermuda en route to first Barbados and then Panama. She met with the friends one evening, was a guest speaker at a public meeting and also recorded a television interview which was telecast a week after she left.

Another triumph is that the Baha’is of Bermuda have a separate telephone listing in the yellow pages where formerly it was listed under “Churches.” This was achieved after negotiation and is another step forward.

Norway Temple Site

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Norway reports the acquisition of its Temple site, its most important goal of the Nine Year Plan! It is an unusually beautiful hill property located at Nannestad in the outskirts of Oslo and near the national military airport of Gardemoen, with a view of the surrounding area, and easily accessible on a good motor road. It has a flat white stone top which is surrounded by beautiful pine trees. The clearing is large enough for a Temple building and the entire site covers about three acres of land. In the years to come it will be necessary to acquire a parking space but now we are satisfied to have a Temple site and rejoice that Norway can pay for it.

Another vital goal of the Nine Year Plan has been achieved with the recognition of the Faith by the State, and the acceptance of the Bahá’í marriage ceremony. However, with the addition of the minimum requirement of the law which is “Do you (name) accept (name) in marriage?” for both parties and then the declaration that they are wedded. The Universal House of Justice has approved this addition so now Bahá’i marriage is possible in Norway.

The recognition of the State, of course, has meant that Bahá’ís must withdraw from membership in the State Church, and for a few of the friends this has been the cause of withdrawal from the Faith, but in reality this means a solid foundation for the Faith in Norway.
First National Spiritual Assembly of Iceland. Front row, left to right: Liesel Becker, Recording Secretary; Svana Einarsdottir, Chairman; Barbara Thinat; John Spencer. Back row: Petur Magnusson, Treasurer; Johannes Stefansson, Corresponding Secretary, Icelandic Language; Roger Lutley; Balour Bragason; Larry Clarke, Corresponding Secretary, English Language.

FIRST NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF ICELAND

Delegates and guests at the first National Convention of Iceland, on April 29, 1972. Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga is on the second row, fourth from right. Mrs. Elizabeth Olinga is back of him. Counsellor Betty Reed is in the front row, fifth from right. Jameson Bond, representative of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly is on the right end of the second row. National Spiritual Assembly Representative of Canada Glen Eyford is in the back row, to the right of the tallest man.
The new Bahá'í Center at the top of a hill at Livingston, Guatemala. In the background is the Atlantic Ocean.

Livingston, Guatemala, Dedicates Bahá'í Center

The dream of the community of Livingston, a town on the Atlantic coast, was realized on the weekend of February 26, 1972 when the first local Bahá'í Center in Guatemala and perhaps in all of Central America was dedicated to Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga.

About fifty enthusiastic Bahá'ís, young and old, boarded a chartered bus early Saturday morning for Puerto Barrios, from which point seventy-five boarded the express boat to Livingston. For many it was their first glimpse of the ocean. One man said, “Isn't there any land out there?”

For those who came from communities of nine or ten believers, it was an impressive sight to see the colorful stream of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh ascending the incline from the wharf to the town and the friendly exchange of greetings between the townspeople and the visitors.

Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájjir told some of the friends on his visit in 1968 that his heart was in Livingston and that the inhabitants are an abandoned and unappreciated people who are hungry for the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. He said: “When someone is on fire to do something it will be done.” Louise Caswell was set on fire. She went and one person accepted the Faith. She persevered. Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga came

Some of those attending the dedication of the new nine-sided Center of Livingston, dedicated on February 26, 1972.

Inside the new Center, the Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly welcomes visitors.
and walked the streets like a king. The people, unconsciously attracted by the great love he always radiates, followed him everywhere. Dr. Ahmadiyah came, touching many hearts by his devotion and sincerity. Daniel and Pamela Wegener, newly-arrived Directors of the Institute visited, fell in love with the people and asked to pioneer there.

As the number of believers increased the desire was born in their hearts to build a nine-sided building. In searching for the land they found a beautiful spot on a hill overlooking the sea in the direction of Belize. Through special contributions the project was started less than a year ago and now, how inspiring to see this unique structure like a jewel in this beautiful setting!

The dedication took place with more than 200 in attendance. The Mayor of Livingston and many townsmen climbed laboriously up the steep dug-out clay steps to the Center where the program of music and speeches took place.

Pupils from the Bahá’í school sang several Bahá’í songs in English and Spanish. This bilingual grade school meets in the Center. Over fifty children are taught by Adam Lino.

Sunday morning a National Institute was held. Four visitors from Barrios entered the Faith. Auxiliary Board member Edith McLaren spoke on “Universal Participation.” Daniel Wegener concluded the session with comments on the joys and struggles during the period of construction when during the hottest time of the year work on the Center continued.

Most of the visitors went for a plunge in the ocean after which all enjoyed a delicious fish dinner served by the ladies of Livingston.

Representatives attended from fifteen communities, which included thirteen Local Spiritual Assemblies. Especial thanks are expressed to Dr. Muhajir, Enoch Olinga and Mrs. Louise Caswell.

In Japan, Groups Enter the Faith
By Sharon Kuchar Bond

In March 1972, I had the bounty of travel-teaching in Southern Japan. After making plans with the Counselor, Auxiliary Board member, and the members of the Chugoku Regional Goals Committee, I left as a team leader for Tokuyama and Yanai with a university student who knew very little about the Bahá’í Faith but who was my devoted translator for the next few days.

Praise be to Bahá’u’lláh that through His Divine Confirmation we now know that the Japanese people, like all of the other people of the world, are patiently waiting to be invited to join the ranks of the soldiers of Bahá’u’lláh! We need only to tell them about Bahá’u’lláh and His Teachings, then to invite them to become Bahá’ís. The Japanese have the love of Bahá’u’lláh in their hearts and the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh in their minds, but they haven’t heard of Bahá’u’lláh yet. One new Bahá’í asked, “Why haven’t I heard of Bahá’u’lláh before? Why isn’t He in the history books?”

Of course, I want to be a Bahá’i!”

Shoghi Effendi has said, “Japan, a land so richly endowed, so alert and progressive, so quick in its grasp of the realities of life, is now the recipient of a Divine Bestowal, greater, richer and more enduring than any material gift she has ever enjoyed in modern times. What blissful thought to remember that you are the Chosen Ones that shall establish the Kingdom of God in that land; that you are the pioneers of a work that will endure and supersede all the other achievements, however meritorious and brilliant, of your fellow-countrymen for Japan!”

Yes, here in Japan, we’ve had fifty declarations in less than four days! Armed only with prayers and the love of Bahá’u’lláh, we found fifty waiting souls. We traveled raising the cry of “Ya-Bahá-u’l-Abhá” throughout the countryside.

Of course, our tests were many. Upon arriving at our destination quite early in the morning, we discovered that my wallet was missing. After consultation, we decided to solve the problem of money by economizing on food. We also decided not to pay for coffee or lunch for any of our new friends but to go “dutch treat.” We followed this and found that our Japanese friends liked this much better as they were not considered guests and their pride wasn’t injured.

The tests we had only united us and kept us praying. We kept on teaching in the train station, at the coffee shops, and at the zoo. We had twelve declarations the first day! Sunday, we met a Tokuyama Bahá’í and her two friends at the zoo. The non-Bahá’ís were teaching and inviting seekers to join the Faith! We had twenty-four declarations! Many declared in small groups of three to ten.

Meanwhile, my companion had been trying to convince me all this time that in Japan I shouldn’t go up to strangers, especially couples. He was ready to go home, so we spent many hours in consultation. Thanks be to God, he remained with me translating.

The next morning we left for Yanai. We met a teach-
er on the train who after our discussion about Bahá'u'lláh signed a declaration card. Upon arriving at the station, our new Bahá'í friend began teaching the Faith to a couple in the train station who upon hearing about the Bahá'í Faith also joined. The ranks of the soldiers of Bahá'u'lláh. We invited them to have coffee with us. Then our new Bahá'í friend took us to a Buddhist Temple where we had tea with the Priest, his wife, and son who was also a teacher. Our new Bahá'í kept teaching about Bahá'u'lláh. These new Bahá'ís had the gift of teaching bestowed upon them from the very moment they declared themselves.

By the time we got back to the hotel, it was time for dinner and our evening meeting in Yanai where we spent the evening deepening with the Bahá'ís. By the time we got back to the hotel, it was time for dinner and our evening meeting in Yanai where we spent the evening deepening with the Bahá'ís. After consultation, they decided that it was impossible to find more Bahá'ís in Yanai or to have a Local Spiritual Assembly by Ridván. I read some prayers. After consultation, my translator decided to stay until the next afternoon. Through prayer, consultation, patience, understanding, and stamina, we found more new Bahá'ís in Yanai the following day, so we will have a new Local Spiritual Assembly by Ridván. One woman even signed her brother's name on the declaration sheet! Of course, we could not accept his name as each individual must make his own declaration. Without my translator, I would not have been able to invite these people to the beautiful garden of Bahá'u'lláh. I merely acted as a translator of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings while my companion translated these teachings into Japanese—he was my communication link. We only tried to be good instruments. We asked them if they would like to hear about the Bahá'í Faith. We told them that Bahá'u'lláh is a new Teacher Who brings us a new plan for world peace—a new world order. We explained a little about the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh and the Principles of the Faith. Then we invited them to join the Bahá'í world community. Most accepted! We usually showed them pictures of the friends at the Sapporo Conference and an album of the friends in Honduras. We would give them a Bahá'í pamphlet and an explanation of the Local Spiritual Assembly. We tried to make friends and deepen if there was time, inviting them to teach with us. The Japanese are joyful, happy, kind, and courteous people with strong characters. We have only to share our joy and love of Bahá'u'lláh with them on a personal level and invite them to be Bahá'ís.

In order to achieve the Nine Year Plan, we must put aside our old ideas and fears of being shy or timid. Many people want to be Bahá'ís but haven't been informed of Bahá'u'lláh or invited to join the Bahá'í family. I read my first Bahá'í book in February of 1969. I considered myself a Bahá'í at that time. I attended my first meeting, which was Naw-Rúz in San Jose, California. From then on, I attended firesides regularly. At one of the firesides in May, a Bahá'í friend said, "Look at Sharon, she's not even a Bahá'í and she believes in Bahá'u'lláh and is teaching about the Faith." At that point I insisted I was a Bahá'í. No one had invited me to sign a card, so how could I accept? So it took me three months, attending firesides regularly, to be invited. We must open up our hearts, share the joy of Bahá'u'lláh with our new friends, and invite them to be Bahá'ís. No one is a stranger in this world; we are all brothers and sisters. We must put aside our fears and search for new members of our world community.

By detaching ourselves from all earthly things, we must rely solely on the Supreme Concourse. Through prayer, we will be guided to those waiting souls who are ready to embrace the Cause. "The invisible battalions of the Concourse on High," our beloved Guardian has written, "are mustered in serried ranks, ready to rush their reinforcements to the aid of the vanguard of Bahá'u'lláh's crusaders in the hour of their greatest need, in anticipation of that Most Great, that Wondrous Jubilee in the joyfulness of which both heaven and earth will partake."(2)

Notes:
1. From a letter to Japan on Dec. 17, 1922 by Shoghi Effendi
2. Bahá'í News No. 254, p. 4, 4/52

First National Convention of Nepal
First National Convention of Nepal

Chanting in Nepalese, Arabic, Persian, English and Hindi marked the opening of the first National Convention in Nepal. When Hand of the Cause of God A. A. Furutan read the first sentence of the Message from The Universal House of Justice, the forty delegates and observers sensed the importance of the moment.

"The banner of the Faith of God which in the past few years has been firmly planted on the heights of those beautiful Himalayan regions is now ... being unfurled."

From the plains, valleys, mountains of Nepal, the Friends had come to Kathmandu, to confer, pray, elect their National Assembly. For nearly five years they had worked for this moment. Dr. Furutan said: "It is a God-given system ... those who are elected are appointed by God ... in the Bahá’í election, we do not consider if a member of an Assembly can do anything for us. We elect from the purity of our hearts."

On the afternoon of the first day, April 23, the first National Spiritual Assembly of Nepal was elected, consisting of new and older Bahá’ís, from many religious backgrounds—Buddhist, Hindu, Christian. The Hand of the Cause counseled the members, some of whom were serving on an Assembly for the first time. Remarked Dr. H. M. Munje, representative from the National Spiritual Assembly of India: "Prayer is your powerhouse and the National Spiritual Assembly is the power-driven machinery. You must constantly pray to receive more power."

In the evening, and every evening Dr. Furutan dined with leaders in the fields of education, arts, government to whom he informally presented the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh.

The second day of Convention opened with a report on "Progress of the Faith in Nepal", telling how the Faith developed from the first seed planted in 1958, blossomed, then slumbered for many years, to be revived in 1968 and burst into fourteen Local Assemblies within three years. Nearly eighty congratulatory messages from National Assemblies around the world were read to the delegates. Specific objectives of Teaching were recommended to the National Assembly. At noon, the First Convention of Nepal closed with chanting by the Hand of the Cause.

Although the Convention was over, a "Deepening Class" for all the friends was held for the next one-and-half days in order to take advantage of the knowledge of the Hand of the Cause, as well as visiting Counsellor Vasudeva and Mr. Furudi, Auxiliary Board member. The spirit of prayer was felt by everyone, including the hotel staff. Other guests at the hotel were stirred to make inquiries about the Faith.

Now Nepal begins a new era in the Faith. As the friends returned to their homes, deepened in the knowledge, they are more determined than ever to awaken their countrymen to the Message of Bahá’u’lláh.

First National Convention of the Republic of Ireland, held on April 22-23, 1972. Hand of the Cause of God William Sears represented The Universal House of Justice and is holding the Greatest Name.

First National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland

Members of the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Republic of Ireland. Seated, left to right: Mr. Philip O'Brien (Treasurer), Miss Eleanor O'Callaghan, Miss Leslie Gibson (Secretary), Mr. Adib Taherzadeh (Chairman). Standing: Mr. John Turner, Mr. Joseph Watson (Vice-Chairman), Dr. Margaret Magil, Mr. Patrick Dawson and Mr. O. Z. Whitehead.
Hong Kong Holds First Bahá'í Winter School

The first Winter School in the history of the Bahá'í community of Hong Kong began on February 15 and continued for two days.

Mr. R. D. Gulwani, Chairman of the National Administrative Committee, welcomed participants and stated the aims of the school: 1) To unite the hearts of the people and sincere truth seekers of Hong Kong; 2) To study and deepen in the fundamental teachings of the Bahá'í Faith; 3) To encourage youth participation in fun and fellowship and to remind older Bahá'ís that there is no generation gap. He pointed out that it was the first project of its kind in the locality and so was historic.

He reminded the friends that the opening of the conference was on the Chinese New Year and said: "May God specially help us to glorify His Name amongst His creatures at the gateway to China."

The first session was given by Yin Hong Shuen about the successive Prophets up to the Bahá'u'lláh. A brief talk on the Bahá'í Administrative Order was given by Mr. Richard T.K. Lee. Many questions were asked and answered. Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Charles Duncan led a workshop on the election of a Local Spiritual Assembly which included a mock election, enjoyed by all.

The second day of Winter School began with devotions and a talk on "The Power of Prayer" by Teh Teik Hoe. Mr. Charles Duncan, Professor of Music Theory in Korea, taught the class how to chant Bahá'í prayers in English, and invited some of the friends to chant a given prayer in their own style.

Yin Hong Shuen related some of the poignant incidents in the life of Bahá'u'lláh and related them to Bible prophecies. Mr. Philip A. Marangella told of the bounty of teaching, drawing from his own personal experiences. He showed the personal letters received from the Guardian. Hong Shuen spoke about the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. A quiz session was conducted by Teik Hoe with the purpose of determining how much had been learned during the school.

Nineteen believers and seven seekers attended this school. Immediately afterward, the youths helped to clean up the Center. Then they launched a distribution of about 1,000 pamphlets in two public parks in Hong Kong.

Exhibit in Chilean Fair

The Bahá'í community in Concepcion in the Southern part of Chile participated in the Fair of the Province of Bio-Bio in the city of Concepcion from January 20 to February 9, 1972 with the assistance of Bahá'ís from other communities and also by some of the new local believers.

The stand was quite small and inconspicuous, but people seemed to enjoy coming in to discuss the Faith and religion in general. Average attendance was 200-250 visitors daily, forty-five new believers were enrolled and several localities opened to the Faith. A local newspaper El Sur had an article about the Bahá'í stand at the Fair with a picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and many visited the stand as a result of this article.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the July issue we will have more complete coverage about the Panama Temple and especially the Conference, also more about National Assemblies being elected for the first time.
Assembly in the Republic of San Marino

The small Republic of San Marino, situated on three mountain cliffs in the center of Italy, was first opened to the Faith in 1953, at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade, when Mrs. Tobandeh Payman, Knight of Bahá’u’lláh, settled there, followed shortly by her husband, Mr. Sohrab Payman, and their little daughter Chitty. At that time San Marino was very different from what it is today. It consisted of a tourist center in the summer, while in winter it would become almost deserted and inactive.

The difficulties encountered by these valiant pioneers are many. They were the only ‘foreigners’ living in San Marino and were looked upon by the natives with some suspicion. It took patience and perseverance on the part of this family to make a place for themselves. More importantly, they were able to acquire the friendship and the respect of the inhabitants of the place.

The government of San Marino has always been reluctant to grant a permit to any outsider to settle in their country and, although others have tried, only the Payman family has been able to stay throughout these years notwithstanding the many difficulties. The beloved Guardian had stressed the importance of having a pioneer there. This family, acting under the directive of Shoghi Effendi, was able to gain the trust of the people as well as of the government which today is cooperating with the Bahá’ís as they put into practice the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. The Faith had to be spread very quietly, by living the life, setting an example and slowly but constantly sowing the seeds.

About a year ago, a youth, Miss Loredana Pinotti, made her declaration in San Marino. Last fall things began to happen. In fact the first two natives of San Marino, a young couple Mr. and Mrs. Giachery, accepted the Faith, soon followed by another young man, Mr. Marino Giardi also of San Marino. Many friends have visited this country. Last year Hand of the Cause Mr. Ugo Giachery and Mrs. Giachery were there more than once. It was during a fireside held on the occasion of their visit that the first two believers, Mr. and Mrs. Giachery, made their declaration. The pioneers of San Marino share this joyful news with the rest of the Bahá’í world as it marks another step toward achieving one of the goals of the Nine Year Plan, namely a Spiritual Assembly in the Republic of San Marino.
Decision Design New Building World Center Announced

JOYFULLY INFORM BAHÁ'Í WORLD RANGE AND ACCELERATION GROWTH CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLAH LOCAL NATIONAL LEVELS AND RESULTANTS EXPANSION ACTIVITIES WORLD CENTER IMPEL US NOW ANNOUNCE NEAR COMPLETION NINE YEAR PLAN DECISION INITIATE PROCEDURE SELECT ARCHITECT DESIGN BUILDING FOR SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE ENVISAGED BELOVED GUARDIAN ON FAR FLUNG ARC HEART MOUNT CARMEL CENTERING SPOT CONSECRATED RESTING PLACES SISTER BROTHER MOTHER BELOVED MASTER. CONSTRUCTION THIS CENTER LEGISLATION GOD'S WORLD REDEEMING ORDER WILL CONSTITUTE FIRST MAJOR STEP DEVELOPMENT AREA SURROUNDING HOLY SHRINE SINCE COMPLETION INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVES BUILDING. MOVED PAY TRIBUTE EXPRESS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE OUTSTANDING SERVICES ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN IN PREPARATION FOR THIS HISTORIC UNDERTAKING. FERVENTLY PRAYING PROJECT NOW INITIATED MAY DURING YEARS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD PROGRESS UNINTERRUPTEDLY SPEEDILY ATTAIN MAJESTIC CONSUMMATION.

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Center
7 June 1972
"O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of ‘Ya-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 ye may achieve it."

That call of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the Tablets of the Divine Plan came to Martha Root daily, she said as, the very first to arise in response to His call, she traveled through South America in 1919.2

It was only the beginning of successive and continuous trips to which Martha gave the remaining twenty years of her life. She taught the Faith on every continent and on over four hundred universities throughout the world. Wherever she went she spread information as widely as she could, arranging for translations of Bahá’í books, giving booklets whenever she lectured and to whomever she met, visiting what newspapers she could and sending articles to the rest, placing books in libraries and writing home for more. She spoke for universities, women’s groups, press societies, Esperantists, and Theosophists; for socialist, religious, educational and peace congresses; and over the radio. She elicited the admiration of princes and presidents for the Bahá’í teachings—and the allegiance of a queen.

She was already middle-aged when she started her journeys—small, frail, and often ill. Undaunted, she wrote back from South America that future Bahá’í travelers should carry “a thermometer and simple remedies.”3 And from China she wrote, “I leave many things undone, and every day I lie down for two hours to get the strength to do the most important work—I mean in Shanghai. I have done this and thus the strength has come. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá knows I have done my utmost. The test of the year is if the Message has been spread in China, it isn’t a question of health or how much or how little work, but only if the Holy Spirit has poured over China, if some souls know ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He told us not to be concerned about the harvest.”4

Miss Root was not wealthy; she supported herself on her travels by writing articles for newspapers and magazines. While she was planning her trip to South America, the head of a newspaper syndicate based in New York met her at a fireside and asked her to sell his articles from South America.5

She wrote ‘Abdu’l-Bahá of her intended trip to South America, and He answered her:

O thou enkindled with the fire of the love of God!

Your detailed letter dated November 7, 1918, was in these days received. The contents produced great joy, for they indicated a benevolent purpose, an untiring effort and an extended tour around the different parts of the globe. Today the promulgation of the ideal principles of His Holiness Baḥá’u’lláh, which are manifestly recorded in the books, is the spirit of this age and the cause of the realization of assistance and confirmation. Assuredly whenever thou holdest fast to it, in whatever enterprise thou mayest engage, thou shalt find the doors of might and power flung open to thy face. My hope from the blessings of His Holiness Baḥá’u’lláh is that thou mayest forget rest and composure and like unto a swift-flying bird, thou mayest cover long distances and in whatever land thou tarriest thou mayest reproduce the melody of the Kingdom and engage in songs and music in the best of tunes...

As ears are awaiting the summons for Universal Peace, it is therefore advisable for thee to travel, in case comfortable journey is possible, to the different parts of the globe and roar like unto a lion in the Kingdom of God. Wide-reaching consequences thou shalt witness and extraordinary confirmations shall be exhibited unto thee.

I very much desire that thou shouldst visit the Holy Land and thus to meet thee, but teaching stands above everything else and if thou deemest it advisable, engage thou in the spreading of it throughout the regions of the world.6

In another tablet, He wrote to her, “Thou art indeed serving in the path of God, art with all thy soul showing love to others, art raising the call of the Kingdom and art illumining the hearts of men.”7

Martha Root set sail July 22, 1919 for South America. The cruise required two weeks, and she knew she must
somehow in that time reach the other passengers. So she summoned up her courage and joined in the "sports contest" sponsored on the ship, admitting that "she didn't know very much about sports." She also donated one of the prizes (a farewell gift she had received from one of the Bahá'ís). "The next day being the first Sunday at sea," she reported, "Miss Root asked the captain's permission to speak in the evening on the Bahá'í Cause. The purser put a large notice on the bulletin board. No person aboard had heard of the Bahá'í Movement. The men on the sports committee were the first ones to enter the music room; they helped to make it popular, and everyone invited everyone else!"

Martha Root proclaimed the Faith in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Panama, and Cuba—all without any knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese or any literature in those languages (none had been printed yet). She relied on sign language, showing her address on a slip of paper to policemen and street car conductors in Rio de Janeiro, pointing to Bahá'í articles in the newspapers in a library there where she wanted to give books—or in what French she knew, giving the principles to newspaper editors in French so that they could print them in Spanish or Portuguese.

In Pernambuco, Brazil (now Recife), she was fortunate in finding an interpreter. Hearing that there was an American businesswoman staying at one of the hotels, she went there, and there she found that the woman was the cousin of Lura Getsinger! (See Bahá'í News, December, 1971). The woman, Mrs. Vegas, took Martha Root to the five newspaper offices in town and interpreted for her there.

Miss Root was discouraged from going on to Bahia, Brazil (now Salvador, on the Bahá'í de Todos Santos—Bay of All Saints) because of reports of yellow fever there. It was feared that she might not be able to get out of quarantine to leave again. But she remembered 'Abdu'l-Bahá's injunction, "Visit ye especially Bahia, on the eastern shore of Brazil. Because in the past years this city was christened with the name of Bahía, there is no doubt that it has been through the inspiration of God."

So Martha Root went to the stateroom of her ship in perplexity and threw herself down on the bunk. She looked through the porthole and, seeing Jupiter shining brightly, steady in its course, she rose up and ordered her bags taken ashore.

Later, new friends made in Buenos Aires tried to dissuade her from crossing the Andes in wintertime, but she was determined to travel up the western coast of South America in order to reach Panama, of which the Master had said, "The teachings once established there, will unite the East and the West, the North and the South."

Failing in their first effort, her friends piled her with "gifts of books, flowers, fruits, candy and lunches." Her hostess gave Martha her own heavy overcoat and long underwear, for, despite 'Abdu'l-Bahá's instructions that Martha travel "in case comfortable journey is possible" the only way across the Andes then was by mule. Read her own description:

The trip by mule-back over the "top of the world ..." was thrilling enough for the most sensational. To pray the "Greatest Name" among these minarets, "I was overawed," she reported, "Miss Root obeyed the Eternal, Unknowable. The ancient trail led 10,400 feet above sea level. The people on mule back were infinitesimal specks clinging to mighty terraces ... they huddled on the edge of jagged peaks, frozen chasms, and stiffened mountain torrents. Fortunately the sun shone brightly, and the acute cold was not so terrible as all had expected."

A detour through one dark tunnel took over an hour in stumbling, slipping blackness in which the frightened mules shied and fell. Miss Root, as her mule plunged downward into the mouth of the tunnel, gripped the pommel, threw her body far back, closed her eyes, and prayed the "Ya Alih'u'l-Mustaghath" for all. Over and over again in that black uncertainty, the clear, vibrant voice of the Italian girl would ring down the line of mules: "Mademoiselle, are you all right?"

Later, out from the tunnel, when the procession came to precipitous downward slopes toward Chile, Miss Root could not even see the one inch margin that had been promised. . . And so it was with great joy that she saw the men getting off their mules and walking farther in down the mountain side. She did the same for the mules would sometimes slip a yard in their perpendicular path and they were frightened too. Taking the guide's hand they made the descent together, and when they could not walk they could run! The warm sun had melted the crisp ice just enough that they could get a foothold. They stopped every few minutes to breathe as one's breath is very short in this altitude. Some fainted, some had "puna," which is bleeding of the nose and ears. Everything given Miss Root was passed along to those who needed it.

On the journey by ship, up the western coast of South America, Martha's supply of 500 booklets which she had brought with her gave out, and she began to hand out newspapers and magazines containing articles which she had published. She was ill: "Grippe had to be the shadow to make one appreciate the sunshine, so the first few places are but memories of trying to get ashore to newspaper offices to explain the Bahá'í Message, then leaning against the friendly lamp posts for strength to drag one's self back to the boat."

She spent a week in Panama (see Bahá'í News, March, 1972). And on the ship out she recalled 'Abdu'l-Bahá's admonition to "roar like a lion" and again summoned up the courage to ask a ship's captain for permission to speak. Writing home about it, she said, "If anyone feels timid about asking opportunities to speak, let him remember that no day comes twice to any servant in the Cause."

When Martha Root returned from South America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote her: "Thou art, in truth, a herald of the Kingdom and a harbinger of the Covenant. . . Thou art truly self-sacrificing. Thou showest kindness unto all nations. Thou art sowing a seed that shall eternally put forth leaves and blossoms and yield fruits, and whose shadow shall day by day grow in magnitude."

He also wrote: "Praise be to God the Call of the Kingdom hath been received in South America and the seeds of Guidance have been sown in those cities and regions. Certainly the heat of the Sun of Reality, the rain of the Eternal Bounty and the breeze of the love of God will make them germinate; have confidence."

Martha Root "rested" from her nine-month trip by helping to edit the Star of the West and by travel-teaching in the United States and Mexico.

China-ward

Her second great journey was to China, responding to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's eloquent appeal:

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. China has most great capability. The Chinese people are most simple-hearted and truth-seeking. The Bahá’í teacher of the Chinese people must first be imbued with their spirit, know their sacred literature, study their national customs and speak to them from their own standpoint and their own terminologies. 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. Truly, I say, the Chinese are free from any deceit and hypocrisies and are prompted with ideal motives.

Had I been feeling well I would have taken a journey to China myself. Martha Root felt compelled to try to carry the Message to all the places where Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá themselves could not go. From China she wrote:

If Christ could have lived and traveled, if Bahá’u’lláh could have been free to visit all countries, if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá could have come to China and to Indochina, how great would have been the results! Man, in his ignorance and blind prejudices, prevented them. Now the only way the Most Great Peace can come is for Their faithful disciples—and the disciples of all the other world

Continued on page 5

The Call for Pioneers

"It is the teaching goals which must engage our attention and effort. Although more than 200 territories have achieved their assigned goals of localities where Bahá’ís reside . . . there are still some 60 territories where this goal is yet to be won and where its attainment must be given absolute priority between now and Ridván 1973 . . . A detailed listing of all territories throughout the world which have not yet won their goals for localities and Local Spiritual Assemblies will be sent to every National Spiritual Assembly for urgent release to the friends . . . Those communities which have already attained their goals . . . should consider the world picture . . . and do everything they can . . . to assist their fellow communities with pioneers and traveling teachers . . . we call on all believers everywhere to prayerfully consider their personal circumstances, and to arise while there is yet time, to fill the international pioneer goals of the Plan . . . Our immediate and inescapable task, however, is to ensure that every attainable goal of the Nine Year Plan is achieved. This must be done at all costs. No sacrifice, no deferment of cherished plans must be refused in order to discharge this 'most important' of the many "important" duties facing us. Who can doubt that one last supreme effort will be crowned with success?"


"And when he determineth to leave his home, for the sake of the Cause of his Lord, let him put his whole trust in God, as the best provision for his journey, and array himself with the robe of virtue . . ."

Bahá’u’lláh Gleanings p. 334-5

"These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West. Should one of them turn his face toward some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open. . . . Singly and alone he will . . . defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries . . . and carry his attack to the very center of the powers of the earth. This is the meaning of the Hosts of God."


(Especially to Americans in American Bahá’ís in the Time of World Peril) "A veritable exodus from the large cities, where a considerable number of believers have . . . congregated . . . must signalize the inauguration of this most intensive and challenging phase of the Crusade on the homefront. . . . So grave . . . and so critical the political position of the country that were a bare fifteen adult Bahá’ís to be left in each of these cities, over which unsuspected dangers are hanging, it would still be regarded as adequate for the maintenance of their local Spiritual Assemblies. . . . It is therefore imperative for the individual American believer and particularly for the affluent, the independent, the comfort-loving . . . to look forward, and dedicate their resources, their time, their very lives to a Cause of such transcendence that no human eye can even dimly perceive its glory. Let them resolve, instantly and unhesitatingly, to place . . . his share on the altar of Bahá’ís sacrifice, lest of a sudden, unforeseen calamities rob them of a considerable portion of the earthly things they have amassed. . . . Now if ever is the time to tread the path which the Dawn-Breakers of a previous age have so magnificently trodden."

"They cannot be the chosen people of God—the recipients of the Master’s Divine Plan and do nothing about it. The obligation to teach is the obligation of every Bahá’í, and particularly, the obligations of the Bahá’ís of the United States. These are the immutable laws of God, from which there is no escape: ‘For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.’"


"Let each one of us re-examine his life in the light of the loving and moving call raised by the supreme body, The Universal House of Justice, and ask himself what sacrifice he can make to participate in the spiritual conquest of the globe. There is no time to lose. Every hour is unimaginably precious.

teachers—to take these universal Bahá’í principles for world peace and carry them to every land.19

Miss Root stopped first to visit Agnes Alexander and Ida Finch in Japan, where she gave twenty lectures. Then she spent six months in Peking studying the language and customs of the people, supporting herself by writing for a news syndicate and giving private English lessons. Shoghi Effendi sent her a cable her first week in China, saying, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá guiding you. Success assured, Shoghi.”20 After summering in Peking, Martha Root debated with herself whether to teach English in a university there, which would have given her more security financially, or to travel-teach. Finally she decided on the latter and received a cable of confirmation from Shoghi Effendi.

She traveled southward from Peking to Shanghai, visiting the cities between as she went. She was ill and unable to get out much when she first arrived in Shanghai, so she spent her time writing newspaper articles. Later, as the articles began to appear in the papers, she was able to get speaking engagements easily, so she felt that her illness had brought good results, writing, “O, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has blessed every move and am so grateful today.” That day, she wrote, nine newspapers were carrying Bahá’í articles, but she had neither time nor money to go out and buy them all—as some cost twenty cents a copy.21

In March, though ill with the flu (then called “the grippe”), she determined to make a teaching trip up river to Hangchow and Wuchang in the interior of China:

I arose about five to take the boat next morning from Nanking, waited in a cold rain for an hour for the ricksha, then waited seven hours for the boat in a place with nothing but a roof over, no sides. When the boat came it had no fires, no bed (we were supposed to take beds), there was only one foreigner, a Russian young man, aboard. I said I could not go, so ill, he said “try it,” and I went. It rained every minute of the trip for those three days. When I reached Hangchow my arms were so numb I could not hold the fork or eat or write and my temperature would frighten any one not a Bahá’í. I went right to bed and stayed in bed two days, except getting up every little while to take exercises to conquer the numbness. I prayed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to heal me, and He did, and then wonderful things happened. The syndicate articles written in Peking and sent out by the Asiatic News Agency for whom I had worked last summer had penetrated this “heart of China.”... One Esperantist to whom I had written came to call and said, “Your name is not a stranger to Wuchang,” and he showed me the clipping from the Hankow papers of last summer about the Bahá’í Cause, and it had been much studied and underlined. He was a prepared soul and was my trusted friend. He was teaching economics in National Commercial College of Wuchang, 250 students. I lectured there, and he arranged for me to speak in Wuchang University, 1600 students, and the President also sent out written invitations to the girls’ Normal College and to the Y.M.C.A.22

By the time Martha Root left China she had taught in nineteen of the principal cities and in nearly a hundred universities, colleges, and schools. She wrote back encouraging others to come, to correspond with Chinese, or to teach the Chinese in America, saying, “It is a favor and a bounty of God to have the privilege to do anything for China. I do not think one of you will ever come who will not love the Chinese people.”23

She left China for Saigon and visited the newspaper, the library, and nineteen schools, societies or individuals in the short stay of five days. Stopping briefly in China and Japan, she proceeded to Australia and New Zealand for a four-month teaching trip. There she traveled with Elsie Baker, Katherine McLaughlin, and Gretta Lampril, broadcasting from every large radio station and giving lectures—more than sixty of them in Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney—speaking two, three, four, and occasionally five times a day.24 She stopped in South Africa and spent a month in Haifa before proceeding to Europe, scene of her most important endeavor.

(Part one of two parts)

NOTES:
1. Revised translation as found in God Passes By, p. 389.
4. Letter, January 11 and 12, 1924.
7. Ibid., p. 216.
10. Ibid.
12. Ibid., vol. XV, p. 44.
15. Ibid., March 19, 1924.
17. Ibid., p. 274.

Pioneers to the Tuamotu Archipelago: León and Elise Nahenahe. The wife is from the Loyalty Islands while Leon Nahenahe is a Tahitian. They left Noumea, New Caledonia to re-open the Tuamotu Archipelago, first opened by Knight of Bahá’u’lláh Jean Sevin, now in Noumea. Mr. Nahenahe is a fisherman. As nothing grows on the coral islands where they live, sacks of soil are bought in order to grow a few vegetables.
The first Assembly was opened by Counsellor Appa. Some seventy National copies of The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh which was received with reverence. The Minister read the opening sentence and said he would make a call to the Chief Minister of Seychelles-Island of Love as a personal gift. During the interview the Chief Minister was pleased to hear about the emphasis Bahá'ís place on loyalty to government. He assured the visitors of his cooperation and assistance to the Baha'i community whenever needed. A copy of the proclamation volume was also presented to the Deputy Governor of Seychelles, Honorable J. R. Todd.

Dr. Mühlschlegel recorded a twenty-five minute interview in the Seychelles Broadcasting studio during which he dealt with many important aspects of the Faith. He and Counsellor Appa were guests of honor at a reception given by the Bahá'ís where over fifty dignitaries were present. The wife of the Deputy Governor presented to the Deputy Governor of Seychelles, Honorable J. R. Todd.

Dr. Mühlschlegel read a part of the Ridván Message from The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís world and then the one specifically addressed to the Bahá'ís of Seychelles. In the latter were given tasks to be achieved by the end of the Nine Year Plan in 1973: 1) Raise the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside to at least forty. 2) Obtain from the civil authorities recognition of Bahá'í Holy Days and Bahá'í marriages. 3) Establish a Local Assembly in Agalega Island. 4) Reopen, circumstances permitting, the Chagos Archipelago. 5) Convert the local Hazíratu'l-Quds into the headquarters for the National Spiritual Assembly.

There was a detailed discussion of the Ridván Message. Counsellor Appa made a call for pioneers for Agalega and three youth of Victoria responded.

Dr. Mühlschlegel was the first Hand of the Cause to visit these islands. With Counsellor S. Appa, on April 17, they paid a courtesy call to the Chief Minister of Seychelles, Honorable James R. Mancham, which extended for forty-five minutes. Counsellor Appa presented the Chief Minister with the book The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh which was received with reverence. The Minister read the opening sentence and said he would read a portion of this Book every morning and night before retiring in order to receive inspiration. In token of his sincere appreciation the Chief Minister presented to Dr. Mühlschlegel and Counsellor Appa autographed copies of Sechelles-Island of Love as a personal gift.

Hand of the Cause Dr. Mühlschlegel (seated, center), Counsellor Mr. A. Appa (to his right) and Mr. P. Sauboorah, representing the National Spiritual Assembly of the Indian Ocean (standing, second from left), with members of the Seychelles National Spiritual Assembly. Seated, left to right: Mr. W. Andre, Mr. H. Mussard, and last in the row, Mr. R. Pillay, Treasurer. Standing, Abdur' Rahman, Secretary; third, Mr. Bernard Renault, Chairman; Antonia Gopal (holding the Greatest Name); Saul Accouche; David Petrouse, Recording Secretary; Andre Samson, Vice-Chairman.
Hand of Cause Robarts Visits Papua, New Guinea

During March this year Hand of the Cause John A. Robarts visited Papua, New Guinea. He had only enough time to visit two towns, Port Moresby and Goroka.

In Port Moresby the believers held a meeting for him in a welfare center hall. Forty-three Baha'is and ten seekers attended the meeting. This included Auxiliary Board members Rodney Hancock and Vi Hoehnke. Everyone was delighted with his stories of Africa, a continent with which Papuan and New Guineans obviously identify. The Hand of the Cause was also able to address a session at the first Teaching Institute in Papua, held in the new building in Sogeri.

In Goroka the believers were fortunate to meet with him on several occasions. Mr. Robarts enjoyed the crisp mountain air and all the beautiful fresh fruit and vegetables available from local gardens. The pioneers were particularly uplifted by his visit and his talks on prayer and spiritual renewal.

Hand of Cause Giachery Visits Miami

Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery and Mrs. Giachery visited the Baha'is of Dade and Broward County in early March, 1972. They had been visiting the Baha'is in Central America as part of their extensive travel plan undertaken at the request of The Universal House of Justice, they stayed several days in Miami en route to Haiti and other Caribbean Islands. Two meetings were held, one at the home of Mrs. Emily Bethel in North Miami, the second at Toby Emanuel's residence in Miami Beach.

Dr. Giachery brought all the friends close to the person of the beloved Guardian through his many intimate stories of his years of personal association with Shoghi Effendi. Dr. Giachery emphasized the compelling need to study the words of the Guardian and to treasure, read and re-read God Passes By. To the youth he stressed the necessity of reinforcing their understanding of the precepts of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh through an intimate knowledge of the station of Shoghi Effendi whom he repeatedly described as the "sign of God" on earth. A vivid description of the appearance of the Guardian and the awe with which he inspired everyone in his presence brought the Baha'is close to the person of this great and humble grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Giachery also related stories of the victories achieved in Italy, and how prophecies of Bahá'u'lláh regarding the decline in the fortunes of the Church continue to be fulfilled with every passing day.

Dr. Giachery was interviewed on WMBM Radio—Blanche Calloway's program "Progress Report." It is a four and one-half minute program broadcast three times daily. There were two separate interviews, aired on April 3 and 4, 1972.
Panama Temple Dedication and International Conference  
April 28-May 2, 1972

Since 1967 when the cornerstone was laid, the whole Baha'i world has been anxiously awaiting the formal dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, which took place April 28-29, 1972.

The Queen of the day, of course, was the House of Worship itself, a thing of magic beauty, glistening like mother-of-pearl by day, and glowing by night like an unreal globe of light from another planet, tethered delicately upon the hilltop of Sonsonate, six miles north of the City of Panamá.

Panamá was chosen as the site for the first House of Worship of Latin America because of the great importance attributed to the Republic by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Tablets of the Divine Plan:

"Ye must give great attention to the Republic of Panamá, for in that point the Occident and the Orient find each other united through the Panama Canal, and it is also situated between the two great oceans. That place will become very important in the future. The Teachings, once established there, will unite the East and the West, the North and the South."

This prophecy came true during the days of the Dedication ceremonies and the International Conference, May 1-2, 1972. More than four thousand Baha'ís from "the East and the West, the North and the South" landed in Panamá's Tocumen Airport. Early in the week there was a trickle, then more and more each day, until on Friday the heavens opened!

To meet the chartered planes were not only the Welcoming Committee and friends expecting guests, but also a group of Panamanian dancers in typical historical costume sent by the Institute of Tourism.

This gesture of welcome by the Republic of Panama was one of many during the five days of the Conference. Brigadier General Omar Torrijos and his government went all-out in their helpfulness and courtesies to the Baha'ís, who couldn't believe it when they were whisked through customs without a bag being examined!

The three Hands of the Cause of God attending the Conference, Ruhiyyih Khanum is standing at the podium. Seated are Dr. Giachery and Mr. Khadem.
In the lobbies of the hotels the big posters "Conference Bahá'í's" were prominent; the registration tables led hundreds to ask for pamphlets. The newspapers displayed banner headlines, "Bahá'í Faith to Give Spiritual Breath to Panamá's Progress, Believers Pledge" (a quote from Dr. Giachery's press conference), and full page spreads of text and photos. The chartered buses were labeled "BAHÁ'Í!". The constant going and coming by taxi and bus to the New Panamá Gymnasium, the Conference Hall, the Cuna and Choco and Guaymi Indian costumes, the overpoweringly interracial flavor of the groups conversing in the patios, dining in the restaurants, the 337 plate banquet in the Bella Vista Room of the plush Hotel El Panama—all this made the Bahá'í Faith the big story of the week.

Ridván Feast
It all began at the Ridván Feast, Friday evening, April 28. We entered the huge circular Auditorium to find the entire lower floor completely filled. From our seat in the balcony we gazed down on the speakers' table decorated with colorful floral arrangements of red ginger, gladioli, pink and white chrysanthemums and carnations, and the native anthuria, a large red flower resembling a patent leather leaf. Seated at the table were the three Hands of the Cause, Amat'ul-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Representative of The House of Justice, Mr. Dhikru'llah Khádem and Dr. Ugo Giachery; the Chairman and Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Panamá, Raquel de Constante and Leota Lockman.

After the Devotions, Sra. de Constante in her musical Spanish welcomed the friends to Panama and the Conference, and her remarks were translated into English and Persian. Following the introduction of the three Hands, Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum addressed the Feast:

A Panamanian band and native dancers in beautifully embroidered and colorful native dress, performing as chartered planes arrived at the airport for the Dedication and Conference.

"As I stood here," she began, "my eyes fell on this flower before me. It is so like our gathering tonight—so many hundreds of petals, each, plus entirely unique, yet united, these petals make this beautiful flower. This flower bloomed because of the sun. Because of the Sun of Bahá'u'lláh we grew these flowers in this room.

"I remember when there were no Bahá'ís in Latin America. Shoghi Effendi longed for Bahá'ís on this continent. Now, see the Bahá'ís we have in Central and South America.

"It is hard to realize the significance of things happening in the Faith. I am sure that the Bahá'ís of the black and white races are happy we have Indian Bahá'ís now. When a race enters the Faith we are erecting one of the walls of the Faith. We cannot visualize the future. But we know that it is not going to be an American or a Persian or an African future. As we build it together it will develop into a world future, a world civilization.

"We have no time to waste. The receptivity of the world today is greater than any of us have ever found before. Don't deprive yourself of this wonderful day in the world. Shoghi Effendi always said that the immediate future is very dark; the distant future is very bright. The fields are so wide, the hearts so hungry. Never let a day go by without doing something for the future.

"Mr. Peter Tillotson, English architect of the Temple, was called to the platform and spoke of his joy in the beauty of the finished structure.

"The musical entertainment at the close of the Feast was the performance of the lovely composition of the "Tablet of Ahmad" on the organ by its composer Charles Peterson of Panamá, and sung in a glorious full soprano by Constancia Bell, a talented Panamanian artist.

Dedication of the Temple
The next morning, Saturday, April 29, at 8:00 a.m., the first session of the Dedication ceremonies began. Another was called for eleven, and in the afternoon, at two and five o'clock. As the seating capacity was only 550, many stood during each ceremony.

As we mounted the steps and entered the Auditorium through the wide open gate, we found this fifth House of Worship in bridal array. Our eyes flew instinctively toward the east, where six lovely tropical floral sprays made a border of the white grill panels. Pine garlands made by the Guajiro Indians of Colombia and flown in for this occasion encircled the red ginger and anthuria, white and pink chrysanthemums and carnations. The effect of the dazzling white purity of the interior was exquisitely beautiful, and the view of the surrounding wooded mountains and deep blue Pacific visible through the many openings, breath-taking.
First on the program was a choral selection by the National Conservatory of Music. Then, Hand of the Cause Amat’ü-Bahá Ruḥiyiyyih Khánum read from Prayers and Meditations of Bahá’u’lláh, pp. 331-332. The readings for all sessions were the same. (See Bahrí News, June 1972.)

After the conclusion of the prayers, Hand of the Cause Ruḥiyiyyih Khánum rose and stood to the right of the table upon which the Sacred Portraits of Bahá’u’lláh and the Bab rested. The line formed in the aisle and began slowly to move toward her. She anointed each of the Bahá’ís as they paused before her, and on to view the portraits of the Messengers of God for this Day.

Outside, the friends lingered in the fresh mountain breeze. The newly planted gardens will soon be in fuller bloom, as the rainy season waters their roots. The small royal palms, cannas and ground cover had been grown in pots, along with other plants given by individual believers, over a period of several years, before transplanting to their permanent beds. The cannas came from Changuinola in Bocas del Toro. They were not supposed to bloom until three months after transplanting; but, planted just a month before the Dedication, they unexpectedly burst into flower that very day. Ruḥiyiyyih Khánum had asked that some frangipani be planted as it was the Guardian’s favorite flower. Some cuttings had been sent from Hawaii, and were placed in the gardens.

**Public Dedication of the Temple**

Sunday, April 29, the Public Dedication was held in two sessions, one at ten in the morning, the other at three in the afternoon. The program for this was more varied:

Choral selections by the Panama National Conservatory of Music Choir consisted of: “Blessed is the Spot” by Charles Wolcott, “Ave Verum”, by Mozart, and “Hymno de la Noche”.

Hand of the cause Ruḥiyiyyih Khánum gave a brief Dedication speech.

The message left with the people was that of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, printed in the attractive program:

> “The world of existence may be likened to this Temple and place of worship; for just as the external world is the place where people of all races and colors, varying faiths, denominations and conditions come together, just as they are submerged in the same sea of divine favors, so likewise all may meet under the dome of the Mashriq-i-Adhkár and adore one God in the same spirit of truth, for the ages of darkness have passed away, and the century of light has come.”

**Banquet and Meetings**

The Public Meeting, Saturday evening, was addressed by Hooper Dunbar, Counsellor for South America. His subject: “The New Race of Men”, was given in Spanish and English. A musical program followed by the Emily Butcher Choir of Panamá, the Jin-ai singers of the state of Washington, Thomas Kavelin and Kay Harris, opera singer and former pioneer to the San Blas Islands.

The banquet for dignitaries was held in the Bella Vista Room of the El Panamá Hotel, Sunday evening. There were 337 guests and Bahá’ís present. Background music was provided by the Jannowitz String Orchestra of Panama City.

The official hostess for the National Spiritual Assembly, Raquel de Constante, welcomed the guests, giving much appreciation from the Bahá’ís to the Government of Panamá for its many courtesies in relation to the Dedication and International Conference.

Sra. Constante then introduced Mr. Peter Tillotson, architect for the Temple. Mr. Tillotson spoke of his happiness in seeing how beautifully his design had been erected.

Hand of the Cause Ruḥiyiyyih Khánum was introduced, and pointed out that Mr. Tillotson was so very fortunate to have achieved this eminent position so young in life; that people from all over the world would come to see his design, the Temple, and that few architects have ever had such an experience. She added that God had
truly blessed him with such worldwide recognition. "Maybe," she said, "God will bless him again."

While the banquet was being held, the rest of the friends met for Entertainment Night in the New Gymnasium of Panamá. Moises Guevara was master of ceremonies for the first part of the musical program and Linda Marshall for the last half. The Panamá Dancers performed their typical graceful dances, whirling in their colorful costumes. The tone of the evening was lively and youthful. Dan Gilmer from Maryland, Tommy Kavelin, pioneer in Venezuela, Phil Lucas from Nicaragua played guitar and sang. Dan England accompanied on the piano by John Ford Caley, professionals from Hollywood, gave several lively numbers, followed by Seals and Crofts, always favorites.

**Beginning of the Conference**

May 1, Monday morning at 9 a.m. the Conference officially opened, convened by the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Panamá, Sr. Raquel de Constante, a member from its inception of that body. From her position as Chairman of the National Assembly, she has served as expert and liaison with Government departments. Her public appearances as Chairman of the banquet for dignitaries and of the Conference were always gracious and eloquent.

The three Hands of the Cause were introduced to the Conference, as were the seven attending members of the Continental Board of Counsellors, the twenty-two Auxiliary Board members and the twenty-six representatives of National Spiritual Assemblies.

The Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Panamá, Leota Lockman, read greetings from the Bahá’í world, and presented some of the many gifts sent for the new Temple. There was such a flood of beautiful gifts, she said, that only a few could be mentioned: a Navajo rug with the design of the Greatest Name was presented by Mr. Franklin Kahn, whose wife had woven it. He said that the Navajos weave like the spider, and as they weave they clear the cobwebs out of their minds. Navajo rugs represent the inner thoughts of the weaver. Several Persian rugs were gifts, a Buddhist gong, a piece of the wall of the Australian Temple, dust from the window ledge at the prison of Mah Ku. Among the precious gifts was a lock of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s hair, and small stones from the tomb of the Purest Branch. Also, a silk scarf given to Paul Theile by Hand of the Cause Mr. Faizi.

Hand of the Cause Amatu’l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánum read the message from The Universal House of Justice. (See Bahá’í News, June 1972, page 3)

The Chairman of the afternoon session was Alfred Osborne of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central America, one of the first Bahá’ís in Panamá and Chairman of the first National Assembly of Panamá elected in 1961. He introduced Mr. Robert McLaughlin, architectural consultant of the Panamá Temple for The Universal House of Justice, who gave a resume of the building of the Temple. He spoke of the Temple as a building where function and form unite in complete clarity and simplicity. He explained that nine concrete arches support the thin shell dome, and that these arches rest on eighteen massive reinforced concrete buttresses which form a nine-pointed star. This is the first thin shell dome, he said, of this magnitude to be erected in Central America by the gunting process.

The one sad note of the dedication was the absence of engineer Paul Theile, now desperately ill in Hawaii. The Secretary of the National Assembly of Panamá, Leota Lockman, who had worked so closely and long with him when he was engineer in charge of Temple construction, rose to speak of his service and sacrifice. His wife, Helen, represented him at the Conference. She was brought forward to the podium and presented to the Conference who gave her the warm welcome they longed to extend to her husband. Mrs. Lockman called him a great example and said, "He served to his very last ounce of strength." He truly gave all for our Temple, and there were anxious and loving prayers go up to God for his healing."

Hand of the Cause Dr. Giachery addressed the Conference on the subject: "A Call to the Believers to Proclaim
At the banquet Mrs. Constante, Chairman of the Panama National Spiritual Assembly, is presiding with Alan Pringle as interpreter. Near the podium are Hand of the Cause Mr. Khâdêm, Mrs. Giacchery, Mrs. Salvatore Pelle, and Peter Tillotson, architect of the Panama Temple. In front, facing the audience is Auxiliary Board member Ruth Pringle.

Choir of the National Conservatory of Music, who gave selections both at the Dedication and the Conference.

Rūhiyyih Khânûm after a session of the Conference.

the Faith to Mankind.” “We are a new race of men,” he said, and reminded us of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s expectations for us: “... to be an example, have clean thoughts, a pure heart, love and compassion for every single man. Our duty is to spiritualize mankind. The Administrative Order,” he said, “had to be built before we could proclaim to the masses; they had to have some place to go for deepening and organization. We must always work within the framework of this Divinely Appointed Administrative Order.”

Dr. Peter Khan spoke on “Individual Deepening of the Spiritual Life.” He said that the world is losing respect for authority, and that we must remove the barriers to obedience within ourselves. The spiritual self, he reminded us, is nourished by prayer and meditation, then action. Action causes the opening up of the heart; teaching opens the heart of him who teaches, and develops the soul and enriches the nature.

At the closing of the session, the two first pioneers to Panamá in 1939 were given a standing ovation. Louise Caswell and Cora Oliver were thanked for their services as first resident Baha'is.

Then, the mother of Latin America, Leonora Holappie Armstrong, was called to the platform. She spoke briefly, “All our hearts must rejoice today, overflow with joy and gratitude.”

The evening session was conducted by the youth, with Rodrigo Tomás as Chairman. The three speakers were Mr. Paul Lucas, Auxiliary Board member from Mexico, Felicia Fennell of Panamá and H. Fitz-Henley of Jamaica. Their subject: “Bahá’í Youth—the Advancing Army of Bahá’u’lláh—Their Role and Privilege of Participation in Proclamation.” On the program was printed the quotation from the Guardian, “They are the ones to raise the call of the Kingdom and arouse the people from slumber. If they fail, the Cause is doomed to stagnation.”

Felicia Fennell’s talk brought out the fact that the leading figures in this Faith were extremely young, all under forty when they began their work. The Báb was only twenty-five, Bahá’u’lláh twenty-seven, the Beloved Guardian only twenty-four when he was called to assume the leadership of the Faith. Shoghi Effendi had praised the youth, their vigor, their eager spirit, alertness and optimism as qualities which would spur them on to great endeavor. “They must always bear in mind,” he warned them, “that their enthusiasm must be tempered by wisdom, discretion and dignity when teaching the Faith.”

Mr. Fitz-Henley quoted Bahá’u’lláh, “Guidance hath ever been given by words, and now it is given by deeds.” He spoke of the great need to live the life, as the “greatest challenge and opportunity.” “The generation gap,” he pointed out, “is alien in character to the Faith and its best interests. ... The House of Justice counsels the student to be patient and humble ... this situation offers great opportunity to teach in substance and in spirit.”

Second Day of Conference

The second day of the Conference, Tuesday, May 2, began with the taking of the official photograph. The bright red and gold of the Cuna dress, the mother–hubbard style of the Guaymi, contrasted sharply with the pant suits and mini skirts of the Americans and Panamanians. The Mexican women wore their very feminine embroidered costumes, and there was a group in elaborate Turkish and Oriental attire for both men and women that called for many admiring private photos. In other words, it was a typical Bahá’í crowd smiling up at the photographer high above the street.

The chairman of the morning session was Mr. Wallace Baldwin, Chairman also of the National Teaching Committee of Panamá. He introduced the speaker of “A Call for Pioneers,” Mrs. Javidukht Khâdêm, Auxiliary
Board member from Evanston, Illinois. She recalled some of the great names of pioneering in the early days of the Faith and gave tribute to them all. "We must sever ourselves from everything except God," she said. "Our human personality must recede. No sacrifice is too great to achieve the goals of the Nine Year Plan. Let us be soldiers in the army of Baha'u'llah."

When she voiced the call for pioneers to arise, 103 persons walked and wept their way to the platform. Mr. Khadem embraced as many as possible and each volunteer was given a flower.

Some humor was injected into the serious business of pioneering by the delegate from Belize, Mrs. Gladys Stewart. "My very presence here," she said, "shows there is a spiritual solution to the economic problem!" She quipped her call for help for her small country in its proclamation effort, and was lustily applauded.

Don Alberto Perez, the Guaymi teacher and blind pioneer of Panama, spoke eloquently on "Teaching the Masses," followed by Dr. Farzam Arbab.

The afternoon session was chaired by Mr. Richard Mirkovich of Costa Rica. Donald Witzell, Counsellor for South America, elaborated on the theme of training local teachers to carry on the work after the traveling teacher has left an area. "A small number of traveling teachers cannot possibly handle the numbers coming into the Faith now," he said, "and more expansion local teachers must be raised up." He quoted from Shoghi Effendi's letter to Latin America in 1957: "Great as are the services rendered by the pioneers and unforgettable as are the deeds accomplished, they cannot take the place of the indigenous element which must constitute the bedrock of the community, and carry on its own affairs."

Sr. Raul Pavon of the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador continued this discussion, citing examples from his vast experience as pioneer to the Indian tribes of that country. Artemus Lamb of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central America, living at present in Costa Rica, added: "Perhaps the first step toward resolving the vital task of consolidation is to understand and accept the fact that it is a long and arduous and inevitable process, requiring patience, love, wisdom, and a dogged perseverance. The second step is to make systematic plans and then stick to them regardless of all obstacles. These plans should include many different types of activities, the purpose of which is to constantly encourage and train the new believers and communities to function actively."

"The greatest gift of God has been a spirit of sacrifice," Hand of the Cause Mr. Khadem told the nearly 4,000 believers filling the great auditorium. "The Messengers give the example. All of them suffered and accepted Their sufferings in order to prove that they were sincere. The Bab, Baha'u'llah, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá suffered so much—prisons and trials—for humanity. Baha'u'llah said in the 'Tablet of Visitation' that none had suffered like He. From the earliest history we read of sacrifices. Abraham was willing to sacrifice His two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. The Purest Branch was a sacrifice in the Baha'i Era. Men, women and children loved..."
Baha'u'llah so much they accepted all kinds of physical suffering and sacrifice to be near Him. Baha'u'llah asked three people if they were ready to enter the Abhá Kingdom. The first answered, "No! It is too early!" The second replied, "Sanih yourself, I am ready." The third said, "I am dead, I can't own what you say!"

Hand of the Cause Dr. Giachery recalled, for his farewell message, the wonderful work and life of Shoghi Effendi. "I cannot describe the Guardian to you," he said, "he was the man of the century. He struggled singlehanded for more than thirty-six years, and accomplished more in that time than any other man in 300 years. He was the forerunner of the Peace Corps; volunteers went out under his guidance." He then spoke tenderly of the Guardian's death; how he had never thought that the Beloved Shoghi Effendi would die first. Very gently he reminded the Baha'i youth to remember how the Guardian always taught that Bahá'ís must be dignified in everything they do, an example for others. It was the Guardian, he said, "who had started the international conferences which mingle all the races and peoples together, creating this new race of men."

When Hand of the Cause Rubiyiyih Khánum rose to give her goodbye message, she joked, "At the end of a Chinese dinner they always serve boiled rice. I am the boiled rice of the Conference!" She told of a believer in prison in Mozambique who had made ten ivory rings with the Greatest Name on them, one of which he had sent to her. She was offering it for sale, the money to be sent to the House of Justice for the next Temple. Her subject as announced was: "The Joy of Serving the Faith." "To be honest," she began, "serving the Faith is not all joy! We get very tired and discouraged sometimes, but we go on and try to do our best to be a Bahá'í under all circumstances and all our lives."

"Mass teaching," she said, "is like getting struck by an atomic bomb. We find ourselves suddenly in the next world. But stick with it," she encouraged, "you must be tried and tried again. Pioneers are like travelers on a road; they see a forest and want to go there. So they go to it, but after they get in it, they no longer can see the forest. It surrounds them. Pioneering takes infinite patience. Pilgragers don't like clocks; they don't live by the clock as we do. They have other values more human. The most important thing in the pioneer field," she emphasized, "is unity and harmony among the friends. Inharmony makes you ill. It ruins everything. You find that the people you have gone to teach have evaporated. They can't take inharmony. We are losing so much and so much because we are not sufficiently united and harmonious. When people actually see love and unity they will come in; you don't have to buy anything to them.

She warned the Bahá'ís not to take on Christian or Moslem customs in our practices. Other sects don't like it and won't come in. People must find that the Faith is bigger than any other and all inclusive. She gave the suggestion that in our teaching we talk more of life after death; to speak of the south, the ghost of primitive people, and to tell them how much of their beliefs is true, how much is superstition.

Incidents

One of the most appealing stories of the entire Conference was the experience of Laurence Coward of Trinidad. He had a beautiful Bahá'í ring, the anniversary gift of his wife. When an appeal was made for funds, he gave his ring to be sold for the Fund. An American friend brought the ring and gave it back to him. Dear Mr. Khádem was there and asked the young man his name. When he said Laurence Coward, Mr. Khádem protested, "Oh no! Not that name for a Bahá'í. You must change it. From now on you are Badii!" So Laurence told us privately that he would change his name and be known as Laurence Badi from now on.

One day during lunch, one of the Indian babies choked on food so badly that he stopped breathing. A cry for help went up, and as it happened none of the medics were there. A believer from the U.S. hurried to help, as she had first aid training. After removing the piece of food from the child's throat, she gave mouth to mouth respiration until the child began to breathe again. The self-discipline of the other believers present was very obvious in that they held back to give air to the child, without being told, but were intensely interested and praying for his recovery.

The last moments of the Conference were given to an ovation for the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama for its outstanding labors in the work of building the Temple. The Temple Committee was made up of the entire National Assembly and the engineers. It is impossible to mention and thank all the pioneers and Panamanians who worked so hard on committees and as volunteers. The spirit of service was universal. The Panama Bahá'ís rose as one man to give their time and talents for the success of the Dedication and Conference.

During the entire Dedication and Conference, Kiva Films was photographing the proceedings. Under the guidance of Board member Ruth Pringle they filmed scenes at the Lion's Club, at the Dedication and at the Conference. The film, when finished, will be on mass teaching, deepening and consolidation in Latin America. Some of the associates of Kiva Films are Bahá'ís, and the company was commissioned to make the film by The Universal House of Justice. The film will be in Spanish.

With a strange mixture of sadness at parting and joyful inspiration from our days together, we turned to say goodbye to each other. Secure in the House of the Lord, warm in His Everlasting Arms, friends who had been estranged embraced, hearts were healed of old wounds, hurts forgotten. We looked at each other aware of the shining faces; souls, tethered to the emanation of the Holy Spirit bathing the Temple and Conference Hall, experienced that unity Bahá'ús all came to develop and toward which we strive. Sadly but happily we turned to go; another great Conference was ended.

—Kit Goldstein and Amine DeMille

EDITOR'S NOTE: The August issue of Bahá'í News will carry the story of the Lions' Club camp where about 400 Indian Bahá'ís and visitors stayed during the Dedication and Conference in Panama.
The first National Bahá'í Convention of Bangla Desh, formerly East Pakistan, was held at Dacca on April 22-23, 1972. Present as representative of The Universal House of Justice was Continental Counsellor Mrs. Shirin Boman. Also present were Auxiliary Board member Mr. Amjad Ali, fourteen out of nineteen delegates and twenty observers. The Message of The Universal House of Justice was read and translated into Bengali.

Members elected to the first National Spiritual Assembly are: Mr. Moghaddus, Chairman; Mrs. Simin Moghaddus, Treasurer; Mr. Masoomul Huda, Secretary; Mr. Kamal Jehangir; Mr. S. M. Imamuddin; Mr. Danish Ali; Mr. Shah Alam Chowdhuri; Mr. Abdul Rashid; Mr. Mojibullah.

Many recommendations were made by delegates for consideration by the National Spiritual Assembly. The by-laws sent by The Universal House of Justice were presented and it was decided to file them immediately with the civil government. When incorporation is achieved the Hazratu'll-Quds in Dacca will be transferred to the National Spiritual Assembly.

Two telegrams were sent to The Universal House of Justice. This required much persuasion with the postal authorities who said these were the first telegrams sent to Israel from Bangla Desh.

Mrs. Boman arrived early to make some preliminary arrangements for the Convention. Most important was a visit to the President of Bangla Desh. A delegation of four Bahá'ís was received with great respect on April 21, 1972. The President stood up when receiving The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh which Mrs. Boman presented on behalf of The Universal House of Justice. She informed the President that this Book contains letters of Bahá'u'lláh to the then kings and rulers of the world, that it is a Revelation from God; that it was sent to Heads of States throughout the world and was now being presented to him as a new Head of State. After a brief presentation about the Faith he asked questions after question. He was impressed with the story of the martyrdom of the Báb. Mrs. Boman told him that the Báb prayed that His life be a sacrifice so that the Promised One of all religions would soon become manifest and fulfill past prophecies. The eagerness of the President caused the time for the interview to be extended. He assured the believers he would read the book and asked for more literature. He appreciated the statement "Loyalty to Government."

An interview was arranged with Dr. Kamal Hussain, the Law Minister of Bangla Desh. When presented with the proclamation volume he said that he had seen the Temple in Wilmette.

Mrs. Boman was successful in arranging for telephone facilities for the Bahá'í Center, which had been delayed for some six months, by presenting literature, explaining about the Teachings and the necessity for the phone. When word spread to others who were also waiting for phones, an outcry was made but the authorities, reinforced by Bahá'í literature, were able to satisfy the protesters.

On the first day of Ríjáván, Dacca Radio broadcast a ten-minute program on the Bahá'í Faith, explaining the importance of the Holy Day. Proclamation and teaching is continuing and many youths and students are being attracted.

Some of a group of Iranian Bahá'ís standing on the steps of the House of Worship in Wilmette. They had just come from the Dedication of the Panama Temple and were making a world tour.
Members of the National Spiritual Assembly, left to right, seated: Mr. Choo Yoke Boon, Treasurer; Dr. J. K. Fozdar, Chairman; Mr. Rusi Irani, Vice-Chairman; Mr. M. Maniam, Secretary. Back row, standing: Mr. N. Ragai ak Lang, Mr. P. Thinatayallam, Mr. Lim Boon Huat, Mr. G. Kuppusamy, Mr. Sapong ak Andar.

First National Convention of Brunei and Eastern Malaysia

Historic first National Convention of the Bahá’ís of Eastern Malaysia and Brunei held at the “Uma Orang Ulu”, Kuching April 28-30, 1972. One hundred and seventy attended from Sabah, Brunei and Sarawak including Hand of the Cause of God Mr. Jalal Khazeh representing The Universal House of Justice, Counsellor Dr. C. J. Sundram, and Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Grete Fozdar.
Windward Islands Form First National Spiritual Assembly

The spiritual excitement present at the formation of a new National Spiritual Assembly was well in evidence in Barbados, West Indies April 22-23 during the first Convention of the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands. This newly born national area includes the islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent, the Grenadines, Grenada, and Barbados.

Delegates and visitors from these islands, from the Virgin Islands and from the United States assembled on the campus of the University of the West Indies, Barbados, for this historic first Convention and first national election. Showering her love and wisdom upon the convention was Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, the official representative of The Universal House of Justice to the Convention. Also present was Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Marjorie Harmer.

Mr. George Howard, delegate from St. Vincent, presided as the Convention chairman. Fourteen of the nineteen delegates were present.

The Convention was opened with the reading of Messages from The Universal House of Justice by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum. The beloved Hand of the Cause also addressed the Convention on the subject of The Universal House of Justice. Mrs. Karen Wood spoke on The Administrative Order, and Mr. Philip Wood on The National Spiritual Assembly. Mr. and Mrs. Wood, speaking before the election, made their addresses as members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, the "mother" body of the new National Spiritual Assembly.

Greetings from around the world were read and gifts were presented.

The morning of the second day of the Convention began with an address by Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Marjorie Harmer, whose home is on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. This was followed with consultation on the Kitáb-i-Ábáíraírí Messages from The Universal House of Justice and on the goals of the new National Spiritual Assembly.

In its Message to the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands, The Universal House of Justice called upon the friends to "carry the Message of God to every waiting soul in these beautiful islands, nor to rest until the Divine Truth is known to all inhabitants."

The Convention was closed with a highly moving speech by the Chairman of the new National Spiritual Assembly on behalf of the delegates and visitors in which he expressed humble, heartfelt gratitude to The Universal House of Justice for the presence of beloved Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum.

During the Convention it was announced that during this past year fifteen localities had been opened to the Faith and seventeen new Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed.

Preparations for the Convention included the production of press kits which were sent to all newspapers, radio and television stations in the area. The kits included two news releases, a fact sheet, a photograph of the World Center, and an invitation to a press conference. The Windward Islands Broadcasting Service carried long pre-Convention reports from its stations on four of the islands. Newspaper coverage was also given to the event, one newspaper using an entire page for the story.

*First National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands, elected in Barbados on April 22, 1972. Standing, left to right: Mrs. Karen Wood, Secretary; Miss Hazel Beckels; Mrs. Carol Haynes; Miss Diana Bourne; Mrs. Patricia Paccassi, Recording Secretary. Seated, left to right: Mr. Philip Wood, Chairman; Mr. Frank Farmum; Mr. George Howard, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Frank Paccassi, Treasurer.*
One Thousand Bahá'í Children

Gather in Ecuador

Encouraged by advances in consolidation obtained through a series of Regional Teaching conferences and eleven Regional Conventions, at which large numbers of believers attended, the National Teaching Committee of the National Assembly of Ecuador conceived the ambitious plan of holding a national school for children with the goal of gathering together 1,000 children. The term ambitious was no exaggeration when we think of what it means to mobilize children between the ages of eight and twelve years of age in a country with primitive transportation facilities and extremes of climate and altitude change at a time when budgets are low and the few dedicated teachers already exhausted and considering the prospect of having to elect 220 Local Assemblies within another month.

The Regional Teaching Committee of Esmeraldas shouldered the responsibility of making arrangements for the Conference. Pioneers Nooshin Escandari and Jim Jensen accepted the challenge. Invitations to send representative were sent to all Bahá'í communities in the country and to the different neighborhoods of the city of Esmeraldas. With the cooperation of Local Assemblies and other Regional Teaching Committees, children from Chota, Ibarra, Ocuavil, Quito, Salasaca, Chibuleo, Carchi and Riobamba braved the cold rainy season, unpaved roads, and poor buses to challenge the majestic snow-covered Andes Mountain range to join their Bahá'í brothers and sisters on March 19, 1972 in the hot, humid, jungle surrounded, Pacific coast port city of Esmeraldas. Sixty neighborhoods of the city of Esmeraldas were represented: the coastal villages of Tachina, Rio Verde, San Vicente, Las Piedras and Palestina moved their children en mass to Esmeraldas.

The site of a government school received in its large interior patio the multitude of just less than 1,000 children, each colorful in the native dress typical of its ancestral region. Faces were toasted by sun or dried by wind, but still reflected the innocence of tender years. The spectator received an unforgettable impression of springtime, the significance of which only a Bahá'í heart could comprehend. Each child wore on his chest with undisguised pride as if he had just received the highest honor as the most distinguished citizen of the world, a large circular pin depicting the Unity of the Human Race.

These two young Bahá'ís are Chibuleo Indians and they sang and participated in the program of the Children's Conference.
Prayers of Baha’u’llah and ‘Abdu’l-Baha sung in choir by those 1,000 children filled the atmosphere and joyously swelled the heart. The visiting children presented the programs they had prepared especially for the occasion. The principles of the Faith were reviewed. New songs were learned. By their presence and contribution, Auxiliary Board members Rufino Gualavici and Charles Hornby added grace and dignity to the occasion. Then came the social part and the closing of this historic occasion.

No detail was overlooked by the committees, who on March 20, treated the children to a visit to the shores of the Pacific Ocean at Sua and Atacames. The mountain children, with eyes accustomed to only the green pastures of narrow valleys and golden table lands could not disguise their surprise and fright at finding themselves surrounded by the songs and flutter of tropical birds, the forms of unknown animals, jubilant vegetation and the Pacific Ocean—a strange world which their young minds could neither have imagined nor dreamed.

Filled with a sense of having accomplished their mission and with the sure knowledge that the world does not end at the point where mere sight diminishes, these new citizens of the world returned, for the most part, to their adobe or cane homes to share their adventures with their companions and seniors, leaving the teaching committees with yet another preoccupation—teaching the young!

Happy, Historic Convention in Sweden

Nineteen delegates attended the 1972 Convention in Sweden, where before the largest number had been nine. The National Spiritual Assembly report was a source of joy, and highlights were:
1) Ten Local Spiritual Assemblies, exceeding the goal by two.
2) The goal for localities exceeded by four, a total of fifty-eight.
3) Formation of the Swedish Bahá’í Publishing Trust and its legalization by the authorities.
4) Translation of Bahá’í literature into the Samish (Lapp) language, fulfilling a cherished goal.
5) Translation of Paris Talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá into the Estonian language. This was a surprise by Mr. Jacob Kain, from Uppsala.
6) Proclamation of the Faith to more than 2,500 clergy-men and thirteen bishops, some of whom wrote back, expressing thanks and asking for more information.
7) Enrollment of more than seventy new believers, an unprecedented number for any of the Scandinavian countries in a single year.
8) Formation of the Bahá’í Student Committees of the Universities of Uppsala and Gothenburg and presentation of the proclamation book to the Chancellor of the University of Uppsala.
9) A wave of pioneering effort which rebuilt the Local Spiritual Assembly of Malmö, consolidated the Local Spiritual Assembly of Västerås, and helped form the Local Spiritual Assembly of Åland, a joint goal of Finland and Sweden.

The loving cable of The Universal House of Justice crowned the efforts and gave fresh impetus for the challenging tasks ahead.
Bahá'í—United Nations Activities Around the World in 1971

In its consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Bahá'í International Community continued during 1971 to expand its activities in support of the economic and social goals of the United Nations. At the UN Headquarters in New York, Dr. Victor de Araujo and Mrs. Annamarie Honnold, respectively UN Representative and Alternate Representative for the Bahá'í International Community, participated in the sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, the Commission for Social Development and the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. At the UN Headquarters in Geneva, the Bahá'í International Community Permanent Representative Mrs. Janet Lindstrom covered the session of the Commission on Human Rights and the summer session of the Economic and Social Council. These meetings afforded many opportunities for formal and informal contacts with members of the UN Secretariat and delegates of UN Missions, in which the Bahá'í “presence” was made known and Bahá'í views expressed when appropriate.

Further, the Bahá'í International Community was invited to send representatives to special seminars for member-states held by the United Nations in observance of International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The first one was held in Yaounde, Cameroon, June 16-29. Dr. Aziz Navidi, the representative of the Bahá'í International Community for the Continent of Africa, was the official observer. He was assisted by Counsellor Dr. Mehdi Samandari. Dr. Navidi presented two papers explaining the Bahá'í point of view towards race, emphasizing the general principles concerning the oneness of mankind. Both were well received and many people expressed their admiration. Both Dr. Navidi and Dr. Samandari had many opportunities to visit with representatives from other countries and to acquaint them with the Bahá'í Faith.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman, Mr. Emmanuel Egbe Tabi, said, “This Conference is of the greatest importance; we cannot realize how important it is. I am reminded of the words of Bahá'u'lláh: 'Ye are the leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch’ and “The earth is one country and mankind its citizens’ and ‘Glory is not his who loves his native land; but glory is his who loves his kind.”’ In his closing address, Mr. Tabi mentioned the need for morality and spirituality in order to bring an end to racial discrimination, and he then said “I am ending my talk with the words of Bahá'u'lláh which I mentioned in the opening of the seminar.” At a later meeting with Dr. Navidi and Dr. Samandari, Mr. Tabi told them he could never forget the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and felt compelled to quote His Words... He said that he had been taught the Faith by Hand of the Cause Mr. Enoch Olinga and, in turn, had taught Mr. Diekson who is now treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly of Cameroon. He indicated his desire to study the Faith and welcomed an invitation from Dr. Navidi and Dr. Samandari to attend a reception and to meet other Bahá'ís.

The second special UN governmental seminar was held in New York on August 24-September 6, 1971. Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, assisted by Mr. Al Lincoln and Miss Guilda Navidi, represented the Bahá'í International Community. Subject of the seminar was “The Dangers of a Recrudescence of Intolerance in all its Forms and the Search for Ways of Preventing and Combating it.” Twice the Bahá'í representatives were given opportunity to present the viewpoint of the Faith on specific subjects being discussed. A great deal of attention was given to both presentations and favorable comments were made by many government delegates. Many excellent contacts were made for the Faith while at the same time effective and durable friendships were established. The press, too, seemed favorably impressed with the Bahá'í delegation, devoting a special article to the Faith. No other NGO or government representative received any acknowledgment from the press.

In its affiliation with the United Nations Office of Public Information, the Bahá'í International Community and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States joined hands in participating fully in the Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, held at UN Headquarters in New York on May 25 and 26. The Bahá'í International Community was represented by Dr. Victor de Araujo, Mrs. Annamarie Honnold, Mrs. Betty de Araujo, Mr. Phil Chris­tensen and Mr. J. Michael Cavitt; the National Spiritual Assembly was represented by Mrs. Mary Sawicki, Mrs. Eita Mae Michael, Miss Delano Barbour, Mr. Stephen Waite and Mr. Foad Katirai. The theme of the Conference was “The United Nations and the Human Environment.”

Assistance in support of the aims and activities of the UN came also from Bahá'í communities throughout the world. Some of these activities have been reported in the January and February issues of Baha'i News. We have since heard exciting reports of valuable cooperation in the following countries:

Bathurst, The Gambia

The National Teaching Committee of the Gambia organized the observance of UN Day in Bathurst. The meeting received paid publicity and one free radio broadcast. The same talk was repeated at Yundum College where a lively audience of some 100 students listened and discussed with great interest for a long evening.

British Honduras

It is estimated that close to 1,000 people attended the celebration of United Nations Day arranged by the Bahá'í Proclamation Committee in a public park in Belize City. The park was chosen with a view to reaching as many as possible from the general population. A popular band contributed their services. Some 50 large cardboard flags of UN member nations had been made by children in primary schools and by committee members. The school children were trained by a Bahá'í dance director in a most effective dance with these flags and, at a given time, they reversed these to show large letters on the backs spelling out “UNITED NATIONS—OUR BEST HOPE” and “HELP THE UNICEF CHILDREN’S FUND”. The United States Consul had loaned a very effective and moving short film on the work of UNICEF entitled “Three of Our Children,” which proved to be both enjoyable and informative. During the picture the audience was implored to contribute with collection boxes for the Children’s Fund. An impressive sum was given to the Minister of Education to be sent to UNICEF. Prominent newspaper publicity was received.
Dominican Republic
UN Day was celebrated in Santo Domingo, Santiago and Moca. All the programs consisted of informal talks in which the aims and achievements of the United Nations as well as the relationship of the Bahá’í Community to the United Nations were explained. Many, especially young people, attended. United Nations pamphlets and wall sheets received through the Bahá’í International Community office were used to advantage.

Fiji Islands
An unusual ad was run by the Bahá’ís of Suva, Fiji for their United Nations Day meeting. It read in part as follows:

“Fiji has become a member of the United Nations since Independence. What influence can Fiji have?”

Dr. E. Hald, the United Nations Liaison Office for Fiji, was the guest speaker. The program also included two color films: “The Story of UNICEF” and “Workshop for Peace”. The chart display attracted attention. Literature was distributed.

In private conversation Dr. Hald expressed his appreciation that at least one group of people in Fiji was taking an interest in publicizing the work of the United Nations. It is reported that representatives of women’s organizations who were present almost gravely questioned the Bahá’ís on how they were able to obtain so many charts, so much literature and such good films of the United Nations. They admitted having a good representative at the United Nations Headquarters.

It is also of interest that the pamphlet, “The United Nations—Twenty-Five Years of Working for You”, is included in the travel-teacher’s scrap book which is taken out to villages and outer islands.

France
United Nations events were sponsored by the Bahá’ís of different towns, including Paris, Marseille, Celle-St-Cloud and Tours. Departing from the public meeting idea, the Marseille Bahá’í Community sponsored a big bus with an exhibition on the United Nations and on the Bahá’í Faith. UNESCO was very cooperative in supplying posters and many other useful items.

Iran
The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Iran published a special issue of their Bahá’í NEWS (No. 16) to commemorate The International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (1971).

Italy
Many communities observed UN Day and Human Rights Day, including Milan, where Prof. Alessandro Bausani spoke at a conference on Human Rights Day on the topics: “Bahá’u’lláh, Standard-bearer of Human Rights”. On the Island of Elba announcements of a UN Day meeting were placed in shop windows in Porto Ferro and Porto Azzurro.

Kenya
Five UN Day programs were held on October 24th. These gatherings took place in Nairobi, in Western Province, in Nyanza Province, in Coast Province and in Central Province. United Nations Day literature was made available.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
One hundred and seventy-five Bahá’ís and their guests celebrated UN Day in Kuala Lumpur on October 24, 1971. The speakers were Mrs. Minna Chiew, director of information services for the UN Development Programme, and Mrs. Elizabeth Gibson, Bahá’í pioneer, who showed slides of United Nations Headquarters in New York before speaking on the UN’s International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

Monaco
In response to the wish expressed by the Bahá’í International Community and within the framework of the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the Bahá’ís sponsored a conference on December 7, 1971 at the House of Youth and Culture of Monaco. Mrs. Diane Starcher, a graduate in biology and residing in Saint-Cloud, France, lectured on “Racism and Science”. School principals were informed of the forthcoming event, posters were distributed and ads run. Most of the audience consisted of young people, most of whom took a very active part in the small discussion groups which followed.

Paraguay, Costa Rica and Norway
Svolvaer and Lillehammer
These countries have also cooperated in this work.

Samoa
The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Samoa sent the Health Departments of American Samoa and Western Samoa an excerpt from World Health Magazine concerning a diet supplement biscuit for children, together with an offer to assist in any way possible in the institution of such a program. The Director of Health of the Government of Western Samoa acknowledged “the Bahá’ís keen interest in promoting health for the people of Western Samoa.”

Spain
In the meeting room of the Hotel Balmoral, in Barcelona, a public meeting was held on the occasion of Human Rights Day, 200 persons attended, 150 of whom were not Bahá’ís. The previous day a press conference had been called. The guest speaker’s topic was “Equality of Rights and Opportunities, Especially Regarding Women” while Bahá’í Professor Mehrakhan developed “The Spiritual Source of Human Rights.” A display table proved a center of attraction. The professor was interviewed by radio broadcasting stations.

Switzerland
It is gratifying to note that the Bahá’ís in Switzerland held Bahá’í observances in Nyon, Lausanne, Locarno and Lugano. One-hundred-fifty students and faculty from Franklin College in Lugano came out to hear “Combat against Racism”. A large article appeared in the press about the meeting held in the little town of Nyon on Lake Geneva.

Canada
Toronto Bahá’ís held a Race Unity children’s party to celebrate the annual UN Day, and to call attention to the “International Year to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination”. The event took place in the Toronto Bahá’í Center which is located in a neighborhood of mixed racial and national backgrounds. Before the party, 500 colorful fliers went out to the homes in the immediate area, and announcements were made on radio and TV, extending an open invitation to residents. The local chapter of the United Nations Association contributed 100 large balloons for distribution. About
250-300 children came. Each was given “sunny money” and invited to choose a variety of activities, including a “candy tree”, finger printing and other crafts, a pet show and apple bobbing. One member of the community displayed her collection of 750 dolls from many nations. Each child went home with a balloon and many adults took literature about the UN.

Chile

On Human Rights Day, a ceremony took place at the Atla Magna at the University of Chile, organized by the Bahá’í community with the cooperation of UNIS, including a lecture on Human Rights and the showing of the UNESCO film “Mundo Fragíl.”

The Bahá’í friends of Santiago responded with courtesy and kindness to Mr. David Exley, Chief, NGO Section, United Nations Office of Public Information, when he visited Santiago recently. The friends met him en masse at the Santiago airport and escorted him to his hotel, where a pleasant discussion was held regarding Bahá’í-UN activities in Chile.

Jamaica

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Jamaica distributed a large selection of UN publications, which were received from the Information Center in Trinidad, to all Bahá’í communities and suggested that their UN Day programs focus on the “International Year to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.” Also, a newspaper release which related the Bahá’í Faith to the United Nations was published in the Sunday Gleaner, a Kingston newspaper.

Japan

Mr. Hiroshi Tsuncy, a member of both the National Spiritual Assembly of Japan and the Japanese Federation of UNESCO Associations, was the major speaker at a United Nations Day observance in Nagoya, Japan. The subject of his talk was “The Formation of the UN and World Peace” and was delivered to an audience of 20 people.

Nigeria

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Nigeria is officially listed with the United Nations Information Center in Lagos and receives from that center their regular report on UN activities. On several occasions last year, articles from this report were reprinted in the Nigerian Bahá’í monthly newsletter. Even closer relations with the United Nations were established by the Bahá’í community of Nigeria when Mr. Penuel Malafa, Director of the United Nations Information Center in Lagos, met Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum at a reception-buffet dinner given in her honor by the Bahá’ís of Lagos on September 13.

Panama

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the Republic of Panama sponsored an effective United Nations Day observance last October. To their knowledge, it was the only such observance for the United Nations in the Republic on October 24th, United Nations Day. Among the 175 people in attendance were ambassadors and other distinguished guests. There was good publicity. Parts of the program appeared on television throughout the Republic the following day.

The program included volunteer dancers of high professional quality, well known in Panama. At the end many of the audience joined in the dancing, a tamborito, making it an even more festive and happy occasion.

Paraguay

United Nations Day was celebrated by the Bahá’ís of Asuncion, Paraguay with a public meeting featuring two speakers. Dr. Enrique Vela, Director of the United Nations Information Centre, gave an excellent talk on the elimination of prejudice. The Bahá’í talk was based on the same theme and received high praise. Music for the program was composed and presented by a U.S. Peace Corpsman and two Paraguayan youth. The melodies were lovely and the lyrics very moving, on the theme of human brotherhood. Instruments were an interesting combination of guitars, French horn and recorder. Preceding the program, there were TV and radio interviews which explained the significance of the Bahá’í Faith. The film “Taller de la Paz”, which was provided by the United Nations Information Office, was also shown.

Solomon Islands

Bahá’ís of the Solomon Islands plan to introduce United Nations publications and audio-visual materials into their school programs. Two Bahá’í schools are in operation. Portable projectors have been acquired and they plan to utilize UN slides in conjunction with the booklet, “The United Nations and What You Should Know About It”.

Tonga and the Cook Islands

From the Bahá’ís of Tonga and the Cook Islands comes a report that slides of the UN buildings have drawn enthusiastic interest when shown in villages where, for the first time, there was awareness of the UN as a reality. One of the large Methodist high schools has borrowed all materials that the Bahá’ís have to offer including UN charts and indicate a desire to have all future UN materials which become available. All are clearly marked as the property of the National Spiritual Assembly of Tonga. Effort is also being made to offer a series of UNDP slides. A showing of these slides has already been arranged at the local Rotary Club in Nuku’alofa, Tonga.

Nicaragua

On October 24, 1971, Bahá’ís of Nicaragua held a celebration in recognition of the Twenty-sixth Anniversary of the United Nations. Official representatives of the UN, the Technical Branch of the Ministry of Public Education, the Ramirez Guoyena Institute and of the Bahá’í community of Nicaragua were present. After a talk given by Mr. Fills, the UN representative, Mr. Artemus Lamb, member of the Continental Board of Counsellors, spoke of the similarity of the aims and purposes of the Bahá’í Faith and the United Nations. Five hundred special invitations were sent out. The meeting place was attractively decorated for the occasion with posters depicting UN themes, and informative pamphlets on the Bahá’í Faith and the United Nations were distributed.

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Wilmette Celebrates Hundredth Birthday

Wilmette is the location of the Mother Temple of the West and the National Bahá'í Center, and as such plays an important role in the history of the Bahá'í Faith. This year the Village of Wilmette celebrates its one-hundredth anniversary.

On May 21, 1972, the Wilmette Bahá'í community held a "Bahá'í Salute to Wilmette." The event opened with a buffet-reception at the Ḥażrat-ull Quds to which Wilmette officials and other dignitaries were invited.

Following the buffet Bahá'ís, guests and the general public attended a devotional service at the Bahá'í House of Worship which had the general theme "His Praise Glorified." In addition to Bahá'ís, the Mayor of Wilmette and the Chairman of the Wilmette Historical Society read at the devotions. A special choir and soloist presented a cappella music for the occasion.

Following the devotions, at 8:00 p.m. an historical and musical program was presented in Foundation Hall of the House of Worship. Music was provided by Mr. Milton Norman, guitarist and by Mr. Kiu Haghghi and Mr. Syrus Haghghi playing the Persian santour and zarb. The santour is a resonant 80-string instrument which originated in Iran in the ninth century. The zarb is an Iranian drum.

The historical portion of the program consisted of a slide show of the history of the Bahá'í House of Worship from 1908 to the present time. The entire program stressed the close relationship between the growth of Wilmette and the history of the Faith, and the part Bahá'ís have played and are playing in the growth of Wilmette. After the slide show, refreshments were served.

The event was well publicized by special invitations, a public invitation in the local newspaper and by news and radio releases. All of the Village officials were in praise of the event and many indicated that the Bahá'ís had done more for Wilmette's Centenary than any other group in the Village.

The Italian Dawn-Breakers

Italian Dawn-Breakers performing in one of the cities visited in summer 1971.

The Italian Dawn-Breakers made an extensive teaching tour for two months following the conference at Fiesch. This group, consisting of seventeen young people traveling in cars and sleeping in tents, visited twenty-two cities in Italy, including the islands. When reaching a town, usually where the Faith had not been taught, they would go to some open square, put out their equipment which would include big signs with quotations from the Writings and "Bahá'í World Faith" in big letters. The people would be attracted and listen to this group singing songs about peace and unity.

When the program was over the Bahá'ís would disperse among the crowd that had gathered around them, answering questions and proclaiming the Faith.

In the evening, roundtable discussions were organized, open to everyone, with lively debates. In most places they visited, the radio and the press would announce the meetings. A number of news articles about the Faith were printed.

The result of this trip was that two hundred people made their declarations.
PHILIPPINES: At a Naw-Ruz celebration are members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Batong Malake, Los Banos, Laguna, with Auxiliary Board member Fred Ramirez and National Spiritual Assembly member Zeny Ramirez. Standing, left to right, back row: Fred Ramirez, Jaime Go, Temeng Carpio and Mario Angeles. Front row, seated: Steve Pamulaklukin; Sofia Pareja, mother of seven children, whose husband and eldest daughter are pioneering in the Cook Islands; Zeny Ramirez; Luming Go; Bert de los Santos.

SPANISH NATIONAL CONVENTION

The National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Spain took place in Tarrasa, Spain on the 30th of April and the 1st of May 1972. Amongst the delegates and more than 200 Spanish friends who attended from all parts of Spain including the Canary Islands was George True (a pioneer in the Islands for 19 years), and also in attendance was Continental Board of Counsellors member of Europe, Annalise Bopp. The first day of the Convention consisted of opening prayers asking Baha'u'llah to crown our efforts with success for the Nine Year Plan and hearing a cable from The Universal House of Justice. That evening the election was held and the results were announced.

During the second day of the Convention, Miss Bopp raised a call for home front pioneers to the Canary Islands and one family volunteered and six other Bahá'ís offered their vacations to go to the Islands in order to win more victories for the Cause of God.

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"...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... is destined to evolve into the focal center of those... world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Baha'u'llah..."

Shoghi Effendi in Messages to America, p. 32
Spiritual Assemblies May Be Formed Whenever Community Membership Reaches Nine

To: All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

In order to stimulate the teaching work in every land and encourage the friends during this last year of the Nine Year Plan we have decided that as soon as the number of adult believers in any locality reaches or exceeds nine they are permitted to form their Local Spiritual Assembly immediately, rather than wait until 21 April 1973.

We hope moreover that, especially in the areas where the people are entering the Cause in troops, the implementation of this decision will increase the number of those communities which will, without the need for outside assistance, re-elect their Assemblies on the first day of Ridván in 1973 and in succeeding years.

It is our prayer at the Sacred Threshold that during the months ahead the steadily mounting number of these divine institutions will tremendously reinforce the labors of the valiant servants of the Blessed Beauty in every clime.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,
—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Center
Haifa, Israel
28 May, 1972

Site Selected for Edifice of Supreme House
Joyfully inform Baha’i World Range and Acceleration growth cause Baha’u’llah local national levels and resultant expansion activities World Center Impel us now announce ere completion nine year plan decision ‘initiate procedure’ select architect ‘design building for seat Universal House Justice envisaged Beloved Guardian on far flung Arc Heart Mount Carmel centering spot consecrated resting places sister brother mother beloved Master. Construction this Center Legislation God’s World Redeeming Order will constitute first major step development area surrounding Holy Shrine since completion international archives building. Moved Pay Tribute express heart felt gratitude outstanding services Robert McLaughlin in preparation for this historic undertaking fervently praying project now initiated may during years immediately ahead progress uninterruptedly speedily attain majestic consummation.

—The Universal House of Justice

(Bahá’í World Center
7 June 1972

(Corrected copy, July Bahá’í News)

New Building Plans Significant in “Sail His Ark” on Carmel

The inestimable significance of the decision by The Universal House of Justice to erect the building to serve as its legislative seat in the momentous Tablet of Carmel, the charter of the World Administrative Center of the Baha’i Faith, revealed by Baha’u’llah during His exile in the Holy Land.

“The design of the international Bahá’í Archives, the first stately edifice destined to usher in the establishment of the World Administrative Center of the Faith on Mt. Carmel—the Ark referred to by Baha’u’llah in the closing passages of His Tablet of Carmel—has been completed, and plans and drawings forwarded to Italy for the purpose of securing bids for its construction immediately after the conclusion of the necessary preliminary steps taken in the Holy Land for its forthcoming erection.” —Letter dated April 1954

“In the Holy Land, the center and pivot round which the divinely appointed, fast multiplying institutions of a world-encircling, resistlessly marching Faith revolve, the double process, so noticeable in recent years, involving a rapid decline in the fortunes of the breakers of Baha’u’llah’s Covenant and proclaiming the rise of the institutions of its World Administrative Center, in the shadow of His Shrine, has been accelerated on the one hand, through the death, in miserable circumstances, of the treacherous and malignant Majdi’-d-Din, the last survivor of the principal instigators of the rebellion against the Will of the Founder of our Faith, and, on the other, through the laying of the foundation, and the erection of some of the pillars, of the facade and of the northern side of the International Bahá’í Archives—the first of the major edifices destined to constitute the seat of the World Bahá’í Administrative Center to be established on Mt. Carmel.” —Letter dated April 1955

“The remaining twenty-two pillars of the International Bahá’í Archives—the initial edifice heralding the establishment of the Bahá’í World Administrative Center on Mt. Carmel—have been erected. . . . Simultaneous with this striking development, the plan designed to insure the extension and completion of the arc serving as a base for the erection of future edifices constituting the World Bahá’í Administrative Center, has been successfully carried out.” —Letter dated April 1957

—God Passes By, page 345
The Ascension of Bahiyih Khanum Forty Years Ago

Daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and Asiyih Khánum, the sister of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. To the believers she was known as "The Greatest Holy Leaf." To those she loved among she was Khánum, that is to say "Lady." She passed in July 1932.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO HIS DAUGHTER

"... 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. ... Through My remembrance of her a fragrance laden with the perfume of musk hath been diffused; well it is with him that hath inhaled it..."

SHOGHI EFFENDI, IN TRIBUTE TO THE GREATEST HOLY LEAF

"... A purity of life that reflected itself in every minutest details of her daily occupations and activities; a tenderness of heart that obliterated every distinction of creed, class and color; a resignation and serenity that evoked to the mind the calm and heroic fortitude of the Bab ... 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 cloud; 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. ... Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have paid touching tributes to those things that testify to her exalted position among the members of Their Family, that proclaim her as an example to Their followers, and as an object worthy of the admiration of all mankind."

*From The Baha'i World, Vol. V.*
When you think of the traits and ways that made up her lovely behavior she comes to you at first, perhaps, as she welcomed you among her guests—gracefully erect and poised, controlled yet at ease—putting others at ease, without familiarity—and with the mild dignity, simplicity and unselfconsciousness of a great lady....

Her balance, sense of fineness and fitness and practical judgment she displayed in creating order and grace in the household, and all the elements that make for well-being she blended in an ambience of harmony. ... So quietly did she make her influence felt that you were scarcely conscious of its working.

And she shed her creative sympathy in the form of tender interest in every detail in the lives of those around her, thus entering into their small hours and filling them with happiness. At the moment you did not recognize this sympathy as sympathy, but enjoyed it as pleasure. It is a charming Persian habit to wrap a gift in an embroidered silk or linen cloth, as fine in its way as the thing enclosed. So, always, she gave a gift within a gift. You took the happy warmth of contentment you felt when you were with her and only later came to realize that this was the fine wrapping of a deeper joy, a richer core.

She left spirit and body alike utterly free, demanding nothing of those she loved. And she would, it seemed, have them unaware of any debt of love. So light was her touch that she woke in them no sense of responsibility or conscious gratitude. Even when she comforted, her caress was feather soft; for she knew that those in sore need can be bruised by the least pressure of compassion. She would give the balm itself and add no weight of her own hand; so that healing and comfort came as a magic gift.

She would not use criticism and censure. When you brought her your darkness she lit a taper. ... You were sure that if one tried to hurt her she would wish to console him for his own cruelty. For her love was unconditioned, could penetrate disguise and see hunger behind the mask of fury, and she knew that the most brutal self is secretly hoping to find gentleness in another. She had that rarest heart-courage—to uncover the very quick of tenderness to any need. And so deep was her understanding that she plumbed all the miseries of the human heart and read their significance, blessing both the victim and the valid pain itself.

When she made a gift she seemed to be thanking you for it. ... When she gave joy she blessed you for it. It was almost as if she did not distinguish giving from receiving.

To serve her was not duty: it was high privilege. But she took nothing for granted in the way of devoted service and even in her last hours she whispered or smiled her thanks for every littlest ministration. Her generosity was instinctive, not considered; you felt no pause between impulse and act. You knew that her openhandedness was the evidence of an unbroken stream of impelling kindness that flowed through her, that never failed. 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 favor. She was a channel rather than cup; open treasury, not locked casket.

And as she would not lock away her small treasures, neither would she store up her wisdom and her riches of experience. In her, experience left no bitter ash, Her flame transmuted all of life, even its crude and base particles, into gold. And this gold she spent. ... Just by being what she was she gave us all that she knew.

Her thoughts were kneeling thoughts. She found communion in shared quietude, and privacy in a sunny room where children played.

Her room was the heart of the house. ... You left your
shoes at the threshold of that room and you left, too, any
outer covering of pose or manner you might have made
for yourself for protection in a bleak world. . . . Here
in the light of her shining simplicity you became simple.
All fear went out of you, all shyness, all timidity. . . .
You were free.

Although for so many years she had been the head of
that great household, directing every detail of its order-
ing, she showed no urge to small activity. When there
was something to be done she did it straightway, giving
it her full attention. When she sat with folded hands she
was wholly there; no part of her mind seemed to be busy
with the next step, the duty to come. It was in keeping
with her harmony with life that she gave herself in her
entirety to her hours of companionship and so made
them complete. Islands in time...

She was never in conflict nor at variance within her-
self. In her inclinations you heard no dissident minority
of hesitation. . . . Her personality was so attuned to her
spirit that integrity and purity were her natural expres-
sion. . . . She was incorruptible rather than innocent, for
she knew the shapes of evil and faced them fearlessly. . . .
She was not learned nor even educated in a worldly
sense: she drew her wisdom from hidden springs.

If she found you troubled she would not discuss your
difficulties and try to solve your problems. You forgot
them. Confusion and complexity were dissolved in her
warm clarity. You reached with her a region of con-
sciousness beyond clamor and doubt and beyond ques-
tioning. You were reassured...

She seemed not to separate this plane from the next,
nor to long . . . to escape to the bright wonder of the
future life. . . . Small things were not small to her: they
were fragments of the vast. She gave you, not hope of
bliss to come, but realization of present happiness. This
moment, this now, was tinged with the beauty of the eternal. . . .

She loved beauty. You would say that she lent to her
surroundings her sense of order, fragrance and ex-
quisiteness, but you look in vain for words to describe
that inner sensibility of which these were the outer
gossamer traces. Ever after to those who had known her
any lovely thing . . . was a reminder of her. She was
immortalized in all beauty. In the moth-green and
silver of spring you find something of her fragrance and
serenity. . . . You remember her in the sound of the sea,
and in the laughter of children. Wherever happiness is
or friendship, she is there.

We of the West knew her only in the latter days of her
life. But we could not find it in our hearts to wish that
we had known her in her youth or earlier womanhood
rather than in the time of her fulfillment. She had none
of the habits of mind which we have come to associate
with age. . . . Her now embodied all her yesterdays.

And you would not say that she was still beautiful, for
that implies a preserving lacquer of time. Her beauty,
too, was fulfillment, not vestige of former loveliness . . .
She was more than beautiful . . . in grace that was long
union of gracious thought and act. . . .

Her life could not be called martyrdom, for she did
not recognize it as such. . . . In the face of test and
danger she neither hurried nor held back, but entered
the perilous way with quiet breath. Her courage was
born of her understanding faith . . . that carried her
serene through years of incessant labor and meticulous
service, and through times of waiting empty-handed—and
through the bearing of irretrievable sorrow and
loss . . . She was never known to complain or lament. It
was not that she made the best of things, but that she
found in everything, even in calamity itself, the germs
of enduring wisdom . . . She was as incapable of impa-
tience as she was of revolt. But this was not so much
long-sufferance as it was quiet awareness of the forces
that operate in the hours of waiting and inactivity.

Always she moved with the larger rhythm, the wider
sweep, toward the ultimate goal. Surely, confidently, she
followed the circle of her orbit round the Sun of her
existence, in that complete acquiescence, that perfect
accord, which underlies faith itself.

From The Bahá’í World, Vol. V.

Annual Convention in Nigeria for 1972. The National
Spiritual Assembly members are seated, from left to
right: Miss Evelyn C. Spears, D.M.C.H. Ogbonna, Oscar
Niang, Fouad Sadooh, E. A. Obedeyi, Counsellor Williams,
Maxwell, B. O. Udo, A. E. Eno, Mrs. Mary Maxwell,
Kingstey J. Umoh.
Martha Root “Herald of the Kingdom”

By Barbara Casterline

Part two of two parts

Presidents and Princes

Martha Root’s “most momentous service” was performed during her first tour of Europe, in the four years from 1926 through 1929. There she visited at least fifteen countries (by present boundaries) and attended four annual Universal Esperanto Congresses, in Edinburgh, Danzig, Antwerp, and Budapest, as well as seven other international conferences and a session of the League of Nations. She had extensive lecture tours in Great Britain and in Germany, visiting twice every German university but two.

A great part of her time was spent in the Balkans, where she visited every country and where she had the first four of those eight successive interviews with Queen Marie of Rumania with Shoghi Effendi proclaimed as “the most outstanding feature of those memorable journeys.”

Martha Root presented Esslemont’s Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era to Queen Marie at the palace in Bucharest, only to be recalled the next day for an audience in which she found out that the Queen had stayed up all night reading the book and accepted all.

“Blessed be the king,” proclaims Bahá’u’lláh, “whose sovereignty hath withheld him not from his Sovereign, and who hath turned unto God with his heart...” So far, Marie, granddaughter of Queen Victoria, alone among royalty, has had the courage and detachment to give homage to the Sovereign of the Age.

Shoghi Effendi stressed the importance of what Martha Root had done:

Of all the services rendered the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh by this star servant of His Faith, the most superb and by far the most momentous has been the almost instantaneous response evoked in Queen Marie of Rumania to the Message which that ardent and audacious pioneer had carried to her during one of the darkest moments of her life, an hour of bitter need, perplexity and sorrow. “It came,” she herself in a letter had testified, “as all great messages come, at an hour of dire grief and inner conflict and distress, so the seed sank deeply.”

Queen Marie herself proclaimed the Cause through open letters to Canadian and American newspapers, writing in the Toronto Star:

...It is a wondrous Message that Bahá’u’lláh and his son ‘Abdu’l-Bahá have given us... Love, the mainspring of every energy, tolerance towards each other, desire of understanding each other, knowing each other, helping each other, forgiving each other.

It is Christ’s Message taken up anew, in the same words almost, but adapted to the thousand years and more difference that lies between the year one and today. ...

...If ever the name of Bahá’u’lláh or ‘Abdu’l-Bahá comes to your attention, do not put their writings from you. Search out their Books, and let their glorious, peace-bringing, love-creating words and lessons sink into your hearts as they have into mine.

...Seek them, and be the happier.

The following year, Queen Marie’s husband King Ferdinand died, and when Martha Root called, on her second interview, the queen and her daughter Princess Ileana had been reading Bahá’u’lláh’s words in the Ígán about life after death. In subsequent interviews, Queen Marie gave Martha Root written appreciations, used as frontispieces for the Bahá’í World volumes, and a diamond and pearl brooch, now in the International Archives building in Haifa. Princess Ileana translated a Bahá’í pamphlet into Rumanian and saw to its printing.

Martha Root spoke of Queen Marie as being beautiful—as a queen should be. Indeed, in her articles she had nothing but kind words for everyone she met, writing with love and respect of the heads of state, professors and other notables whom she met in Europe and Asia.

President Masaryk, founder of Czechoslovakia, she described as “a psychologist of peace... born into this world to be a statesman.” Dr. Joseph Kruszynski, president of Lublin University, who had visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a young priest and was the first to write of the Faith in Polish, she found, “a tall, handsome, scholarly, kindly, interesting man with eyes full of light.”

Their words, and those of others Martha met on this trip—Dr. Auguste Forel, Edmund Privat, and Charles Baudouin of Switzerland; Prince Paul and Princess Olga of Yugoslavia and Professor Bogdon Popovitch of that country; Dr. Rusztem Vambery of Hungary; Eduard Beneš, foreign minister and later president of Czechoslovakia; King Faisal of ‘Iraq; notables of Turkey, Egypt, India, and Japan; Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, founder of modern China, and Dr. Y.S. Tsao, president of Tsing Hua University—can be found in the Bahá’í World.
Small wonder that the noted people she interviewed with such interest and enthusiasm were able to speak appreciatively of the Bahá'í Faith; they had her for an example. Doria McKay, who knew her, wrote that, "Whoever you were, her loving interest was her introduction to you. There was no one, high or low, who had not felt that... There was a quiet stateliness in her manner, an element of ceremony. 'Make every meeting an occasion,' she instructed me. 'Always, if only a flower, some candy or fruit. Pray that they will accept from you the Greater Gift.'"32

After her years in Europe, Martha Root took the long way home by way of Turkey; Egypt; a month in Haifa as a guest of Shoghi Effendi, Damascus; Iraq; five months in Iran, where she visited the friends and places of Bahá'í martyrdom; two and a half months in India and Burma; Malaya; China; Japan; and Hawaii. The National Spiritual Assembly of Iran wrote with appreciation of the effect of Martha Root's visit on the believers: "People who, as proved by history, looked down upon foreigners with enmity and bitterness, and considered association with them as contrary to religion, now, thanks to Bahá'uílínah's Teachings, shed tears of joy at the sight of their American sister." That letter also remarked on "the eagerness with which friends rushed to meet her... They took her to the Varqa and the home of Táhirih, and she, in turn, recorded for the Western believers the beautiful story of the Varqa family in ‘White Roses of Persia'"33 and began work on her book of the life of Táhirih.

Martha spent a year in the United States, traveling from the Pacific to the Atlantic, lecturing daily as she went.

Europe Again

Then in January of 1932 Martha Root set sail for her second tour of Europe, staying there another four years. She spent three months in Geneva for the Disarmament Conference and the Extraordinary Session of the League of Nations, meeting personally the statesmen of over fifty nations.

After that she concentrated chiefly on Northern and Eastern Europe, where she placed articles in more than one hundred periodicals. Her articles extended all the way to the North Pole. She arranged for the publication of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era in Rumanian, Greek, and Finnish and of a booklet, "What Is the Bahá'í Movement?" in Rumanian, Finnish, and Icelandic. She spoke on the radio and once again had interviews with nobles and royalty, including an audience with King Haakon VII of Norway. She attended Esperanto congresses again on this trip, often in the company of Lidjia Zamchenof.

For the Bahá'ís of the West she wrote of her pilgrimage to Adrianople, a pilgrimage in which she searched for and found the houses Bahá'u'lláh had lived in and the people who had known him. The American National Spiritual Assembly wrote:

With what tenderness our hearts follow her on her journey of October, 1933, to Adrianople, where the Blessed Perfection had "planted a seed under every stone." Through her we are welcomed by the Governor and Mayor. With her we kneel reverently in the Musalla to Maryam and sense "how far Bahá'u'lláh had come to meet our Western World!" Through her eyes, many times teardimmed in that city, we see the gentle Mustafá Big, who had been in the Presence of the Beloved and was able to tell us of His gardens, His house, His great generosity, and of the reverent esteem of His fellow citizens.34

The history of the Bahá'í Faith in Iceland, like that of so many countries, begins with Martha Root's lecture tour there (July to August of 1935). Martha told of being introduced on the street to a school principal who had read her article, "What is the Bahá'í Movement?" in the newspaper:

He invited us to come with him to his home to coffee, as is the delightful custom in Iceland. We went, and after a long conversation about the Bahá'í Teachings, just as we were about to go, he asked, "Tell me, do you believe in dreams?" The writer replied, "yes," that Bahá'u'lláh had said there may be many mysteries and wisdoms in dreams; even there are occasions where it may happen that one witnesses outwardly in the world of time exactly the thing he had seen in his dream. "Well," said the host, "last night I dreamed that a bird came into this room, and resting on the sofa sang such a beautiful melody. I was so happy. This morning I said to myself, 'Who will come? Then I met you in the street, you come with your friend Holmfridur to our house and you have taken the sofa where the bird sang and sang the melody!' He was one of the great souls of Iceland.

Martha Root was sent back to the United States in the middle of the following year by the Guardian. Her health was broken, and he told her to rest. She stayed two months with the Wilhelms, recuperating, then began lecturing across the United States, but with a lighter schedule than on the previous tour.

First, Finest Fruit of the Formative Age

Martha Root left San Francisco May 20, 1937, on her last earthly journey. She went first to Japan where she taught one month. She next landed in Shanghai, but the Japanese bombardment of that city made it too dangerous to stay. Her next stop was the Philippines, where an earthquake immediately after her arrival destroyed in fire all the clothes she had brought. Three months of teaching in the Philippines were followed by a month in Ceylon.

Then in October, Martha arrived in India for a fifteen-month stay, where she lectured "from Bombay to Mandalay, and from Srinagar to Colombo." Her lecture topics varied: "What Is Culture?" "How We May Work for Universal Peace," "New Solution of the Economic Problem," etc. But, she noted, "Every lecture in India has been a Bahá'í lecture whatever the subject, the theme is always one—the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith."

She visited Rahindranath Tagore and met the Prime Minister of India. More than 200 newspaper articles appeared during her stay in India and Ceylon. She traveled through southern India in the company of Shirin Fozdar, who sang songs of Qurratu'l-'Ayn (Táhirih). In Rangoon she met with the Bahá'í children and gave them the first lesson in a Bahá'í class which the Rangoon Spiritual Assembly determined to continue in remembrance of her visit.

She spent three months in Karachi arranging for the publishing and printing of her book, Táhirih the Pure, Iran's Greatest Woman. Martha Root was inspired by the "heroic selflessness" of Táhirih, whom she described as "the first woman suffrage martyr" and as "to this day our living, thrilling teacher."35

"Sometimes I have asked myself," Martha Root had said, musing upon the life of Táhirih, "was Táhirih great enough instantly to say, 'O God, I give my life to establish this Faith among mankind.' or did she, too, need to be trained by the infinite God to long to give her life as a martyr to serve this new religion."36
At the end of Martha's journey through those areas which are now separated as India, Pakistan, and Burma, the Guardian wrote: "Martha Root has opened the whole of India to us, and it now devolves upon us to utilize these openings and produce the best of results."41

Her last lecture tour was through Australia and New Zealand. She was in poor health and weakened as she went along, but she continued determinedly, giving her last ounce of strength. Her report to the American Bahá'ís describes her teaching method. She said that she had had a fireside, but:

...I could not do as much as I wished, because the program was so full; and when one is going to give a lecture it is important to study, concentrate, meditate. For example, the day I was to speak in the big Theater I kept with my subject all day; I read, I thought, and I sent my "mind" once through a lecture of 45 minutes; at 5 p.m. I jotted down an outline of five of us. When I sat down that night, I did not look at the outline, and I did not say exactly what I had thought out in the day—we have to see our audience before we know what we are going to say!... We as Bahá'ís should prepare and be ready. Sometimes, I know, we cannot, because we are so involved, but then Bahá'u'lláh helps us just the same; but we should study and know well all the teachings.42

She wrote her report when very ill. just the day before she was stricken down on her way, in inextremis.43

Despite her illness, she had loved being with the friends and ended her report: "And now that I am leaving, May 29th on the 'Mariposa,' it will be very difficult to say farewell, but if not in New Zealand, we shall again do 'spiritual sky-larking' together in the Heavenly Realms."44 As the Guardian testified:

...Neither age nor ill-health, neither the paucity of literature which hampered her early efforts, nor the meager resources which imposed an added burden on her labors, neither the extremities of the climates to which she was exposed, nor the political disturbances which she encountered in the course of her journeys, could damp the zeal or deflect the purpose of this spiritually dynamic and saintly woman. Single-handed and, on more than one occasion, in extremely perilous circumstances, she continued to call in clarion tones, men of diverse creeds, colors and classes to the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, until, while in spite of a deadly and painful disease, the onslaught of which she endured with heroic fortitude, she hastened homeward to help in the recently launched Seven Year Plan, she was stricken down on her way, in far-off Honolulu.45

Two Bahá'ís on board the "Mariposa" took care of her and, when the ship reached Honolulu, took her to the home of a Bahá'í, where she spent her last months, passing away on September 28, 1939, at age 87, in that "lyon's den, a meeting place of East and West."46 The Guardian wrote to the American believers, "The passing of dearest Martha and the circumstances of her severe and painful illness have brought profound sorrow, but I rejoice at the glory and joy that must be hers and which she fully deserves in the Abhá paradise."47

In a cable, he announced, "Posterity will establish her as the foremost Hand which 'Abdu'-Bahá's will has raised up in first Bahá'í century. Present generation of her fellow-believers recognize her to be the first, finest fruit which the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has as yet produced.48

And in God Passes By, the Guardian's history of the first Bahá'í century, he describes the American Bahá'í community as "crowned with imperishable glory by these signal international services of Martha Root."49 She had, he said, "outshone the feats accomplished" by any of the propagators of the Faith "in the course of an entire century"—thus his tribute:

To Martha Root, that archetype of Bahá'í itinerant teachers and the foremost Hand raised by Bahá'u'lláh since 'Abdu'-Bahá's passing, must be awarded, if her manifold services and the supreme act of her life are to be correctly appraised, the title of Leading Ambassador of His Faith and Pride of Bahá'í teachers, whether men or women, in both the East and the West.50

She was our sister Martha.

NOTES:

1God Passes By, p. 347.
2The Promised Day Is Come, pp. 32-33.
3God Passes By, p. 346.
7Ibid, vol. IV, pp. 428-434; vol. V, articles beginning on pp. 541, 565, and 609; and subsequent volumes.
8Ibid., vol. VIII, p. 643.
9Ibid., vol. III, p. 45.
10Star of the West, vol. XXIII, pp. 71, 179, 225, and 255.
11Ibid., p. 396.
13God Passes By, p. 388.
14Messages to America, p. 30.
15Star of the West, p. 274.
16God Passes By, p. 398.
17Ibid, p. 368.

Presentation to Officials in Curaçao

The Governor of The Netherlands Antilles, His Excellency Dr. B. M. Leito, is shown receiving a presentation of the Baha'i Book, "The Promulgation of Bahá'u'lláh" from the hand of Dr. Nosrat Rabbani, pioneer. Accompanying her are Mrs. Englehardt, right, and Mrs. Lenderink, left. The Governor was most interested and kept the Bahá'ís talking for over half-an-hour. This event took place on March 7 and on March 10 a similar presentation was made to the Lieutenant-Governor of Curaçao, His Excellency Mr. A. E. Kibbellaar. On March 13 a third copy of the same book was presented to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Antilles, His Excellency Mr. O.R.A. Beu-
First National Spiritual Assembly in Afghanistan


A New All-Chinese Community in Sarawak

By the light of a borrowed gas lamp in a community hall in Siburan, on December 3rd 1971, about seventy Chinese residents of a fenced-in village in a restricted area in Sarawak heard the Bahá’í message for the first time. In order to arrange this a police permit and curfew pass had to be first obtained as Siburan is a village created under the Resettlement Project.

It all started during a “feeler” trip a few days earlier, when Koh Ai Leen of Malacca on a visit to Sarawak, went with Grace Choo to Siburan to investigate the possibility of teaching there.

In a coffee-shop, they were served by a friendly lady who turned out to be a teacher by profession. They very soon got acquainted (Ai Leen being a teacher herself) and Miss Ang kindly agreed to arrange a fireside at her home at some future date. The very next day a phone call brought the happy news that Miss Ang had contacted more than thirty friends who were interested so it was decided that a public meeting be arranged at the community hall instead of her home. Bahá’ís from Kuching went over to clean up the hall and distribute pamphlets and invitations to as many as possible.

Auxiliary Board member Grete Fozdar spoke on the Faith and Yang Kouk Chung translated into Mandarin. At that meeting, when the seeds were sown in this first all-Chinese community, one man became a Bahá’í. Vera Kho’s report says “The car that zoomed away in the blackness of the night as we returned to Kuching seemed to be traveling on air for the occupants had just soared to new heights in Sarawak after the first organised talk to the Chinese masses in East Malaysia.”

Another report from Vera about two weeks later had this interesting piece.

““It was night time in a classroom in Siburan and the attendants at the Bahá’í meeting were having the greatest lesson. It was the second public talk to be held in Siburan and this time there were ten declarants after the Message was given in Mandarin by Chua and Mrs. Choo.”

Then a still later report included the following paragraph:

“There we were in that familiar classroom in Siburan and the great lesson went even deeper. There were no talks, but there were prayers—prayers read by the new believers and readings from the holy Writings... The Nineteen Day Feast was being celebrated in Siburan—the Feast of Sovereignty. We now have a Bahá’í community in a Chinese bazaar. Mr. and Mrs. Choo were the hosts to about thirty new believers.”

—From MALAYSIAN BAHÁ’Í NEWS, January 1972.
ALASKA—CONVENTION REPORT

Last year’s Convention was a banner-waving one, at which the delegates dared to challenge the believers to “Spiritually Conquer Alaska.” This year’s Convention was one of quieter strength and self-confidence as the twenty-nine delegates and 200 friends gathered to rejoice over the gains and to plan for the future.

In the cable from The Universal House of Justice, Alaska was praised for fulfilling all goals and called a “shining light.”

These goals fulfilled were the formation of thirty-two Assemblies, including one in the Aleutians, two on Kodiak Island and three in the Baranofs. Twelve Assemblies are incorporated. Prayers have been translated into Athabaskan and Tlingit and Bahá’í literature also translated into Aleut and Yukpik as well as tapes made in the leading languages of Alaska.

One goal was to extend teaching activity among minority groups. Now a large proportion of the believers of Alaska represent minorities and they are very much involved in teaching activities.

In addition the foreign goals have been accomplished. The Stettler family of three pioneered to Swaziland. Don and Marie Van Brunt pioneered to Iceland. Kathryn Alio settled in Lesotho. Alaska assisted in the acquisition of Temple sites in West Africa and Luxembourg.

A youth conference with sixty to seventy participants was held during Convention. All youth recommendations were accepted by the delegates. By various activities they raised some $400 for the Fund during Convention.

In response to the urgent plea of The Universal House of Justice in their Ridván Message for pioneers to complete the worldwide goals, by the end of Convention forty-four persons had volunteered to pioneer or travel-teach, over twenty percent, or one person out of five.

Howard Brown, Auxiliary Board member, reminded the friends that during the disintegration of the old world, people will come to the Bahá’ís as patients come to their doctor.

Counsellor Florence Mayberry spoke on “Alaska in the Eyes of the World,” reminding them that at the Singapore Conference they were asked about the “prayer watch” and how the “Army of Light” was formed in Alaska. She told of interest in Central and South America in the techniques developed in Alaska. She repeated a portion of the 1964 Message from The Universal House of Justice to Alaska to “play your part in the awakening of the entire North American continent.” In conclusion she stated that the power and dynamism of the believers have been tapped and described it as a wonderful example of universal participation.

—Condensed from June 1972 ALASKA BAHÁ’Í NEWS.
Group Photograph of International Conference
Panama, May 1, 2, 1972
PANAMA LIONS' CLUB CAMP

By Kit Goldstein

On the night of arrival for the National Conference, one of the Indian babies, after three days travel with his parents on foot through the wilderness and in the bus, was rushed to St. Tomás Hospital at midnight, suffering from severe diarrhea and dehydration from the days without food or liquid. The doctor gave him an injection and wrote out the prescriptions, telling us to get as much liquid into him as possible as he was badly dehydrated and in danger of death. There was a mad jeep ride hunting for an all-night drug store and then a restaurant for cans of apple juice. By two in the morning he was greedily sucking apple juice from the can as there was no time to sterilize bottles. In two days he was a smiling happy baby, eating voraciously. His name was Karbila. There was another Guaymi baby named Abhá.

The Temple’s very nearness set the atmosphere, for with so many people living in the rough accommodations—bunk beds, child size, five feet long, dormitories, cafeteria dining—the warmth and radiance was almost universal. It was amazing how little complaining went on. How well the mixed crowd of indigenous, sometimes primitive, people and “rich North Americans and Latin Americans” with cameras, radios, moving picture cameras, with bags and bags of clothing and cosmetics (which made the humbler shopping bag of the Indian or bundle of a change of clean clothing look poor indeed), met and truly lived together, forgetting self and jumping eagerly to help one another. As one of the workers there said, “Here is your answer to the people who say that this Faith is a beautiful dream, but it will never work.” “Yes,” said another, “in these Conferences we are living for a time in the world’s future!”

As in all of the Bahá’í activities, there was a committee that worked day and night. The physical arrangements were under the direction of the devoted.

A new Panamanian believer, photographed on the day of her declaration.

The first day of the Conference. Some of the sixteen tribes represented. Note the Eskimo in the back with her fur hood.

Looking back on those five days which flowed with activity from dawn till midnight and often long after, we recall the faces of the Bahá’ís, not so much what was said, but the faces of the 4,000 subjects in the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh, submerged in the sea of grace, rayed through and through by that mysterious quickening power of God.

Nowhere was this so evident as in the group at the Lions' Club, where about 400 Indian and campesino Bahá’ís lived in camping style with the overflow from the crowded hotels. The facility is a summer camp for underprivileged children, and stands on a hilltop near to and slightly lower than the Temple. Here for a number of years the National Assembly of Panama has held its National Conventions since the summer school at Villa Virginia has become too small. It seemed most fitting that our Indians and campesinos should find a resting place within sight of the Queen of Sonsonate. At night the glowing Temple on the nearby hilltop blessed the camp; and by day, facing the white dome and ‘Akka, many of the friends said their morning prayers. Its influence was strongly felt, and it became the focal point for the teeming love and adoration of Bahá’u’lláh and God Himself that swirled through the camp. As one man said, “We felt strongly the presence of Bahá’u’lláh. He was there.”

The beautiful Guaymi Indians of Panama forgot their reputed “stolidity”, and, as the friends arrived the first night, ran out with glad cries to kiss and embrace companions of schools and teaching trips. The face of a non-Bahá’í bus driver who saw this was a real picture of amazement, shock and pleasure as he gasped and laughed when the Indians and “Blancos” embraced. (Incidentally, he asked for a Bahá’í book.) The Lions' Club was, as usual, living the life.

The cooks and assistants in the kitchen, many of them Cuna Indians, all became Bahá’ís after two days of this happy fellowship, for they felt the brimming over of love.

A new Panamanian believer, photographed on the day of her declaration.
pioneers, Ken and Marty Rutan, who worked sixteen to
eighteen hours a day to make things as happy and com-
fortable as possible. Others on and off the committee
worked long hours to help. One American believer got
only one session of the Conference and missed the Ded-
ication so that others might be free to go.

"We are soldiers of God's Army" was the theme song
of the Camp; it was whistled, hummed, sung and
strummed on guitars day and night. Groups got together
and sang spontaneously, and there was always a guitar
handy. One night, while waiting for the buses to take us
to the Gymnasium, the delegates of Trinidad-Tobago,
Ecuador and Panama came together in the center of the
dining hall and "sang up a storm!" A few youth from
the United States joined in and with Alberto Carbo, the
little dynamo of Ecuador, leading they sang songs in
Spanish and English. Mr. Carbo is noted for the Baha'i
songs he writes. One beautiful song from Hawaii was
taught by Tod Fletcher from the United States. Mr. Leo
Frazier, National Secretary of Trinidad, a handsome
and most dignified gentleman, stood on the outskirts of
the singing group, surprised, perhaps even a little
shocked at the whole-hearted abandon of young and old,
performing so uninhibited together; but in a few min-
utes, the joy was so irresistible that he was singing
merrily with the rest.

The Trinidad delegation was one of the joys of the
Dedication and Conference. The vivid Edna Caverly,
North American pioneer to Trinidad-Tobago, sang the
"Remover of Difficulties" with solo and chorus as it is
sung in her locality.

 Everywhere, on lines outdoors and in the bathrooms,
was the laundry of the Indians as they strove to keep
themselves shining clean. The Cuna Senoritas washed
their clothes on the rocks of the hillside in the rain. One
day the Cuna ladies did one of their beautiful dances
with pan pipes and maracas.

There was no age barrier. The youth leaped to help
older or crippled friends, saving them seats on the buses
and gladly carrying packages or bundles too heavy for
them. For three nights in succession the guests made
sandwiches for the lunch boxes to be taken to the Gym-
nasium. The love of the Hands - drew them into a com-
pany of the continually arriving Guests. The guests
gratefully gave them to friends new or old; with promises to meet
again here or in the world to come, with messages to
friends who could not come. The Guaymi kept to their
home, and sang spontaneously, and there was always a guitar
in the mountains there are no roads as
and love for the Indians that sometimes, when in the
rush of the vast responsibility assumed by the Panamanian
Baha'is, something would be overlooked, the guests
pitched in and took care of it. Specifically, there was the
case of the infected toe of one of the delegation from
Bolivia. He seemed too reticent to bring it to the Doc-
tor's attention, even when urged; so, one of the North
American women who had had first aid training dressed it,
and later got him to go to the Doctor. Another time,
when the plan to have a room for Indian family groups
became impossible because of the continually arriving
crowd, Ken and Marty Rutan gave up their own room to
the Cuna family groups, and slept in a storeroom.

The farewells the last day were filled with loving
warmth, with embraces and exchange of gifts, both
Indian and visiting women taking off bits of jewelry to
give them to friends new or old; with promises to meet
again here or in the world to come, with messages to
friends who could not come. The Guaymi kept to their
custom of riding away in the buses chanting
"Allah'u'Abhá!"

A group ready to say prayers, each in his or her native
language.

Those of us who have had experience at the Lions' Club
in other years know how strong is the spirit there,
and we wouldn't be bribed to spend our time in the most
luxurious hotel. We know that the real essence of those
two wonderful days was there. We were "Soldiers of
God's Army" bivouacking together there in the love and
service of Baha'ullah.

Even the very shy Chocos smiling and offering their
hands in farewell were a small miracle of love. One
Guaymi said to a Choco, "How are you?"
The Choco chuckled and replied, "I'm going home in
my car with two wheels!" All carried away the blessed
memory of the glowing Temple, and the joyful, noisy life
of the Camp—brothers and sisters, loving, helping, pray-
ing together, always in spirit together.
More About the Cunas

The Cuna Indians who reside on the San Blas Islands, off the Atlantic coast of Panama, have a prophetic heritage which includes a promise that God will send people to them from the outside world with a new Book, a new Message and a new Name and that the Message will teach them to live in harmony with all the people of the world. The Cuna word for God is Baha.

Nine years ago the Bahá'ís from Panama traveled throughout the islands and, at that time, over 2,000 Cunas accepted the Cause. They have, since that time, had little opportunity to deepen in their knowledge of the Faith.

Recently a teaching team visited the island of Ustupo, spending four days with the Cunas. During this time the Sahilas (chiefs) of the island accepted the Cause, as did the Voceros (spokesmen). That the Sahilas embraced the Faith is highly significant, as they have previously treated any visitors who spoke of religion with courtesy but have refused to align themselves with any religion. Plans are now being made to deepen the Cunas systematically.


The "mala" shown is a sample of the Pre-Colombian native art form of the Cunas of the San Blas Islands. It is made of layers of colored cloth with a reverse applique process, cutting through layers to expose the desired design. The women use them on the waist of their gowns. It is said that a "mola" must be used at least once before it can be sold. They are used for wall decorations and are collected in prominent museums. Many were for sale at the Gymnasium where the Conference was held, and were popular with visitors.

Cuna Bahá'ís. Note the "mola" worn on the woman's blouse.

National Convention of Bolivia


Martha Root's Preparation for Her Journeys

Before starting on her world tours to promote the Bahá’í Faith, Martha Root performed a symbolic deed. She made a trip to Austin, Texas and visited Miss Anna Reinke, a believer who was a seamstress, working by the day in various homes. One morning Martha asked Anna for a small box and with this in hand they went to the backyard, dug a hole and buried the box. Martha exclaimed to the effect: "Now I am ready. I have left my self behind."

As for Anna, she continued to work and serve the Cause. She set herself to place a copy of Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era in every library in Texas and carried on extensive correspondence to this end. She bought an old streetcar, had it moved to some distance from the city and converted it into her home which became a rallying-point for the Bahá’ís for some years. She passed on May 23, 1971. (As told by Anna Reinke to Evelyn Hardin, Managing Editor, Bahá’í News)
Belize Holds Unity Month

A Bahá’í month—"Unity" month! Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Muhájír suggested it when visiting Belize, British Honduras at the beginning of February. "India," he said, "was concentrating on the cities, discovering many wise and souls of capacity to become leaders of the masses. Why not concentrate our next effort on Belize City?" he asked. We agreed. But a month! Could we cope with that? Had we the personnel? The Universal House of Justice had advised us to make audacious plans, then rely on the Supreme Concourse to help carry them out.

So we set February 19 for the opening. Our Minister of Internal Affairs, always a friend of the Faith, when meeting Dr. Muhájír had agreed to open the month by radio and in person but unfortunately when the time came he had to be out of the country. We went to work, many people cooperating. Five thousand leaflets were printed, announcing the month and subjects to be presented, based on ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s "Seven Candles of Unity" and additional Bahá’í principles. Attractive posters with drawings and quotations, a book display, pictures showing Bahá’í unity in action, all these made the Center a place to fill the eye and the mind.

Then, wonderful news came! Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Ugo Giachery and Mrs. Giachery would arrive on February 14 and leave on February 20, just in time to open Unity Month on his last night. We would make this a reception for him as well, but hold it at our best hotel to accommodate more people and facilitate serving a nice supper. Three hundred invitations were sent out in the hope that ten percent would accept. Newspaper and radio publicity was released and we began to distribute the leaflets all over the city. We were ready.

Dr. and Mrs. Giachery arrived, met with the National Assembly, with the Bahá’ís, visited and spoke at the new Capital, Belmopan, and while there had a forty-minute interview with our Premier and recorded a talk for radio. At the reception he gave a beautiful discourse on "Unity" to an audience of fifty-six, twenty of them learning of the Faith for the first time.

We were off to a fine start and we knew that prayers and the power released during the Fast period would sustain and aid us to make the Month one that would bear good fruit. A happy Naw-Rúz Feast had thirty-five guests, ten of them not Bahá’ís, and all enjoyed a delicious supper and true Bahá’í fellowship.

Daily radio announcements gave the topic for the program for each night. As our radio station reaches into neighboring countries, many thousands heard of the Faith daily. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Ruth Pringle was Chairman for one of the meetings, and sixteen other Bahá’ís presided at one time or another, giving short talks and answering questions. The Center was kept open during the day but, as it was not a business street, few people came in.

Bahá’í youth participated at almost every meeting. A young Carab who had been studying the Faith in other countries came in especially to enroll. Dewart McLean from Canada was an effective teacher. Bahá’ís from Burrel Boom and Belmopan participated as well as those in Belize City. There were twenty-six non-Bahá’ís who attended the series, with from twelve to twenty-five persons at each meeting. Music and slides added to the enjoyment.

Twice during the month a team went to outlying sections of the city, showed slides, gave the Message and distributed leaflets. The first group numbered thirty, the second two hundred adults and children. The monthly fifteen-minute radio program fell during this period. The words of Bahá’u’lláh were read by two voices to a musical background and told of the Unity of God and His Messengers.

The final fruitage of this effort is unknown; however, 5,000 people took the leaflets. For the last two weeks there was a book display in the lobby of the largest store in town where 3,000 leaflets were distributed, a number of Bahá’í books were sold and many opportunities were used to tell of the Faith.

The immediate results were four enrollments but who knows how much fruit is ripening? Ask anyone in Belize City if they have heard of the Bahá’í Faith and the answer will be "Yes." So we pray for the harvest.

In the Falkland Islands a Wedding—a Proclamation

The first inter-racial marriage recorded in Falklands Islands took place on Saturday February 19, 1972. The wedding of Sally Tan Lin Nio, formerly of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Bernard Steer of the United Kingdom attracted much attention.

After a civil ceremony in the Registrar’s office the couple went to the Port Stanley Town Hall where about 120 guests awaited the Bahá’í ceremony. As they entered to music, they went to the front and seated themselves at a small table where the Greatest Name was displayed. Floral arrangements made a backdrop to the scene. There were readings from the Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian and Muslim Holy Books, interspersed with music. The theme of all the readings was "Love and Unity." The Bahá’í readings and the marriage vow were concluded with the "Prayer for All Mankind."

At a reception later there were representatives of many beliefs, including an Anglican minister and his wife. Notable was the complete lack of intoxicating drink, usual for such occasions in this island. Comments about this serene and beautiful wedding are still being heard and the occasion brought favorable attention to the Faith.
Faith in various Zones and gained significant results. Youth activities were fruitful because of a correspondence course entitled "Towards Bahá’u’lláh and the New World Order", the establishment of a Youth Library, the formation of a Student Club in Van Hahn University, the organization of teaching classes for youth and of a National Youth Conference. The youth have proved their trustworthiness in the midst of a world of confusion and decay. Their enthusiasm, steadfastness and sacrifices are a source of comfort upholding the Faith in time of trial.

The Language Committee has translated teaching material from English. The Chinese Language Committee has started a Teaching and Proclamation Plan by distributing literature in Chinese and publishing Bahá’í articles in Chinese newspapers.

Bahá’í properties increased during the year with the purchase and building of the Hazíratulláh-Quds of Ta Duong. Others are in the process of being acquired in QueSon, Dientroung, and PhuTho, while lands have been donated by believers in Phu-Yen (Phu-Yen Province), and in Dienrtroung (An-Zuyen Province).

Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone made a welcome visit which inspired the Bahá’ís, especially the youth. A few days before Convention, Counsellors Mr. Payman and Mr. Yan Kee Leong met with the National Spiritual Assembly.

A weakness this past year is that many localities lost contact with the National Spiritual Assembly and did not send in reports while the National Spiritual Assembly did not have the means to send out enough people to these localities, and loss of contact means weakening. Therefore to maintain all cherished goals and to continue consolidation, liaison must be improved.

The Universal House of Justice in its Ridván 1972 Message called on us to "consider the world picture" and "upon all believers everywhere to prayerfully consider their personal circumstances, and to arise while there is yet time, to fill the international pioneer goals". Those who have means without having capacity should contribute the means; those who have capacity without having means should contribute their capacity.

Let all of us pray together to show our gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh for all His bestowals during the year and also to supplicate Him to continue to protect our Bahá'í brothers and sisters in the areas of serious fighting such as Binh-Long, Binh-Dinh, Kontum, Pleiku, Quang-Tri, Thua Thien and Chuong-Thien.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Vietnam. Right to left: Mr. Le Loc, Chairman; Mr. Le Can, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Le Cho, Secretary; Mr. Tron Thang, Treasurer; Mr. Nguyen Hoang Loc, Assistant Secretary; Mr. Le Duc Huan, Assistant Treasurer; Mrs. Tran Thiti Giang Chau; Mr. Le Day Thinh; Mr. Trong Lien Dong.
Hand of the Cause Mr. A. Q. Faizi addressing a seminar of the newly enrolled university students of Delhi at the Baha’i House. Counsellor S. Vasudevan conducted the seminar which was attended by over a hundred students, on February 9, 1972.

Students listening to the talk of Hand of the Cause Mr. A. Q. Faizi at the New Delhi Baha’i Students Seminar on Feb. 9, 1972.

**IN INDIA**

Forty-third Annual Convention of the Baha’is of India, held at Poona from April 30 to May 2, 1972. Present in the Convention were Hand of the Cause Mr. A. A. Furutan, Counsellors Shirin Boman and S. Vasudevan as well as most of the Auxiliary Board members in India.
Baha'i Participation in Brussels International Book Fair

This year for the first time, the Brussels Bahá'í French Language Publishing Trust has participated in the International Book Fair which takes place in Brussels every year in March. Among those of 1,100 publishers, the booth of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust presented the whole range of Bahá'í literature in French and samples of Bahá'í literature in some forty languages. Twenty-four National Spiritual Assemblies had cooperated in sending samples of literature in their languages, among them Lao, Amharic, Chinese, Bengali, Urdu, Panjabi, Pushtu, and Samoan.

Of the 125,000 visitors of the Fair, several thousand persons passed the Bahá'í booth and were offered pamphlets and invitations to Bahá'í evenings.

Highlights of the exhibition were the visit by the Hand of the Cause, Mr. Enoch Olinga and Mrs. Olinga who, on their European tour, passed through Brussels, and the visit by His Majesty King Baudouin. The King who was accompanied by M. De Raeymackers, inquired about the purpose of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust and Mrs. Lea Nys had the privilege of giving him, though very briefly, the Message and offering him a book.
Roy Wilkins Presented Louis G. Gregory Award

Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, was the recipient of the Louis G. Gregory Award for Service to Humanity on Saturday, June 24, 1972 at the Bahá‘í House of Worship Foundation Hall, Wilmette, Illinois.

Given by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá‘í’s of the North American Bahá‘í Office for Human Rights (NABOHR), this award honors persons or organizations whose humanitarian services have contributed significantly to the rights and unity of man. Louis G. Gregory was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States eleven times over a period of years and worked to advance the cause of racial unity and human rights.

In presenting the award to Mr. Wilkins, Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman of the Bahá‘í National Spiritual Assembly and Professor of History at Yale University, stressed the part the Bahá‘í Faith has played in race relations in America. He said that when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in this country in 1912, he addressed the fourth Annual Convention of the NAACP and pointed out that “racial differences were ephemeral and insignificant and that man’s essence lay in his being the reflection of divine qualities, virtues and perfections. The spirit and the intelligence of man is the essential ... therefore color or race are of no importance.”

Mr. Wilkins, in accepting the award which was presented to him for his part in the observance of the United Nations International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and in particular for his contributions to the cause of human rights in America over many years said, “The followers of the doctrine of love and amity between people are at times a lonely lot. Yet they have much about which to be thank-full because as great as the odds seem, they are not as great as they once were. The history of this country in its slow combating of racism is that this hard task requires the enlistment for the duration, not for the faint hearted or weak ... but those who enjoy morsels of victory adding them to other morsels and watching things change, watching attitudes change, not from this year to the next, but from this year to ten years from now and twenty years from now. It is worthwhile to be a member of that small band of believers whose faith never waivers and whose deeds never cease.”

The program was chaired by Glenford E. Mitchell, former Assistant Editor of Africa Report and now Secretary of the National Bahá‘í Assembly. He spoke on the life of Louis G. Gregory. Dr. Kazemzadeh spoke on “Human Rights are God-Given Rights.” Donna Kime, recording artist for radio and television commercials, provided a musical interlude accompanied by Tom Pautz on the guitar.

The award was designed by Vernon Voelz, noted American sculptor from Sarasota, Florida and conveys the concept that human rights are God-given rights. Previous recipients of the award are Xerox Corporation for its sponsorship of the television series “Of Black America”; Clark Eichelberg, Chairman of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace; the television series “Sesame Street”; and Dr. James L. Olivero, Executive Director of the Southwestern Cooperative Educational Laboratory.

Roy Wilkins has been Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1955. He joined the staff of NAACP in 1931. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, he graduated from the University of Minnesota and for eight years worked on the staff of The Kansas City Call, a weekly newspaper. He is Chairman of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and served on the President’s National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1967-68). He is Chairman of the Call Committee of the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa and is a member of a number of boards and governing bodies of agencies serving the field of human rights.
Auxiliary Board member Mr. Jawad Mughrabi and his daughter with a group of Bahá'ís and their children in Central African Republic. Many new Bahá'ís are in the group.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Central African Republic elected at Ridván 1972. From left to right, standing: M. Michel Toleque-Koy, Recording Secretary; M. Sebastien Tchientson; M. Raymond Ousmanou; M. Albert Lincoln, Corresponding Secretary; M. René Jean-Baptiste, Chairman; M. Hubert Katossi-Simani, Vice-Chairman. Seated: Mme. Agnes Katossi-Simani, Treasurer; Mme. Janet Mughrabi and Mme. Turilia Jean-Baptiste.

Bahá'ís from nine different localities were gathered in Bangui, Central African Republic, in October 1971 for a Victory Conference, one of a series called by the Continental Board of Counsellors for the zone of Central and East Africa and held in different countries of the zone. The Conference was a great success and gathered together for the first time over fifty Bahá’ís from different parts of the country to discuss the outstanding goals of the Nine Year Plan.

For many, it was the first time they had been able to meet with Bahá’ís from other communities and to visit the newly acquired National Hazíratul-Quds where the Conference was held.

Under the able leadership of the representative of the Continental Board of Counsellors, Mrs. Isobel Sabri, the Conference gave new awareness and fired the enthusiasm of all those who were able to participate.

First Pygmy believer in the Central African Republic, (February 1972) with Auxiliary Board member Mr. Jawad Mughrabi, pioneer to Bangui.
Dr. and Mrs. Giachery Visit Trinidad and Tobago

Dr. Ugo Giachery, representative of The Universal House of Justice and Mrs. Angelina Giachery, made a three-day visit to Trinidad and Tobago April 12-15. A press conference held on April 13 included the editor and reporters of two leading newspapers, and representatives of the two radio stations.

After the press conference, lunch was served to all present, including a very good friend of the Bahá'í Faith, Senator Nicholas Simonette and his wife, Irma. Wide publicity was given to the occasion in both press and radio. Later that day, a meeting was held at the Bahá'í Center for the friends who enjoyed hearing about Dr. Giachery's wide experiences, especially his memories of the very many years spent in association and collaboration with the beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi.

On Friday morning, Dr. and Mrs. Giachery, accompanied by several Bahá'ís, paid a courtesy call on His Excellency The Governor General Sir Solomon Hochoy at Governor General's Residence, St. Ann's. The visit lasted for an hour in a friendly atmosphere, during which His Excellency expressed his sympathy towards the Faith.

Second National Convention of Trinidad and Tobago

The second National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Trinidad and Tobago was held at the Bahá'í Center, Woodbrook, April 22-23, 1972. Auxiliary Board member for South America, Mr. Leonard Ericks, seventeen delegates (mostly new believers) and a large number of Bahá'í friends were present.

The Message of The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world was read by Auxiliary Board member Mr. Leonard Ericks. Consultation and discussions on teaching and consolidation of the Faith, and the election of the second National Spiritual Assembly took place in a spirit of love and unity.

The reports of victories won were very exciting. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies raised was from 27 to 68; localities from 77 to 160, and believers from 940 to 2,400 since last Ridván.

The purchase of the endowment property and Temple site are progressing satisfactorily, and the incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly is near completion. The enthusiasm of the friends to double their activities is indescribable.

New Center in Micronesia

Partial group of the friends attending the dedication of the first Baha'i Center in Mudok Village, Sokehs, Ponape, Micronesia. Hand of the Cause Featherstone is in the back row.
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Thailand for 1972-73. Standing, left to right: Yoga Chandrā, Treasurer; Jat Gopal, Chairman; Naser Jafari; Noi' M. K. Chandran. Seated, left to right: Aldham Roberts, Vice-Chairman; Avril Roberts; Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Betty Fernandez; Mrs. Savita Jand, Secretary; Prasad.

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### Proclamation in Arusha, Tanzania

"Bahá'u'lláh, the Promised One of All Religions" was the theme of the Bahá'í proclamation meeting held on April 23, 1972 by the Arusha, Tanzania community at Tanu Hall. The meeting attracted at least 250 people.

Approximately forty posters in which the name "Bahá'u'lláh" appeared were distributed in the city along with 2,000 printed invitations in both Swahili and English. Over 1,000 pamphlets, Iman ya Bahá'í and a few Bahá'í Faith: An Introduction by Gloria Faizi, were given with the invitations at all stores and offices. The Regional Police Commander had visited the Shrine of the Báb and was especially pleased to receive his invitation. He introduced the Bahá'ís to his subordinates and urged that they be given invitations also. Just prior to the meeting, a loudspeaker was used to invite people.

Dr. Belcher from Dar-es-Salaam graciously consented to be the guest speaker, Sally Quazi enthusiastically translated. This was followed by a question and answer program in which typical questions were asked. In addition to prayers in two languages, there were readings from Hidden Words and music by the Kijenge Bahá'í Choir.

At the close of the meeting, printed forms were distributed in which those who attended could indicate their desire for more information or their intention to be a Bahá'í. There were forty-seven inquiries and twenty-nine desired to become believers.

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'Abdu'l-Bahá, the "Mystery of God"
The Fundamental Purpose of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh
Letter from The Universal House of Justice

To: All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The blessings of the Ancient Beauty are being showered upon the followers of the Greatest Name. Our efforts to serve Him and humanity are being crowned with victories throughout the world. As we give thanks for these splendid achievements, as the Cause of God spreads in every land, as our institutions become more perfected, as the number of believers increases over the face of the planet, our individual lives must increasingly mirror forth each day the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and we must so live our lives that all will see in us a different people. The acts we perform, the attitudes we manifest, the very words we speak should be an attraction, a magnet, drawing the sincere to the Divine Teachings.

Bahá'u'lláh tells us that prejudice in its various forms destroys the edifice of humanity. We are adjoined by the Divine Messenger to eliminate all forms of prejudice from our lives. Our outer lives must show forth our beliefs. The world must see that, regardless of each passing whim or current fashion of the generality of mankind, the Bahá'í lives his life according to the tenets of his Faith. We must not allow the fear of rejection by our friends and neighbors to deter us from our goal: to live the Bahá'í life. Let us strive to blot out from our lives every last trace of prejudice—racial, religious, political, economic, national, tribal, class, cultural, and that which is based on differences of education or age. We shall be distinguished from our non-Bahá'í associates if our lives are adorned with this principle.

If we allow prejudice of any kind to manifest itself in us, we shall be guilty before God of causing a setback to the progress and real growth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It is incumbent upon every believer to endeavour with a fierce determination to eliminate this defect from his thoughts and acts. It is the duty of the institutions of the Faith to inculcate this principle in the hearts of the friends through every means at their disposal including summer schools, conferences, institutes and study classes.

The fundamental purpose of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is the realization of the organic unity of the entire human race. Bearing this glorious destiny in mind, and with entire reliance on the promises of the Blessed Beauty, we should follow His exhortation:

We love to see you at all times consorting in amity and concord within the paradise of My good-pleasure, and to inhale from your acts the fragrance of friendliness and unity, of loving-kindness and fellowship.

Bahá'í World Center
Haifa, Israel
July 13, 1972

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
Along the slope and crest of a gentle hill in Teaneck, New Jersey, five miles west of the George Washington Bridge, are located the Wilhelm Properties, one of the most sacred Bahá'í spots in America. Here in a fragrant evergreen grove on June 29, 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a Unity Feast to over 300 guests. Radiating joy and the spirit of brotherhood He welcomed the friends, walking among them, greeting each personally, and with His own hands serving them delicious Persian food. Shoghi Effendi in God Passes By refers to it as "the symbolic Feast He Himself offered to a large gathering of His disciples assembled in the open air, and in the green setting of a June day...."

Those privileged to be present on that day must have been keenly aware that it was an unusual occasion. Let the words of Juliet Thompson, recorded in her diary, recapture for us the setting and the scene.

The great words He spoke to us then have been preserved.... But He said one thing which woke my whole being:

"This is a new Day; a new Hour."

By the time He had finished the feast was ready, but just as it was announced a storm blew up—a strange, sudden storm, without warning. There was a tremendous crash of thunder; through the treetops we could see black clouds boiling up, and big drops of rain splashed on the tables.

The Master rose calmly and, followed by the Persians, walked out to the road, then to the end of it where there is a cross-road. A single chair had been left there and, as I watched from a distance I saw the Master take it and sit down, while the Persians ranged themselves behind Him. I saw Him lift His face to the sky. He had gone a long way from the house; thunder still crashed and the clouds rolled frighteningly low, but He continued to sit perfectly motionless, that sacred, powerful face upturned to the sky. Then came a strong-rushing wind; the clouds began to race away; blue patches appeared above and the sun shone out. And then the Master rose and walked back into the grove.

Part of the gathering on June 24, 1972, attending the annual Souvenir of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
The Wilhelm House in Teaneck, N.J. where 'Abdu'l-Bahá spent the night of June 29, 1912.

From the center of the large circle around which the tables were arranged, now marked by a section of the pylon base from the Baha'i House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke:

This is a delightful gathering; you have come here with sincere intentions and the purpose of all present is the attainment of the virtues of God. The motive is attraction to the divine kingdom. Since the desire of all is unity and agreement it is certain that this meeting will be productive of great results. It will be the cause of attracting a new bounty for we are turning to the kingdom of Abhá seeking the infinite bestowals of the Lord. This is a new Day and this is a new Hour in which we have come together. Surely the Sun of Reality with its full effulgence will illumine us and the darkness of disagreements will disappear. The utmost love and unity will result, the favors of God will encompass us, the pathway of the kingdom will be made easy. Like candles these souls will become ignited and made radiant through the lights of supreme guidance. Such gatherings as this have no equal or likeness in the world of mankind where people are drawn together by physical motives or in furtherance of material interests, for this meeting is a prototype of that inner and complete spiritual association in the eternal world of being.

True Baha'i meetings are the mirrors of the kingdom wherein images of the Supreme Concourse are reflected. In them the lights of the most great guidance are visible. They voice the summons of the heavenly kingdom and echo the call of the angelic hosts to every listening ear. The efficacy of such meetings as these is permanent throughout the ages. This assembly has a name and significance which will last forever. Hundreds of thousands of meetings shall be held to commemorate this occasion and the very words I speak to you today shall be repeated in them for ages to come. Therefore be ye rejoiced for ye are sheltered beneath the providence of God. Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are intended for you and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you.

After the meal 'Abdu'l-Bahá blessed each guest, placing rose perfume upon his forehead. In the evening a meeting was held on the lawn of the Wilhelm House where 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke from the veranda to about 150 guests. He remained with the Wilhelm family until Sunday morning when He left to fill an engagement elsewhere in New Jersey.

In a tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Mr. Roy Wilhelm in 1913, He wrote: "O thou, my dear son! Thy letter dated July 3, 1913, was received. Its contents indicated the firmness and steadfastness of the believers of God..."
and told of holding a divine meeting in your radiant, charming country place. Praise be to God that that day was spent in the utmost joy and happiness. That Annual Memorial Meeting will be The Souvenir of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, especially when it is passed with infinite delight and gladness.

Faithful to the Master’s prayer, that memorable Day has been celebrated every year since 1912 on the last Saturday in June by what has come to be known as “The Annual Souvenir of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá”, when several hundred guests gather in the spacious surroundings of the Wilhelm Properties and listen to the reading of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá’s address given there in June 1912. A keynote talk also is given followed by prayers in the grove. Earlier in the day a picnic is held in an atmosphere of joy and fellowship reminiscent of that Unity Feast hosted by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.

In addition to the Souvenir held annually on the grounds blessed by the feet of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the Wilhelm Properties are the center of continual activities of a varied nature. The “Cabin” is the Teaneck Baha’i Center where the Spiritual Assembly, national and local teaching and administrative committees meet the year round, where an institute is held on Sunday mornings, and where study classes, public meetings, socials, marriages, conferences, and prayer sessions abound. Not to be omitted, of course, are the frequent declarations of new believers who are made aware of the unique “presence” of the Master.

The late Roy C. Wilhelm, Hand of the Cause, commenced the building of Evergreen Cabin in 1916. Subsequently he made additions to it until it contained nine rooms, a kitchen, an attic and basement. Within the Cabin is a fireplace composed of stones from many parts of the world. To Mr. Wilhelm there was a significance in the arrangement of the colored and differently shaped stones which symbolized to him the Baha’i ideal of a united humanity.

In close proximity to the Cabin is a two-storied building that houses the caretaker and a tenant. In the garage rests the 1911 Reo touring sedan in which Mr. Wilhelm drove ‘Abdu'l-Bahá on several occasions during His visit to New Jersey. On the left rear door of the car Mr. Wilhelm placed the familiar reference in Nahum 2:4: “The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.”

To Baha’is the Wilhelm Properties are the cynosure of many warm thoughts and a lodestone that attracts believer and seeker alike for spiritual sustenance in a world darkened by heavy clouds of atheism, materialism and racialism. Whether they stand in silent prayer in the grove, meditate in the shadow of the Wilhelm House, listen in rapt attention to a discussion in the Cabin, or gaze with lively interest at the 1911 Reo, all are deeply aware that this is a place which is an approach to the reality of God.

At the Baha’i Cabin, Teaneck, N.J., Honorable Frank Burr, Mayor of Teaneck (at the right, seated) participating in the activities of the Bahá’í Children’s Sunday School on World Religion Day, 1972. On this day he received The Proclamation of Bahá’u’lláh from the Teaneck Baha’i Community.

—Photo by Frank Sawyer, New York City.
November 28, 1921 marked the 50th anniversary of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Since 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited and traveled across America in 1912, many communities had an excellent opportunity to use this day as a proclamation.

The Bahá'ís of Washington, D.C. held a meeting in the Parson's home where the Beloved Master spoke during His visit. It was widely attended by other communities including the Bahá'ís of Montgomery County, Maryland who sent releases to five newspapers and five radio stations.

The Inglewood, California community held a seminar starting at 2 p.m. which included a pot luck dinner, the observance of His Ascension at 1 a.m. and ended with breakfast at a near-by coffee shop. Of the twenty-nine who attended, nine were youth and seven non-Bahá'ís.

A Friday Fireside started a weekend proclamation in Morrisville, New Jersey where 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited in July of 1912. The proclamation ended with the commemoration of His Ascension Sunday.

In Chicago, Illinois, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited in April and May of 1912, the Bahá'ís held a public meeting at their Center. A bus was rented in New York City, New York for the believers to view all the places the Master visited in the City. Then a large number of Bahá'ís saw the movie of 'Abdu'l-Bahá made while He was in America.

Two newspaper articles appeared in the Palm Springs, California newspapers. One very good account told of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's life and journey through America. Not only did they observe the anniversary of the 1 a.m. Ascension, but they held a public meeting Sunday with a talk on His life and a slide show of His pictures with a background of some of His writings.

Mrs. Nancy Bowditch, eighty-two, who met 'Abdu'l-Bahá when she was twenty two years old shared her experiences with the Meriden, Connecticut community. They also arranged an interview for her on the local radio station. Several articles appeared in the papers including one in Spanish inviting people to attend the public meeting which started with everyone receiving a red rose.

A memorial dinner was held in Temple City, California with movies shown of the World Congress in London, followed by prayers.

North Plainfield, New Jersey received good publicity with two newspaper articles and seven one-minute spot announcements. At their meeting they read stories from Womad Omez and The American Bahá'í, finishing with prayers.

A weekend institute was held in Palmdale, California with movies shown of the World Congress in London, followed by prayers.

The Southern Nevada Youth Conference held in Las Vegas drew more than 130 who with twelve states represented. As its core, the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was commemorated with slides, a tape of His chanting and an 8-minute movie of His visit to America. A full-page spread with pictures appeared in their local paper. Thirty-seven teams went mass teaching in Las Vegas and the area, including the Moapa Indian Reservation. There were twenty declarations during the weekend. Although 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not visit this area during His travels, the people who attended said, "He was here in spirit all through the conference."

Mansfield, Ohio had good publicity including an interview on their local radio station.

Palos Altos, California was the host community to the San Francisco Bay Area for a deepening and small group discussion—nine groups of nine each—on 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His life and writings. The communities finished the day at the Stanford Memorial Chapel ('Abdu'l-Bahá spoke on the Stanford University campus) where prayers were read.

A commemoration sponsored by the Bahá'í Community of Hemstead, New York was held in Manhasset for the Bahá'ís of Nassau County.

A children's book display was placed in the local library by the Lyon County (Nevada) Bahá'í Group.

The greater St. Louis, Missouri area held a pot-luck supper followed by a speaker. News releases were sent to radio and newspapers.

A prayer service and social gathering were held in Beacon, New York for the Bahá'ís in Dutchess County. The commemorative edition of Womad Omez on 'Abdu'l-Bahá was read and discussed.

A study institute, community dinner and public meeting, followed with the 1 a.m. commemoration of the Ascension, were held in Salem, Oregon.
The newspapers, radio and television were all used to inform the public about Great Falls, Montana’s commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Ascension. The local bank sent the clipping to the community in a nice folder titled “Good News About You We Thought You’d Like to See.”

An all day deepening class was held on the Covenant in Salina, Kansas.

Since last August Pueblo, Colorado has concentrated on putting articles in their two local newspapers. A beautiful display of books, the Temple model and Bahá’í records are displayed in the foyer of the new Pueblo Regional Library which services over 200,000 people in southern Colorado.

Two articles in the Bozeman, Montana papers told of the meeting planned for the commemoration of the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Special memorial slides were shown at the public meeting.

The life and example of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was the topic of discussion at the public meeting in Houston, Texas.

The children of Torrance, California planned the program for the anniversary of the Ascension.

Releases were sent to five radio stations in East Orange, New Jersey.

Pompano Beach, Florida hosted an inter-community public meeting with over 150 in attendance—forty non-Bahá’ís.

Good newspaper coverage was received in Loveland, Colorado in three papers as well as spot announcements on three radio stations. Over 230 handwritten invitations were mailed for the public meeting and posters were scattered around town.

... And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a Covenant between you and me—that ye have faith; ... for I am with you always, whether living or dead, I am with you to the end.

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

The Passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá—Fiftieth Anniversary

The Universal House of Justice had requested that the three days, November 26/28 during which the Day of the Covenant and the anniversary of the Ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá occur, should be set aside this year by all Local Spiritual Assemblies for specially arranged gatherings and conferences on the main themes: the Bahá’í Covenant, the Formative Age and the Life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Copies of a program for local meetings were sent throughout the community and special meetings were held in London, Oxford, Bristol, Liverpool and Edinburgh, all of which the Master had visited in 1912. On display in Edinburgh were two of that community’s most treasured possessions—a signed photograph of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and a Tablet from Him to Mr. Graham Pole, which the Scottish Theosophical Society had generously presented to the Local Spiritual Assembly. At the London meeting, the friends listened in awe to the recorded voice of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá chanting a prayer. At Oxford Mr. Dudley Richards, Senior Tutor of Manchester College, was presented with a copy of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the newly published book by Hand of the Cause Hasan Balyuzi. Mr. Richards mentioned that he had been asked to review the book and so was pleased to meet the Bahá’ís and learn something of the Faith. He later conducted the party to the Carpenter Library, where many early books on the Bahá’í Faith are kept for reference and recalled that Dr. Carpenter had chaired the meeting in Manchester College Library in 1912 when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed a distinguished gathering. In Bristol the friends gathered for prayer outside the house in which

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had stayed and at a large meeting in Liverpool the chairman opened one session by reading an article from the Daily Post and Mercury, written on the Master’s visit in 1912. All these activities surely served to kindle in our hearts the feeling of personal relationship with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to strengthen the desire to serve Him.

—from Convention Reports of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the British Isles.

Signs of the Faith in Thai

Signs about the Faith in the Thai language, and at least one in English, have been placed in downtown Sriracha, about 100 k. m. south-east of Bangkok, Thailand.
United Nations Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations

The United Nations Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations was held at UN Headquarters in New York, May 31 and June 1, 1972. The Baha'is were, as usual, well represented, both at international and national levels. The Baha'i International Community had as delegates Dr. Victor de Araujo and Mrs. Anna­marie Honnold; as observers, Mr. Pattabi Raman and Mrs. Betty de Araujo; while attending as delegates for the National Spiritual Assembly were Mrs. Mary Sa­wicki and Mrs. Patricia Jackson; and as observers, Mr. Foad Katirai and Miss Susan McGuirk.

The theme of this year's conference was "The United Nations: The New Phase." The range of topics—from science and technology to the seabed, from disaster relief to narcotic drugs—stressed the steadily increasing usefulness of the United Nations in solving economic and social problems on a global scale. While the political role of the UN in keeping peace has been frustrated by the limitations of national sovereignty, the effectiveness of this world body in building peace through steady improvement of the social and economic conditions of all peoples has been most reassuring.

Dr. Victor de Araujo, United Nations Representative for the Baha'i International Community chaired the two-day meeting. He has been serving for the last year as Chairman of the Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations with the UN Office of Public Information, and was re-elected by the Conference for another year. He was privileged to welcome the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, as well as Mr. F. Bradford Morse and Mr. Robert Gucer, both United Nations Under-Secretary-Generals, who participated in the program along with other distinguished members of the UN Secretariat, UN Missions, the UN Press Corps, and Non-Governmental Organizations.

In speaking to the NGOs about the crisis of confidence in the United Nations, Secretary-General Waldheim noted that UN critics forget what has been done in these twenty-seven years by this world body. He stressed that there was no alternative to the UN; it was an instrument of peace which had to be used. The enormous problems that confront the world—human environment, the population explosion, the peaceful uses of outer space and the seabed—know no boundary lines and can only be solved through international cooperation.

Keynote speaker, Mr. Robert Muller, Director of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, laid the framework for the talks and discussions of the conference by exploring areas of international action where the United Nations is making inroads.

In speaking enthusiastically about the scientific and technological developments in our world, and the needs that these have created for international arrangements, machinery and institutions, he mentioned the changes in basic attitudes that will necessarily be brought about in people, government and leaders, as they react to these new conditions. He emphasized that only through international cooperation can the world's problems be solved; and those who are already aware of this fact,
must help others understand so that they also can take action.

The program also featured a panel discussion on "New Structures for Global Problems," focusing on the application of science and technology to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor nations, the peaceful exploitation of the seabed and the ocean floor, and the regulation of trade for the benefit of the whole of mankind; and a discussion of "The Globalization of Social Concerns," consisting of a review of the steadily growing involvement of the United Nations in coordinating assistance for large-scale natural (and some man-made) disasters, and the vital concern of the UN and its steady progress in the field of narcotics control. Later, a panel discussion by representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations examined ways in which NGOs, in explaining the aims and the work of the UN clearly and realistically, could help mold public opinion towards world undertakings. A luncheon, with Mr. Bradford Morse as guest speaker, provided an enjoyable opportunity for Baha'is to make friends with representatives of other organizations and acquaint them informally with the ideals of the Faith.

The program closed with a provocative panel on "The Mass Media and the United Nations," featuring, among others, the well-known UN correspondent, Miss Pauline Frederick, of NBC; and a final encouraging view of the forward world thrust of the United Nations, in spite of its inherent limitations, offered by Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, Mr. Roberto Guyer.

In attending this conference Baha'is were reminded of the many steps that must gradually lead to that most significant large achievement in the development of a world civilization: the Lesser Peace; and they recalled how Shoghi Effendi had outlined most vividly this first stage:

Suffice it to say that this consummation (the World Commonwealth) will, by its very nature, be a gradual process, and must, as Baha'u'llah has Himself anticipated, lead at first to the establishment of that Lesser Peace which the nations of the earth, as yet unconscious of His Relevation and yet unwittingly enforcing the general principles which He has enunciated, will themselves establish. This momentous and historic step, involving the reconstruction of mankind, as the result of the recognition of its oneness and wholeness, will bring in its wake the spiritualization of the masses, consequent to the recognition of the character, and the acknowledgement of the claims, of the Faith of Baha'u'llah—the essential condition to that ultimate fusion of all races, creeds, classes, and nations which must signalize the emergence of His New World Order.

Shoghi Effendi, The Promised Day Is Come, p. 128

**Baha'i Participation in United Nations Conference—Stockholm**

The Bahá'í International Community took an active part in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held during the first two weeks of June in Stockholm, Sweden. With the increasing awareness of the global nature of many environmental problems, the need for international action has become urgent. The Stockholm Conference brought together representatives from over 100 governments to take the first steps towards global cooperation in caring for the human environment.

To Baha'is, of course, these environmental problems are further symptoms of man's failure to follow the Teachings of Baha'u'llah, who warned a hundred years ago about the dangers of civilization carried to excess, and provided the spiritual and social principles necessary to meet global problems. These basic spiritual and
social needs were reflected in the Conference documents, which called for a new set of ethics for man, and stated that "the ills of the environment . . . are probably symptoms of a deep-seated crisis in the evolution of modern societies."

The two accredited observers from the Bahá’í International Community were Dr. Arthur Lyon Dahl, a marine ecologist from the United States, and Mr. Torleif Ingelug, a forest ecologist and member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Sweden. A Bahá’í statement was presented before one Conference session, resulting in the improvement of some conference recommendations. The Bahá’í’s also contributed to a joint statement to the Conference from the representatives of many non-governmental organizations.

A special pamphlet, *The Environment and Human Values, a Bahá’í View*, was prepared for the Conference and sent to the 1,500 government delegates and 600 observers in attendance.

The Bahá’í Faith was also actively represented at the Environmental Forum held in conjunction with the UN Conference, where many non-governmental groups came together to present their views and discuss environmental issues. A large exhibit sponsored by the Bahá’í International Community with the assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly of Sweden illustrated some of the Bahá’í principles most pertinent to environmental problems. Bahá’ís from Sweden were present continuously at the exhibit to answer questions and tell more about the Faith. Many copies of the environment pamphlet were distributed in both English and Swedish, together with other Bahá’í literature in many languages. Bahá’ís also organized and took part in a number of seminars and workshops where there were many opportunities to explain the Bahá’í approach to the world’s problems.

While much of the other activity in Stockholm emphasized the dangers of the environmental crisis and described in great detail the symptoms of the old order being rolled up, the Bahá’í approach stood out as a positive program of action, laying the foundation for a new world society in harmony with its environment.

### Supplementary Reports

**Sweden**

*U.N. Day:* UN Day was celebrated with public meetings and Bahá’í speakers by Bahá’í communities in Gotland, Gothenburg, Linköping, Lund, Malmö, Karlstad, Sigtuna, Stockholm, Uppsala, Umeå and Västerås. In connection with public meetings, exhibitions were arranged in Gotland and Gothenburg.

*Human Rights Day:* Human Rights Day was celebrated with public meetings and Bahá’í speakers by communities in Karlstad, Sigtuna, Stockholm, Uppsala and Västerås. Firesides were held in the communities of Solna and Gothenburg.

**India**

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of India reports that nineteen communities observed UN Day and Human Rights Day in 1971. Audiences totaled approximately 2500 on UN Day and 2100 on Human Rights Day. Public meetings were held during the celebration of these events, and literature from the United Nations was distributed as well as Bahá’í publications. These observances were a source of remarkable publicity through press and radio, acquainting the general public with the aims and purposes of the United Nations and demonstrating Bahá’í support for this international institution.

Some of those attending the first Convention in Afghanistan. The photograph was taken at the Haziratu'l-Quds at Kabul.

FIRST CONVENTION OF AFGHANISTAN

At the first Afghanistan Convention, Mrs. Bahiyih Nadiri, left, represented the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran, the mother Assembly, while Mr. Hadi Rahmani Shirazi, right, represented The Universal House of Justice.
"The happiness and pride of a nation consist in this, that it should shine out like the sun in the high heaven of knowledge." This was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's hope for His native Persia, that it should shine with wisdom as it had in earlier ages. Seeing Persia as it was in 1875, fast in a "drunken sleep," the "object of pity, deplored by all nations," the young 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed The Secret of Divine Civilization to the Shah and people of Persia anonymously, with one purpose, He said, "to promote the general welfare." He called upon all to join Him in this effort:

We must now highly resolve to arise and lay hold of all those instrumentalities that promote the peace and well-being and happiness, the knowledge, culture and industry, the dignity, value and station, of the entire human race. Thus, through the restoring waters of pure intention and unselfish effort, the earth of human potentialities will blossom with its own latent excellence and flower into praiseworthy qualities, and bear and flourish until it comes to rival that rose garden of knowledge which belonged to our forefathers.

'Abdu'l-Bahá emphasized the need for good government in order that a backward nation might become advanced, an ignorant people enlightened, an impoverished country wealthy. He praised the Shah for forming Persia's first parliament "by the grace of God and the spiritual influence of His universal manifestation," but warned that great results cannot be expected from legislatures and parliaments unless the members are qualified. The members of "assemblies of consultation" must be both right-minded and knowledgeable:

First, the elected members must be righteous, God-fearing, high-minded, incorruptible. Second, they must be fully cognizant, in every particular of the laws of God, informed as to the highest principles of law, versed in the rules which govern the management of internal affairs and the conduct of foreign relations, skilled in the useful arts of civilization, and content with their lawful emoluments.

And lest we despair of ever finding such members, 'Abdu'l-Bahá assured us that they would not be impossible to find.

As the legislature depends upon learned men, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spent the greater part of His book describing the learned man. So this book will surely be one of those we shall turn to when it comes to the setting up of Bahá'í universities for the training of future leaders of society—the members of "assemblies of consultation."

In outlining His subject, 'Abdu'l-Bahá turned to one of the authoritative utterances of Muhammad, which states: "As for him who is one of the learned: he must guard himself, defend his faith, oppose his passions and obey the commandments of His Lord." He then expended each of the points in turn.

First, to "guard oneself." He said, does not mean to avoid tests, as the prophets and saints have never done so, but to acquire the attributes of spiritual and moral perfection.

Second, to "defend one's faith," He said, does not mean only to observe its forms, but to promote it throughout the world.

Third, in calling upon leaders to "oppose their passions," He pointed to "the supreme desire" of the governments of His day to "conquer and crush one another," so that opposing this passion would be to seek wholeheartedly for peace.

Fourth, "obedience to the commandments of the Lord" is the very cause, He said, of "the progress, achievement, and happiness of man."

It is certain that the greatest of instrumentalities for achieving the advancement and the glory of man, the supreme agency for the enlightenment and the redemption of the world, is love and fellowship and unity among all the members of the human race. Nothing can be effected in the world, not even conceivably, without unity and agreement, and the perfect means for engendering fellowship and union is true religion.

He then showed what great changes took place in western culture as the result of the revelations of Jesus and later Muhammad and alluded to the new revelation of Bahá'u'lláh by announcing to the people of Persia that, "The winds of the true springtide are passing over you ... the dawn star is shining ... the sea of might is swelling."

Returning to the first requirement of the truly learned, that of acquiring the attributes of spiritual and moral perfection, we see what high standards 'Abdu'l-Bahá has set. Among the attributes of perfection, He said, are learning and the cultural attainments of the mind; justice and impartiality—regarding humanity as a single individual; arising with complete sincerity and purity of purpose to educate the masses; fearing God; loving God by loving His servants; the exercise of mildness and forbearance and calm; being sincere, amenable, clement and compassionate; having resolution and courage; trustworthiness and energy, striving and struggle; being generous, loyal without malice; having zeal and a sense of honor; being high-minded and magnanimous, and having regard for the rights of others. "Whoever is lacking in these excellent human qualities is defective," He said.

Of all these attributes, 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave learning first and foremost. Suppose a member of any consultative body wanted to follow His advice and acquire "learning and the cultural attainments of the mind," what would he need to know? 'Abdu'l-Bahá spelled out a complete curriculum:

This eminent station is achieved when the individual combines in himself a thorough knowledge of those complex and transcendental realities pertaining to God, of the fundamental truths of Qur'anic political and religious law, of the con-

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*Numbers inserted in this manner are the page numbers of the book being reviewed, The Secret of Divine Civilization.
tents of the sacred Scriptures of other faiths, and of those regulations and procedures which would contribute to the progress and civilization of this distinguished country. He should, in addition, be informed as to the laws and principles, the customs, conditions and manners, and the material and moral virtues characterizing the statecraft of other nations, and should be well versed in all the useful branches of learning of the day, and study the historical records of by-gone governments and peoples. For if a learned individual has no knowledge of the sacred Scriptures and the entire field of divine and natural science, of religious jurisprudence and the arts of government and the varied learning of the time and the great events of history, he might prove unequal to an emergency, and this is inconsistent with the necessary qualification of comprehensive knowledge.35-36

But where are we to find the "comprehensively learned individual"? Even 'Abdu'l-Bahá said they were "hard to come by."37 His solution, until such time as comprehensive education is a fact, is to form a body of scholars, "the various groups of whose membership would each be expert in one of the aforementioned branches of knowledge. This body should with the greatest energy and vigor deliberate as to all present and future requirements, and bring about equilibrium and order."38

By this means can the reforms badly needed in each country be brought about. 'Abdu'l-Bahá listed many of those needed by Persia of His time: a definite procedure for the settlement of disputes so that decisions would not be appealed from one court to another interminably, a limit to the authority of provincial governors so that they could not hand out death sentences at will, the elimination of bribery, and so on. He urged that Persians not be afraid to try out foreign ideas, even though these ideas might come from people the Persians considered infidels. The important thing is the results:

If the country were built up, the roads repaired, the lot of the helpless improved by various means, the poor rehabilitated, the masses set on the path to progress, the revenues of public wealth increased, the scope of education widened, the government properly organized, and the free exercise of the individual's rights, and the security of his person and property, his dignity and good name, assured...

A glittering culture is not the goal of all this striving and change, for civilization is only the means to an end. The end is human happiness. "The primary purpose, the basic objective," said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "in laying down powerful laws and setting up great principles and institutions dealing with every aspect of civilization, is human happiness."39 And what is human happiness? He said, "... Human happiness consists only in drawing closer to the Threshold of Almighty God, and in securing the peace and well-being of every individual member, high and low alike, of the human race..."40

And the greatest blessing for an individual is "that he should become the cause of the education, the development, the prosperity and the honor of his fellow-creatures."41

The highest righteousness of all is for blessed souls to take hold of the hands of the helpless and deliver them out of their ignorance and abasement and poverty, and with pure motives, and only for the sake of God, to arise and energetically devote themselves to the service of the masses, forgetting their own worldly advantage and working only to serve the general good.42

First National Spiritual Assembly of Bangla Desh

First National Spiritual Assembly of Bangla Desh, Ridván, 1972. Seated, left to right: Mr. S. M. Imauddin, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Bahman Maqaddas, Chairman; Mrs. Simin Maqaddas, Treasurer; Mr. Shah Alam Choudhury, Standing; Mr. Md. Masoomul Huda, Secretary; Mr. K. L. Khosro; Mr. Mujeebullah; Mr. Danish Ali, Mr. Md. Abdul Rashid. See the story of the Convention of Bangla Desh in the July 1972 issue of BAHÁ'Í NEWS.
Second National Convention of Chad

Prayers were said and a loving message of congratulations drafted for the Bahá'ís assembled in Panama for the historic dedication of the beautiful Panama Temple.

During the evenings, friendly groups gathered under the stars outside the Convention Hall where they celebrated a Nineteen Day Feast hosted by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Fort Lamy, commemorated the ninth day of Ridván, enjoyed educational films, and joined in happy Bahá'í songs to the accompaniment of a guitar strummed by a pioneer.

The Convention came to an end with the reading of a rousing call from Hand of the Cause William Sears for every Bahá'í to arise to carry the Nine Year Plan to complete victory, and with all hearts united in prayer that the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty would encircle all his servants in Chad during this vital year in His service.

HAITI

National Spiritual Assembly members for Haiti for 1972-73 are, seated, left to right: M. Mussolini Theus, Lelien Jean-Pierre, M. Sauveur Ferdinand, M. Georges Marcellus. Standing, from left to right: M. Pierre André, M. Serge Bastien, M. Alfred Cassion, M. Philippe Bastien, M. Voegeli Juste Constant.

Haiti has won its Nine Year Plan goals with the exception of the formation of a Local Spiritual Assembly in one province.

There are five Bahá'í schools in different parts of Haiti managed by the Bahá'ís in those localities, which are become quite successful. The students receive a general education as well as a Bahá'í education. There are no government schools in these districts, which made these schools possible.

Haitian Bahá'ís are devoted and fervent and most of the teaching is being done by them except around the capital city of Port-au-Prince where the pioneers help.

Under the protecting wings of Bahá'ú'lláh, forty-seven delegates and thirty-seven visitors joyfully gathered for the second annual National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Chad, held at Fort Lamy on April 28 and 29, 1972.

Mr. Ernest Ndouba, newly appointed Auxiliary Board member, representing the Continental Board of Counsellors, directed an inspiring delegate-training institute for two days preceding the opening of the Convention, and guided the delegates and officers through the Agenda and election of the new National Spiritual Assembly with the utmost love and patience.

In response to the urgent call from The Universal House of Justice in its stirring Ridván message, fourteen Bahá'ís from many parts of Chad arose to offer land in their villages as local endowments to complete Nine Year Plan goals.

The annual report of the Secretary revealed that this new branch of Bahá'ú'lláh's divine tree, notwithstanding the many adverse winds with which it had been buffeted during its first year of growth, had withstood the storms and was beginning to produce good fruit.

Of the recommendations made by the delegates, the most strongly urged were those for more pioneers: pioneers to serve in the outlying regions of Chad; pioneers to serve in each main Bahá'í center; pioneers to guide the teaching activities of youthful and inexperienced believers, struggling to expand and consolidate the Faith in their areas without mature help; pioneers who speak and write French well. Other recommendations were for more teaching institutes, for more contributions to their Faith by all Bahá'ís, and for greater emphasis in living the Bahá'í life.

Twenty spic and span, and perfectly behaved children from the Bahá'í School at Gassi thrilled the Convention when they appeared before it to say the Bahá'í prayers they had memorized and to sing Bahá'í songs in French and in their native language.
SUMMER PIONEERING IN GERMANY
A letter from Roberta Barrar

There are sixteen Americans in Germany this summer. We are split into five teams: München, Erlangen, Lübeck, Köln and Hofheim (the Temple area). Each team has three goal towns near these towns. The Germans need twenty-three new Assemblies and an unbelievable number of new localities. The Ri'ván letter of The Universal House of Justice says that failure is unthinkable, so we are trying.

Each team has from two to five Germans and Persians with them. There is a music group, who travel between the stationary teams, called “The New Garden” after the book from the Indian Publishing Trust. In each town the team goes in the morning and they speak informally to people on the streets. Some have a table or a car with chairs nearby. Some use guitars to attract people, but all simply teach on the streets. Doesn’t sound very exciting but it has been. We aren’t having fifty declarations in four days like in Japan, but that story inspired us to try harder.

Once while teaching and praying for confirmation one of the German Bahá’ís met a man who poured out his heart to him. Another stopped as though struck and turned. There stood a man who asked very politely if he could learn about the Bahá’í Faith. Young people in a local club near Lübeck have told us that they wish to be Bahá’ís, but since they learned about it only recently...
they would like to think about it a little. The owner of this club has become a fast friend of the Faith. He has never had so many people in his place on off nights. He allows us to pass out literature and to talk for hours and hours about the Faith to people in the place. Speaking English is fashionable and Americans are unusual in this small town, so we are getting quite an audience.

Recently I was with the team in Dachau. We visited the Concentration Camps and said prayers there, at the site of the horror of our century. There is a museum which attracts a lot of tourists who never seem to see the town, which is lovely. Imagine having such an address as Dachau! Through a chance contact on the street we were invited to address a class.

These things we are doing are not spectacular, they are not new. We are taking first steps in this country, proclaiming, seed-planting, routine walking through towns, saying “Ya-Bahá’u’l-Abhá”. We are blessed and confirmed at every turn.

Convention of Swaziland and Mozambique

Swaziland and Mozambique held its Sixth Annual National Bahá’í Convention at the two-year-old Leroy Ioas Teacher Training Institute on beautiful Malaguane Hill in Mbabane, over the week-end of April 28-30, 1972.

The Convention was honored not only with the thrilling Message from The Universal House of Justice but as a special bounty, Hand of the Cause William Sears sent a personal message of affection and inspiration. These, with the presentation by Counsellor Bahiyyih Ford of a message from the Continental Board of Counsellors for Southern Africa, set the stage for the consultation by the delegates on a high note of dedication and absolute assurance that the goals of the Nine Year Plan can and will be achieved.

Delegates came from many parts of Swaziland. A note of special joy was brought by the attendance of several of the friends from Mozambique. This was the first time that more than three had been able to attend. This year there were six.

The Convention revolved around one central theme: “How to Win the Remaining Goals of the Nine Year Plan.” Suggestions and teaching methods were exchanged by the assembled delegates.

The friends from Mozambique told how one of the remaining goals, that of translating teaching material into the Makhuwa language, had been won. They said, “When the heart is pure and willing to serve, Bahá’u’lláh can accomplish His purpose. Injustice and prison bars led to finding the soul who could fulfill one of the goals of the Nine Year Plan—the translation of Bahá’u’lláh’s Message into the Makhuwa language.”

The goal of fifty Local Spiritual Assemblies for Swaziland and ten for Mozambique was uppermost in the minds of all so the Convention was enlivened by accounts of last-minute miracles that enabled the formation of the thirty-two Local Assemblies in Swaziland on April 21. These gave hope and assurance that the eighteen remaining Local Assemblies could be achieved by Ridván, 1973.

One young lady, Margaret Shongwe, reported how they had walked from house to house singing Bahá’í songs. When doors opened they gave the Message and invited the people to a fireside. This won several enrollments. Still they lacked the required nine so Margaret shut herself in her room and kept saying the Tablet of Ahmad over and over. Finally her prayers were interrupted by her husband knocking gently and calling her to come and help form the Local Spiritual Assembly. A young man who was a Bahá’í living in the area had heard of the meeting and came to inquire.

Group photo for Swaziland and Mozambique.
Mr. Albert Dlamini: "I heard in the Message from The Universal House of Justice that in ’Iraq the National Spiritual Assembly is dead. We Bahá‘ís here in Convention must say the ‘Remover of Difficulties’ for them."

Miss Ruth Dlamini: "We must teach by showing oneness and unity."

Mr. Joseph Mnisi: "I always smile and speak to everyone I meet. People think I know them so pause to talk and then I give them the Message."

One delegate in speaking of the Fund, said: "Now we are taken care of by our fathers and mothers, but sometime we will have to take care of ourselves. We must therefore, learn to give too."

New areas for opening to the Faith were discussed. Counsellor Ford suggested the idea of having a Bahá‘í wagon pulled by a donkey to open new localities. This was made a recommendation to the incoming National Assembly.

The Convention closed on the happy note of having Elliot Hlatshwayo, a youth, ask to sign his enrollment card. He was presented with a book by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Following the Convention was a two day Teacher Training Institute conducted by Mrs. Ford. It consisted of a thorough grounding by means of questions and visual aids in such Basic Bahá‘í Teachings as “Who is God?” “Who is the Prophet?” “Who is Bahá‘u’lláh?”, etc.

To the question of “How do you know Bahá‘u’lláh is a Manifestation of God?” one young student answered, "Because He makes my heart go pitter-pat.” During the second day of the Institute the group split up into teams and were transported to various teaching areas. They returned happy and enthusiastic, ready to go to their homes and spread the Faith with renewed vigor.

No report on the National Convention would be complete without mention of the singing. In this medium, the Swazi is completely at home, and he can pour out in harmony the adoration of his heart. Sometimes it seemed as if walls could not contain the joy and enthusiasm in the praise of their Lord, Bahá‘u’lláh!

Four who attended Convention proudly wearing Swazi costumes.

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland and Mozambique. At back, left to right: Jacob Mduli, John Allen, Benjamin Dlamini, Charles Ducker, Charles Caprez. Front row: Valera Allen, Margaret Shongwe, Ruth Dlamini, Angelica Duna.

The youth, too, were right out in front. This sector of the Bahá‘í community was greatly enhanced by the arrival of three youth from the United States: Gary Worth, Jeffrey Norman and Douglas Allen who had entered high school in Swaziland for the express purpose of helping Swaziland win the remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan. They have held proclamation meetings, one at the Swazi National High School where they entertained 300 students with songs from the Southern States and talks on the Bahá‘í Faith; formed a small choir of Swazi youth; held youth meetings and helped in the teaching field. At the Convention they arranged a youth night which was full of fun and entertainment for all.

Their enthusiasm burned high during the weeks before Ridván and together with the Swazi youth and Sue Greer, also a pioneer from the States, they aided greatly in the formation of Local Assemblies. In one village they "sloshed" through mud, overcame indifference and disappointments yet came at sunset on the evening of April 20 with only eight believers. They were walking down the hillside wondering where they had failed. They heard a voice calling. Yes, the man was calling them! He had just inquired about the American youth and was told they were teaching the Bahá‘í Faith. He couldn’t wait, he rushed after them, jubilant that he had again found the Faith!

The consultation among the delegates was enthusiastic and mature. Following are some of the contributions given by them:

Mrs. Christina Zwane: “When once you have received the Message of Bahá‘u’lláh, you must give it out and not keep it in you."

Mrs. Sabina Malibi: “A Bahá‘í must live a good life and show others.”

Mr. Moses Dlamini: “If you teach the people then they find you stealing—how then can you teach the Faith?"

Mrs. Lizzie Maseko: “Through prayers we get assistance from God. When we bring someone into the Faith we must teach them to go out and teach.”

Mrs. Josephina Dlamini: “The Local Spiritual Assemblies should learn to consult in an orderly manner so things can progress smoothly.”

Mr. Joseph Mnisi: "I always smile and speak to everyone I meet. People think I know them so pause to talk and then I give them the Message."

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Four who attended Convention proudly wearing Swazi costumes.
Eastern Airlines Salutes Bahá'í House of Worship

Eastern Airlines has just released a radio commercial under their "Wings of Man" series which spotlights the Bahá'í House of Worship as a famous Chicago landmark.

Last year alone over a quarter of a million people from all over the world visited the House of Worship. This unsought recognition from a major airline only re-emphasizes the fact that the House of Worship is the great "silent teacher." Free publicity like this commercial, which will be aired throughout the United States in the next few months, will make more people aware of the Faith and its principles.

EASTERN AIRLINES COMMERCIAL

Narrator: "It took 40 years to build... this House that so closely resembles the Taj Mahal. This House that appears to be carved from a giant piece of ivory and stands framed like a flower with the petals of nine formal gardens. A house that sings welcome to anyone who chooses to visit it.

Choir: "Bahá'u'lláh! For the Great Day of Peace has come!"

Narrator: "It is the Bahá'í House of Worship, outside Chicago. A majestic sanctuary for meditation and prayer. A gift from the people of the Bahá'í Faith to the world in the name of brotherhood and love.

"Chicago... one of the places that makes Eastern Airlines what it is... the second largest passenger carrier of all the airlines in the free world.

"The wings of man."

Bahá'ís who wish to write their local Eastern Airlines representative, telling them of their awareness of this commercial and their interest and approval, are free to do so. This is one of the signs of recognition in relation to efforts made during the Nine Year Plan.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States for 1972-1973. Left to right: Miss Charlotte Linfoot, Assistant Secretary; Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman; Mr. Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary; Miss Magdalene Carney; Dr. Dwight Allen; Dr. Daniel C. Jordan, Vice-Chairman; Dr. Sarah M. Pereira; Mr. Franklin Kahn; Dr. Dorothy W. Nelson, Treasurer.
Teaching Momentum from the United States Convention

State and regional bulletins for the Bahá'ís of the United States are now indicating the upsurge of inspiration from teaching ideas consulted upon and recommended in the annual Convention this year.

The feeling of urgency was generated in discussing the Ridván Message of The Universal House of Justice with its call to pioneering in order to fill all the possible goals in this last year of the Nine Year Plan. The phrase "while there is yet time" sank deeply into the hearts of the delegates.

As related in the June issue of the bulletin from Southern California, District Number One: "Certainly the delegates assembled at the sixty-third Convention did not doubt. Each knew that this ninth year of the Nine Year Plan would be the year of victory for the entire Bahá'í world. And with that knowledge and determination came a sense of ideas of such vast scope and depth that Dr. Kazemzadeh (Convention Chairman), proclaimed he was 'staggered by the self-discipline' of the delegates, and Continental Board member Florence Mayberry lovingly said she would always remember this Convention 'as the delegates' Convention because you have been so creative.' The delegates quickly became the central pivot of the Convention as delegates made their recommendations and expressed their hopes and concerns, a unified awareness of the direction in which we must move descended upon the gathering... We must, every one of us, be involved in mass teaching. As Dr. Kazemzadeh stated, 'Mass teaching is simply inevitable. It is a matter of arithmetic.'"

"By the second day of the Convention, the recommendations evolved into an elaborate, detailed plan for mass teaching... It includes a plan in which every Local Spiritual Assembly will choose a goal area in which to raise up a new Assembly."

From the July bulletin for Colorado we read: "Those (delegates) attending the National Convention... felt a strong need to make this (Convention) report somewhat different, to convey to the friends back home as much as possible of the love, the joy, the radiance, the confirmation, and the urgency generated at this year's annual meeting... So they mapped out an itinerary that was to take them nearly 2,000 more miles to about 225 believers in eleven cities. The idea was reinforced when Ken Willey and Carol Greene returned from Panama on fire... and contributed a 50-slide presentation."

"The show opened in Boulder, Colorado on May 7. The following weekend it went to Laramie and Cheyenne, Wyoming and Loveland and Denver, Colorado. On May 20 and 21 some participants traveled nearly 1100 miles to visit the Southern Colorado communities of Montrose, Ignacio, Alamosa, Pueblo and Colorado Springs. The final city visited was Casper, Wyoming..."

"The show opened with an hour's slide presentation about Panama... The second part centered around a 45-minute excerpt from the Convention highlights cassette tape... The recording was stopped periodically to permit persons to share their own feelings and consult, as the delegates relived parts of the convention...

"The delegates also told their listeners that they and their families were leaving their districts to serve the Faith... Three delegates (Colorado and Wyoming) experienced unprecedented confirmations that changed the course of their lives..."

From the teaching plans initiated in California are we to conclude that California, which for a number of years had the largest number of believers of any of the states, and at the same time sent out numerous pioneers, is now out to regain its numerical supremacy from South Carolina?

According to the July bulletin from Newhall, California: "Operation Nightingale will be the largest and most detailed teaching plan ever to occur in Western United States... The goal is to establish Local Spiritual Assemblies... in the County (Los Angeles) by next Ridván, thereby raising the total number of Assemblies in the District Number One from thirty-six to eighty-one."

New Zealand Fills Nine Year Plan Goals

The goal was ten Assemblies, one in each province and one extra. The localities' goal was sixty-four, and now there are ninety-five localities where Bahá'ís live. There were four Assemblies in 1969, five in 1970, eleven in 1971 and in 1972 there are sixteen Assemblies.

The formation of Local Spiritual Assemblies at Greymouth and Blenheim in South Island and the re-formation of the lapsed Assembly of New Plymouth in the North signalled the completion of the Nine Year Plan goals for New Zealand.

Two additional Assemblies were formed in the North Island, Manakau City and Gisborne, the latter with drama. By April 20, the last pioneer had arrived in Greymouth, the last goal unfilled, and there were nine adult believers. "Would-be pioneers from Gisborne, (at this time a group of six), and from Nelson were told that the goal had been attained. On April 21, an adult declaration in Greymouth made ten for the Assembly, and at the same time Gisborne reported the likelihood of a declaration there. Many t0ll calls resulted in the would-be pioneer from Gisborne to Greymouth being told to stay there, while the prospective pioneer from Nelson to Greymouth turned about and headed toward Gisborne. A pioneer to Gisborne from Auckland only recently arrived from the south, found herself heading back north again. This gave Gisborne eight adult members. The sun began slowly to sink below the horizon—it was just a short minute away to the end of April 21 when a Gisborne adult declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh and the first Local Assembly of Gisborne was formed."

Last year Napier, 150 miles south of Gisborne, formed its Assembly with fifteen minutes to spare, while nearby Hastings, in contrast, had achieved its goal with some comfort the year before, a whole day ahead. On each occasion the Assembly was formed by a late declaration of faith.

Members of the first Local Assembly of Blenheim, New Zealand, formed at Ridván 1972. Back row, left to right: Jean Perryman, Dick Hale, Edwin Darby, David Putland, Barry McSweeney. Front row, left to right: Pauline Hale, Le Atakohu Lani Noble, Pauline Putland, Naomi Darby, Le Atakohu Lani Noble, wearing headband, is the first Maori believer in South Island, New Zealand.
Race Unity Day Observances

The 15th annual observance of Race Unity Day was held June 11, 1972. Inaugurated by the National Spiritual Assembly in 1957, this year's theme was "Oneness—Pathway to Peace."

The purpose of Race Unity Day is to focus attention on the most challenging issue facing America—racial prejudice and discrimination, and to stress the essential oneness of mankind under God, as well as to spread the concept of the spiritual unity of man, irrespective of race, religion or color.

The public has become increasingly aware of this day. It has been listed in several calendars used by various peoples, organizations, businesses and religions.

The National Bahá’í Public Information Office in Wilmette plans the theme, sends out suggested news releases, radio spot announcements and proclamation ideas. The increased use of Bahá’í sponsored days helps to spread the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. Excellent publicity was given this special day and many interesting proclamations were held around the country.

El Cajon, California held their third annual Festival of Race Unity with a large attendance. Their publicity chairman stated: "We have gained momentum by making the Race Unity Festival an annual affair... This year... the crowds were greater than previously."

They received good publicity in three papers with the largest running an article prior to the event and a post-photograph on the front page: "Hundreds of persons were attracted to the event which featured entertainment by Mariachi and Latin bands."

A Human Rights Award was given in Spokane, Washington to the school superintendent for his "personal commitment to, and efforts on behalf of, equality of opportunity for all, regardless of race, in the diversified field of education." His selection was the result of a poll of church and civic groups which received publicity in two papers.

A "Friendship Festival" was held in Hayward, California. Their local paper printed a very large picture announcing the event with the caption reading: "From racial unity to world peace." They received spot announcements on both their local radio and television stations. The public library displayed the Mayor's Proclamation.

A large article appeared on the Church Page of the Laramie, Wyoming paper announcing the joint Race Unity picnic for Laramie and Cheyenne. This is noteworthy because the two communities are more than fifty miles apart which shows that distance is no barrier to inter-community activities.

Another good inter-community celebration was held in North Dakota with the communities of Minot, Newton and Williston participating in meetings in all three towns. They received publicity in all three local papers.

DeWitt, Iowa received good publicity and also contacted thirty-seven local organizations offering them speakers. They presented the Mayor with The Proclamation of Bahá’u’lláh and held a picnic with forty-five in attendance—seven non-Bahá’ís. The Iowa UN Forum published an article on Race Unity Day and drew attention to the Des Moines Bahá’ís.

There were many radio stations which carried either spot announcements or news stories and interviews. Charleston, North Carolina had a thirty-minute television program with six Bahá’ís of different ages, race and national backgrounds participating. As a result of this they will have another program in August.

The Governor of Missouri signed a Race Unity Day proclamation which was carried as a news item on two radio stations in Jefferson City. The president of Lincoln University also signed a proclamation for Race Unity Week on campus and met with members of the Bahá’í Club. They had one declaration.

The Melrose Township Group near Quincy, Illinois had announcements read over two radio and two television stations.

Fostoria, Ohio sent announcements to four radio stations. One station requested and read the whole newspaper release over the air.

A picnic in the afternoon and a fireside in the evening were the attractions offered by the Antelope Valley South Bahá’ís (Palmdale, California). They received radio coverage from four stations through spot announcements carried two or three times a day in the community news. They also obtained articles in three newspapers.

Missoula, Montana received approximately 200 thirty-second spot announcements for a total of 100 minutes of air time on their local radio station. They decided not only make the day a proclamation event, but "a social... as well... for better (community) relations." They wanted Race Unity Day to be more than a "token" event.

An unusual event was held in North Dade (Miami, Florida). Over 100 people, at least half non-Bahá’ís, ate forty-five lbs. of fish at their Race Unity Day Fish Fry.

The Tri-Cities Intergroup of Oak Grove, Kentucky held a picnic with softball afterwards. They invited other picknickers to join them in the fun.

The Youth Task Force of Sacramento, California planned and coordinated an "all day teaching effort..."
with selected teachers using National Teaching Committee Guidelines for Teaching the Masses." They climaxd the event with a night of guitar playing, singing, a speaker, a showing of the film "It's Just the Beginning" in a public park. This shows what the youth can do.

Baha'is from four localities in Kentucky as well as visitors from Winnipeg and Manitoba, Canada attended the Lexington, Kentucky picnic where steps were taken to initiate incorporation.

"Baha'i Week" was held in Anoka, Minnesota with mass teaching in the park one day and then mass proclamation on the streets inviting people to attend the Race Unity Day Festival. There was a series of lectures and discussion groups held every day of the week as well.

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the State of Maine, John Stevens (a new Baha'i) spoke on the University of Maine Campus in Portland, Maine with thirty-six in attendance.

Not a Race Unity Day event, but something that should be shared with all was the "Spring Unity Faire" held in Sacramento, California. They obtained eleven radio interviews, both about the Faith and the Faire; television coverage, including spot announcements and news as well as press coverage. The Day included "free" music, art displays and information booths in the Sacramento Park. There was diversified entertainment including folk, hillbilly, western, Flamenco guitar, rock music groups and a barbershop quartet.

Many more of the Baha'i Communities around the United States joined in this unique proclamation day. Race Unity Day, as well as World Peace Day (September 17) and World Religion Day (January 21) give the Baha'i Community an opportunity to proclaim the Faith through areas of increased world-wide interest.

Teaching Pointers from Australia

At a Teaching Conference held in Australia, as reported in the June 1972 AUSTRALIAN Baha'i BULLETIN, Leonie Penrith changed the title of her talk from "Teaching the Aboriginal People," to "Loving Them." She told how her first contact with aborigines was at a Conference in November 1969 when she met Harry (whom she later married) saying "You have much to learn from us," Leonie's talk was worthy of being made into a book, and the tapes taken of her talk should be heard by any Baha'i contemplating this area of teaching, which is another goal of the Nine Year Plan.

Said Leonie: "In loving the aboriginal people, let your light shine fully—make the most of our opportunities before they disappear. Try to find the more stable people. Love them, be gentle and patient. Don't expect anything. Time is nothing to them—they live in the present. The importance of regular contact can't be stressed enough. Make it daily contact. What do the aborigines think of the whites? They talk too much, talk too fast, and use too big words. So, use simple words, don't be too organized and efficient—they appreciate you being in a muddle! Use visual aids, short talks. They love slides, as they are hungry for knowledge about other countries and about their own culture. 'Abdu'l-Baha's photograph has a special attraction for them. The aborigine is gay, light-hearted, naturally friendly, and he appreciates real talent, especially in music. So, turn your heart to the heart of 'Abdu'l-Baha and teach them with love!"

ARGENTINA

Baha'i friends in Saenz Pena, Argentina. Left, Florentino and Luciana Gomez; center, Eugene Dornbrook, U.S. pioneer; right, Mauricio Gomez.

Group photo of Institute at Saenz Pena, in October 1971. Center, near post, Miss Eve Nicklin, Auxiliary Board member from Paraguay; right at rear: Eugene and Suellen Dornbrook, U.S. pioneers to the Chaco. Councilor Hooper Dunbar also attended and served as the photographer for this picture.
Liberian Youth—a New Stimulus

A first of its kind in Liberia was a project entirely planned by the Bahá'í Youth Club of Monrovia, consisting of a combined workshop and social, held in the spacious home of Mr. James Peabody, one of the members of the Youth Club. It was attended by about thirty with twenty-one of them pre-Bahá'ís, and from all backgrounds.

The first part of the planned program consisted of dividing the group into four separate ones, who for thirty minutes conducted a discussion in which all participated. The four topics for discussion were: 'Why the necessity of equality of men and women—of one World Language—of a World Court or Tribunal—of compulsory education for all?' The discussions were lively. After the allotted time a representative summarized the opinions of his group to the whole assembly.

The Chairman of the Monrovia Youth Club Committee, Mr. Alexander Foley, stirred the youth by his enthusiasm and gave promise of victory to the efforts of the youth of Monrovia. Miss Georgia Sanchez asked for youth to become future "pillars" of the Faith in order to implement the principles and bring about the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. She exhorted them to believe that these principles can become a reality in their lifetime if they are strong, steadfast and willing to face pressures of present-day society, reinforced through the Teachings of the Faith.

The final part of the occasion was social, with dancing and games. Heartfelt helpings of "Jallaf Rice" were served. As the evening drew to a close two of the youth present expressed their desire to become Bahá'ís.

Liberia Has Weekly TV Spot

The Publicity Committee of Liberia was most successful in securing a unique opportunity for Bahá'ís in Monrovia and surrounding communities in Liberia to proclaim the Faith every week over the national television network on the program "Epilogue." The Publicity Committee, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, has been able to provide regular five-minute presentations on this program.

This series of five-minute presentations is becoming a valuable asset to the teaching activities. Many TV viewers have reported to the Bahá'ís that they eagerly await each Wednesday evening when they are shown magnificent slides of the various Bahá'í places, which are shown simultaneously with prayers and readings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. Other faiths are regularly represented by a particular minister or priest, however the Faith is represented by a variety of persons, old or young, of varied national or tribal backgrounds. Now being appreciated by the audience is this demonstration of "unity in diversity" of the Faith. The Bahá'í program is always presented with dignity and it is promoting the prestige of the Faith.

HAWAIIAN MILESTONE

The National Spiritual Assembly of Hawaii has received three separate notifications from the sixth Hawaiian Legislature, containing copies of House Resolution Number 267 and Senate Resolution Number 219, both confirming their passing. These documents give state-wide recognition of the celebration of Naw-Rúz. A Bahá'í prayer said by Kimiko Schwerin opened the forty-fourth day of the session of the House of Representatives and the Senate meeting was opened with a Bahá'í prayer read by Sue De Sena.

Certified copies of all meetings in regard to the resolutions were sent to the archives of Hawaii, along with signed proclamations from both the Mayor of Honolulu and the Governor of Hawaii.

The Baha'i World Book Fair, New Delhi, held from March 18 to April 4, 1972. Over 50,000 persons visited it.

World Book Fair, New Delhi

The then Lt. Governor of Delhi, Mr. Pimputkar with Mrs. Pimputkar examining The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah at the World Book Fair, New Delhi.

Mrs. Munsiff, travel-teacher from the British Isles, being received by Mr. Apithy, one of Dahomey's three Presidents.

A Travel-Teacher in Dahomey

Mrs. Mehrangiz Munsiff, a travel-teacher from the British Isles, and twice a Knight of Baha'u'llah, during a seven-day visit to Dahomey was received by one of the three Presidents of the country, Mr. Apithy at his residence, where she presented him with a copy of Hidden Words. He welcomed Mrs. Munsiff and wished her success in teaching the Faith in Africa.

Another important visit was to Mrs. Gankpé, the head of the country were she discussed the importance of the role of women in society. Mrs. Munsiff also visited several villages in Dahomey. She was a great encouragement to the friends.

Niger Recognized Officially

Mr. Aziz Navidi visited Niger especially to help the friends there to obtain official recognition from the government, which was granted on April 7, 1972. Left to right are Mr. Navidi; President of the Republic, His Excellency Diori Harmoni; and Minister of the Interior, Mr. Kazende.
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## Kenya National Youth Conference

A booth was installed by the Kenya Bahá’í community at Jamhuri Park in the All-Africa Trade Fair held during February and March of this year. The photograph shows friends talking to seekers. This proclamation effort was very successful. People of many nationalities visited the booth; to name a few: Canadian, English, American, Indian, Pakistani, Basuto, Madagascan, Yugoslav, as well as people from neighboring countries of Africa. Thirty-eight countries were represented at the Fair—attendance at over 120,000. More than 6,000 pamphlets were handed out at the booth. The stand was due to the efforts of some youth who worked until early morning hours to decorate it.

The photograph shows a few of those who attended the National Youth Conference held in Nakuru, Kenya on March 26, 1972, sponsored by the National Youth Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly of Kenya. This was one of the three successful youth conferences held in recent months; others were at the Gidiou Bahá’í Center in the Western Province of Kenya and in Mombasa in the Coast Province.

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‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Haifa
Glimpsing Early Baha’i Pilgrimages

By Annamarie K. Homold

Introduction

The flow of pilgrims from around the world to the Baha’i holy places in Haifa and ‘Akká is mounting. Yet many accounts of early pilgrimages are almost inaccessible to most of these travelers. These early visits were so full of inspiration and love, warmth and wonder that it seems fitting to pull together a little of what was then experienced and felt. Insights into the life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá refresh and prepare the Baha’is for modern-day holy pilgrimage. Too, they inspire all Baha’is “to live the life”.

It must at the outset be understood that these accounts are “in the class of pilgrim’s notes”. The words attributed to the Master may not be completely authentic, but they catch His message and spirit. Regarded in this light, Shoghi Effendi permitted the use of “pilgrim’s notes”.

What follows are only selections of early accounts. This is not intended to be an exhaustive study.

Who can know how many pilgrims poured in from the East and from the West during the Master’s ministry? And who can know their influence? A few writings now must suffice to paint an impression of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, that majestic Man of God, Who desired only to be God’s Servant, but Who Himself was so loved that His followers went gladly forth to do His bidding.

They found Him in His prison-home in ‘Akká, a home reached after going through “the inner court where the fountain plays and roses bloom all the year.” (Knock and It Shall Be Opened Unto You, M.J.M., p. 14) They searched Him out in ‘Tiberias, a town where Jesus walked. During a sojourn in Alexandria, Egypt, He Himself went to the hotel of Louis Gregory and granted him interview after interview, receiving him “with great affection.” (A Heavenly Vista, The Pilgrimage of Louis G. Gregory, Vol. II, Louis G. Gregory, p. 27.) And when He was no longer held prisoner and took up residence in Haifa, He was again found by eager pilgrims, young and old alike.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá once told an early pilgrim that “each believer has a certain time when he should make the desired visit, each having a certain work to do for the progress of the Cause.” (Notes Taken at Acco, Corinne True, p. 18) This believer learned that “there are two kinds of visits—one in which the person comes very thirsty and the water will taste very sweet to him; the other in which the person is not thirsty and the water will be bitter.” (Ibid, p. 28) In addition there is the temporal visit, which must come to an end, and that which is spiritual and does not terminate. “The temporal visit has no effect unless it be the spiritual also.” (Ibid, p. 31.)

Pilgrimage Begun in the Days of Baha’u’llah

Centuries before the advent of Baha’u’llah, the Arabian Prophet uttered these words: “Blessed is the man that hath visited ‘Akká, and blessed be he that hath visited the visitor of ‘Akká.” Baha’u’llah confirmed these words—words which could not be understood for centuries. Muhammad said, too, that “A month in ‘Akká is better than a thousand years elsewhere.” (Note Baha’i Holy Places at the World Centre, The Universal House of Justice, p. 10.)

During Baha’u’llah’s confinement in the Most Great Prison in ‘Akká, visitors were not permitted. “Several of the Baha’is of Iran came all the way on foot for the purpose of seeing their beloved Leader, but were refused admittance within the city walls. They used to go to a place on the plain outside the third moat, from which they could see the windows of Baha’u’llah’s quarters. He would show Himself to them at one of the windows and after gazing on Him from afar, they would weep and return to their homes, fired with new zeal for sacrifice and service.” (Ibid, p. 6)

Conditions changed after Baha’u’llah was permitted to leave the barracks. While He was yet in ‘Akká an Egyptian merchant, affluent and averse with God’s latest message, desired to visit Him. Abdel Kerim wrote for permission to go on pilgrimage. He must have been greatly surprised when the reply arrived: he might go on pilgrimage but only after all his debts were paid.

He had been in business for many years. His caravans crossed the desert with precious cargo. He had quite naturally been interested in expanding his business, but now his consuming interest was to “owe no man anything.” It followed that when he received a payment, instead of investing it for further gain, he paid off a debt. This continued for five years when at last he was debt-free.

His business shrank. No longer did “love of wealth” consume him. When all his debts were paid, he had only enough to keep his family going in his absence and to pay for deck passage on a ship bound for Haifa.

Formerly he would have traveled first-class. Now he had neither bed nor warm stateroom. Never mind! He was going to see Baha’u’llah. As he crossed the gangplank, his shawl slipped into the water. The night would be chilly, but his heart was glad and he felt “alive with prayer.”

Baha’u’llah informed His family that He was expecting an honored guest. A carriage was sent to Haifa to pick up the merchant, but the attendant received no description of this very special guest. As the passengers disembarked, he watched them very carefully—surely he would recognize someone so distinguished. But the passengers appeared quite ordinary and in due time he returned to ‘Akká with word that Baha’u’llah’s visitor had not arrived.

The merchant had expected to be met. No money remained to hire a carriage. Bitterly disappointed, he seated himself on a bench, feeling forlorn and destitute.

Baha’u’llah knew that His distinguished guest had arrived even though he had not been recognized. This time He sent ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who recognized in the twi-
light "the disappointed figure huddled upon the bench".

Quickly, the Master introduced Himself and explained what had happened. Then He asked him if he would like to go to 'Akka that very night or if he would prefer to wait until morning.

The merchant had already spent hours in prayer in preparation for his meeting with Bahá'u'lláh. But he found that bitterness had now come into his heart because he had felt so forgotten and alone upon his arrival in Haifa. He had even begun to wonder about the very station of Bahá'u'lláh. For what had he given up his fortune? He was in torment.

Now in the presence of this welcome and gentle Man doubts and suspicions ebbed out of his soul, but he felt the need of hours of prayer to feel ready spiritually to meet God's Emissary.

As the story is told, 'Abbáš Ëffendi knew instinctively that His new friend would not wish to seek a hotel at His expense, so finding that he preferred to wait until morning for the journey to 'Akka, He unbuttoned the long cloak that enveloped Him, seated Himself beside the pilgrim, and wrapped both in its ample folds. So they passed the night together, lost in that ecstasy of prayer that brings realization.

The next morning they proceeded toward the prison-city of 'Akka. At long last the Egyptian appeared before Bahá'u'lláh with a glad heart, purified through five years of testing. (The Oriental Rose, Mary Hanford Ford, pp. 94-95)

Early Pilgrimages before World War I

Pilgrimages from the West to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akká and Haifa began before the turn of the century. America had just begun to hear about the Baha'i Faith. "It was on September 23, 1893, a little over a year after Bahá'u'lláh's ascension, that, in a paper written by Reverend Henry H. Jessup, D.D., Director of Presbyterian Missionary Operations in North Syria, and read by Reverend George A. Ford of Syria, at the World Parliament of Religion, held in Chicago, in connection with the Columbian Exposition, commemorating the four-hundred anniversary of the discovery of America, it was announced that 'a famous Persian Sage,' The Bábí Saint, 'had died recently in 'Akká, and that two years previous to His ascension 'a Cambridge scholar' had visited Him, to whom He had expressed 'sentiments so noble, so Christ-like' that the author of the paper, in his 'closing words,' wished to share them with his audience." (God Passes By, Shoghi Effendi, p. 256.)

"He is the Master"

In 1898 philanthropist Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, the wife of Senator George F. Hearst, organized a group of pilgrims who made their way to the prison-city. In a letter she later made testimony: "Those three days were the most memorable days of my life... The Master I will not attempt to describe: I will only state that I believe with all my heart that He is the Master, and my greatest blessing in this world is that I have been privileged to be in His presence, and look upon His sanctified face... Without a doubt 'Abbáš Ëffendi is the Messiah of this day and generation, and we need not look for another.'" (Ibid. p. 259) In her enthusiasm and devotion to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, she, as so many others, mistook the Master for the Prophet Himself. This, of course, He never claimed to be.

"A Heart White as Snow"

Mr. Robert Turner, the butler of Mrs. Hearst, distinguished himself by being the first Western Negro to become a Bahá'í. May Maxwell recalled later that "on the morning of our arrival, after we had refreshed ourselves, the Master summoned us all to Him in a long room overlooking the Mediterranean. He sat in silence gazing out of the window, then looking up He asked if all were present. Seeing that one of the believers was absent, He said, 'Where is Robert?'... In a moment Robert's radiant face appeared in the doorway and the Master rose to greet him, bidding him be seated, and said, '"... your Lord loves you. God gave you a black skin, but a heart white as snow.'" (An Early Pilgrimage, May Maxwell, p. 20) "Such was the tenacity of his faith that even the subsequent estrangement of his beloved mistress from the Cause she had spontaneously embraced failed to cloud its radiance, or to lessen the intensity of the emotions which the loving-kindness showered by 'Abdu'l-Bahá upon him had excited in his breast." (God Passes By, Shoghi Effendi, p. 259.)

Only the Mention of God

May Bolles (Maxwell) was one of those fortunate fifteen pilgrims welcomed in the prison-city at that time. She recorded her experiences in An Early Pilgrimage—a divine love story.

In the Holy Land whose very air was "laden with the perfume of roses and orange blossoms", she found 'Abdu'l-Bahá Whose love and wisdom penetrated her very soul. In 'Akká the Holy Family had vacated their own rooms that the pilgrims might be comfortable. Early mornings the Master would inquire about their happiness and health, and at night He wished them "beautiful dreams" and a good rest.

And there, for three precious days and nights, they heard nothing "but the mention of God." Never elsewhere had she seen such happiness nor heard so much laughter. The Master wanted no tears. At one time the tearful were asked to weep no more for His sake. Only when all were fully composed would He teach the friends.
“Then He said: ‘Pray that your hearts may be cut from yourselves and from the world, that you may be confirmed by the Holy Spirit and filled with the fire of the love of God.”’ (p. 39) “... I say unto you that anyone who will rise up in the Cause of God at this time shall be filled with the spirit of God, and that He will send His hosts from heaven to help you, and that nothing shall be impossible to you if you have faith. And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a covenant between you and Me—that ye have faith; that your faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move, that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end... As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the balance—this is the balance.” (p. 40)

She had the inestimable privilege of seeing the portraits of both Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. Whereupon in poignant voice the Master said, “‘Another commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I love you. Great mercy and blessings are promised to the people of your land, but on one condition: that their hearts are filled with the fire of love, that they live in perfect kindness and harmony like one soul in different bodies. If they fail in this condition the great blessings will be deferred. Never forget this; look at one another with the eye of perfection, look at Me, follow Me, be as I am; take no thought for yourselves or your lives, whether ye eat or whether ye sleep, whether ye are comfortable, whether ye are well or ill, whether ye are with friends or foes, whether ye receive praise or blame; for all of these things ye must care not at all. Look at Me and be as I am; ye must die to yourselves and to the world, and shall ye be born again and enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Behold a candle how it gives its light. It weeps its life away drop by drop in order to give forth its flame of light.”’ (pp. 41-42)

Spiritual and physical life stood in sharp contrast. The Master told an American, who felt orphaned due to unbelieving parents, that “‘Material relationship is nothing, it bears no eternal fruits. You are the child of God and of the Kingdom and the ties of the flesh are nothing, but the ties of the spirit are all.’” (p. 31)

Nourished by the Love of God

She was to hear that the food man eats was of no importance as its effect endured but a short time. But the food of the spirit was life to the soul and its effects would endure eternally. She heard Him tell the touching “story of the hermit”. Bahá'u'lláh “was traveling from one place to another with His followers” and “He passed through a lonely country where, at some little distance from the highway, a hermit lived alone in a cave. He was a holy man, and having heard that Our Lord, Bahá'u'lláh, would pass that way, he watched eagerly for His approach. When the Manifestation arrived at that spot the hermit knelt down and kissed the dust before His feet, and said to Him: ‘Oh, my Lord, I am a poor man living alone in a cave nearby; but thenceforth I shall account myself the happiest of mortals if Thou wilt but come for a moment to my cave and bless it by Thine Presence.’ Then Bahá'u'lláh told the man that He would come, not for a moment but for three days, and He bade His followers cast their tents, and await His return. The poor man was so overcome with joy and gratitude that he was speechless, and led the way in humble silence to his lowly dwelling in a rock. There the glorious One sat with him, talking to him and teaching him, and toward evening the man bethought himself that he had nothing to offer his great Guest but some dry meat and some dark bread, and water from a spring nearby. Not knowing what to do he threw himself at the feet of His Lord and confessed his dilemma. Bahá'u'lláh comforted him and by a word bade him fetch the meat and bread and water; then the Lord of the universe took of this frugal repast with His followers, and the man, and having heard that

It was from these portrait-blessings that he gained His approach. When the Manifestation arrived at that spot the hermit knelt down and kissed the dust before His feet, and said to Him: ‘Oh, my Lord, I am a poor man living alone in a cave nearby; but thenceforth I shall account myself the happiest of mortals if Thou wilt but come for a moment to my cave and bless it by Thine Presence.’ Then Bahá'u'lláh told the man that He would come, not for a moment but for three days, and He bade His followers cast their tents, and await His return. The poor man was so overcome with joy and gratitude that he was speechless, and led the way in humble silence to his lowly dwelling in a rock. There the Glorious One sat with him, talking to him and teaching him, and toward evening the man bethought himself that he had nothing to offer his great Guest but some dry meat and some dark bread, and water from a spring nearby. Not knowing what to do he threw himself at the feet of His Lord and confessed his dilemma. Bahá'u'lláh comforted him and by a word bade him fetch the meat and bread and water; then the Lord of the universe took of this frugal repast with joy and fragrance as through it had been a banquet, and during the three days of His visit they ate only of this food which seemed to the poor hermit the most delicious he had ever eaten. Bahá'u'lláh declared that He had never been more nobly entertained nor received greater hospitality and love. ‘This,’ explained the Master, when He had finished the story, ‘shows us how little men require when he is nourished by the sweetest of all foods—the love of God.’” (pp. 22-24.)
The Law of Love

May Maxwell came to realize that every word and every act of the Master’s had meaning and purpose. The pilgrim party was invited to meet Him “under the cedars on Mount Carmel where He had been in the habit of sitting with Bahá’u’lláh.” She recalled that “On Sunday morning we awakened with the joy and hope of the meeting on Mount Carmel. The Master arrived quite early and after looking at me, touching my head and counting my pulse, still holding my hand He said to the believers present: ‘There will be no meeting on Mount Carmel to-day ... we could not go and leave one of the beloved of God alone and sick. We could none of us be happy unless all the beloved were happy.’ We were astonished. That anything so important as this meeting in that blessed spot should be cancelled because one person was ill and could not go seemed incredible. It was so contrary to all ordinary habits of thought and action, so different from the life of the world where daily events and material circumstances are supreme in importance that it gave us a genuine shock of surprise, and in that shock the foundations of the old order began to totter and fall. That day Bahá’u’lláh had opened wide the door of God’s Kingdom and given us a vision of that infinite world whose only law is love. This was but one of many times that we saw ‘Abdu’l-Bahá place above every other consideration the love and kindness, the sympathy and compassion due to every soul. Indeed, as we look back upon that blessed time we look back upon that blessed time but to pray.

To Speak No Evil

“We had learned that to be with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was all life, joy and blessedness. We were to learn also that His Presence is a purifying fire. The pilgrimage to the Holy City is taught but a crucible in which the souls are tried; where the gold is purified and the dross is consumed. It did not seem possible that anything but love could ever again animate our words and actions.

“Yet that very afternoon, in my room with two of the believers, I spoke against a brother in the truth, finding fault with him, and giving vent to the evil in my own heart by my words. While we were still sitting together, our Master, who had been visiting the poor and sick, returned, and immediately sent for my spiritual mother, Lua, who was with us. He told her that during His absence one of His servants had spoken unkindly of another, and that it grieved His heart that the believers should not love one another or that they should speak against any soul. Then He charged her not to speak of it but to pray.

“A little later we all went to supper, and my hard heart was unconscious of its error, until, as my eyes sought the beloved face of my Master, I met His gaze, so sweet happiness pervaded my soul, my heart was comforted with such infinite hope, that I knew He would cleanse me of all my sins.” (An Early Pilgrimage, May Maxwell, pp. 25-6.—adapted)

The Role of the Manifestations

“In 1909, May and Sutherland Maxwell made a pilgrimage together to the Prison City of ‘Akka, to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Sutherland was not yet a convinced Bahlí. One day at table, he said to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: ‘The Christians worship God through Christ; my wife worships God through You; but I worship Him direct.’ “‘Abdu’l-Bahá smiled and said: ‘Where is He?’ “‘Why, God is everywhere,’ replied Sutherland.

“‘Everywhere is nowhere,’ said ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He then went on to demonstrate that such worship was worship of a fragment of the imagination and had no reality; we must worship God through something tangible and real to us, hence the rôle of the Manifestations. Sutherland bowed his head in acceptance. The real seed of his faith germinated from that hour. The way this faith grew in him was a beautiful thing.” (Bahá’í World, Vol. XII, p. 653.)

Lua Getsinger—spiritual mother of both Mrs. Hearst and May Boiles (Maxwell)—was also in that late 1898 pilgrim party. For the following eighteen years she returned time and again to ‘Akka and Haifa. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá entrusted her with vital teaching missions. And constantly He taught her in the path of divine love.

Be Firm in Purpose

During one of her visits to the Orient the Master told her, “Thou must be firm and unshakable in thy purpose, and never, never let any outward circumstances worry thee. I am sending thee to India to accomplish certain definite results. Thou must enter that country with a never-failing spirituality, a radiant faith, an eternal enthusiasm, an unquenchable fire, a solid conviction, in order that thou mayest achieve those services for which I am sending thee. Let not thy heart be troubled. If thou goest away with this unchanging condition of invariability of inner state, thou shalt see the doors of confirmation open before thy face, thy life will be a crown of heavenly roses, and thou shalt find thyself in the highest station of triumph.

“Strive day and night to attain to this exalted state. Look at me! Thou dost not know a thousandth part of the
difficulties and seemingly insurmountable passes that rise daily before my eyes. I do not heed them; I am walking in my chosen highway....” (Star of the West, Vol. IV, No. 12, p. 208.)

She grew impatient to grow spiritually. Impetuous in nature, she wanted instant perfection with which to better serve ‘Abdu’l-Baha. The Master taught her that she could not stand that—perfection is a slowly evolving process.

“Serve Thy Fellow Man”

One day when Lua was in ‘Akka to see the Master, “He said to her, that He was too busy today to call upon a friend of His who was very ill and poor and He wished her to go to His place. Take him food and care for him as I have been doing,” he concluded. He told her where this man was to be found and she went gladly, proud that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá should trust her with this mission.

“She returned quickly. ‘Master,’ she exclaimed, ‘Surely you cannot realize to what a terrible place you sent me. I almost fainted from the awful stench, the filthy she should clean it; if this brother of yours is dirty, bathe him; if he is hungry, feed him. Do not return until this is done. Many times had He done this for him and cannot she give him once?’” (Portals to Freedom, Howard Colby Ives, pp. 84-85.)

Her passion for her Faith and her love for the Master knew no bounds. The physical world became less important to her as she grew in spirituality. Her very dress changed before her early death in 1916. She abandoned her old finery. Instead she always wore a conservative blue outfit. During her last years, she lived only in and for the world of the spirit.

“Endure people even when they are unendurable!”

Stanwood Cobb, teacher at Robert College, Constantinople in 1908 went to Egypt for his midyear vacation. While in Cairo, whom should he run into on the steps of the Shephard Hotel but Lua Getsinger, this devoted follower of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Cobb had arranged to go on a trip to the Nile. He was on her heels to see the Prisoner in ‘Akka. She urged him to join her, saying that she had standing permission to take anyone with her.

With candor and intimacy he has recorded his first pilgrimage: “My first meeting with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was bewildering. We were ushered into a long study, lighted by large French windows at the farther end. I saw a large desk there, but no person sitting at it. Only a radiance of light. As we approached the end of the room, a majestic figure in Oriental garb became evident to me. It was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

“Lua Getsinger, with the devotion of a Mary Magdalene, fell to her knees and fervently kissed His robe. But what was I to do? I am not one who can act insincerely. Should I merely shake hands with Him? As I stood in hesitation, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, fully realizing my predicament, saved me from it by taking me in His arms and embracing me.

“You are welcome!” He said.

“Every evening at dinner ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who did not eat at that time, helped to serve us. He went around from guest to guest, putting more food upon the plates. This is the height of Oriental hospitality, to serve an honored guest with one’s own hands.

“When the meal was over, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would give us a brief talk on spiritual themes. I regret I have not a memory sufficient to recall all that He said. But I do recall two of those messages of spiritual wisdom.

“It is not enough to wish to do good. The wish should be followed by action. What would you think of a mother who said, ‘How I love you, my babe!’—yet did not give it milk? Or of a penniless man, who said, ‘I am going to found a great university!’”

“On another occasion He spoke of the need for loving patience in the face of aggravating behavior on the part of others.

‘One might say, ‘Well, I will endure such-and-such a person so long as he is endurable.’ But Bahá’ís must endure people even when they are unendurable!’

“Three extraordinary qualities which characterized all of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s utterances were to be found in these two brief conversations: His supreme logic; His delightful sense of humor; and the inspiring buoyancy with which He gave forth solemn pronouncements.

“For instance, when He said, ‘But Bahá’ís must endure people even when they are unendurable!’ He did not look at us solemnly as if appointing us to an arduous and difficult task. Rather, He beamed upon us delightfully, as if to suggest what a joy to us it would be to act in this way.

“I want to emphasize this important point—the joyousness with which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá always depicted the spiritual life as He enjoined it upon us. And why not? Is man’s spiritual life not in reality more joyous than any other kind of life that he can lead?”

“This philosophy of joy was the keynote of all of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s teaching. ‘Are you happy?’ was His frequent greeting to His visitors. ‘Be happy!’

“Those who were unhappy (and who of us are not at times!) would weep at this. And ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would smile as if to say, ‘Yes, weep on. Beyond the tears is sunshine.’

“And sometimes He would wipe away with His own hands the tears from their wet cheeks, and they would leave His presence transfigured.” (Baha’i News, July 1962, p. 5)

(The To be continued)

Mass Teaching in the Hawaiian Islands

Some highlights of the mass teaching and consolidation project of the Bahá’ís in the Hawaiian Islands include:

A Unity Feast in Waimea which brought together about a dozen new believers, and one in North Kohala where a Bahá’í couple recently moved to help form the Local Spiritual Assembly. They were able to take a new believer who speaks three Filipino dialects out teaching with them.

In the North Hilo area, ten young men rode their bicycles over thirty miles to see a showing of the Bahá’í movies. All of them enrolled!

On the last night of our teaching effort in the Puna Community, a team of Bahá’ís attracted everyone present to enroll—two ladies from Germany who now live in Hawaii, an older Portuguese man, one Hawaiian girl, and three young men who had arrived only forty-eight hours before, sailing from the coast of California to Hilo on a nineteen-foot schooner, “The Destitute.” The sailors said they were no longer destitute. After a twenty-eight day journey across the ocean, the three young men accepted a portion of that “boundless treasure” which Bahá’u’lláh offers to all who seek it.

Since the project started six weeks ago, over 300 people have enlisted under the banner of Bahá’u’lláh.

—LIGHT OF THE PACIFIC (Hawaii)—June-July, 1972
New Assembly in Guinea—A Great Victory

Because of a special political situation, Guinea in West Africa seemed to be an inaccessible fortress. Friends from Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Mauritania, Ivory Coast, etc., had all tried to enter it but all had failed. Yet this was a Nine Year Plan goal that a Local Spiritual Assembly be formed there. The National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa considered a possibility that teaching on the border near Guinea might lead to an Assembly in the country. Mr. Jamshid Fanaiyan was commissioned to make the effort.

Mr. Fanaiyan made many trips to a small Liberian town on the border and sometimes returned on foot, after hours of walking. The people of this town were noted for their mistreatment of missionaries sent to them, or their indifference to religion. Surprisingly enough, some of the residents enthusiastically embraced the Faith. Little by little the number became sufficient for an Assembly to be formed. During the course of teaching activities it was discovered that four of the newly-enrolled Bahá’ís were from Guinea. As the news of the new Faith spread on both sides of the border it reached the government officials. Soldiers were sent to question the new Bahá’ís of Guinea.

To the Bahá’ís, it seemed the door was about to close. Mr. Fanaiyan spent many nights near the border praying about the situation. However, the friends in Guinea were firm and their numbers increased. One early morning the friends came, one by one, to the house of the Chief, who is a Bahá’í. They closed the door and formed the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Guinea.

Vietnam Youth Conference

A Bahá’í Youth Conference was held in Can-Tho, Vietnam, the Capital of the Western Provinces, on July 8 and 9, 1972. Present at this Conference were Auxiliary Board member Nguyen Van Loi and seventy Bahá’í youth from the West. “The Role of Youth in the Faith” was the topic discussed.

The banners in the photos read: “Welcome to the Auxiliary Board member, Representative of the National Assembly and Youth Delegates.” “The Bahá’í Youth follow the example of sacrifice of His Holiness the Bab.”
At the Ḥazīratu'l-Quds in Victoria Amatu'l-Bahá was warmly received and welcomed by some of the National Spiritual Assembly members and many local believers. In her talk she said that one of the most beautiful and outstanding characteristics of the African people is their compassion and love for children. She pointed out that in nearly every home an African family is sheltering, feeding and educating one or more children who do not belong to them. This characteristic is so strong, Rūḥiyih Khānum pointed out, that after the passage of centuries the descendants of Africans carried out the work of the Faith in every country of the world. These words had a visible effect on His Excellency and he said he wished to invite us two ladies to lunch to meet his wife. Unfortunately the day we went to the Lodge, the home of Mr. Muna, his wife had not yet returned from a visit to Bamenda but his son and his charming daughter-in-law had lunch with us. The son is a brilliant lawyer, a graduate of the Bar in London. During this luncheon Rūḥiyih Khānum was able to further explain some of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and especially the important teaching of strict obedience to government enjoined by Bahá'u'lláh Himself upon all His followers.

In Buea

On October 25th we left Victoria and drove to the seat of the Government in Western Cameroon, the town of Buea. The distance from Victoria to Buea is only twenty-three miles, but one climbs from sea level to 3000 feet on the slopes of famous Mount Cameroon, the highest mountain in West Africa. Buea is often enveloped in clouds and is cool, green and beautiful. On the following day Amatu'l-Bahá was received by Mr. Solomon Tandeng Muna, the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon and the Prime Minister of West Cameroon. For nearly half an hour Rūḥiyih Khānum, Counsellor Dr. Mehdi Samandari, Mrs. Zora Banks and I had a very friendly and pleasant visit with him. As she was leaving Amatu'l-Bahá told him with deep sincerity that the greatest compliment anyone could pay to his people and his continent was the fact that two white women, mostly travelling all alone, had come from East to West Africa and were now, after driving over 21,000 miles, recrossing the continent. She said it is easy to pay compliments with your lips, for, after all, you can say anything and not mean it, but this a witness in acts, not words, to the fact that we have found we have nothing to fear. If we arrive in a village at night the villagers will be kind to us and shelter us. If the car breaks down a truck driver or motorist will stop and help us. So we have nothing to fear—but men with guns! She said she was afraid of them in any country of the world! These words had a visible effect on His Excellency and he said he wished to invite us two ladies to lunch to meet his wife. Unfortunately the day we went to the Lodge, the home of Mr. Muna, his wife had not yet returned from a visit to Bamenda but his son and his charming daughter-in-law had lunch with us. The son is a brilliant lawyer, a graduate of the Bar in London. During this luncheon Rūḥiyih Khānum was able to further explain some of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and especially the important teaching of strict obedience to government enjoined by Bahá'u'lláh Himself upon all His followers.

While in Buea Rūḥiyih Khānum had an hour-long radio interview as well as a press conference attended by the head of the Government Information Agency and several reporters. She also gave an introductory talk on the Bahá'í Faith at a government primary school where the headmaster is a devoted Bahá'í. At the end of her talk she told the children that he too was a Bahá'í and they could come to him for further information and to ask questions—a thing he had surely never done before this occasion! On a Sunday the Bahá'ís of Buea had a very nice meeting in the local Council Hall to receive and welcome Rūḥiyih Khānum. Several of the friends from Victoria were present. After her talk a delicious meal of many varieties of Cameroonian food as well as fruit and nuts was served to us all. On our last evening in Buea some of the very active Bahá'í friends came to visit Rūḥiyih Khānum and we had a long talk on many aspects of the Faith.

THE GREAT SAFARI of Hand of the Cause Rūḥiyih Khānum
By Violette Nakhjavání, Companion
Part nine

Rūḥiyih Khānum and Violette Nakhjavání luncheoning with His Excellency Mr. Solomon Tandeng Muna, Vice-President and Prime Minister of West Cameroon.
in Paris. At the Nineteen Day Feast, on the eve of November 4th, beloved Ruhiyyih Khanum spoke very intimately and informally to the gathering of Bahá'ís on the life of our beloved Guardian, on his sufferings and his victories. At this meeting we met another of the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh, Samuel Njiki, who had opened the French Cameroon and established the Faith in this city of Douala in 1954. There are several very deep and knowledgeable Bahá'ís in that community and as a result of this the questions they asked Amatu'l-Bahá were profound. One of the friends said that in the Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh says words to this effect that many a saint in his last moment falls to the depth of disgrace and many a sinner at the time of yielding up his soul is clothed with the robe of faith and forgiveness. "What is the meaning of this and how can we protect our souls from such downfall and disgrace?" He further asked, "For example, if one day I forget or neglect to say my Obligatory Prayer and on that very day I die, does this mean that I have died in a state of disgrace and lost my faith?" Amatu'l-Bahá answered this in her usual way of deep tolerance and compassion. She said: "I don't think such small negligences are the cause of the withdrawal of the Grace of God. We read in the teachings that the Mercy of God exeedeth His Justice." She went on to tell, how her mother used to say one should, every single day of one's life, pray for the protection and preservation of one's soul, as no one can be sure of one's own end. She said her own answer to this, which had troubled her for many years, had been to try to serve the Cause continuously day by day, with as pure a motive as she could, trying to give to the Faith of God as much as she could. She believed each of us should keep our eyes on this objective, advancing step by step and praying for the Mercy and Grace of God to be given us at the end. The acceptance or rejection of our deeds is not with us but rests with God and we should learn not to worry too much about it, but to constantly strive to do our best as surely this will count at the end of each person's life. During our stay in Douala we were able to meet the dear friends there a number of times.

Fourteen miles from Douala, in the village of Bonamumble Amatu'l-Bahá was warmly received by the Bahá'ís and their friends. One of the many joys of travelling and teaching in Africa is to hear the simple and logical proofs and answers the African Bahá'ís themselves give, in this village an argumentative, fanatical Christian asked Ruhiyyih Khanum many foolish questions and hardly bothered to listen to her answers, then one of the local Bahá'ís, in his quiet and dignified way, said "Look my friend, if you had received the news that a very distinguished guest such as this lady was coming to stay in your house what would you do? You would first of all throw all the junk out of your house, clean it, sweep it and prepare it to receive your guest. Now it is the same with this wonderful Message of Bahá'u'lláh, unless you clean up your heart to make room to receive this Message there is no place for it!" In the closing remarks the Chairman of the Local Assembly, who acted as the translator at this meeting, said with deep humility these beautiful words: "If we fall on our bended knees every moment of our lives and thank God for having blessed us with the recognition of His Manifestation, Bahá'u'lláh, in this day, we have not thanked Him enough, for He has chosen us from amongst many." That same day we also visited the village of Sodiko, where a Local Assembly was formed last year.

In Yaoundé

In the period of almost two weeks we stayed in Yaoundé, the capital city of Cameroon was packed with activities and every moment of Amatu'l-Bahá's time was used to advantage to help proclaim the Faith. We were the guests of a devoted Persian pioneer family whose home became the center of many meetings. Unfortunately the President of the Republic was away and therefore unable to receive Ruhiyyih Khanum. Among her engagements, however, was a very successful radio interview in English and a lively press conference during which she was bombarded with many challenging questions.

She spoke at two colleges, the Lycee Technique C.E.S. and the Ecole Normale Superieure, her subject at both being the "Role of Youth in Society". During the question and answer period in the Ecole Normale one of the students asked: "If in Africa we want to concentrate on moral values and neglect the material values where would we be in this race of technological development in the world? We are already so far behind the West that we can not waste time thinking of anything else except catching up with the white man." Amatu'l-Bahá said, "Supposing you are in a small African canoe, paddling along and far away you see a beautiful big white ship, blazing with electric lights and big and impressive and deluxe. You would long to abandon your canoe and board that beautiful big boat. But if you were told that on that boat there is no water, but plague and pestilence and the people are dying of thirst, would you still wish to exchange your canoe for that boat?" The young man laughed, for he saw the point quickly enough, and sat down satisfied with the answer.

In trying to depict the state of our civilization today, Ruhiyyih Khanum gave another example: She said: "Civilization is like a horse and man the rider; the rider must be in full control of his horse and guide the horse.
Amatu'l-Baha's public address at the University of Cameroon. Counsellor Dr. Mehdi Samandari is recording the words of the Chairman, Dr. Ndam Njoya, Professor of Law at the University.

along its way. Today the horse has gone wild and is dominating its rider and carrying him towards a precipice and disaster."

Amatu'l-Baha also spoke at a public meeting held at the University of Cameroon, attended by over 100 people, on the "Spiritual Destiny of Africa". I remember the night before this meeting someone questioned the wisdom of allowing the audience a period of questions after the meeting. We were told that the university students are very turbulent, negative, and ready to start unpleasant scenes, especially on a subject such as this. This made us all a bit nervous but as in the invitation a period of questions and answers was mentioned, nothing could be done about it. However, Amatu'l-Baha, in the beautiful, sincere and absolutely honest way in which she always speaks charmed her audience in such a vivid way that at the end of the meeting there was not only no feeling of belligerence but a deep and peaceful atmosphere of unity and friendship filled the hall. This was so obvious that several of the non-Baha'i guests remarked on it. The Chairman of this meeting, Dr. Ndam Njoya, is a young and very distinguished Professor of Law who studied in France and married his French wife there. He is also a Doctor of Law and teaches at the University. He is head of the School of Diplomacy at the University and a most charming man, a Moslem, of insight and tolerance. With deep feeling he told Rúhíyyih Khánum: "Tonight you have solved many of my inner problems and answered many of my un-asked questions."

In several firesides Amatu'l-Baha was able to meet with a large number of close contacts and friends of the Faith and lively discussions continued till the late hours of the night. On more than one occasion Rúhíyyih Khánum met with the Bahá'ís of Yaoundé and nourished them with her wealth of knowledge and abounding love. In his words of welcome and gratitude for the presence of the beloved guest a young Bahá'í student from the university said this: "Baha'u'llah in the Hidden Words says: 'Love me that I may love thee, if thou lovest Me not My love can in nowise reach thee'. We loved Him and so to show His love for us in return He has send you to us'. On the birthday of Baha'u'llah which was celebrated in the home of one of the Cameroonian Bahá'ís Amatu'l-Baha spoke of the life, the words and the sorrows of the Blessed Perfection. She shared with us some of those gem-like incidents which she had heard from the beloved Guardian or the members of his family about the personality of Baha'u'llah, how He would call the members of His family after dinner sometimes and say, "Now it is time for laughing"; or His tenderness and love for children. The last meeting Rúhíyyih Khánum had with the friends in Yaoundé was a dinner she personally gave for them in the home of the pioneers where we stayed. It was a joyous occasion.

Rúhíyyih Khánum, pioneers and some local believers meeting in the village of Obala, East Cameroon.
During this stay in Yaoundé we visited two communities situated in other towns: In Mbalmayo, where there are no Baha'is, but good prospects for developing the teaching work, Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke in the Town Hall to an eager and receptive audience of over 200 people. As an example of the relationship of the Bahá'í Faith to other religions she pointed to the walls of the hall, saying: “Imagine that wall was built by Christ and we call it Christianity. That wall was built by Muhammad and we call it Islam. That one was built by Moses and we call it the Jewish Faith. That one was built by Buddha and we call it Buddhism. Now Baha’u’llah has come with His Revelation and He has added the roof to this building, but in so doing He has neither condemned nor destroyed any of the walls already erected, which are good walls. He has only united them under the roof of His Universal Teachings for this new age in which we are living which needs new answers to its problems. Her audience was so thrilled by this example that a roar of approval went up and thunderous clapping filled the hall.

Thirty-five miles south of Yaoundé in the town of Obala Amat’u’Bahá met with the Baha'is in one of their homes in the morning and spoke to them on the importance of teaching and spreading the Cause of God. Later on during the day she spoke to a larger group of the Baha'is in what is called the "Pioneer Village" and its village hall is named "Carmel". The names were too significant to me not to mention them here. There are a number of these experimental villages set up by the government, helped and guided by special agricultural advisors from Israel. We found a great receptivity among these villagers toward the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

Amat’u'Bahá's third talk on that day was at a public meeting held in the Town Hall in Obala, where over eighty people attended and listened to the Message of God, asking many interesting questions at the end of her talk.

The devoted young French pioneer, the only European pioneer in all Gabon, flew to Yaoundé to be with Rúhíyyih Khánum over the week-end and was able to attend a number of meetings with us and hear her speak. It was especially nice to meet him because as things turned out there was no representative of Congo Brazzaville in the Cameroon and so we could not get a visa to that country and therefore gave up going to Gabon as well, as to go and return to Cameroon would have taken too much time. This was a great disappointment to us as it ruled out both of these countries we had long anticipated visiting.

The Cargo Boat for Zaire

Our very happy tour of East Cameroon, which lasted almost a month, and which had followed our equally enjoyable one in West Cameroon, which was almost as long, ended on December 1 in Douala, when we with the Land Rover boarded a Lloyd Triestino cargo boat called the "Piave" and set sail for Matadi in the Republic of Zaire (formerly Congo Kinshasa). With great regret we bade goodbye to the African member of the National Assembly and the two American pioneers who had come to see us off. Our ship stopped two days to load and unload in the small port of Lobito, in Angola—the twenty-first country visited by us on this long tour of Africa. We were fortunate enough to get acquainted with a sweet girl from Luanda and spend some time with her and to speak about the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. We took her back to our ship and Rúhíyyih Khánum gave her an inscribed copy of her book Prescription for Living and our addresses in case she wished to follow it up. We were not only fortunate to find this young woman, who volunteered to translate for us, (as we were hopelessly lost in trying to make ourselves understood, no one seemed to know a word of anything but Portuguese) but considered ourselves blessed in having been able to at least mention the Cause to one person in that country and leave a Baha'i book behind in Angola.

On board "Piave" December 7th 1971.

(To be continued)
Almost 200 American Bahá'ís, mostly youth and young adults, volunteered to give their summer to Bahá'u'lláh and travel-teach in other countries. In Europe and in Latin America, projects were planned and National Assemblies awaited the arrival of these troops who would assist in completing the remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan, working with native believers.

Special training sessions were held in Green Acre, Maine and in Puebla, Mexico at which the friends received instruction and guidance regarding teaching, adjustment to other cultures and, in Mexico, some practical experience teaching in the nearby villages. These four-day training sessions proved to be invaluable aids to the projects as the participants found themselves better prepared to serve and remarked that many times they faced tests and difficulties which would have discouraged them had it not been for the training they had received.

Basic to both sessions were classes on the Covenant and Quality of Bahá'í Life. In Green Acre, teachers included members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and its International Goals Committee. In Mexico, members of the National Teaching Committee and the Teaching Committee of the South taught the attendees about Latin American culture. A special in-depth intensive Spanish course was also held in Mexico and many who were not yet fluent were able to communicate in a basic way after these classes.

Songs and fellowship accompanied the sessions and many wonderful results came about because of the efforts expended by these dedicated souls this summer.

A special "Pioneer Emphasis Week", held at Davison Bahá'í School, drew Bahá'ís from all over the country who were anxious to gather information on pioneering and the goals remaining to be filled for the Nine Year Plan. Workshop classes were conducted by individuals who had pioneered to various areas in the world and much information was exchanged. Almost 100 percent of the attendees made firm commitments to pioneer, either before next Ridván or shortly after. This invaluable opportunity for learning and sharing will be made available to the friends again in the near future.

*Group attending Pioneer Emphasis Week at Davison Bahá'í School.*
Group attending the Summer Projects Training Institute held at Puebla, Mexico, for those who were to serve in Latin America.

The group attending the Summer Projects Training Session held in Green Acre in July 1972 for those volunteering for Europe.
Soldiers of Light Brave Dark Jungles

Pioneering sometimes brings opportunities for heroic self-sacrifice and high drama which escape the reader when mere statistics are reported.

Arnold and Gisela Zonneveld, of Dutch and German backgrounds, respectively, with three of their children moved to the "middle of nowhere" in the vast Departamento of El Beni, Bolivia. In the north, almost on the Brazilian frontier is pioneer Stephen Ross and in the South in the city of Trinidad lives Jack Burwell. These four pioneers are holding the territory of El Beni which has two local Assemblies of more than 600 established in Bolivia this past Ridván. These pioneers are in lonely places far from the mainstream of Bahá’í activity and can seldom see the other friends.

The Zonnevelds last fall moved to Jacuquirí, Province of Itáñez, El Beni Departamento, Bolivia. They immediately got busy building a home of native materials, clearing the ground for a garden, buying horses for transportation.

In the meanwhile Gisela’s mother, Ursula Von Brunn, Knight of Bahá’u’lláh, took care of her grandchildren in the city of Cochabamba until the parents were ready for the children to come to their new wilderness home.

Travel from a Bolivian city to the Zonneveld home is first by "meat plane"; seatless and uncomfortable. These planes bring meat from the ranches to the cities and make unscheduled return flights. Then alighting from the plane, one takes an ox-cart for several hours.

On a recent flight after the children had landed safely, the plane took off again and lost an engine!

The Zonnevelds enthusiastically teach the Faith, although out of touch with the National Spiritual Assembly, the National Teaching Committee and even Gisela’s mother for weeks at a time. Teaching continues in spite of bouts with high fevers, malaria, and other complaints, plus the fact that Arnold sometimes can barely speak above a whisper.

Travel is by horseback; once Gisela on her horse had to swim a river to get to a new teaching location. Six-year old Hilmer also rides although he is a tiny figure astride a giant horse. When river conditions are favorable, sometimes travel-teaching can be done by boat.

The main object of some trips was to meet the Siriono Indians. First it is necessary to understand the background of these people. In the nineteen-forties, thousands of this tribe left their mountain homes, strong and healthy, to work on the extensive holdings of rich landholders who have kept them in a state of peonage ever since, and have not paid them wages for twenty years. These same owners act as the local authorities in a condition of lawlessness reminiscent of the "Wild West". The tribe has little recourse to justice. When the Sirionos try to supplement their meagre diet through hunting the landlords claim the game, except for turtles and monkeys. Many of the tribe are diseased, receive virtually no medical treatment, and only a small number have survived.
The Zonnevelds are deeply moved by the plight of the Sirionos. They had to row for hours in a small boat to reach them. Arnold and Gisela were made welcome in a Siriono home and after a number of hours of giving the Message, the entire group present accepted the Faith. The Zonnevelds had already met the proprietor and his son, Don Federico, and took the occasion to speak to the son about the sad condition of the Siriono tribe. This young man agreed to go with them to the district police and promised to assist the tribe. Don Federico did not meet them, as promised, when they returned to the Siriono home. While they were in the boat for the return trip, Gisela developed a high fever and Arnold handled the oars alone, even though he had become ill himself. They were able to stop in a small place for medical treatment and recuperation before continuing home.

The Zonnevelds wrote: "We could live for several weeks at a time with these Indian friends but we feel we cannot form an Assembly yet until they are truly free. We beg your prayers in their behalf."

On the three-week teaching trip, they opened six new localities, brought in twenty-two adults, seven youth and seven children. Among these was a young alert Guarayo tribesman.

These pioneers, in spite of all their difficulties, have brought into the Faith about a hundred believers, including members of the Baures, Siriono, Yanaigua, Chiquitana and Guarayo tribes, none of the Quecha and Aymara people who are most numerous among Bolivian believers. The Local Assembly was formed in Jacuquiri at Riégván.

**Bahá'í News**

**Forty Years Ago**

Believers who have given special thought to the Guardian’s references to the importance of non-participation in political matters are requested to note the following excerpts from a Tablet revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the Spiritual Assembly of Mashad, Persia, during the year 1910:

*In these days the banner of political dissension and revolution is raised throughout Persia. Every part is afflicted with disturbance and each district is in the grasp of turmoil. All the people are in the utmost confusion. But, praise be to God, the friends of God did not mix with any of the political affairs, neither did they interfere with the plans of either party. They were the friends of all parties and kind to every one, inviting all to unity and concord, which is the fundamental basis of progress and civilization. They did not utter a word, neither did they offend any one; they made no complaint against any one, but they praised and glorified the unity and concord of the world of humanity. Therefore they were protected and preserved. Whosoever acted otherwise became afflicted with great calamity.*

To the National Spiritual Assembly: "Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler is now with us in Haifa and in a few days will start for Persia. She rendered wonderful services in both Australia and India and Shoghi Effendi trusts that she will do the same in Persia. One of the things the Guardian has asked her to do is to obtain the permission of the authorities to bring Bahá'í literature into Persia. This is a very difficult task but it is also so important that Shoghi Effendi feels we ought to attempt it."

On the next page, we read a copy of a letter sent to the National Spiritual Assembly by Mrs. Ransom-Kehler: "On August 15, I saw his Highness Teimourtash (Court Minister, Teheran) and received from him the direct, unqualified assurance that Bahá’í literature would be admitted into Persia and permitted to circulate."

In "News from Other Lands" we learn of public meetings addressed by Mrs. Ransom-Kehler at the Brahma Samaj and the Theosophical Society of France. Also she addressed public meetings in Mandaialy, Benares, Lucknow, Aiglar, Amritsar and Lahore, and was welcomed in the universities in Benares.

She visited Poona for three days. "For each succeeding lecture the hall engaged chanted to be larger than (Continued, bottom on next page)
THE MOST MIGHTY BRANCH OF GOD

By Hugh McKinley

A BOOK REVIEW

'Abdu'l-Bahá by Hand of the Cause of God H. M. Balyuzi; Publisher, George Ronald, London; copyright 1971, hard back, 559 pages, $5.00.

No description can measure up to the theme of a life which transcended every barrier to its total fulfillment. It lies beyond the range of assessment because every event in the life of the Son of Bahá'u'lláh carries a major accent.

This is evident. Yet these words stand testimony, also to the monumental humility of Hand of the Cause of God Hasan Balyuzi, whose own great gifts and whose family's hereditary links with the blessed Bahá are completely withdrawn from our notice in this detailed and definitive biography of the Center of the Covenant of God.

'Abdu'l-Bahá is a work of nearly 500 pages, far more than a chronological record, not alone because many intimate details are cited, many sources referred to, in the "language of Revelation," that have hitherto been closed to us in the West; it is also a volume of unique teaching as well as of deepening value.

Mr. Balyuzi cites very substantially from the major discourses and also from informal talks that the Master gave while in the United States and elsewhere and he quotes extensively from the Diary of Mirzá Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání who accompanied the Most Great Branch upon His travels to the western world and recorded these events (published in Bombay, 1914 and 1921). Also quoted are excerpts from the narrative of Hájí Mirzá Haydar-Á'í, including a priceless report of the advice upon His travels to the western world and recorded Zarqání's hereditary links with the blessed teaching as well as of deepening value.

The style is concise and easy to grasp; never weighing us down with the immense amount of precise fact the book contains. We are shown a number of rare photographs embellish the clearly set-out text; the index is a work of nearly 500 pages. far more than a chronological record, not alone because many intimate details are cited, many sources referred to, in the "language of Revelation," that have hitherto been closed to us in the West; it is also a volume of unique teaching as well as of deepening value.

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This is a book to which one may return for continual refreshment, for continual encouragement and inspiration to serve the Cause. As a text for Summer School courses it is worthy of the highest place. As a Handbook for teaching it is unique in that it contains, at one and the same time, the matter and the manner in which this may be best presented with supreme effect.

Mr. Balyuzi brings us almost as close as words may to this Mystery; and his narrative may also be counted as indispensable preliminary reading before visiting the World Center of the Faith and the Master's Shrine.

If this book does not present us with any "explanation" of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we may take this very fact as evidence of the author's success. Why? Let us turn to his opening and closing words, in meditation:

"Here is a life, abundant, spacious, immeasurable. It cannot be adequately described. It cannot be encompassed."

"'Abdu'l-Bahá was the Mystery of God. Who, then, can portray Him?"

Notes:
1. The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 12
2. Messages to America 1932-46, Shoghi Effendi, p. 39

(Continued from page 15)

that of the previous day and yet it proved too small to hold all those who had come to hear her.

In Persia the "Association of the Bahá'í Youth; planned to "manage a Bahá'í Club and prepare the means of progress for Bahá'í youth, mentally, physically and spiritually" and reported 240 members.

"For the first time in the history of the Cause in 'Iráq a public address was given before non-believers. The Y.M.C.A., a British organization in Baghdad, expressed a desire that Dr. Aflatum, Vice-Chairman of the Na-

tional Spiritual Assembly of 'Iráq address it... The meeting was a signal success.

"The minutes of the Council of the League of Nations, declaring the urgency of expropriating the House of Bahá'u'lláh, were duly published by the local press (Iráq). This mention and publicity, which could not be attained by the efforts of even hundreds of teachers, is certainly due to this crisis which proved to be an unbounded blessing in disguise."

—Bahá'í News, September and October, 1932
Three African Presidents Receive Baha'i Writings

July 26 is a special day for Liberians. It is the Day of Independence of their country. This year the people and government of Liberia celebrated the 125th Anniversary of Independence in Nimba County.

Upon the recommendation of the National Public Information Committee, the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa agreed to ask one of the members of the committee, Mr. Jamshid Fanaiyan, as he was traveling to Nimba that week, to explore the possibilities of their participation on the program in collaboration with the Local Spiritual Assembly of that area. This festival presented an unequalled opportunity to proclaim the Faith to Liberian President Tolbert and his special guests, President Sekou Toure of Guinea and S. I. Koroma, Vice-President of Sierra Leone, as well as the thousands of visitors who were expected to attend.

The friends decided to present Baha'i Writings to the Presidents and to have a booth for displaying Baha'i literature.

The big day came, but the plan for presenting the gifts could not be carried out because of the strict schedule already established by protocol.

When Baha'is heard President Sekou Toure of Guinea say “The leaders of today must be just and uncorrupt” they could not bear the thought of failing to present him with The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah. Again, the Chief of Protocol came and whispered to the waiting Baha'is that it was impossible to present their gifts because the program had already extended over its scheduled time. Then too, it was time for the friends to leave for their homes while transportation was still available, realizing that all day long they had been frustrated in making their presentations of Baha'i literature.

But, Miss Georgia Sanchez, National Spiritual Assembly Secretary, remained and with all her heart and soul, prayed for the assistance of God in fulfilling her mission. Suddenly at about 10:30 p.m. off the stage came the President, greeting the various dignitaries in the audience. Finally he stopped at the table in front of Miss Sanchez. The power of Baha'u'llah prevailed!

All the Presidents are heavily guarded, and particularly President Sekou Toure of Guinea, whose life is in constant danger. Miss Sanchez succeeded in introducing herself on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa, and handed over all the gifts to President Tolbert who in turn, immediately passed them to his guest, President Sekou Toure and the Honorable S.I. Koroma. The special aides took the gifts, returned to the stage and examined them, after which they were given back to the Presidents.

The National Spiritual Assembly was especially pleased that the volume The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah was received with an expression of thanks from the President of Guinea, as that country is the only African country which Baha'i pioneers, until now, have been unable to enter. The occasion was a spiritual triumph. Baha'is of Africa pray that the Creative Words will sink into the hearts of those officials who have now received the message of Baha'u'llah.

Freetown, Sierra Leone Week-End School

Thirty-seven friends from all over Sierra Leone and some from Liberia joined the Freetown Baha'is for a week-end School on May 13-14, 1972. It was also attended by Counsellor H. Ardiaki and Auxiliary Board member Mr. M. Kebdani, whose participation added to the loving atmosphere.

Mrs. H. Vera Edwards conducted a class on “The Institution of the Hands of the Cause;” Mrs. Georgia Sanchez, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, on “Baha'i Administration”; Mrs. Susan Koucheckzedah, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly on “The Work of the Local Spiritual Assemblies”; Auxiliary Board member Mr. Shidan Koucheckzedah on “The History of the Faith”; and Counsellor Mr. Kebdani on “Social Laws and Teachings.” At the end of the sessions a test was given.

The evenings were spent in informal discussions. From the questions asked, it was evident that the new believers had gained remarkable insight and enthusiasm.

The Local Assembly of Sierra Leone used the occasion to present Baha'i books to their Library Board. The National Public Information Representative sent an article to the leading newspaper, The Daily Mail. It was later learned that the following Sunday, the Minister of Education made visits to various churches requesting them to publish more reading materials to enrich the knowledge of religions.

Week-End School in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Many of the friends had to leave before this photograph was taken.
News of Zaire by Pioneer

John Newport, pioneer to Zaire, visited the Wilmette House of Worship and the Bahá'í News editorial office while on a visit to the United States. He had just come from South Carolina and was en route to a summer school in the west. One purpose was to obtain samples of literature suitable for translation into the Zaire version of Swahili which would be of greatest usefulness on his return.

Newport was enthusiastic over the Bahá'ís finally being recognized by the Government after years of patient and painstaking effort. Dr. Navidi, well-known international lawyer, in occasional trips spent one and one-half years in the endeavor. Dr. Amin Jazab, personal physician to the President, was influential in the final achievement. Assured of Bahá'í policy of loyalty to the government, the President sent back this advice: "Bahá'ís should show their Faith through actions rather than words."

Upon receiving recognition, the Convention was called at the last of July, and the new National Spiritual Assembly was elected.

Goals by Riqván are 1,000 Assemblies in Zaire, with 3,000 localities where Bahá'ís reside. At the time of Convention, there were 350 Assemblies. Pioneer Newport believes suitable literature will contribute greatly to achieving these goals and is enthusiastic about the new simplified booklet *The Trusted Ones of God: The Local Spiritual Assembly.*

Members of the Kivu Provincial Teaching Committee. There are about 25,000 Bahá'ís in this Zaire Province and about 3,000 in the rest of the country. This was before permission to teach was received by the Government. John Newport, pioneer, is the tallest.

Kendal will never be the same again. We have entered a new dimension and a new phase in our teaching activity. The Faith has been growing steadily here since the pioneers opened the town in the summer of 1966, but it has now made a sudden leap forward. It has the chance to demonstrate, as never before, its ability to unite all kinds of people, to solve their problems and to heal their sicknesses.

The team arrived here on July 15 and stayed for two weeks. Much preliminary prayer and detailed organization had already gone into the project. We did a prayer walk round Kendal after the celebration of the Martyrdom of the Báb on July 9th, using mostly the prayer of 'Abdu'l-Bahá beginning “O Mustaghfith!” and on July 12 we all met and prayed individually every night at 9:00 p.m. for our contacts (by name), the goals of the Nine Year Plan, the York and Kendal projects and the extension teaching goals, including one in this area. The organization covered the manning of the Town Center and the home for firesides, and we ensured that there was always at least one adult member of the community on duty.

During the fortnight we had regular consultation between the team and the officers of the Local Spiritual Assembly and the whole community. More than once the Local Spiritual Assembly witnessed the unexpected help and bounties which come when the community is united and abides by its decisions.

One instance of this was in connection with the Town Center. Determined and lengthy efforts failed to find one, so in the end the home for firesides (Ingleside, the Hellabys' home) became both, rolled into one, and was available from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. (and sometimes later). The first week there was a heat wave, and the team was able to use a small park near the river as their unofficial Town Center; here they sat and played and sang and attracted people, and here they were interviewed by a reporter and photographer from the Westmorland Gazette. The accompanying photograph appeared in that paper at the end of the second week.

The team was accommodated by various members of the community, but all had their evening meal at Ingleside. During the daytime some of them went into the town in order to talk to people, either in the streets or in cafes and other places. They also had one or two interesting encounters with an evangelical youth club in the town.

We had, during the fortnight, a Unity Feast and consultation briefing session the night the team arrived, and two public meetings. For the first, the speaker was Mrs. Marion Hofman in the Town Hall. The second speaker was Philip Hainsworth. All other evenings we had something on at Ingleside; either we showed the film “It’s Just the Beginning”, or a slide show with taped commentary on the Baha’I Faith, prepared by Madeline Hellaby, and sometimes both together in different rooms! When the weather was good, people could sit outside in the evenings, and the strains of guitar music and Baha’I songs could be heard under the treesmost nights until it rained on the middle Sunday. And what a storm that was! All had gone from a picnic in the park when there was a clap of thunder, the heavens opened and it poured and flashed and banged for four hours. On the last night there was a social, beginning with an entertainment organized by Dave Brown, in which most members of the team and local community took part.

The results were four declarations, two young men and two youth (boys). But the long-term results cannot be assessed, and as was said at the beginning we have now entered a new phase—an exciting challenge to the Local Spiritual Assembly to work out an entirely new teaching and deepening program!

Hand-in-Hand Project in Kendal, Westmorland, England. Left to right: Robert, a Swedish boy (non Baha'i) who discovered the team in York and followed them to Kendal; Richard Hainsworth; Ted Williams; John Bell of Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.; Estelle Mapp; Dave Brown and Richmond McTuer of Winona, Minnesota. In front is Stephen Foster, Baha’i child of Kendal. (Courtesy of the Westmorland Gazette.)

Uganda Youth

Uganda youth are enthusiastic and active we learn from letters from Zylphra O. Mapp and the newsletter published by the National Spiritual Assembly. Florence Olinga, daughter of Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga, is now a student at the Tororo Girls' School and brings more and more students for firesides at the flat of pioneer Mrs. Mapp.

Two youth from Teso, Toby Epyeru and Ben Ekoot, conducted a traveling institute in Dokelo County, Lango for two days, January 9 and 10, 1972, and each of these days there were twelve in attendance. They also carried the institute to the following villages in Lango: Kangai, Agwata, Kwerwa, Adowaki and Batta. Many old believers came and several new friends made their declarations. Traveling institutes were conducted by a small band of believers at Gulu. Donna Taylor at the Gulu Baha’I Institute wrote:

“I’ve just returned from Atiak and leave for West Nile on the midnight train tomorrow. I will reach Pakwach before dawn, wait for daybreak then walk to town. We can’t go at night because there are too many elephants around. Sometimes I’m ‘pedalling’ or ‘looking’ or getting rides on buses or trains. The bicycle put on nineteen miles just after I got it and found a lot of waiting souls in out-of-way places.”

Study classes in Teso have begun at Acissa, conducted by Grace Olinga on Baha’I principles and Toby Epyeru on Baha’I History. The youth are keen and ask many questions. They are often joined by adults, with around twenty-five people as an average in attendance.

The visit of Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhajir inspired the youth to open up nineteen new localities for the Faith and to plan a series of three youth conferences.
CONVENTION IN ARGENTINA

Delegates and observers at the twelfth National Convention for Argentina.

Counsellors’ Institute, Guanacaste, Costa Rica

The Continental Board of Counsellors is holding a series of deepening institutes in strategic points in each country of Central America where the greatest number of Bahá’ís can be gathered. Usually these institutes are only of one or two days duration as the people cannot leave their homes and work for a longer period.

The first institute for the year for Costa Rica was held on July 16, in the village of Nambi, in the agricultural area of Guanacaste where there are over thirty Local Assemblies in the making. Attendance was but thirty. Classes were given by resident Counsellor Artemus Lamb and three native believers, two of whom are part of a team of four youth from the Capital area who spent the prior week in Nambi.

Although attendance was small, a wonderful spirit of understanding, love and happiness kept growing throughout the sessions which burst forth at the closing with a series of spontaneous speeches of joy and gratitude. One elderly man said with tears in his eyes and shining face: “Now I really understand and although I am too old to do much, I am going to teach my children and grandchildren.”

Group who participated in the Institute. Counsellor Artemus Lamb took the picture.
NORWEGIAN SUMMER SCHOOL

The Norwegian Bahá’í Summer School, held from July 1 to 7, at Ringsaker High School was pronounced the most successful ever with a splendid program and with the best attendance of over 130. Two Hands of the Cause of God, Dr. Ugo Giachery, and Enoch Olinga, each with his wife, Dorothy Ferraby of the Board of Counsellors for Europe and two Auxiliary Board members, Mrs. Modesta Hvide and Mrs. Gerd Strand, brought great inspiration to all.

The American youth, who came to participate in “Operation 129, Europe and America Hand-in-Hand”, were a great source of rejoicing with their singing and clapping under the leadership of their co-ordinator, Shirley Yarbrough from Florida, U.S.A. After three days at the School the American and Norwegian youth left for the goal cities of Tromsø and Bodø—over the Arctic Circle,—and Lillehammer and Ås in Southern Norway. Before their departure, however, all the youth descended on Lillehammer, the nearest city, and for the entire day advertised the public meeting to be held there that evening. This effort, indeed, filled the hall to capacity and those interested were invited to the School and the next evening for a program and refreshments. During the activities of the youth, older Bahá’ís held a vigil of prayer for twenty-four hours, with the total result of many visitors from the area attending the School the next evening, and two declarations, one from Lillehammer and one from Svolvaer!

After years of effort Norway had its first television interview on July 26th and this came at a most opportune time to assist the youth in the goal cities, and in fact, Bahá’ís over the great length of this country to propagate our beloved Faith. Publicity has followed this event and has brought a new impetus to teaching activity, which should bring the victory in achievement of the goals of the Nine Year Plan for Norway.

Holger Hagan, co-ordinator for Norwegian Youth and Shirley Yarbrough, co-ordinator for American Youth in Norway.
Youth Activities

Strong youth groups were formed in Anchorage, Spenard and Petersburg, and more youth activities have begun in Fairbanks and Kenai where large numbers of young people have enrolled.

Students missed no opportunity for promoting the Cause of God, making the Faith the topic of essays in English courses and talks in speech classes. Books were placed in high school libraries and the movie, “It’s Just the Beginning,” was shown in a number of schools. In Juneau a Bahá’í team presented programs to all elementary schools which resulted in a letter of thanks and praise from the Assistant Superintendent of the Juneau School District.

The University of Alaska campus at Fairbanks was the scene of a number of activities including a successful week-long proclamation when a display booth was set up and firesides held nightly. Articles on the Faith appeared in the campus newspaper and interviews were aired over the Campus FM Station.

During the year, youth participated in travel-teaching programs to a number of areas, including Bethel, Kodiak, Cordova, Kenai, Nenana and Wrangell. Young people also played an important role in Massive Encounter and Proclamation Projects.

State Fair

Around 1300 pieces of literature were distributed at the Matanuska Valley Assembly booth at the State Fair near Palmer. Some Assemblies maintain literature racks in depots, airports and other public buildings.

Massive Encounter

All members of the Field Army worked together in Ft. Yukon and when the Encounter was completed in that community, they were assigned to smaller teams for teaching in the remaining villages. By fanning out in small teams, the entire Yukon Basin was covered in just over a month. When Massive Encounter was finished in the Yukon Basin, there were Bahá’ís in every village but one. In the tiny village of Gold Camp, every one enrolled.

In mid-November over forty believers gathered in the Haines-Klukwan area for a three-day spiritual preparation followed by assignment to teams to begin Massive Encounter in Southeast. They travelled by two chartered boats (both captains enrolled in the Faith), ferry and plane, and swept southward through the panhandle and into Northern British Columbia taking the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh to virtually every town, village, logging camp and cannery site in Southeast Alaska. As a result, every single community large enough to be noted on a map and many places too small to be found on any map had Bahá’ís resident in them.

National Spiritual Assembly members, Anchorage and Spenard Local Assembly members joined the teams in seeking out “waiting souls” . . . The result: Over 400 waiting souls were found. These live mostly in the Anchorage area with a sprinkling of perhaps thirty-five new souls in Spenard.

Perhaps of greatest importance is the fact that Massive Encounter made possible winning and surpassing the most difficult Nine Year Plan Goals, goals which seemed beyond our grasp only a few short years ago.

—Alaska Baha’i News, August, 1972

Dutch Summer School

Over two hundred Bahá'ís, representing about fifteen countries, attended the Dutch Summer School held from July 8 to 15, 1972 in Haeze, in the south-east part of the country. Situated on a picturesque lake surrounded by woods, the location was an inspiration.

The spirit soared with the commemoration of the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb, held the second day after opening. A befitting and majestic observance movingly portrayed the life of the Martyr-Prophet. Included were beautiful devotional readings with music, quickening the love and reverence of all assembled.

Classes were held regularly in morning, afternoon and evening and were well attended. Native believers, pioneers and guest speakers participated. Continental Counsellor Miss Bopp related recent news of the numerous triumphs achieved in various European countries. She presented four classes, highly informative and comprehensive, among her topics being “The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh,” “The Administration,” and also the development of the Faith in relation to the United Nations.

Other classes offered varied yet connecting themes: “The Life of Bahá’u’lláh,” “Writings of Bahá’u’lláh,” “The Sufferings of the Manifestations,” “History of Persia in the Time of the Báb,” “Bahá’í Prophecies,” “The Soul,” “Outstanding Bahá’í Women,” “The Role of the Woman in the Bahá’í Community”, etc. Workshop on the topics of “Bahá’í Life” and “Finding Your True Self” were highly developed and related present-day thought to the Bahá’í viewpoints.

Children’s classes were held and care for the youngest was provided. Two separate age groups of children offered colorful programs for the last evening of school, reciting prayers and singing Bahá’í songs.

The daily round of activities was interspersed with slide programs. A twenty-four hour prayer chain was offered for the attainment of goals. Pioneers volunteering to serve in the goal cities were hailed with joy. Three souls publicly acknowledged their faith in Bahá’u’lláh.

By midweek, a high point was reached at the celebration of the Feast of Kullmat. A special feature that evening was the dance portrayal by a Finnish Bahá’í, Raja, a gifted ballerina.

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Members of the new National Spiritual Assembly of Norway. Left to right; front: Gudrun Østegaard, Treasurer; Amelia Bowman; Elna Lodrup, Secretary; Lisa Hegge; Counsellor Eric Blumenthal. Top row: Ernst Holm; Gunnar lange-Nielsen, Vice-Chairman; Harald Thiss; Dr. Hushang Ra'fat, Chairman; Holger Hagan, Recording Secretary.
To the Bahá'ís of the World

With feelings of deep sorrow we relate to the Bahá'í world the distressing circumstances surrounding the murder of three Iranian Bahá'í students, pioneers to the Philippine Islands.

Parviz Šádiqi, Faramarz Vujdání and Parviz Furúghí were among a number of Iranian Bahá'í youth who answered the call for pioneers. With eleven others they registered at the Universities in Mindanao with the intention of completing their studies and proclaiming the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. These three had conceived the plan of making teaching trips to a rural area inhabited by Muslims. When on July 31st the authorities of Mindanao State University were notified that they had left the campus the previous day and had not yet returned, search parties were immediately formed and the assistance of the police and local authorities obtained. After inquiries and search, led entirely by President Tamano of Mindanao State University, the bodies of the three young men were found in a shallow grave. They had been shot, grievously mutilated and two had been decapitated. The bodies were removed and given Bahá'í burial in a beautiful plot donated for the purpose.

Immediately upon receipt of the tragic news, Vicente Samaniego, Counsellor in Northeast Asia, in close cooperation with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Philippines, acted vigorously on behalf of the Bahá'ís and was given the utmost cooperation and sympathy by the authorities, police, military and civil. A convocation was called, attended by more than 900 students, faculty members and University officials. Prayers were said in English, Arabic and Persian. The President of the University gave a talk in which he said that the murdered Iranian students are not ordinary students, for with them is the Message of Bahá'u'lláh which is the way to unity. The Council of the Student Body asked that their new Social Hall be renamed Iranian Student Memorial Hall. Three thousand people marched in the funeral procession and six hundred went to the burial site to attend the interment.

A dignified burial was conducted by the Bahá'ís in the presence of University authorities and friends.

The relatives and friends of these three young men, who gave their lives in the service of the Blessed Beauty, are assured of the loving sympathy and prayers of their fellow believers. The sacrifice made by these youth adds a crown of glory to the wonderful services now being performed by Bahá'í youth throughout the world. Bahá'u'lláh Himself testifies:
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.

September 19, 1972
Haifa, Israel
—The Universal House of Justice

Glimpses of Early Bahá’í Pilgrimages
By Annamarie K. Honnold
Part two of three parts

One of the early pilgrims to see the Master while He was yet a Prisoner was Corinne True, who went to the prison-city in 1907. This proved to be the first of nine pilgrimages she was privileged to make to the Bahá’í Holy Places. Only the knowledge that she and her small party were to receive shelter in the home of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá could have made her enter that grim city, so aptly named “The Greatest Prison.”

The loving warmth of that holy household was felt immediately. The Master had picked three lovely roses, which were sent to them with His welcome. When He Himself appeared, He brought pink and purple hyacinths. Later He sent each a luscious tangerine. These small considerations seemed to fill the very atmosphere with a divine sweetness, filling their hearts with joy.

“Make a Beginning”

“This was during the time of the Second Commission of Investigation by the Turks, when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had again been confined as a prisoner in ‘Akká by order of the Sultan of Turkey. On this visit Mrs. True took a petition to the Master asking permission for the American Bahá’ís to begin planning for the erection of a ‘House of Worship.’ This petition was in the form of a parchment containing the signatures of over a thousand American believers. She told the story of putting the parchment behind her on the divan and first presenting the little gifts sent by the loving friends. But the Master strode across the room, reached behind her and grasped the parchment, holding it high in the air. ‘This,’ He exclaimed, ‘this is what gives me great joy.’ ‘Go back,’ He told her, ‘go back and work for the Temple; it is a great work.’ How she longed to do this work, but it seemed such a great task. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, looking at her with deep intensity said, ‘Denote yourself to this project and all will come right.’ He then proceeded to give basic instructions about its design. It was to have nine sides, nine gardens, nine fountains, nine doors, nine walks, etc. And so a vision of the first Bahá’í Temple in the Western Hemisphere was born.” (Told by Honor Kempton in Bahá’í World, Vol XIII, p. 847)

The small pilgrim party was invited to join the family in early morning devotions—usually held between six and seven—at which time tea was served and the Holy Words were chanted. The Master took His breakfast of a little cheese, Syrian bread and a cup of tea. The pilgrims’ breakfast was served later.

The Holy Household

Corinne True tells about this early morning experience: “The widow of one of the martyrs sits on the floor in the Persian style and makes and serves the tea every morning. Her husband was one of three brothers who were imprisoned for this Cause. For days they had no news about them. One day they heard a great noise in the street and looking out they saw three heads placed on long poles and being carried through the streets, and when in front of their home they tossed these heads into their mother’s room. She wiped them off with water and then threw them back, saying, ‘What I have given to God I will not take back.’ This woman who makes the tea had been married only one year to one of these brothers. Having lost all of her relatives through the persecution, and Persian women having no openings for self-support, the Master took her into His household. What a wonderful household this is—over forty people living here in one home, some black, some white, Arabic, Persian, Bur­manese, Italian, Russian and now English and American! Not a loud command is heard and not one word of dispute; not one word of fault-finding. Every one goes about as if on tip toes. When they enter your room, their slippers are left before the door and they come in with stocking feet and remain standing until you invite them to sit down.” (Notes Taken at ‘Akká, Corinne True, pp. 29-30.)

Dinner served two purposes: to eat and to teach or learn. The Master would eat a bite or two and then He taught those present. She observed that “Not one moment of the day is wasted by this Mighty Man of God.” (p. 25)

Friday Mornings

Corinne True was one of many who were deeply touched by the Master’s customary Friday morning
acts of charity. From her window she "saw between two
and three hundred men, women and children gathered.
Such a motley crowd one can see only in these parts.
There were blind, lame, cripples and very feeble per-
sons, the poorest clad collection of people almost that
the earth contains. One man had his clothing made of
a patched quilt, an old woman had grubby sacking for a
cloak; children were so ragged that their clothing would
scarcely stay on them.

"Two or three of the men believers were with the
Master. The people were required to arrange themsev-
in order about two sides of the court and the Master
began near the gate giving into the hand of each some
piece of money and then each was required to move out.
It was a sight never to be forgotten to see the Master
going from one to another, saying some word of praise
or kindness to encourage each. With some He would
stop to inquire into their health and He would put them
on the back, these poor, dirty-looking creatures, and
once in a while we would see Him send some one away
on the back. these poor, dirty-looking creatures, and
there were blind, lame, cripples and very

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"The Master's Appearance

"In personal appearance the Master is of medium
height and slender build. His complexion is rather dark,
from the American point of view, but he is fair for a
Persian. His eyes are bluish gray, and there is a white
line within the iris which sometimes seems to radiate
light, making His eyes wonderfully luminous. His coun-
tenance is of the type rendered familiar to us by the old
masters' paintings of Christ. His hands are small and
delicate, decidedly of the spiritual and artistic sort, but
with a grip of steel. Though but sixty years old His hair
and beard are white, and His hair falls over His shoul-
ders in Oriental fashion. He is very indifferent as to His
appearance, though extremely neat, and in warm
weather frequently tucks His flowing locks up under His
fez." (p. 10).

A Life of Simplicity and Sacrifice

"Abdu'l-Bahá's simplicity and generosity were indeli-
bly imprinted in her heart and mind. He knew how to sit
with her in silence. He knew how to make a cup of tea
for her. His own physical needs appeared virtually non-
existent.

How could this Prisoner give to the needy of 'Akká
every Friday morning? Had not His exiled family's
wealth and property been almost totally confiscated?
She found that "All that the Master gives is a real
sacrifice, and is saved by the cutting off of what most
people would consider necessities." (p. 28)

"The Master slept on the stone floor with only a rug
and a matting between His body and its cold, hard
surface, and no cover except His cloak. One of the
American pilgrims was grieved to see Him so deprived
of comfort, and gave Him a bed and mattress. Soon
afterward it was discovered to be gone, and when ques-
tioned about it, the Master replied: 'How could I sleep
in disgust when so many have nothing?'" (p. 29)

She found that He gave away all the many gifts which
were sent to Him. "A story is told of a beautiful silver
service which was presented to Him, and He did not
even look at it. One and another received portions of it
until piece by piece it disappeared. A significant inci-
dent is that of a wealthy woman who offered Him a sum
of money before she left 'Akká. He refused to accept it,
and as the lady pleaded for the privilege of placing it in
His hands, He said, at length: 'I never accept anything
for Myself, but if you wish you may bestow it upon a
poor man . . . for the education of his son.' So the money
was used for this purpose." (p. 29)
"Abdul-Baha usually ate but one simple meal a day. In Mary Lucas’ eight days He was present at most meals, often coming just to add joy to the occasion, though He was not hungry. If He knew of someone who had had no meal during a day, the family supper was gladly kicked up and sent to the needy.

She noted that grace was not said before meals. She mentioned this to the Master, to which He replied, "'My heart is in a continual state of thanksgiving, and so often those accustomed to this form say the words with the lips merely, and their hearts are far from being in a state of thanksgiving.' " (p. 31)

Even His household reflected His greatness. In addition to Himself, His wife, His sister, two married daughters with husbands and children, and His two youngest daughters, there were some orphan children and widows of martyrs. She observed that "These serve in some capacity in the household, and the sentiment of love and equality in every member of this home is a living example for the world. Everything is done in the spirit of love." (p. 15)

"Forgive Him Now"

It was observed that on 'Abdul-Baha’s birthday, "He spoke only of the Bab, His mission and message. (He was born during the night of the Bab’s Declaration, May 23, 1844.)" Most certainly He did not use the occasion to talk about Himself.

In 1906 over two hundred guests were to dine at the Master’s table. Since dawn, He had been busy helping with the work involved. He Himself kneaded dough to be put in the ovens. "He has been in gay spirits, inspiring, uplifting, cheering all His helpers," someone observed. And later He "assisted in passing the platters ... the rice ... the lamb ... the fruits of the region (of such large size, such color, and such fragrance as only the sunshine of the East produces and paints.)"

Moving among His two hundred guests, He spoke to them as He served them, such Divine words of love and spiritual import ...: "If one of you has been wounded in heart by the words or deeds of another, during the past year, forgive him now; that in purity of heart and loving pardon, you may feast in happiness, and arise, renewed in spirit." With words to this effect He seemed to be telling His many friends that all He wanted of them at that happy time was to know that they had forgiven any transgression which might have been committed against them. (The Sheltering Branch, Marzieh Gail, pp. 70-71)

The First American Babæ’s on Pilgrimage

Thornton Chase, who has become known as "the first American believer," and indeed the first to embrace the Cause of Babæ’s in the Western world" (God Passes By, p. 288), sailed from Jaffa in Syria with several other Babæ’s in 1907. They landed safely in Haifa and the next day went through the German Colony, dating back to 1843. Its inhabitants expected Christ's Second Coming there on Mount Carmel soon thereafter. Inscriptions over doors of homes, church and school expressed their very real expectation. One could still read "Der Herr ist Nahe" meaning that the Lord is near.

The beauty of Carmel did not pass him by as he waited for his pilgrimage to Akka. "Roadsides and fields were painted with blossoms, and we delighted in their variety, colors and fragrance. There were myriads of flowers, daisies, forget-me-nots, sweet peas, lilies, roses, and the flaming red poppies everywhere." (In Galilee, Thornton Chase, pp. 13-14)

Then came that blessed April day to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Akka. They went by way of the sandy seashore in a carriage drawn by three horses, willing side by side.

Vividly he described in his little story In Galilee, his impressions on arrival: "... they conducted us through the arched, red brick entrance to an open court, across it to a long flight of stone steps, broken and ancient, leading to the highest story and into a small walled court open to the sky, where was the upper chamber assigned to us, which adjoined the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The buildings are all of stone, whitewashed and plastered, and it bears the aspect of a prison.

"Our windows looked out over the garden and tent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the sea side of the house. That garden is bounded on one side by the house of the Governor, which overlooks it, and on another by the inner wall of fortification. A few feet beyond that is the outer wall upon the sea, and between these two are the guns and soldiers constantly on guard. A sentry house stands at one corner of the wall and garden, from which the sentry can see the grounds and the tent where 'Abdu'l-Bahá meets transient visitors and the officials who often call on Him. Thus all His acts outside of the house itself are visible to the Governor from His windows and to the men on guard. Perhaps that is one reason why the officials so often become His friends. No one, with humanity, justice, or mercy in his heart, could watch 'Abdu'l-Bahá long without admiring and loving Him for the beautiful qualities constantly displayed." (pp. 23-24)

For five days he remained inside those prison walls —feeling the love and peace of the Holy Household —finding that the real prison was on the other side of those same walls. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was ever the perfect host. An instance of this is cited by Chase, who noted that at the noon meal He accepted food only after all those present had been served. And then He indicated that the meal should be eaten by saying "In the Name of God," smiling His beautiful smile.

The Master possessed spiritual charisma. "He assumed nothing; His powers were natural, His sincerity thorough; His affection pure. His smile charmed and attracted friends to Him.

"He had the stride and freedom of a king—or shepherd. My impression of Him was that of a lion, a kingly, mustierful Man of the most sweet and generous disposition." (p. 29)

'Abdu'l-Bahá is a grand Man, broad, universal in thought, standing above the world and looking down upon it in its weakness and poverty with a boundless love and an intense longing to lift it up from its
wrestedness, to make it conscious of the rich bounties of God, which are so freely offered in this wonderful time..." (p. 54) "His own personality in the eyes of others is naught to Him, nor does He care for the personality of others. It is not love for the individual one, but the love of the Spirit for humanity." (p. 55)

"Abdu'l-Bahá had such an easy way of leading into a meaningful conversation. He would begin "with some simple reference to a natural thing, the weather, food, a stone, tree, water, the prison, a garden or a bird, our coming, or some little act of service, and this base would be woven into a parable and teaching of wisdom and simplicity, showing the oneness of all Spiritual Truth, and adapting it always to the life, both of the individual and of mankind. All of His words are directed toward helping men to live. Unless questions of metaphysics, dogmas and doctrines be introduced, He seldom mentions them. He speaks easily, clearly, in brief phrases, each of which is a gem." (pp. 33-34)

His every instruction was geared to help the living live. And His only wish was that the word and will of God sink deep into the heart of man and conquer it.

The miracle of 'Akka—a mighty Revelation emerging from prison walls over the face of the planet—must have astounded many a mortal. But to those who had become spiritually alive, there was less mystery—they were keyed in to the Lord of the universe and they understood. "... after a week, a day, or an hour, they return to their distant homes, all filled with love, most of their questions unasked and forgotten, curious no longer, but satisfied and overflowing with love to the human race and a great longing to bear the word of Revelation to their friends, and to serve every creature of God without regard to family, race or religion. The inexpressible happiness of the Spirit possesses each one of them, and he wants the whole world to have it." (p. 56)

Yes, Mr. Carl Scheffler, who was with Chase on pilgrimage, was right when he referred to the rugged, stone steps leading to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, saying, "Those are the steps up to heaven". (p. 48)

Love and Harmony in the Penal Fortress

A modest pilgrim to 'Akka, while 'Abdu'l-Bahá was yet a Prisoner in the penal fortress, recorded his visit in a few small pages and then signed this little gem simply "Roy".

What most impressed this early pilgrim was the spirit of sacrifice which he found among the Bahá'ís in the "Most Great Prison." He noted that "Nowhere have I witnessed such love, such perfect harmony. The desire of those in that prison is to serve one another." (Knock and It Shall Be Opened Unto You, Roy, p. 1.)

He was aware of the "bitter antagonism" which existed among the followers of different religious bodies. "For example, a Jew and a Muhammadan would refuse to sit at meat together: a Hindu to draw water from the

...
During his last meal with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, He "broke a quantity of bread into His bowl; then asking for the plates of the pilgrims He gave to each of us a portion. When the meal was finished, He said, 'I have given you to eat from My bowl—now distribute My Bread among the people.'" (p. 9)

The Gateway to Heaven
Ten Days in the Light of Akka records the early pilgrimage of Julia Grundy. Red anemones carpeted field and mountain, heralding the coming of spring.

She came to know the prison city of 'Akka, "home of exiles and prisoners of the Turkish Government. A few merchants and bazaars comprise its present meagre commerce although in former times It was an important market for Syrian products. It is the residence of a governor and various officials. The inhabitants generally are poor and wretched; evidences of poverty and squalor everywhere. Haifa has absorbed the business vitality of 'Akka. The city looks like a catacomb with the roof lifted up; heavy walls, a labyrinth of passages, narrow streets and dark alleys leading in every direction. But the spiritual atmosphere which surrounds us here is unmistakable and uplifting. Here in this unholy yet holy place we have been taught that the peace, power and knowledge of God can only be attained by severance from the things of earth and freedom from the influences of transitory surroundings. 'Akka is to us a gateway of Heaven." (p. 70)

Mightily impressed with the "holy history" of Mount Carmel, she was told that not only had Elijah and Jesus spent part of Their lives there, but that 'Abdu'l-Bahá loved this holy mountain of God and had at times stayed overnight in its caves—to pray and commune with God. Once He attempted to bring a message to the Carmelite Monastery, but He would not be heard. Dejected, He returned to 'Akka, "walking the whole distance of nine miles." (p. 6)

Spiritual knowledge and wisdom flowed from the lips of the blessed Master. How true it was, as she was told, that "The more you see of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the more you will realize the inexhaustible fount of knowledge within Him. He is the "Bazaar" of God, where everything humanity needs may be found without money and without price. In Him there is always something new to learn and possess; always some new thought in His words and explanations. What you receive from Him is measured by your capacity."" (p. 106)

Concerning the Second Coming of Christ, He said, "'In the Book of the Zend Avesta the Zoroastrians are awaiting the coming of two Manifestations. Also in the Old Testament Scriptures there is the promise of Elijah and Messiah. In the Gospel of the New Testament they are expecting the Father and the Second Coming of Christ. Likewise in the Qur’án the Muhammadans have the promise of the Imám Múchd and Christ. In brief all the Holy Scriptures announce the coming of two Manifestations and these two Manifestations are the Báb and the Blessed Perfection.'" (p. 61)

She heard the Master tell a little-known story. "The disciples of Jesus passing along the road and seeing a dead dog, remarked how offensive and disgusting a spectacle it was. The Christ turning to them said, "Yes, but see how white and beautiful are his teeth,"—thus teaching that there is something good in everything." (p. 109) So, too, He taught that one should always look for the good and not the bad.

Super-psychiatrist that He was, He taught that "We should not be occupied with our failings and weakness but concern ourselves about the will of God so that it may flow through us, thereby healing these human infirmities." (p. 11)

At one time the author asked the Master, "'What shall I say to those who state that they are satisfied with Christianity and do not need this present Manifestation?' His reply was clear: 'Let them alone. What would they do if a former king had reigned and a new king was now seated upon the throne? They must acknowledge the new king or they are not true subjects of the Kingdom. Last year there was a springtime. Can a man say "I do not need a new springtime this year,—the old springtime is enough for me?" No! The new spring must come to fill the earth with beauty and brightness.'" (p. 40)

She described a beautiful supper at which many friends were welcomed by the Master Himself. He passed out napkins, embraced and found places for each. All were individually anointed with attar of rose. He served pilau, a Persian rice dish, to each guest. There were also oranges and rice pudding. "Throughout the supper which was very simple in its character and appointment, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the Servant of the believers. This was indeed a spiritual feast where love reigned. The whole atmosphere was love, joy and peace." (p. 74)

One day He sent for her. His words were brimming with love and inspiration: "'I want you to carry away from 'Akka the joy and peace of the spiritual life.'" (p. 39) "'The true pleasure and happiness depend upon the spiritual perception and enjoyment. The powers of mind are the bounties of God given to man to lead him toward spiritual happiness. The highest grace in man is to love God. Love of God, knowledge of God is the greatest, the only real happiness, because it is nearness to God. This is the Kingdom of God. To love God is to know Him. To know Him is to enter His Kingdom and be near Him. This is what I desire for you,—that you may walk in this path.'" (p. 39)

(It must be understood that these accounts are "in the class of pilgrim's notes". The words attributed to the Master may not be completely authentic, but they catch His message and spirit. Regarded in this light, Shoghi Effendi permitted the use of "pilgrim's notes." This is not intended to be an exhaustive study.)

To be continued
Members of the first National Spiritual Assembly of the Malagasy Republic with Head of the Cause Dr. Muhájjir are: front row, left to right: Mr. Shayani Azizullah, Treasurer; Dr. Ratomahenina Vincent; Mrs. Razaka Razafimtbahangy; Miss Ravaomanana Georgette, Corresponding Secretary; Mr. Razaka Guy, Vice-Chairman. Back row: Mr. Moutou José, Recording Secretary; Mr. Rakotomalala Félix; Mr. Andriatovoson Salomon, Chairman; Mr. Rabemanantsoa.

Malagasy Republic—First Annual Convention

During Ridván, 1972, the historic first National Convention of the Bahá’ís of the Malagasy Republic was held. This is located to the east of Africa, the island of Madagascar. The photographs were taken in front of the national Hazíratu’l-Quds in Tananarive. The Universal House of Justice was represented by Head of the Cause Dr. Muhájjir. Among those attending were: Continental Counsellor S. Fatheezam; Auxiliary Board member Mr. R. Thandrayen; Mr. E. Lutchmaya representing the mother Assembly, that of the Indian Ocean; and the Mother—Pioneer of the Island, Mrs. M. Munsiff.
Rwanda Holds First National Convention and Election

The first National Convention of Rwanda was held on April 27 and 28, 1972, with Hand of the Cause of God Dr. A. Mühlschlegel representing The Universal House of Justice. Present were the delegates, Auxiliary Board member Mr. Mutabazi and Mr. Gamal Rushdy, representing the mother Assembly of Burundi. For two days before the Convention, delegates attended a teaching conference in which they were deepened in preparation for the National Convention.

At Ridván, 1972, there were sixteen Assemblies and seventy-five localities where Baha'is reside in Rwanda.

Early pioneers to this country were Mr. and Mrs. Collison who were named Knights of Bahá'u'lláh by the beloved Guardian. The Collisons went to Uganda in 1952 and the next year to Rwanda-Burundi but were forced by the Belgian government to leave in 1955. In 1966, Dr. and Mrs. Ta'eed of Iran arrived, and are now members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Also in 1966 Jackton Kayemba of Kenya came to Rwanda but returned to Kenya in 1971.

Systematic efforts are made to deepen in the Faith. A childrens' class, for both Baha'is and non-Baha'is was started in August. It has ninety students from the ages of five through fourteen. Some of the children assist in teaching and are enthusiastic in learning prayers as well as the principles and history of the Faith. They have also interested many parents.

Class for children, both Baha'i and non-Baha'i, held at the Baha'i Center in Kigali, Rwanda, taken on August 7, 1972. Mrs. Ta'eed is giving lessons in French and Mr. Semanyenzi is translating into the vernacular, Kinyarwanda.
FRANCE—AMERICA: HAND IN HAND

"The stage is set. The hour propitious. The signal is sounded. Bahá'u'lláh's spiritual battalions are moving into position".

These words, written by the beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi on June 5th, 1947, referring to the commencement of an epoch “inaugurating the systematic conquest of the European continent by the organized body of the 'apostles of Bahá'u'lláh' ” could not have been more appropriate than for June 29th, 1972, twenty-five years later.

Thirteen young Americans had just arrived in Paris. Tired and rumpled after the long plane ride from New York but filled with the love of Bahá'u'lláh, they were determined to raise His call in all of France. I found them at the Bahá’í Center in Paris, surrounded by guitars, sleeping bags, and mounds of luggage. The large room was filled to capacity, overflowing with the French friends who had turned out in force. I entered the room very quietly, for all were deep in prayer. After months of planning and preparation in the United States and France, Operation "Mains dans la Mains: Europe-Amerique" was about to begin.

From the outset, the French and Americans joined hands and never let go, working side by side, tirelessly singing, walking and talking . . . bringing Bahá'u'lláh’s healing Message to all who cared to listen. Our awesome task was to bring in new believers, deepen them, help win the goals of the Nine Year Plan, and as much as possible, make all of France generally aware of “La Foi Bahá’íe”.

The immediate aims were to reach the gypsies outside Paris in the north, the villagers near Toulouse in the southwest, strengthen the communities of Metz, Lyon and Toulouse by adding to their numbers, and to bring Local Spiritual Assemblies into being in Strasbourg and in Bastia on the Island of Corsica. The Americans were assigned to specific teams for the duration of the campaign, while the French team members came and went. Two teams had orders to stay in one locality during July, moving on to another goal in August. The other two teams spent the entire campaign in Strasbourg and Bastia, Corsica, the two most important goals in France.

The French friends had prepared for us with open hearts and pocketbooks. Their often expressed gratitude would have been embarrassing in other circumstances, but we knew their desire was the same as ours, to give all we had to guarantee the success of this mission. There was never a time that the French and Americans were not united in purpose, proving ‘Abdu'l-Bahá’s repeated promises that only through unity, love and fellowship, will we know success.

During the last days of the Americans' participation
in France's efforts, these victories were assured. Prior to the commencement of the “Hand in Hand: Europe-America” effort, there were 450 Baha'i's registered in France. On August 22, the teams had a total of 150 declarations, 128 for France and 22 for neighboring countries. The goal Local Spiritual Assemblies were assured, and the French community was forging ahead with its scheduled follow-up plans.

Can one find words to describe the awakening of a soul? How many times we heard “Bien sur, bien sur” (of course, of course) as we told the Message of Bahá'u'lláh! The locked doors and silence of the lovely old church in the tiny village of La Gardelle bore witness to the fact that the priest was no longer there. Four years ago he left to get married. The Lady Mayor welcomed the Bahá'ís with the comment, “The youth need something.”

We wandered in the village, inviting the people to our evening program and the young people, with nothing to do on a hot summer's afternoon, walked with us. Asking questions, they stayed near us all day. That night the “New Garden” road show performed. We showed slides; we told them why we were there, and we had fifteen declarations! The youth had brought their parents with them, and the ages of the new Bahá'ís ranged from 12 years to 38. One woman immediately offered her home for future Bahá'í meetings. The later reports received at the National Center in Paris were filled with confirmations of the strength of these new believers and the continued expansion of the Faith in the area.

Corsica, the Island of Napoleon's birth, the island of tourists and mountains, surrounded by an incredibly blue sea, is inhabited by independent strong men and beautiful women. Mentioned specifically by Shoghi Effendi and ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, Corsica had more than forty-nine declarations. The two newspapers wrote regularly of the Bahá'ís and their activities in the “Salle de Boxe” (our Bahá'í Center was the local boxing ring). Some of the articles were sarcastic and derogatory, but even those quoted the Teachings accurately!

At Padua, attending the Conference are, left to right: Jene Bellows, Mrs. Fatheazam, Hand of the Cause Mr. Faizi, European Project Coordinator Mrs. Lea Nys, Mrs. Claire Honigman, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of France.

Brutally ravished by wars of centuries, injured, hardened, embittered, and tradition bound, Europe is not an easy place to teach. In general, the older people were the most difficult. The young girls are sheltered and bound by a double standard of behavior, and seem not particularly interested in “serious” things. But the young men! How they are searching! Their hatred of war has been made evident on buildings and walls. They were hot to argue politics, and required time and patience as we redefined the issues.

But there are gems deep in the heart of Europe, waiting to be mined. We told it “like it is,” as we have done in the South of the United States. We told and told, and we found the waiting souls were the oppressed people, summer university students from former French colonies, workers and the villagers. How eagerly Bahá'u'lláh's Message was received! How the new believers devoured the books! And they asked questions, and taught, and brought their friends, and answered questions, and were impatient with us, because we didn't tell more people.

On every side there were victories and confirmations. We had many tests, but why try to remember them? As I look back on the events of this summer, mental pictures flash one on top of another. I can feel again the grasp of hands, and the French greeting of a kiss on both cheeks. I see smiles and light-filled eyes. I remember heart-bursting moments of pure happiness that washed away physical exhaustion. Once again I'm with the young team members, American and European, as they drove themselves day and night tirelessly, patiently, lovingly teaching the Faith. Bogged down by language and cultural differences, they nevertheless emerged as mature Bahá'ís, a working unit through prayers, consultation, crazy jokes and total commitment.

I also see my gift from the Bahá'ís of France. A picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá standing in front of the Eiffel Tower faces me across my desk. The Master loved France, and surely helped us to win the goals. Didn't Shoghi Effendi, the Sign of God on earth, assure us with these words, “The Author of the Plan that has set so titanic an enterprise in motion is Himself mounted at the head of these battalions, and leads them to capture the cities of men's hearts.”?

There is no conclusion to this story. For it is just the beginning. Certainly France will never be the same . . . nor will we.

—Jene Bellows

FLASH: New declarations in France as of September, 138 in France, 79 in Corsica; total 217 declarations!
National Conference in
Oruro, Bolivia

More than three hundred friends from all parts of Bolivia attended the National Baha'i Conference held in Oruro, Bolivia on August 11-13, 1972, under the auspices of the South American Board of Counsellors.

Before the opening of the Conference the new Baha'i National Institute in Oruro was inaugurated, fulfilling a long-cherished supplementary goal.

Three languages were used during the program of deepening, stimulating the friends to go out and gain victories for the Faith during this last blessed year of the Nine Year Plan. Emphasis was placed on teaching activities in Bolivia.

At the same time as the Conference there were public and radio talks; also an exhibition was held in the local Municipal Library which attracted about 2,000 people, including many of the university students.

Groups of friends from various parts of the country had prepared dances and music typical of their regions. Among these dances, rarely seen, was one performed by a group of Cochabamba campesinos, called the “Sikuris.” Entering with large disks resembling Japanese parasols, made of reeds tipped with a variety of bright colored feathers placed on their heads, the friends sway back and forth giving the impression of an improvised shelter under which small groups dance in circles clockwise and counter-clockwise to the accompaniment of plaintive flute music and a strong booming drum-beat. This dance attracted many of the people of the city and it seemed to join them all in the happiness of the occasion.

The Conference resulted in a new sense of dedication for the Baha'is. Afterwards, a follow-up teaching project continued for fifteen days in the city. This attracted people to the new Institute for deepening and also to see the exhibition, transferred to the Institute.
Group inside the new Oruro Bahá'í National Institute on August 28, 1972 showing Bahá'ís and some of the 120 new believers who came in during the fifteen-day follow-up teaching project.

Wilmette Pioneer Training Institute—September 7-10, 1972

This was the largest of the series of Pioneer Training Institutes hosted in Wilmette. Invitations were sent to over fifty volunteers who are ready to leave for a pioneering post before December.
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Ruḥiyīyh Khānum
By Violette Nakhjavānī, Companion
Part ten

Almost two years after the “Rahbani African Safari” had crossed from Uganda into Congo Kinshasa, as it was then called, and more than a thousand miles had been traversed through that country and through the Central African Republic, Chad and Niger, now we two, with the Land Rover were set ashore at the port of Matadi, again in Congo Kinshasa, but now the country had a new name, Zaire, both more descriptive and beautiful.

We arrived on December 12, 1971, and as the boat was approaching the dock we could see a small group of friends holding up a large poster of welcome. The Baha’is who had come to meet us included the only Baha’i of Matadi and three Baha’is of Kinshasa who had waited for us two days, uncertain of the time our cargo boat was expected to arrive. The little band eagerly looked for the face of their beloved Hand of the Cause, Ruḥiyīyh Khānum.

Through the help of the Matadi Baha’i who happened to be working in the Customs office, we were able to get the car and ourselves cleared within a short time. Then began the overland journey of 2,500 miles which took us across the country from west to south-east in a period of seven weeks, visiting Bahá’ís in twenty-six centers. Amatu’l-Bahá addressed almost 3,000 Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís during this period in over thirty-eight meetings, representing over eighty localities. Some of the friends walked over fifty kilometers to meet Amatu’l-Bahá, such was their enthusiasm, and many of these were mothers each with a baby tied to her back.

The Kinshasa community, containing many young people, had the privilege and joy of meeting with Ruḥiyīyh Khānum and listening to her words of love and wisdom at a day-long conference where over forty-five Bahá’ís had gathered from different localities in this immense city. Amatu’l-Bahá spoke at length about the beloved Guardian’s trip to their country in 1940 during World War II, when they had traversed it from south to north. She recalled that this particular African country had always attracted him and visiting it had made him happy.

The questions the friends asked both in cities and villages revealed the depth of their knowledge of the Teachings and their deep love for the Faith. For example, in this Kinshasa conference one of the friends asked: “What is the meaning of the Sun Bahá’has set?” He was referring to the cable ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had sent to the Baha’ís after the Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh. Ruḥiyīyh Khānum explained: “This refers to the Sun of the physical existence of Bahá’u’lláh on this earth and not to the Sun of His Dispensation, as that Sun will shine for at least a thousand years.”

At the end of our ten-day stay in Kinshasa, once again Ruḥiyīyh Khānum met with the Bahá’ís in the home of one of the pioneers where over fifty believers were present. She strongly emphasized the duty of the friends to go out and teach as well as to participate in the activities of their community, especially since they had just received permission to hold meetings in the Province of Kinshasa.

Bahá’ís of Kinshasa, Zaire, meeting with Ruḥiyīyh Khānum
During Rúhíyyih Khánum's stay in the capital she was received by the Minister of Information. Unfortunately, the President was touring the Provinces during the entire period of her visit so it was impossible for her to meet him, but the interview with the Minister of Information unlocked the doors of publicity. Now, for the first time, the Faith was openly and widely proclaimed in the press as well as on television and radio.

Because of past events, Zaire is necessarily vigilant; without approval from high officials of the government, the publicity which Rúhíyyih Khánum received would have been impossible.

The Minister was an extremely polished and charming gentleman and received Amatu’l-Bahá, Dr. Navidi and myself with great courtesy. Amatu’l-Bahá told him of our long journey by Land Rover, pointing out that this was the greatest compliment two women could pay to Africa and its people. She also voiced some of her ideas on the spiritual destiny of Africa. He was visibly impressed and said that he himself would arrange for a press conference. He also presented each of us with a beautiful set of voice records of some of the most important public speeches of President Mobutu.

The press conference the Minister arranged was attended by over forty people and the words of Rúhíyyih Khánum were recorded for both national radio and television programs. A number of favorable newspaper and magazine articles were published, not only in the capital but also in the larger newspapers of some of the Provinces.

In a teachers' training college in Ngiri Ngiri, Amatu’l-Bahá spoke to over 450 students and teachers on the much appreciated subject “The Spiritual Destiny of Africa.” Two young men reporters for the school magazine had a long and interesting interview with Rúhíyyih Khánum and were keenly interested in the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

In Kasai

The Kasai, in the central Provinces of Zaire, is a very strictly controlled area as the country's diamond mines are located there and, although travelers do receive permits to visit, usually it takes at least six weeks for the permits to be issued. Because of this prospect of delay Rúhíyyih Khánum turned to the American Embassy for assistance. The Ambassador himself received her and gave instructions that a permit for both of us should be applied for on an urgent basis. This brought good results.

Port Francqui Bahá'ís with Rúhíyyih Khánum

Within a week we were able to load the Land Rover once more on a boat, this time a barge of a river steamer going up the Zaire river, formerly called the Congo. It branched off into the Kasai river.

We eventually disembarked at Port Francqui in Kasai. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Ola Pawlowska, a pioneer in Zaire for ten years, accompanied us on this trip from Kinshasa to Lubumbashi, which was the end of Amatu’l-Bahá’s tour of that country. Mrs. Pawlowska had lived in Luluabourg for four years, and greatly assisted the development of the Faith in both Western and Eastern Kasai. She knew every place there and most of the believers. Without her help and the help of our dear Congolese Auxiliary Board member Sylvain Ngindu, who for three weeks acted as translator for Amatu’l-Bahá, such a satisfying and successful trip as we had would have been impossible.

**Eight Days on a Barge**

At sunset on December 22, the pioneers and many of the Zaire believers waved goodbye to us as we started on our eight-day voyage up the great internal waterway of this country, one of the largest waterways in all of Africa. As one leaves Kinshasa the river spreads out into what appears to be an immense lake. We proceeded up a very swift current appearing, undoubtedly, as a traveling island. Our boat pushed a cargo barge before it and pulled three barges attached to its right side. In the front barge was the Land Rover—we ardently hoped. The three other barges were for passengers, second class down to fourth class. Our own boat was for first class. Hundreds of passengers filled every available space. The lower decks of these barges served as market, restaurant and bar. A loud-speaker blared music from the beer bar all day and most of the night. Many women on the barges conducted successful businesses feeding the passengers and selling all kinds of merchandise. At every port along the route where we stopped, people would come on board to shop at our floating market. An exciting sight was the way men and sometimes women in dugout canoes would approach in the swift river current to reach the side of our barge, board it, attach their canoes and sell fresh fish, food, vegetables and fruit to the passengers. At one time I counted over twenty canoes tied up to the side.

In a small village, where our boat stopped for an hour or so, among the traders who boarded to sell their woven mats were two Bahá'ís who recognized Mrs. Pawlowska and excitedly rushed to her. They were so happy to be introduced to Rúhíyyih Khánum. We were delighted to see that they quickly sold their beautiful handwork to the passengers. It was our good fortune to meet one of these men holding a Bahá'í pamphlet in the local language of Tshiluba and showing it to everyone he knew, bringing them to us to shake hands and tell his friends that our party also belonged to the Faith written about in the pamphlet. The devotion and enthusiasm of the Congolese believers is truly unique and a joy to see.

At the end of this happy week's journey, we disembarked at Port Francqui, reclaimed the Land Rover safely and started to drive to town when we noticed...
On the Kasai river barge Rūḥiyih Khánum is with Bahá‘í heroine on board to sell their mats. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Ota Pawłoworka is to her right.

thick, smelly smoke coming from the engine. We quickly opened the hood and discovered to our horror that rats had built a large nest on top of the engine out of rags, cotton waste, wood shavings, leaves, paper and other odd objects. The heat of the engine had set these on fire and had we not noticed it immediately and put it out, this could have been very dangerous indeed.

At Port Francqui

Rūḥiyih Khánum paid a courtesy visit to the District Officer. In the course of their conversation she assured him that a cardinal principle of the Faith is loyalty of Bahá‘í’s to their government. He asked her: “Why is it that with all these wonderful teachings of love and brotherhood all the religions of the world propagate, the people of the world are in such a state of disunity, inharmony and strife?” Amatu’l-Bahá told him that Shoghi Effendi used to say if you want to forge several iron rods into one piece you have to place them in the fire; not until they become red hot can they be forged into one solid piece. Humanity is in much the same state. Men have refused to respond to the call of Bahá‘u’lláh to unite and promote world peace. Their hearts are cold and hard; therefore it would seem the suffering of some kind of fiery ordeal can alone weld us into a world of peace and brotherhood. She explained how in every age, when the Manifestation of God appears, He offers mankind two roads, the straight and easy one of accepting Him and His call and the long and hard road of suffering which ultimately brings man down to his knees. We are now witnessing the consequences of man’s rejection of the call of Bahá‘u’lláh in this day. The District Officer was quite impressed by these words.

During the two days we stayed in Port Francqui we met with Bahá‘ís twice. On the first day several Bahá‘ís came to the hotel to visit with us. On the second day a nice meeting was held in the home of one of the friends where over twenty people gathered, more than half of them Bahá‘ís, and the rest eagerly listening and asking questions. At the end of this meeting one young man accepted the Faith.

Bahá‘ís of Zaire are well versed in the Teachings and have the keenest appreciation of Bahá‘í literature. All through the country the loudest cry was for more literature, especially the Words of Bahá‘u’lláh. Next came the demand for more pioneers, not only to settle among them but also to travel and visit.

Questions and Answers

The deep questions asked were an indication of their understanding. One asked: “If a man is sick during the Fast period and unable to keep it, can he fast some other nineteen days after the Fast period is over?” Rūḥiyih Khánum said that the Bahá‘ís month set aside by Bahá‘u’lláh for the purpose of fasting is clearly defined, but in the Writings we are left free to fast any time we choose but this, however, does not replace the Fast ordained by God in this day.

Another asked: “What is the wisdom and meaning of the genuflections in the long obligatory prayer?” Amatu’l-Bahá replied that in the first place Bahá‘u’lláh has given us the choice of three prayers and if we do not feel inclined to go through these movements we can always choose the short obligatory prayer. Then she said: “In your own way you have special ways of approaching a great chief or king. You prostrate yourself or kneel down or in some form to show your submission, your humility and utter nothingness in front of the great figure of the chief or king. It is in this same spirit that we approach Almighty God in these prayers. The genuflections are a symbol of our submission. The desire to follow the laws and ordinances of Bahá‘u’lláh is so deep and beautiful in the Congolese that we often marveled at them.

Although in Zaire as in the rest of Africa—indeed, like most of the world, drinking is a deeply rooted evil and widespread, in all these weeks we traveled in that country, neither in towns nor in villages did we ever come across a Bahá‘í who showed evidence of drinking, or smelling of alcohol. Not only do the Bahá‘ís of Zaire follow this important law of Bahá‘u’lláh regarding not using alcoholic beverages but the Congolese go even further. Many of them even abstain from any form of trade which involves liquor.

Palm wine is made in many parts of Africa from a special variety of palm from which the sap is tapped. This is usually a way the women earn a little extra money for their family, and some families have inherited and held special plantations for this purpose. We came across in several villages, Bahá‘ís who without any advice from the outside, on their own accord had decided that if Bahá‘u’lláh forbade drinking then it must be very harmful indeed for mankind and they would have nothing to do with earning money from such a harmful business.

In one village Bahá‘ís women consulted their husbands and decided to give up wine-making and replace their only means of making a livelihood by having a small stall in front of their huts and selling items such as soap, matches and needles, and so on. Their men-talk agreed to supplement the income by making charcoal and selling it at the market. Their business flourished so well that they decided part of their gain should go to the Bahá‘í Fund!

Another distinction of the Congolese believers was the fact that often men, women and children, in towns as well as villages know prayers of Bahá‘u’lláh. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the Bab by heart. Both Bahá‘u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá repeatedly urged the believers to commit to memory the prayers and Writings, a teaching far too often overlooked and neglected by the Bahá‘ís everywhere.

On December 30, 1971 we said goodbye to the dear Bahá‘ís of Port Francqui and started our long, arduous but wonderful overland trip across the south-east part of Zaire. By the end of this journey we came to the
Meeting at Mweke. The man next to Ruhiyyih Khánúm is the first believer of Kasai.

Conclusion that no matter how ghastly some of the roads were in Cameroon and Nigeria, Zaire still holds top place for the worst roads ever!

In Zaire when traveling in the interior, if the Bahá'ís have no accommodations to offer you, then the only choice is to stay at the Missions where generally guest houses are available. In the town of Mweke we spent two nights in the Catholic Mission and ate our meals with the Bishop of this district and eight ordained priests, all Belgians.

After lunch on New Year's day an interesting conversation took place between Ruhiyyih Khanum and the Bishop. Amatu'l-Bahá asked the Bishop to explain to her how the Catholic Church in this age of scientific facts and modern knowledge understands and interprets such Biblical stories as the creation of Adam and Eve and the world in six days and so on. In brief he said that the way he understands it and the Catholic Church explains it is this: “Two men may approach the sea; one is a poet and the other a scientist; the poet describes the sea as he sees it, its beauty, color, the sound of its waves, the glow of the sun on the water, and so on. The scientist does not see it in these terms but rather in those of evaluating its components, its evolutionary history, etc.” It was an extremely subtle answer and Ruhiyyih Khanum enjoyed it very much and used the example herself on more than one occasion.

We had a very pleasant meeting with the three Mweke Bahá'ís and several of their friends and neighbors. The first Bahá'í of Kasai lives in that town and is proud of the fact that as early as 1956 he was the first to respond to the call of Bahá'u'lláh. In this meeting Ruhiyyih Khánúm spoke a great deal on the power of prayers to attract more souls to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

(To be continued)

Whole Villages Become Bahá'ís

The August 1972 issue of the bulletin Bahá'í International News Service relates several instances of whole villages or a large proportion of them becoming believers in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Counsellor Yan Kee Leong, after recent travels, reported that in visiting the Hoi Poi District in Laos he met some of the 1,800 believers who begged that an English-speaking Bahá'í might settle there and teach their children."

Accompanied by a devoted pioneer, he then visited the village of Nam Buel, where five different tribes reside. One of these, the Laothum, are the original people of Laos, now considered by non-Báhá'ís as a low class of people. The Counsellor and the believer who accompanied him spent the night in the home of the Chief of this tribe and all of the members of the tribe in this village accepted the Faith. The pioneer promised to return and deepen the new believers.

In Thailand Mr. Yan Kee Leong had visited a village two years ago, and then one-half the village became Bahá'í. During a recent visit, when all the residents were at home, the entire village became Bahá'í after hearing an inspiring talk by Mr. Leong.

In Colombia, two believers traveled to Santa Lucia for a five-day visit where they were joined by the resident Bahá'ís in a campaign which resulted in the enrollment of 434 new believers, with one-tenth of the entire villagers now Bahá'ís.

In the Dominican Republic, the village of Corral de los Indios has only four adults who are not now believers in Bahá'u'lláh.
On July 8-13, 1972 Bahá’ís from all over Alaska gathered under sunny skies in Juneau for the fifteenth Alaska Bahá’í Summer School held in the Little Theatre Building. Some fifty friends and families attended.

Vinson Brown, naturalist, publisher and author from Healdsburg, California, presented classes on Indian Prophecies.

Dr. Jalil Mahmoudi, associate professor of sociology and languages at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, gave lectures on the subject of Islam.

Later each day, Dr. Mahmoudi spoke upon “The Bahá’í Family.”

National Spiritual Assembly Member, Mrs. Georgia Haisler, elucidated “Bahá’í Morality,” using consultative workshops among the students. Doing the right thing for the right reason, and moral rectitude mark Bahá’ís as “different.”

Robin Fowler, National Spiritual Assembly member, commenced each morning’s studies with an in-depth penetration of the Administrative Order, its nonautocratic nature and beauty as a channel for the flow of the Spirit of the Faith.

The first day of classes included a noon-day observance for the Martyrdom of the Báb, and that evening Mrs. Gene Dorman gave a dramatic presentation of His life story.

Two evenings were spent concerning the Massive Encounter teaching program. The second evening featured many beautiful and humorous stories by the friends who were on the teaching teams.

One session was devoted to a review of the book, Memorials of the Faithful, stories of 70 individuals which were related by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1915, and which has been newly translated and published. Tom Haisler gave the review.

The presentation of The Proclamation of Bahá’u’lláh was made to Lt. Governor, the Honorable H. A. Boucher, who welcomed the Bahá’ís very graciously.

A public meeting was held July 12 and moderated by Bob Milton which centered around the Central Figures of the Bahá’í Faith.

The Feast of Kalimat (Words) closed the Summer School’s official activities.
New Baha'i community of fifty Quechua men at Patacancha in the Department of Cuzco, Peru. This village was opened just after the Panama Conference. John Kepner, pioneer, is kneeling in the foreground. Standing, to his immediate right with a big smile on his face is Anselmo Herrera, of Quechua background, from Bolivia. Facundo Cardoso, Quechua from Bolivia is not located—possibly he took this picture. To the left of John, the man with the book is the Chief of the village who also became a Baha'i. Directly in front of John are the Chief's coins and conch shells.

New Quechua Believers in Peru

In May, just after the Dedication of the Panama House of Worship and the Panama Conference, two Bolivian Quechua Indian teachers, Facundo Cardosa and Anselmo Herrera accompanied by John Kepner, came to Peru on a teaching trip before returning to Bolivia. They were sent to make teaching trips into the Andean Quechua villages in the valleys of Cuzco. The first trip was made to a village called Patacancha which lies in a steep Andean valley about a half-day walk from the nearest country road. A letter from American pioneer John Kepner tells the following story of this exciting teaching trip:

"In these remote Indian villages of Cuzco only Quechua, the native language of the Incas, is spoken. We had no problem because both of the Bolivian teachers also speak the same language, being of the same noble background from Bolivia. The Quechuas of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador are all descendents of the Incas and speak the same tongue.

"When we arrived at the village all the men, some fifty, were at work together building an humble rock school house for their children. We approached and began to help them with the piling of stones one on top of another. We asked them if they could all take a short break to listen to a new Message from God. They all agreed and so they stopped working, put on their hats and colorful ponchos and all sat down in a large semi-circle and were prepared to listen.

"Before commencing any village meeting it is the custom to announce the meeting by sounding what is called a 'potutu', large conch shell used to make a deep fog-horn sound which is heard echoing through the deep Andean valleys and announces to the rest of the villages that a meeting is to be held. The 'potutus' were sounded by the two chiefs of the village and the meeting began.

"We spoke to them in Quechua of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, the new age, the unity of all peoples of the world and that Bahá'u'lláh's coming is a fulfillment of their own prophecies concerning the unity of all tribes of the earth in one universal Cause of God for all peoples of the world. We spoke to them of the great spiritual destiny of the Indian people. This continued for two hours.

"After the presentation a few questions were asked. One was: 'How do we know that what you have spoken to us about is the Truth and not just another trick like those of the Spaniards?' Immediately Anselmo replied because it had been the same question he had asked when the Message was presented to him several years ago. The questioner was completely convinced and was the first of the group to become a Baha'i and give his name.

"Fifty men of the Quechua community of Patacancha all accepted the Faith and declared themselves Baha'is. A great victory was won for The Blessed Beauty. Now we have hope that when we return there will be great enthusiasm and, God willing, all their wives will be Baha'is."

MALAWI

A property has been acquired for the headquarters of the Faith in Malawi. It is on Mpingwe Road, Limbe, Blantyre. It is used for weekly meetings and by travel-teachers who come for deepening and instructions before going out for their teaching trips.

Malawi Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assemblies</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>(Increase of 10 new Assemblies during year)</th>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Locations where Baha'is live</th>
<th>Achieved</th>
<th>(Increase of 71 localities where Baha'i live during year)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>212</td>
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New believers during year—473

—MALAWI BAHÁ’I NEWS, No. 5
Bahá’ís Play Active Role in Universal Esperanto Congress

“Eighty Years of Striving for Peace and Harmony Among Mankind.” Some of the Bahá’ís went to that meeting. Our youth delegate, Nick Athan, made friends quickly, and was able to create among them an interest in the Bahá’í Faith and to follow it up during the week. He worked ceaselessly and tirelessly, as he is also a member of the World Esperanto Youth Organization.

Wednesday morning, August 2, four of us attended the Ecumenical meeting. Their theme was: “Interfaith Co-operation.” The Chairman was Father Klimowicz of New Jersey. After a Protestant minister from The Netherlands and another Catholic priest had given their talks, they called on others present to speak, and the first one they called was Bahá’í. I told them of His prophecy that the religions would unite, wished them success in their endeavors, and offered any assistance they could use.

That same afternoon Oomoto held its annual Inter-religious Meeting. Before the Congress the Bahá’ís had received an invitation to participate, from their headquarters in Japan. In making the arrangements, we received permission to distribute Bahá’í literature at the door of the meeting hall. Their theme this year was: “Religion and Youth—How Religion Guides Young Generations.” Each speaker was given seven minutes to present his paper. Since the subject was about youth, Nick Athan was asked to prepare and present a paper. He did a beautiful piece of work, emphasizing in his talk the youthfulness of Bahá’u’lláh and the Báb and Their followers. It made a deep impression on everyone.

As a result of this meeting we were asked to make Bahá’í literature available, and with the permission of Mr. Michael Nevan, the Congress Secretary, we were able to place posters and literature in the Esperanto Information Service Department. We were the only religious group with this privilege. We also donated several pamphlets to the Esperanto Book Service.

Postcongress

The Postcongress was held the following week at the San Francisco State College and under their auspices. It was a cultural program, presenting the contributions to American culture by four ethnic groups—Indian, Negro, Mexican, and Oriental. I had been asked by the Postcongress Committee to organize an all-Indian program for Tuesday, August 8.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs in Gallup gave permission for ten members of the well-known Indian Dance Club of the Fort Wingate High School and two teachers...
Ambrose Yazzie, Chief of the Navajo Dance Club at the ethnic programs in San Francisco Postcongress.

to travel to San Francisco for this purpose. The young Navajos presented a beautiful and colorful program, all the more beautiful because it was conducted entirely in Esperanto, without the need for an interpreter. All the other programs needed interpreters, except for the young Japanese and Chinese. At this program we were able to announce that they would present dances at the San Francisco Bahá’í Center the following evening, Wednesday, August 9.

As usual, many other affairs were going on at the same time; however, three Esperantists came, a gentleman from Texas and two ladies from France, who couldn’t speak a word of English. After the dances, Mr. Stone and I told some of our experiences with the Faith on the Navajo Reservation. Some literature was distributed.

The San Francisco Assembly should be commended for its initiative in taking advantage of every opportunity to proclaim the Name of Bahá’u’lláh, and for the cooperation and courtesy they showed at this time.

The Navajo Dancers presented a program at the San Francisco Indian Center on the following evening, and also appeared on TV. They went home exhausted, but happy and successful.

As a result of their fine performance, the Fort Wingate Dance Team has been invited to the fifty-eighth Universal Esperanto Congress to be held in Belgrade, Jugoslavia.

—Roan Orloff Stone

Bahá’u’lláh Proclaimed as Fifth Buddha in Laos

A new spirit has been generated in Laos. The masses are recognizing Bahá’u’lláh. A new way of life has opened up to the people of this country!

Since Rjván 1972, the Bahá’í Message has reached more than 20,000 people all over Laos. The number of localities where Bahá’ís reside in the Capital Province of Vientiane alone has reached 133 and the number of believers has tripled, from 5,000 to 15,000 all from the Buddhist background.

Everywhere people warmly accept Bahá’u’lláh as the coming of the Fifth Buddha, Maitriya, for Whom they have been waiting.

August 19, 1972 was an unforgettable day when four Bahá’ís set off on an eight-day teaching trip. Two local teachers, a new pioneer just arrived from Malaysia and Auxiliary Board member Fereidoun Missaghian started on this rainy day of monsoon to go to Buddhist refugee villages. They went by taxi, by truck and then on foot, past the rice paddies and villages, one after another and held large and small teaching gatherings, day and night. They visited six major refugee villages, each combined of a number of smaller villages scattered about within a mile or two in the forest. There is no way to estimate how many attended the gatherings but most...
ARGENTINE SUMMER SCHOOL

In February 1972 a successful international summer school was held in the small town of Rosario del Tala, Province of Entre Ríos. Counsellor Hooper Dunbar was present with Auxiliary Board members Mrs. Maralynn Dunbar of Argentina; Mr. Manucher Shoai from Bolivia; Mr. Ramón Moreira from Uruguay; as well as pioneers and friends from Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and many representatives of tribes from all over the country. Total attendance was about 250. The classes were inspiring.

The Mayor of Rosario del Tala, Mr. Solimano, was helpful in suggesting a location for the school when the committee visited him and explained something about the Faith and the purpose of the school. Not only was a beautiful place for the classes located just outside of town, but for sleeping quarters Mr. Solimano also put the committee in touch with a Ladies' Society which had recently finished a building destined for an Old Age Home, and at a reasonable price. The Army loaned a hundred cots and mattresses, and a bus was hired for transportation to and from quarters to classes.

A curfew was in force which Mr. Solimano thought might cause problems for those coming into the country, but told the friends that if they had any difficulties to call on him. As intimated, some fifteen friends from Uruguay were held up at the border and not permitted to enter the country. They wired the School, which reached Mr. Solimano, who telephoned immediately and cleared up this matter so the friends could attend the school.

The Mayor and his family were invited to luncheon with the Baha'is and on this occasion he was presented with the volume The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah. He was the first Mayor in this country to receive this important book. On other occasions the director of the local newspaper and the head of the Park Commission were also invited to a luncheon. Two public talks were given in the town, one particularly directed to youth.

The Summer School showed forth a wonderful spirit and was an example of unity in diversity with the various tribal and people of several national backgrounds living together as one family.

Bahá’í Representation in UN Regional Conference, Buenos Aires

Because of holding the Regional Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations affiliated with the United Nations in Buenos Aires in August, the Baha'is had the privilege and pleasure of receiving Dr. Victor de Araujo, representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the UN, along with other delegates: Mrs. Molly Landiver, of Bolivia; Mrs. Nilza Taets, from Brazil; Dr. Alejandro Reid, from Chile; Mr. Mario Martinez, from Paraguay; Mr. Leopoldo Caravallo, from Uruguay. The Argentine delegate was Mr. Carlos Talenti.

The Proclamation Committee of Argentina transferred its activities to the Capital to take advantage of this occasion to have a proclamation in Buenos Aires.

Dr. de Araujo arrived on Sunday, August 20, at noon. He was met at the airport by a group of about thirty Bahá'ís. In the afternoon he was received in a special meeting of the National Spiritual Assembly. In the evening the Counsellors, represented by Mr. Hooper Dunbar, held a reception in honor of Dr. de Araujo in the National Headquarters attended by about fifty friends from Buenos Aires and points near-by. On this occasion Dr. de Araujo told of the Bahá'í representation at the UN, explaining that he had been appointed by the Universal House of Justice as representative of the Bahá'í International Community, which is composed of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the world. Bahá'í delegates also spoke.

Monday night a press conference was held for Dr. de Araujo in a downtown hotel to which reporters from all the news services in the Capital were invited. This resulted in some short articles in the newspapers.

After the press conference a youth meeting was held at the National Headquarters, presided over by Counsellor Hooper Dunbar and attended by about twenty-five young people, many non-Baha'is.

During the week of the UN Conference, interviews with the Mayor of Buenos Aires and with a high official of the Ministry of Foreign Relations were held, and a copy of The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah was presented.

A public meeting was held on Tuesday night at the local Bahá'í headquarters, consisting of a panel of the delegates from Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. A reporter from La Razón came on this occasion to interview Dr. de Araujo and two National Spiritual Assembly members.

A television station in Buenos Aires featured an interview with Mr. Hooper Dunbar. Books were presented to the main library of the city.

Tonga and Cook Islands

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Tonga and Cook Islands with Hand of the Cause John Roberts.
NEW TEACHING AND DEEPENING MATERIALS

Two new particularly significant items which may be used to enhance one's personal teaching efforts and surroundings are now available. One is a sequel to last year's handsome Baha'i Victory Calendar Diary; the other a unique set of "illuminated" or decorated quotations of Baha'u'llah.

The Baha'i Unity Calendar Diary for B.E. 130, compiled and edited by the Audio-Visual Department at the World Centre, is an attractive, educational and unusually helpful desk calendar. Each 19-day Baha'i month is on a separate page beginning with Naw-Ruz, B.E. 130 (21 March 1973). The days in the Gregorian calendar are clearly related to those in the Baha'i month. The calendar serves as a convenient reminder of Baha'i Holy Days and Feast Days and helps in becoming acquainted with and learning the Baha'i calendar system. Each of the 23 illustrations on the theme of unity is accompanied by a quotation on the subject of unity from Baha'i Writings. The Unity Calendar can serve as an inspiration for memorizing the quotations. Its individual pages can be mounted on colored paper to be used as picture lessons, teaching cards or study prints for teaching and deepening. Baha'is may wish to obtain several copies of this attractive learning tool to use as gifts or teaching aids.

The Illuminated Prayers and Passages of Baha'u'llah consist of ten different quotations each printed in subdued colors on individual 8.5 by 11 inch sheets of buff-colored paper. These words of the Blessed Beauty, so appropriate at such a troubled time, provide welcome inspiration and hope for today and tomorrow. They are designed to attract the eye, the mind and the heart of the beholder and to assist you in your teaching and deepening programs. The individual prayers and passages include those that begin:

"Blessed is the spot . . ."
"Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity . . ."
"This is the Day in which God's most excellent favors have been poured out upon men . . ."

Suitable for framing or as wall charts, they can be used in homes, offices, public places, centers, schools or institutes, and are helpful in the memorization and the realization of these timeless and inspiring words. They are particularly appropriate as gifts. Certain of the quotations lend themselves to hand-coloring to add a distinctive quality and a personal touch, if you wish.

HOW TO ORDER

Both the Baha'i Unity Calendar Diary (catalog number 20171) and the Illuminated Prayers and Passages of Baha'u'llah (catalog number 20052 for the assortment) may be ordered and prices may be obtained from your local librarian, publishing trust or national distribution committee, or the National Spiritual Assembly according to the established procedure in your Baha'i community.
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NOTICE: An error has been made in numbering issues
of Bahá'í News and was not quickly discovered. The
September issue should have been No. 498 and October
499.

Members of the Lae Youth class, held in the new national
headquarters every Saturday afternoon since it was pur­
chased.

BAHÁ'Í HEADQUARTERS
OFFICE OF
THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BÁHÁ'ÍS OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA, IN MEMORY OF

Newly purchased Hazratu'll-Quds for the National Spiritual
Assembly of Papua and New Guinea. It is located on
Swallow Road, Lae, New Guinea. It is situated in a lovely
garden and behind it is a green hill which will never have
many buildings on it.

BAHÁ'Í NEWS is published for circulation among Bahá'ís only by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the
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The Dedication of the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute
Hemingway, South Carolina

Continental Counsellor Miss Edna True addresses the gathering against a background of the exterior of the auditorium building. Raymond Collins, Master of Ceremonies for the occasion, is at the extreme right. See the story on page 8.
Flow of Pilgrims Halted By World War I

Year after year "a continual flow of pilgrims... transmitted the verbal messages and special instructions of a vigilant Master." (God Passes By, Shoghi Effendi, p. 258.) World War I brought a rude halt to these heavenly journeys.

"A remarkable instance of the foresight of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was supplied during the months immediately preceding the war. During peace times there was usually a large number of pilgrims at Haifa, from Iran and other regions of the globe. About six months before the outbreak of war one of the old Bahá'ís living at Haifa presented a request personally organized extensive agricultural operations near Tiberias. He suffered agony seeing the world plunged into war—Bahá'u'lláh's summons had gone unheeded. Furthermore, He became again virtually a prisoner of the Turkish Government, plagued by real personal danger and a shortage of food. Cut off from most of the Bahá'ís, He was deprived of much joy.

But His work continued, "ministering to the material and spiritual wants of the people about Him. He personally organized extensive agricultural operations near Tiberias, thus securing a great supply of wheat, by means of which famine was averted, not only the Bahá'ís but for hundreds of the poor of all religions in Haifa and 'Akká, whose wants He liberally supplied. He took care of all, and mitigated their sufferings as far as possible. To hundreds of poor people He would give a small sum of money daily. In addition to money He gave bread. If there was no bread He would give dates or something else. He made frequent visits to 'Akká to comfort and help the believers and poor people there. During the time of war He had daily meetings of the believers, and through His help the friends remained happy and tranquil throughout those troublous years." (Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, J. E. Esslemont, p. 75.)

After the war, the flow of pilgrims resumed. Eager as He must have been to welcome them, He was known to grant permission when they could travel in comfort.

"Strive to Create Love"

The Randall-Vail-Latimer pilgrimage of November 1919 is beautifully recorded in The Light of the World. For twelve blessed days the pilgrims basked in the divine sunlight of the Master and of the Bahá'í Holy Places. Dr. Esslemont of England was among that mixed gathering attracted to the Master, as he was to hone his knowledge of Persian, Arab, Kurd, Turkish, English, American, Hindu, Japanese, Muhammedan, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, gathered at one heavenly table by the power of the

This building is the Pilgrim House, the hospice on Mount Carmel. Its builder was Mirza Djasfar Chirazi.

Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh:" (p. 26)

They observed 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He "sat there before us, at times silent, but when He spoke every word vibrated with power. As He talked of world conditions, His irresistible logic, the splendor of His universal mind, were a continual astonishment. As He paused, told a humorous story, laughed about Fugita, heaped more food on Margaret Randell's plate (now Counsellor Bahá'í Ford), His great love set all our hearts in up roar.

"It is not the Master's human personality, attractive as it may be, but the light, the truth of God shining through His selfless spirit that makes Him so wonderful and His words like the Water of Life." (p. 27)

His life style was beautiful, selfless. This "magnetic personality" allowed no one to bow before Him. He often brought flowers to lunch. One day jasmine blossoms—brought to Him from the garden at the Bab's tomb—were sprinkled on the table cloth. One night He got out of bed at midnight and "corrected Tablets for four hours." Yet fatigue did not prevent His coming to lunch, where He joked with young Margaret and with Fugita, the young Bahá'í from Japan who served in the Holy Household.

He taught constantly—by word and act. Dr. Esslemont asked Him if His words were the same as those of Bahá'u'lláh. He answered, "Yes... I have no opinion of my own. Whatever is His Blessed Will I carry out." (p. 37)

Dr. Esslemont also asked, "Was it not true that Bahá'u'lláh had to show forth all the attributes of God, how to be both poor and rich?"

The Master replied, "Yes. However, He lived very simply and economically regarding His own welfare. He had no return from His property at that time. His property was confined to half the village of Adasieh (near Tiberias). It was in ruins and yielded no revenues. Now it is restored and we get some revenues. Bahá'u'lláh owned vast properties in Persia which were confiscated; also in Baghdad, but they were taken from Him toward the end of our stay. All were sacked and confiscated by the Turkish Government." (p. 123)
He stressed love and unity among the servants of God. "'Unity must be made very firm. Whoever has love for Baha'u'llah must give his life for the friends. Love for the friends is love for Baha'u'llah. In this Cause there is no danger save the inharmony among the friends.'"

"Whenever inharmony and disagreement arise between two persons, it will ultimately lead to their both turning away from the Cause... Do not let any conflict arise between two friends. When there is a difference both will become grieved. There must be only love. You must never offend any soul. You must always have love. As soon as you see any dissatisfaction between souls, strive to create love between them. For the Kingdom of God does not accept differences."

"Baha'u'llah says: 'If two persons argue over a subject, both are wrong,' so that no disagreement should occur. 'There must be love, love, love. God is love.'" (pp. 140-141.)

"Many times during our interviews 'Abdu'l-Baha impressed upon us the need of love and its power to transform the heart of mankind. The real spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's unity will be the mirror to reflect this love to the world. To Mrs. Randall He gave the secret of its attainment in the following matchless gem:" "'Separation from the world is the first sign of the love of God. As long as man is much attached to this world, he will be unaware of the Kingdom of God. As soon as he begins to be detached from this world, the Spirit of the Kingdom, like unto a sun, will shine from the horizon of His heart.'" (pp. 141-142.)

During those precious days the Master told them that each Bahá'í should "'make one Bahá'í each year.'" (p. 103)

The day arrived when their steamer was in port. They must depart. But their separation from the Master need not be devastating. His tender words of love and encouragement came even to the end: "'Turn to me always that I may be in your hearts for I love you very much and this is eternal. You are always in my heart, but I must also be in your hearts, then we are in one­ness.'" (p. 146)

"For one moment He held each by the hand. The Master's last words would move them forward with joy: 'You are under the protection of God.'"

Pilgrimage of a Thirteen-Year-Old

This pilgrimage made an indelible impression on young Margaret Randall (Bahiyyih Randall Ford). Telling about her experiences she said "'Of course every Bahá'í wants to go to Haifa. And in those days everyone longed to go to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. And so father wrote and asked if he might come with his family, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote back and said. 'When you may travel in comfort, then you may come.' So in 1919, after the First World War, it was so arranged. George Latimer, Albert Vail, father, mother, and I started for Haifa, Palestine. I was thirteen years old. When we arrived in the harbor of Haifa, our spirits were in such a state of excitement that we could hardly stand it. We got into the little boats which took us from the big steamer to the dock and there Lotfullah Hakim (elected a member of The Universal House of Justice in 1963) met us with the wagons of the Master. We were driven through the little quaint streets of Haifa and part way up Mount Carmel, and finally the little wagon stopped at a gate covered with bougainvillea vines, such beautiful flowers. Lotfullah (Dr. Hakim), said: 'This is where you are going to stay. It is the Persian Pilgrim House.'"

"And as we were about to get out of the wagon, I felt as if a magnet was drawing my eyes, and I turned around and looked into the eyes that were so grand and so wise and so comprehending of everything in the world that they took my breath away. I said, 'Oh, there is the Master!' And of course it was He. He was sitting in the little house that was built on the wall where He used to write His Tablets, and He sat low in the room and the window was high, so that all we could see of His face was just from the top of His nose up, His eyes and His turban, and these wonderful eyes were looking at us. We will never forget those eyes, because they expressed the sympathy and love that seemed to encompass the whole world, and a wisdom that could guide the world.'"

In the Persian Pilgrim House, the party was greeted by Shoghi Effendi, who came bringing flowers. At that time he was one of the Master's secretaries.

Mrs. Ford further recounts some of her experiences: "'One night we were sitting at the table with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He always placed me on His left. He smiled at me and said, 'Your name is Bahiyyih. Bahiyyih means light, but unless you have something within you, something back of it, there is no light.' And I realized the challenge He gave me just then. Another time we were told that we could have an interview with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and mother went with me when I had one. I asked Him 'What can I do to serve this Faith?' The Master paced up and down the room several times and then He turned and looked at me and said, 'Study. Study. Study.' So many times the Master would repeat things three times. That was the Message for me. Always the Master knew the thing that would bring fullest development into the individual's life. If it was requested, He guided the person to it.'"

Every day He came and had luncheon with the pilgrims over in the Pilgrim House, and at night pilgrims would go to His home to have dinner.

Bahiyyih Ford recalled that "'There was a perfectly wonderful person who always sat on the right of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at dinner. His name was Haydar-'Ali and he had been a follower of Bahá'u'lláh and was so meek and so beautiful. His hands would shake so that he could not eat. He was such an old, old man, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá would feed him with such tenderness. One day I saw him sitting out in the garden and I asked him what he had ever done. Of course, he could not speak English and I could not speak Persian, but we somehow seemed to understand. A man came along to interpret just then, and I told him what I had asked: 'What have you done to serve the Faith?'"

'Haydar-'Ali looked up with his eyes to heaven and said, 'I have not done as much as an ant could do in the path of God.' And then the interpreter told me that he had been dragged across the desert, tied in a bag..."
to a camel, and that his whole life had been one series of martyrdoms. Yet, he had said, 'I have not done as much as an ant could do in the path of God.'

Young Bahá’í was impressed with the question the Master was always asking: 'Are you happy? Are you happy?'

(Based on Notes of Bahá’í Ford, typed sheets sent by Mrs. Ford from South Africa.)

The Master at Seventy-five

Dr. J. E. Esslemont, author of the often-printed Bahá’ulláh and the New Era, was 'Abdu’l-Bahá’s guest in Haifa for two and a half months in the winter of 1919-1920. He described what he observed: 'At that time although nearly seventy-six years of age, He was still remarkably vigorous, and accomplished daily an almost incredible amount of work. Although often very weary He showed wonderful powers of recuperation, and His services were always at the disposal of those who needed them most. His unflagging patience, gentleness, kindliness, and tact made His presence like a benediction. It was His custom to spend a large part of each night in prayer and meditation. From early morning until evening, except for a short siesta after lunch, He was busily engaged in reading and answering letters from many lands and in attending to the multitudinous affairs of the household and of the Cause. In the afternoon He usually had a little relaxation in the form of a walk or a drive, but even then He was usually accompanied by one or two, or a party, of pilgrims with whom He would converse on spiritual matters, or He would find opportunity by the way of seeing and ministering to some of the poor. After His return He would call the friends to the usual evening meeting in His salon. Both at lunch and supper He used to entertain a number of pilgrims and friends, and charm His guests with happy and humorous stories as well as precious talks on a great variety of subjects. 'My home is the home of laughter and mirth,' He declared, and indeed it was so. He delighted in gathering together people of various races, colors, nations, and religions in unity and cordial friendship around His hospitable board. He was indeed a loving Father not only to the little community at Haifa, but to the Bahá’í community throughout the world.' (Bahá’ulláh and the New Era, April 1970 edition, J. E. Esslemont, pp. 76-77.)

“Go Out with Gladsome Heart”

Four American pilgrims, Mabel Paine and her daughter, Sylvia (Parmelee), Cora Gray and Genevieve Coy spent a week in Haifa in 1920. Genevieve recounted this visit in several issues of the Star of the West. Before meeting the Master she remembered the advice she had received from Juliet Thompson, Bahá’í artist, in New York: ‘‘When you are in the Master’s presence do not be self-conscious, if you can help it. Do not be afraid. There is nothing to fear. He is full of love and kindness. Pray, pray, all the way on your journey, that your hearts may be freed from all self-consciousness. Go to him freely, gladly!’’ (Star of the West, Vol. XII, No. 10, p. 187.)

Later she recalled: ‘‘It is very difficult to remember much of what He said. Indeed, it was almost difficult to listen.’

‘‘I wished only to look and look at the beauty of his face! For that was what impressed me first—the exquisite beauty of the Master. It was like the most beautiful pictures we have of him, with life and color added. His is a face of living silver—the wonderful silver of hair and beard, and the blue of his eyes. The side face is majestic and sweet and loving. It was that which we saw most of the time. The full face is more dignified; to me it seemed more awe-inspiring. And yet, when he smiled, it was most exquisitely friendly, and human!’’ (Star of the West, Vol. XII, No. 11, pp. 179-180.)

Of course there was talk of teaching. One day the Master said, ‘‘Some people are ready for education. They are like the fort earth. Some have no capacity, they are like the barren or stony ground. His Holiness Christ has told a story about the black volcanic earth and so it could not grow. Other seeds fell in the shallow earth, and they soon withered away. But some fell on the good fertile earth, and grew and produced fruit. So it is with my words. Some fall on hearts that have no capacity; they do not take effect at all. Those people do not understand. Others hear and seem to understand, but they forget my words and do not live in accordance with them. But others have great capacity; they hear my words; they understand; they live accordingly.’’ pp. 182-3.

During their visit the Master was exceedingly busy, and He did not have much time to spend in conversation with them. He had been able to see them more. Yet He added, ‘‘... it is not the length of time that one spends here that is important. Some people stay a short time, and then go and do great service. Other people are here a long time, and they learn nothing. There is some wood that is very dry; it catches fire quickly and burns well. There is other wood that is so wet that it will not burn even though you should try for a whole day. There is no result but smoke. It will not blaze, it will not keep any one warm; it will not even cook anything.’’ As he said the latter He smiled.’’ (Star of the West, Vol. XII, No. 13, p. 213.)

‘‘Life was lived “lifted higher” in the Master’s presence. His home was indeed “the home of peace”’. Yet at departure time it was vital to remember His blessed words, ‘‘My home is the home of joy and delight. My home is the home of laughter and exultation. Whosoever enters through the portals of this home must go out with glad-some heart.’’ (p. 214)

A Theologian’s Daughter Gives Her Impressions

Easter season 1921! Professor Jakob Kunz and his wife, Anna, he a scientist and she the daughter of a Swiss theologian in Zürich, reached the Holy Land when the moon stood full and bright over Mount Carmel. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was not in Haifa. After a severe
illness, He was resting, presumably, in Tiberias. But apparently visitors were received by Him even there—all day long. And they, too, were expected.

Beautifully, Anna Kunz has described that blessed pilgrimage: "It was a bright and luminous Easter morning when the Master called us into His room. Oh, that I could picture Him to all those who never saw Him, could picture Him in those simple surroundings at the shores of that same lake where Christ walked and taught. Though I feared to approach Him, after His loving words of welcome this fear vanished. Here we sat before our Master, in a little room, with only the most necessary furnishings, on top of the hill, with a view of that blessed lake. His look seems to go into one's very heart. Yes, He knows His children and their need. As I think of Him now, I always love to think, first, of His great simplicity, His marvelous humility which knows of no self-existence, and last, or better, first, of His boundless love. To us His outward appearance seemed similar to that of the old Hebrew Prophets; His humility, His simplicity, His love were like the Christ. This boundless love conquered the hearts at once. 'Abdu'l-Bahá talked to us with a ringing, piercing voice which will forever sound in my ears. His words would come forth with that unique simplicity, then He would pause for a while, often closing His eyes. His spirit, it seemed when I dared to look at Him, had left His body; He was looking into infinitude, communing with that world for which we long. Having seen Him, we could understand well what He meant when He said to us, 'The Prophet discerns by sight.' We came before Him, my husband especially, with many, many questions in our minds, but sitting in His presence we seemed to forget them, or better, there did not exist any unsolved problems. He said 'God has created a remedy for every disease,' and while in His presence, we tasted of this remedy." (Star of the West, Vol. XIII, No. 8, Sept. 1922, p. 141.)

Words of wisdom poured forth as interview followed interview. The scientist said that science denied immortality and he asked how the Prophet knew otherwise. The Master replied, "'Science does not know; but the Manifestation makes discoveries with the power of the

Spirit.' They wondered how one should deal with people who denied religion. He answered, 'You must be tolerant and patient, because the station of sight is a station of bounty; it is not based on capacity. They must be educated.'" (p. 143)

And He spoke to them of moderation. "'Everything must be done moderately. Excess is not desirable. Do not go to extremes. Even in thinking do not go to excess but be moderate.'" (p. 143)

Easter took on a new significance for these pilgrims. 'Abdu'l-Bahá pointed to the spot some 150 meters away where Jesus told Peter to become a fisher of men. And now 'Abdu'l-Bahá told them what they should do. "Just as a shepherd who is affectionate to all his sheep, without preference or distinction, you should be affectionate to all. You should not look at their shortcomings. Consider that they are all created by God who loves them all.'" (p. 144) "Say to the friends: 'The Kingdom of God has been opened to you.'" (p. 144)

"You Must Never Forget Christ"

Among the last of those fortunate pilgrims to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá were the Edwin Mattoon family. In their great longing to reach His side, they had asked if they might come from the United States "if only for a day," and Permission was granted. With their two little daughters, Florence (Zmeskal) and Annamarie (Baker), the latter

Mr. Edwin Mattoon is at the wheel of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Cunningham car for which he brought spare parts at the request of Roy Wilhelm and spent several days in its repair. The rest of the Mattoon family are on the back seat. When some of the family returned to Haifa in 1970 the car was still there.

Mrs. Anna Kunz at the Pilgrim House on March 25, 1921.

Florence Mattoon (Zmeskal) with Fugita in the bay at Haifa. Fugita would take little Florence on his back and swim out into the Mediterranean. (July 1921)
only three months old, they joyously set sail. They were asked to take a part of an automobile so that the Master—sent by American friends—might be repaired. Somehow they managed that, too. Annie Mattoon remembered later that 'Abdu'l-Bahá said to them, 'You must do without.' (We Went to Haiti, p 9, mimeographed copy) With this encouragement, they included visits to the Holy Places of Christianity. Today, also, Bahá'ís are encouraged to make the "wider pilgrimage."

Conclusion

'Abdu'l-Bahá was ever the Master—master of every situation, One Who had mastered life, master Teacher, in word and deed. None could do better than to emulate His way, for in some mysterious manner, it was ever the perfect way.

The accounts of those early pilgrims still give us inspiring glimpses of the Master Teacher at work. To follow Him is to realize even in a few precious moments is to better know the life-style of the Bahá'í Exemplar.

How well He knew that people are in different stages of spiritual development. "Do not become a Bahá'í." The Master Himself once told a pilgrim the story behind His giving this advice.

The Master was concluding an interview by telling of the time when He travelled through Persia (Iran) with a party which included a merchant. When the caravan halted in a certain village, quite a few people gathered around to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The travelers later continued their journey and when they stopped in another town, the same thing happened. And it happened yet again.

The merchant noticed this very obvious love and respect, which were showered on the Master. He then took Him aside and told Him he wished to become a Bahá'í.

When the Master asked him why he desired this, he replied, without apparent shame, "You are a Bahá'í, and wherever you go, great crowds of people flock out to meet you, while no one comes to meet me; so I wish to become a Bahá'í." "Abdu'l-Bahá probed deeper. He asked him if that was the real reason. Whereupon the merchant replied with candor, "I also think it will help my business, as I will have all these people come to meet me." It was then that he was told very frankly, "Do not become a Bahá'í. It is better for you to remain as you are." (Adapted from A Modern Pilgrimage to Palestine, L. B. Pemberton, pp 99-100.)

One writer reported that He once said, "At the gate of the garden some stand and look within, but do not care to enter. Others step inside, behold its beauty, but do not penetrate far. Still others encircle this garden inhaling the fragrance of the flowers, having enjoyed its full beauty, pass out again by the same gate. But there are always some who enter and, becoming interested, the desire of what they behold, remain for life to tend the garden." (The Garden of the Heart, p 14)

"All the travelers have come back like pilgrims of a new hope, bubbling and overflowing with the ideas, impressions and suggestions drawn from their visit to this inspiring spiritual center, and their contact with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Each has illustrated the reply given by the Servant of God to the questioner who asked Him: 'Why do all the guests who visit You come away with shining countenances?'

'He said with His beautiful smile, 'I cannot tell you, but in all those upon whom I look, I see only My Father's Face.'" (The Oriental Rose, Mary Hanford Ford, p 6)

Those early pilgrims to the Holy Land during the Bahá'í Dispensation left their marks upon the earth. Their regeneration—born of divine love—gave birth to new generations. And so today, around the globe, ever increasing numbers "remain for life to tend the garden."

**National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey, Togo and Niger**

Members of the third National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Dahomey, Togo and Niger elected Ridván 129 B.E. in Cotonou with Mr. Ardekani, member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for West Central Africa, at extreme right. From left to right: F. P. Charles, Vice-Chairman (Pioneer from Haiti); Doris Madsen (Pioneer from United States); Parvin Djoneidz, Chairman (Pioneer from Iran for Niger); Golgasht Mossajfai, Secretary (Pioneer from British Isles for Dahomey); Emmanuel Tomondoji, Treasurer; Carmelie Charles (Pioneer from Haiti); Edmond Bonfi; Vassou Appa (Pioneer from Mauritius Island); Boniface Denavo.

**National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia**

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia for 1972-1973: (back row) Juan Mamani, Dorothy Hansen Baskin, Eshahallah Oladie, Fati Oladie, Osidro Jachakolla, Prudencia Peña. In front: Sabino Ortega, Reginald Baskin, Hugo Saria. The Assembly is made up of persons of diversified backgrounds including Quechua and Aymara tribesmen, a native of Cochabamba, Persian and American pioneers.

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Counsellors Conference at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

The gentle waves of the Atlantic Ocean formed the background for the Continental Board of Counsellors Deepening Conference held October 20-21 at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Nearly 800 believers from twenty-two states, Guam and Norway filled the Myrtle Beach Convention Center, creating a warm atmosphere of love with their radiant smiles and soft echoes of “Alláhu-Abhá”. It was a time of joy and a time of expectancy. Those attending the conference would on Sunday witness the dedication of the Louis G. Gregory Baha’i Institute at Hemingway, South Carolina.

The memory of that beloved Hand and his exemplary life permeated the entire weekend and left a delicate impression on all the conference sessions. There were those present who were his spiritual children, those who had known and loved him, those who had been touched by his pure spirit, among them Mrs. Sylvia Iotas, wife of the late Hand of the Cause Leroy Iotas, and member of the International Baha’i Council, and Dr. H. Elsie Austin, former member of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Northwest Africa.

The conference officially opened on Friday evening with devotions and the lyric harmony of the Young Sisters from Gainsville, Florida. Still fresh in the minds of those present was the previous day’s Holy Day Observance of the Birthday of the Bab, He Who was the Primal Point and the Herald of this the Promised Day of God. Counsellors Edna True and Florence Mayberry were introduced and greeted the friends on behalf of the Continental Board of Counsellors for North America. Miss True told of the many southern teaching trips her mother, Mrs. Corinne True and Mr. Louis G. Gregory had made together during the early years of the Faith; she descended from the southern genteel class and he, the descendent of former slaves, and how they had used their heritage, and their mutual love and respect to further the interests of the Faith. The nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the United States were introduced, and the Chairman of that body Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, greeted the friends on its behalf, speaking briefly on the significance of the institutions of the Faith and the harmony which exists between them.

The four Auxiliary Board members present, Mr. Albert James, Dr. Jane McCants, Mr. Paul Pettit, and Mrs. Thelma Khelghati, were likewise introduced.

Speaker for the evening session was Auxiliary Board member, Mr. Albert James, himself a spiritual child of Hand of the Cause Mr. Gregory. Mr. James spoke on the subject “Children of One God”, highlighting the pivot principle of the Faith, the oneness of mankind. He also emphasized the fire of the love of God which burns in the hearts of the friends and is the real source of their success in teaching. Mr. Gregory, he pointed out, had that fire, and all who knew him were warmed in its flame. Deeply moved by Mr. James’ presentation, the believers were stirred to even greater heights as Mr. Van Gilmer led the singing of Bahá’u’lláh’s words, “Soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under these banners.” Surely the faces of the many new believers present, from both South Carolina and other states were a testimony to those words, and the evening session closed with the friends eager to greet their new Baha’i brothers and sisters.

Saturday morning began with music and devotions. Then Counsellor True told the marvelous “Story of the Covenant”, God’s promise to never leave man alone, and the fulfillment of that promise in successive stages as each Messenger of God, the embodiment of His love, came to educate and guide the souls of men. Auxiliary Board member Thelma Khelghati spoke of the promise of the “Kingdom of God” as foretold in the Bible and its fulfillment today in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh and the Baha’í Administration. Before the close of the morning session the friends greeted the visiting Baha’is from Norway and Guam. Dr. Jane McCants told the story of the formation, this Ridván, of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the Northwest Pacific, of which Guam is a part. Though not a goal of the Nine Year Plan, such had been the intensity and success of the teaching work in these islands of the Pacific, that The Universal House of Justice had called for the election of a regional National Spiritual Assembly. At their National Convention, the friends of this area dedicated their newly formed National Assembly to the Baha’is of an Eastern country whose National Assembly had been dissolved during the course of the Plan, quoting the words of Bahá’u’lláh, “Should they attempt to conceal its light on the continent, it will assuredly rear its head in the midst heart of the ocean, and raising its voice, proclaim: ‘I am the life giver of the world!’”

In the afternoon the friends were thrilled by the music of the Rockhill Singers, a group of Baha’i Youth from Rockhill, South Carolina, most of whom have been Baha’is less than one year. Auxiliary Board member Dr. Jane McCants’ eloquent introduction of Mrs. Thelma Allison, one of the earliest black believers in the South and another of Mr. Gregory’s spiritual children, who read the Tablet of Visitation of ‘Abdu’l-Baha, stirred the hearts of the friends, as did her eloquent presentation on the life of the Perfect Exemplar, the Mystery of God.

At the close of the Conference, all left their seats and joined hands making a circle around the auditorium, singing “Alláhu-Abhá”.

![Conference Image]
'Abdu'l-Baha. The golden voice of Charles Bullock led the friends in singing the musical version of 'Abdu'l-Baha's plea, "O that I could travel even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions and, raising the call of Ya 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." Surely each heart uttered a silent prayer to be able to give one's all in attempting to fulfill this wish of 'Abdu'l-Baha, to teach unceasingly the Cause of God.

'Abdu'l-Baha had named the Guardian the "Sign of God on earth," and the Guardian had referred to The House of Justice as "the last refuge of a tottering civilization." To close the afternoon session, National Spiritual Assembly member, Dr. Sarah Pereira, a spiritual granddaughter of Louis Gregory, her parents having been taught the Faith by him, spoke of those twin infallible institutions, crowning points of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, their uniqueness, their individual spheres of activity and the unity between them.

The closing session of the conference Saturday evening saw Counsellor Florence Mayberry paint vistas of the opportunity for each Bahá'í to pioneer, if not in a foreign country, into the vast inlands of one's own spiritual being, to uncover the gem-like qualities and virtues latent within, and to polish them into radiant splendor. The challenge to such pioneering, is the challenge to become the "New Race of Men".

It was on this note of challenge that the conference ended. Arm in arm the friends circled the room even as the Faith had encircled the planet. The familiar sounds of "Alláh'u 'Abhá! Ya Bahá'u'l-Abhá!" again echoed through the halls, this time colored with notes of our increased love and fervor, notes tinged with the sadness of our parting, notes stiffened with our resolve to re-dedicate our lives to Bahá'u'lláh, to become that new race of men. Surely the love and unity generated in that closing session had drawn the presence of the Concourse on High and surely among their number smiled Louis G. Gregory, whose heart was like "pure gold."

-Delma Khelghat

Dedication of the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute

On October 22, 1972 over 800 Bahá'ís and friends attended the dedication of the history-making Institute which has been brought into being by the Bahá'ís of the United States for the specific purpose of training teachers, primarily in the Southern states, for the mighty Cause of God.

Driving through tiny, sleepy villages on that special Sunday morning, absorbed by a green and peaceful countryside, suddenly one discovered a clearing in the woodlands. Elegant yet simple buildings appeared, and welcoming walks and driveways beckoned. To visit the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute, located at Hemingway, South Carolina, in the heartland of the blessed state of South Carolina, which has already proved the spiritual capacity of its rural folk, is to find oneself transported to an idyllic setting. On the special day of dedication of that Institute, when the power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh was evidenced by the magnificent diversity of the friends who had gathered, the sparkle of a warm and sunny day filled one with hope and with thanksgiving, and its atmosphere of peace brought the future breathtakingly close.

The Bahá'ís, on this precious day, gave evidence of their labor to erect the Kingdom of God on earth; they were engaged in the task of breathing life into a unified body, of creating the true unity and spirituality which is destined to culminate in the Most Great Peace. It must be God has willed this place to be built!

Dean of the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute, Harold C. Jackson, addresses the assembled friends at the dedication.
Hundreds of chairs had been arranged in a semi-circle against a backdrop of uncleared forest, offering the assembled guests a panoramic view of the complex of Institute buildings and exquisitely landscaped grounds which lay beyond the platform designed for use in the formal dedication observances.

Mr. Raymond Collins, the National Teaching Committee's coordinator for its Southern Region, served as a most able Master of Ceremonies, which were opened with the "Prayer for All Mankind," read by Mrs. Frances Hunter, Assistant Manager of the Baha'i Publishing Trust, and a Passage from Gleanings read by Mrs. Sue Fouts, a member of the National Teaching Committee. Mr. Collins then introduced to the gathering the two members of the Continental Board of Counsellors who were present, Mrs. Florence Mayberry and Miss Edna True, and the individual members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Miss True, speaking briefly and eloquently, recalled the unbreakable bonds which link this day to the early years of the Faith.

The newly-appointed Dean of the Institute, Mr. Harold Jackson, formerly of California, delivered a thought-provoking address on the purpose of the Institute and the plans for its development.

Dr. Sarah Pereira, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, delighted the gathering with a highly informative and heart-warming biographical sketch of Hand of the Cause of God Louis G. Gregory, for whom the Institute is named, in which she included some of Mr. Gregory's accomplishments as a teacher of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and shared personal glimpses of his relationship with her family in the earlier days of the Cause.

Hand of the Cause of God William Sears, unable to be present for this historic occasion, had prepared a taped recording for the event. In his inspiring and love-laden message Mr. Sears recalled to our minds and our hearts the great sacrifices, the truly heroic acts of devotion which Mr. Gregory had exemplified in his life which had caused him to be raised posthumously to the rank of Hand of the Cause of God.

During the program Mr. Van Gilmer of Oxen Hill, Md. and Mr. Charles Bullock of Henderson, N.C. offered musical selections.

Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, in a few well-chosen remarks, formally dedicated and declared open the Louis G. Gregory Baha'i Institute. His words were immediately followed by the planting of a Canadian hemlock tree, at which time those participating in the dedication ceremonies and the friends present abandoned their formal groupings and gathered together for this symbolic act. The Counsellors present; the members of the National Spiritual Assembly; Dean Jackson; Mr. Collins; Mr. George Hutchinson, architect and member of the National Baha'i Properties Committee; Mr. Arthur Hampson, manager of National Baha'i Properties; and Mr. Clark Cooper, electrical engineer, participated in this meaningful gesture. Climaxed by the soft and prayerful singing of "Allah'u-Abhá", the formal dedication ceremonies were brought to a close and the doors of the buildings were opened wide to invite inspection.

It must be God has willed this place to be built!

—Ruth Hampson
Mauritius Teaching Institute

The Bahá'ís of Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean, were happy to receive an unexpected visit from Counselor Mr. S. Vasudevan of Malaysia. The first institute for new believers was organized by the National Teaching Committee on October 1. It was conducted by Mr. Vasudevan with more than fifty friends attending, several from rural parts of the island.

In the afternoon the distinguished visitor delivered an inspiring talk on many aspects of the Faith at the National Institute. This gathering was attended by Counselor Mr. S. Appa, Auxiliary Board member Mr. S. Mooten, who translated the message, and eight of the National Spiritual Assembly members.

Argentine Official Receives Bahá'ís

The Governor of the Province of Santiago del Estero in Argentina, at far left, received the Bahá'ís during their mass teaching project at the end of June and accepted the volume The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh. Seventy new believers enrolled and a new Local Assembly was formed in Sucho Corral. Half-hour radio programs were given for six days, and articles appeared in the newspapers.

At the left of the Governor is Continental Board Counsellor Hooper Dunbar, and to his left, Juan Millalaf, Mapuche Indian from the south of Argentina. To the right of the Governor is seated National Spiritual Assembly member Mr. Zia Vojdani.
Youth Conference in New Zealand

The second annual National Youth Conference of New Zealand was held in Nelson, at the northern part of South Island, on September 22-24. It was a success with 130 attending from all points of both islands. Most arrived on Friday and that evening was spent in singing and fellowship.

The Garcias were special guests. Auxiliary Board member Gina Garcia talked on the role of Auxiliary Board members. They taught a new song: “I Believe in Music.”

On Saturday all participated in the many classes. Jan and Darrell Wieve were appointed Secretary and Chairman, respectively. That evening two films were shown to a packed house. They were: “It’s Just the Beginning” and one from Hawaii. Singing and dancing occupied the time until all trooped off to a small cafe for refreshments. The owners kindly kept it open until 1:00 a.m. for the sixty Bahá’ís, all singing. Many people heard of the Faith that night.

On Sunday the National Spiritual Assembly consulted with the youth on youth recommendations. It was the first time the National Assembly had met outside the Haziratu’l-Quds in Auckland.

When pioneers were called for, Dan Doyland, who recently declared, volunteered to go to the Chatham Islands which is 150 miles from the center of South Island where fishing is the main industry. Linda Hight, who pioneered to the coastal city of Blenheim which is now flourishing, is off again. Dave Toohyi is also pioneering. To the first pioneer to arise an offer was made to pay for travel and the first week’s expenses.

There was also a call for volunteers to paint the Haziratu’l-Quds and many responded.

Upon departure, twenty Bahá’ís from North Island left by inter-island ferry and were allowed to sing on board. The captain was brought in and told of the Faith and presented with pamphlets.

Completing the job of painting the Haziratu’l-Quds in Auckland, New Zealand.

The report concluded: “How lovely if a hundred or more of those reading this report would get their passports and come down and help us pioneer. It’s a beautiful country, plenty of room and very little smog.”

On the weekend of September 9-10, Bahá’ís from as far away as 300 miles came to paint the center in Auckland, New Zealand. Work started at 8:00 a.m. with about fifty scraping and painting. The house was surrounded by Bahá’ís having fun. Two coats of white paint were finished by the afternoon—and it rained just a half-hour after it was finished.

In the evening there was group singing. Two Canadian pioneers told about the activity in Canada. Most of the group working were volunteers from the Youth Conference. The work was well planned by several of the National Spiritual Assembly members, which made the inside-outside paint job possible in such a short time.
The exhortation of the Center of the Covenant, ‘Abdu’-Baha, to carry the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh to the Indians of North America evoked whole-hearted response from Mrs. Ethel Murray. If obedience to the Center of the Covenant in this world is the source of joy to Bahá’ís in the Abáh Kingdom, she is now reaping that eternal harvest. She passed into the next world on August 5, 1972.

In her many years as a Bahá’í, Mrs. Murray enthusiastically supported the teaching plans of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, built on the foundation of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, and in the advanced years of her life she found strength and purpose in living under difficult circumstances in the heart of the Cherokee Reservation, in North Carolina, to make known the coming of the Glory of God, Bahá’u’lláh.

Born in 1884, she was the younger and weaker of twins, with such delicate health that her activities were restricted and she was subject to pneumonia and other childhood illnesses. From the time of becoming a Bahá’í, in the early 1920’s, until just before her final illness, her health improved markedly and she seldom saw a doctor.

She became a Bahá’í in Springfield, Mass., after hearing of the Faith from Electa Timmerman, whom she had engaged to give her daughter, (now Mrs. Beth Newport) elocution lessons. A photographer by profession, she ardently turned her abilities and full interest to the activities of the Faith, with noted early teachers such as Harlan and Grace Ober, and Jenabi Fazel coming to assist her. When her marriage ended, she moved to Montclair, New Jersey, and for some time was in charge of a “Fellowship House”, where Bahá’ís could live for extended periods of time. For example, while Louis Gregory was on a long teaching trip, his wife, Louise, lived at Fellowship House. Such was the obedient attitude of dear Ethel that when she described her dream of expanding this House in a letter to the beloved Guardian, and he responded that now was not the time for the friends to gather themselves together apart from the rest of the world, but rather it was the time to scatter and teach the Faith, she immediately relinquished the idea and moved to Bloomfield, nearby.

Constantly seeking out opportunities to teach more actively, in 1936 she pioneered to Richmond, Virginia, as part of the first Seven Year Plan. Here, her economic situation was much more difficult due to lower rates of pay for her photographic work in the South. But she remained several years at her post, attempting to communicate the principle of the oneness of mankind. She had returned to New York area and was living with her daughter and son-in-law, when the stirring call for pioneers was uttered by Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum at the 1953 dedication of the House of Worship in Wilmette. Thinking that the call for elderly pioneers to “bury their bones” at pioneering posts applied especially to her, she went that November to North Carolina, with the Cherokee Reservation as her goal. Since residence on the Reservation was restricted to Indians, or those who could rent from Indians, she lived first in Asheville, then in Bryson City, nearer the Reservation, and finally felt her prayers were answered when she managed to rent a house from an Indian on the Reservation itself.

Later her landlord reclaimed the house to use for a giftshop, and she moved into a dilapidated shack which hadn’t been lived in for some time. She felt that this move, to a building without heat or plumbing, helped very much to draw her closer to the Indians, who lived in similar poverty. Even when a slightly better home became available later, it had no running water until the very end of her stay. She walked four miles for groceries, and felt Bahá’u’lláh had showered His blessings on her when a new bridge was built which shortened the distance to the store by a mile and one-half. For some years, her drinking water came from her rain barrel.

Visiting her was like a continuous deepening class. To observe her actions was to witness the movements of one centered in the propagation of the Faith of God for this day. She gathered clothing to sell for a few pennies, then converted those pennies into mattresses for Indians who had never had them. Over the years, through prodigious effort and spartan economies, she saved enough money to buy twenty-three such mattresses for Indians, though
she herself slept on a thin quilt laid over a chest. She prayed ardently for the waiting souls to come to her door and always had shelter and food for anyone who came. She answered the letters which increasingly reached her as her service in the teaching field became known, always expressing her great happiness at the privilege of being on the Reservation. For some time she published a column of religious news and ideas in the local newspaper, until the opposition of local clergymen brought it to a halt. But by then, some of the newspaper personnel were her staunch friends and she had proclaimed widely the Message of Baha'u'llah.

Her happiness at her post was a great blessing for Cherokee. "I was satisfied," she recalled at the end of her life, "for I had as much and more than most of the Indians—I did not come to make them envious, and they knew I was not paid as a missionary."

One who had the privilege of visiting her a number of times at Cherokee recalled seeing during each visit fresh signs of sacrifice and selflessness on the part of Mrs. Murray. "I remember marveling at the amount of space in her small home which she had set aside as the Bahá'í meeting room. Then, when I came on a later visit, she had had a carpenter move the wall over, to reduce her small share of the space and increase that of the special room. It was always neatly arranged, with Bahá'í books, pictures and signs, and on the front of the small home was a big sign, 'Bahá'í Center.'"

Her love and effort have securely established the Bahá'í Faith on this Reservation but only the future can make clear the result of such dedication. The physical hardships they experienced were considerable, but one never heard her speak of them. She simply brushed them aside, dwelling rather on the important goals and the means of teaching them. Each step taken on that Reservation must one day yield its fruits, as the Master has promised:

"One pearl is better than a thousand wildernesses of sand, especially this pearl of great price, which is endowed with divine blessing. Ere long thousands of other pearls will be born from it. When that pearl associates and becomes the intimate of the pebbles, they also all change into pearls."

*Tablets of the Divine Plan, page 52. —Beth McKenty

Baha'í Speaker on "Indian Culture"

Anselmo Heredia, an active Bahá'í teacher, was the first of the indigenous people of Bolivia to speak at the Eudianam Culture Center in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The founder of this Center said afterwards: "The Eudianam has fulfilled its purpose as we have had speakers from many countries but this is the first time indigenous people from Bolivia have spoken on our platform."

The topic of Mr. Heredia was "Indian Culture," Valentin Heredia, also a well-known Bahá'í traveling teacher, recited Inca poetry. The audience of over a hundred people were very impressed with the presentation.

In the photograph to the left is the Baha'i Director of the Cultural Center; Augusto Villarroel; center, Anselmo Heredia; right, Valentin Heredia.

Local Spiritual Assembly Formed in Falkland Islands

An important goal of the Nine Year Plan has been achieved with the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly on the Falkland Islands, formed on October 20, the Birthday of the Bab. This was made possible with the declaration of a Falkland Islander and the recent pioneering effort of Greg and Christina Edwards of the United States in addition to the long-term efforts of pioneers John and Margaret (Mills) Leonard.

Only 2000 people live on the Islands and 1200 of them are in Port Stanley; the only city. Most of the residents not in Port Stanley are sheep-herders and live on remote stations throughout the islands. Since the arrival of the Edwards, they have been traveling around to all the sheep stations proclaiming the Message of Baha'u'llah and showing the film "It's Just the Beginning." Until this month travel to the islands was possible only by ship, but air service will soon be established which will allow travel-teachers from the mainland of South America to make more frequent trips to aid with the teaching and consolidation.

This hard-won goal is the result of many years of effort on the part of pioneers from the United States and England and is one of the southernmost Assemblies in the world.

Macau Has Assembly

Macau, the Portuguese colony just a seventy-minute hydrofoil ride from Hong Kong, now has its Assembly. The friends of Macau recently embarked on teaching trips to two of the neighboring islands in Taipei and obtained a remarkable reception. They left nine new believers in Taipei Island.

They have also made a trip to another nearby island, Coloane, and gained, in a day, one declaration and several interested inquirers. The spiritual link of these islands will be enhanced by reason of a bridge being built to join these localities.

“Him Will the Faithful Spirit Strengthen...”
Pioneer Teaching Trip Report—Baskin/Hansen

“Teaching is marvelous in these remote areas. The people seem to recognize the truth immediately. They seem to know that Baha’u’llah has been sent from God. Some whom we met had had dreams of our coming. They accepted our visit as if they had been expecting us.”

This is the essential spirit of a letter from Bolivian pioneers Dorothy and Reginald Baskin and son Benjamin Hansen who spent almost five weeks following the Panama House of Worship Dedication and Conference travel-teaching in Panama, Colombia and Ecuador before returning to their post in Cochabamba.

Traveling by plane, jeep and spine-jarring bus rides for up to three days over primitive roads, they visited various Indian tribes high in the “cold, foggy mountain area” of the Andes, the Guajira Indians “on the dry, remote northern peninsula of Colombia” and the black people who inhabit the humid jungle villages and towns of the coastal lowlands of Colombia and Ecuador.

Meeting up often with other traveling teams of pioneers and finding some temporary sustenance and relief from the rigors of travel in far-flung pioneer homes, they visited seventeen localities in their arduous criss-cross journeys.

After teaching in Colón, Panama with a team that included Edris Rice-Wray, her daughter and Jorge and Chaspie Angulo from Mexico and Larry Day from California, they flew to Bogotá, Colombia for the Counsellors’ Conference May 5-7. “It is almost impossible to transmit on paper the spirit of love, unity and fellowship that existed in that historic reunion. A delegation of thirty-nine Persians had continued on from Panama to be present, along with Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and his wife. I’ve never seen such harmony and cooperation between East and West.”

After presentation of the Colombian National Spiritual Assembly’s precisely detailed teaching plan to bring in 100,000 new believers by May 20, voluntary contributions of money or services were asked. “In two hours over $17,000 was offered, mostly by the Persians... Over twenty native volunteers arose... The presence of the Giachery family was an added bounty. Mrs. Giachery had us all in tears as she told of their early pioneering experiences in Rome.”

After the Conference they traveled thirty-eight hours on a bus with new Auxiliary Board member Maxine Roth, to Barranquilla on the Caribbean coast of Colombia to teach in nearby Santa Lucía, “about three hours by bus into the countryside from the city.” “Thirteen others joined us from the United States, Brazil, Venezuela and Colombia” and (we) “happily jogged off again into the jungle singing Bahá’í songs. Santa Lucía has a goal of 2,000 Bahá’ís by May 20... There were 500 in the little village when we arrived, including a functioning Local Spiritual Assembly. We all stayed in the home of a new local believer where we strung hammocks in every available spot in the house. We were joined next day by Counsellor Hooper Dunbar, Leco Zamora and Tommy Kavelin who slept on the floor. We had public meetings every night with songs, slides and brief talks. The second night 800 came to the public meeting in a theater, and some of us had to stay outside to handle impromptu songs and talks for about 200 who were battering the doors down trying to get in after the hall was filled. All day we would teach in the streets and visit children’s classes. Over 380 became Bahá’ís in those three days... The Assembly planned a meeting in a house which would hold forty at the most. Over 200 came. With the contributions we all left, the Local Spiritual Assembly decided to buy a library for the town and send traveling teachers to a nearby town... Santa Lucía now (July, 1972) has 1,200 believers plus 110...
in two nearby communities.

From Santa Lucia they went on to the Counsellor's Conference with the Guajira Indians, stopping en route at Rio Hacha "where we were met by Auxiliary Board member Habib Rezvani and welcomed like kings to the Bahá'í Center there. Habib's mother takes care of the Center with such devotion and love that as one enters the grounds one cannot help feeling this love which seems to permeate even the sands upon which the Institute is built."

The next stop was "by jeep out to Manauri, an extremely remote, desolate looking village where the Counsellor’s teaching conference was held. The Indians came in from the nearby reservation in long flowing dresses and breech cloths. The land is extremely poor, barren, dry. At Manauri . . . one can see only vast expanses of sea, sky, and salt flats . . . The only source of income for the Guajiras seems to be laboriously digging out salt from the flats, sacking it, and carrying it on the backs of men, women and children to trucks which take it into town to sell. These people must be among the poorest Indians in South America. The women do not speak Spanish, only Guajira . . ."

Leco Zamora, one of the greatest Indian teachers in South America, felt very much at home with the Guajiras. He felt that the land and the people were very much like his land, the Chaco of Argentina, and his people, the Matacos. The Guajiras welcomed him as a blood brother too. Out on the reservation, after the Conference when we returned to their homes with some of the Guajiras, Leco taught late into the night to spellbound men in loin cloths, by flickering candlelight. They asked him all kinds of questions that they were very shy to ask Hooper, who had read Ruhiyyih Khánum's 'Letter to the Indigenous People of the Americas'. The friends wanted to know about the soul, afterlife, dreams, all the worlds of God. They said they had heard that men had traveled to the moon, and they wanted to know if it were true. Finally, in the middle of the night, when Indians from all around had gathered, they brought out the drums, formed a large circle, and began to do a wild running dance in which a shrouded woman chases a man who must run backwards. They fly around and around the circle at astonishing speeds until the man falls or the girl tires . . . Those places we visited out on the reservation were Moosiche and Mauhuasi."

Parting from Counsellor Hooper Dunbar and Leco Zamora who continued on to the Guajira of Venezuela, they returned for two days to Barranquilla where the doctor treated both Baskins for various painful and debilitating health conditions before they jotted on again by bus for a day and a night into the mountains toward Yumbo. Once the bus was stopped the passengers could get out and help chop up storm-felled trees blocking the narrow road. On other occasions on buses in Colombia they had been stopped several times each night by the army as the country was under martial law and all men had to show identification. "Larry Day and Reggie seemed to always be under suspicion, perhaps because they are black but do not look Colombian."

In Medellin they gratefully accepted hot showers and hot soup from the Leeds during a few hours' stop and then continued on for another all night ride to Cali. "In Cali we met a team already gathered for mass teaching in Valle and Cauca. There must have been twenty people staying at the home of Dr. Arbab. His dear wife was cooking marvelous meals for everybody, and always smiling. We went to reunions in the barrios there and out to a place in the country a few hours away, Puerto Tejada. Most of the people there were black and very receptive to the Faith. Around thirty-five entered the Faith in a couple of hours. We met in the home of a family which seemed like old, firm Bahá’ís. It turned out they had just become Bahá’ís the week before. The spirit all over

Local Bahá’ís of Santa Lucía, Colombia provided a lunch of fresh fish from a nearby river for the visiting teaching team of pioneers from Bolivia, Colombia, Venezuela and the United States.

Colombia is really exciting. Dr. Arbab has a printing press in his basement, and follow up materials for mass conversion areas are in constant production. New Bahá’ís are immediately involved in teaching and deepening others, so the work never stops . . .

"From Cali we flew to Quito on May 24 where we joined another large group of pioneers gathered at Charles and Helen Hornby's house. Charles is Auxiliary Board member for Ecuador. From there we took another all night bus ride down the mountains to the jungle banana plantation country of Esmeraldas, Ecuador. This was a sort of homecoming for Benjamin and me (Dorothy), for we had spent about three weeks there in 1970 when we answered Ruhiyyih Khánum's call for traveling teachers after the Intercontinental Conference in La Paz. This return gave us a chance to see a mass conversion area two years after the original teaching. Some of the old Bahá’ís were still there and still firm. Many others had

Following the Panama Conference, Reginald and Dorothy Baskin and son Benjamin Hansen made a consolidation trip to the mountains near Umbato, Chibuleo, Ecuador, and are shown with a Chibuleo family. Dorothy and a Chibuleo girl have exchanged hats, a gesture of international understanding.
had songs from around the world, prayers, and even a Chibuleyos, a mountain people living about a half-day's dor, and a team of native and pioneer Baba'is. We had co-ordinator of the National Spiritual Assembly of Indians are said to have originated in Bolivia in Umbato where about three-fourths of the children are wonderful vis.its with several families there ... We also were there. The concentration now seems to up but most of them are artisans and I am sure a strong bly the Baskin family and Larry Day went to visit students taught their young male teachers (0 God, guide me, protect me ...)

Traveling teacher Larry Day from San Fernando, California, giving the Message of Bahá'u'lláh in Spanish during the mass teaching effort in Santa Lucia, Colombia when over 350 accepted the Faith in three days. (May 10, 1972)

community can be established among them in the future." Reluctantly, they left Ecuador, flying into Lima where they met up with another large group of pioneers at the Khamsi home. "The Khamsi family hospitality is one of the wonders of the South American Continent. Mr. Khamsi is so calm, loving and wise that he inspires pioneers to go always forward to accomplish goals we never dreamed we could. Jane always feeds us well for the road."

They indeed needed to be well-fed for the road for they were to spend three days and a night on a bus from Lima, Peru to La Paz, Bolivia before making the final push on to home in Cochabamba. The only break was a few hours stop over in Arequipa (Peru) at the home of Annamarie and Bill Baker, "another oasis of love and hominess for us wandering South American pioneers."

And finally: "This entire five week trip ... has certainly refreshed and gladdened our spirits. It has given us a new perspective on the teaching, deepening and consoli­dation work in Latin America. It was wonderful and inspiring to teach with the friends from other countries and exchange ideas and inspirations ... it was almost as though the Bahá'ís are already living in a Bahá'í world without frontiers."

Clyde Johnson, left, pioneer from Paraguay, and Reginald Baskin, pioneer from Bolivia, on an international teaching project in a jungle village in the State of Santa Cruz.

 Local Spiritual Assembly of Santa Lucia, Colombia on May 12, 1972, planning an evening meeting with visiting pioneers from Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela and the United States. They were also deciding how to spend contributions of the team. The decision was to buy books to start a local Bahá'í library and send a traveling teacher to open a neighboring village. The meeting was attended by 200. A month later, two new villages had been opened up with 112 new believers.

drifted away, and many new ones have come in since we were there. The concentration now seems to be on children's classes. The National Spiritual Assembly recently sponsored a National Children's Conference in Esmeraldas ..."

On the way back to Quito they stopped at Quinenday, an all black jungle village reminiscent of the rural South. There they saw old friends, taught new ones and had children's classes.

"In Quito we had an unexpected visit and reunion with Continental Counsellor Mas'úd Khamsi. About fifteen returning and arriving pioneers from all over South America were present at the Hornbys," Questioned by a pioneer, "What is the most valuable quality for a pioneer?", Mr. Khamsi replied, "Obedience". Questioned further as to the relative importance of obedience and patience, Mr. Khamsi pointed out that "If you are obedient, you are bound to become patient."

At the request of the Ecuador National Spiritual Assembly the Baskin family and Larry Day went to visit the Chibuleyos, a mountain people living about a half-day's trip outside Quito near Umbato. "These Quechua speaking Indians are said to have originated in Bolivia in pre-Colombian times ... We went by jeep with Raoul Pavor, co-ordinator of the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador, and a team of native and pioneer Bahá'ís. We had wonderful visits with several families there ... . We also gave a presentation at the community public school where about three-fourths of the children are Bahá'ís. We had songs from around the world, prayers, and even a geography lesson with a plastic collapsible globe ... Reggie was always ready with his guitar to sing in English, Quechua, and African (Tokosane). The Bahá'í students taught their young male teachers (O God, guide me, protect me ...)

Traveling with the same team, they went on beyond Umbato to visit the Salasaca Indians in an area newly opened last year. "These seem to be a very closed people, but most of them are artisans and I am sure a strong
In Ecuador, the city of Santo Domingo de los Colorados was the spot chosen during the period June 20 through July 29, 1972 for all levels of society to receive the joyful Message of the coming of Bahá’u’lláh.

Santo Domingo was chosen as the first in a series of all-out proclamation campaigns for the last year of the Nine Year Plan because of its strategic position between the mountain capital city of Quito and the port city of Guayaquil. It is a melting pot of the black, white and Indian peoples in Ecuador. The Colorado Indian tribe, from whom the city received its name had not yet been approached by Bahá’u’lláh’s advancing army.

And what an army it was that converged on this unsuspecting city! The forward thrust was sustained by a small core of experienced native teachers and pioneers. Reinforcement came from fourteen near and distant Ecuadorian Bahá’í communities and from newly arrived pioneers from the United States, Canada and Germany. Among the U.S. contingent were four summer-project youth. You could say the rear guard was the National Spiritual Assembly which met in Santo Domingo almost at the end of the campaign. Continental Counsellor, Mr. Mas’úd Khamsí was an inspiration during the first days of the campaign as were Auxiliary Board members Mr. Rufino Gualayi and Mr. Charles Hornby.

As Bahá’u’lláh’s foot soldiers spread throughout the city, talking to everyone who would listen, the radio was used to announce public meetings at the newly rented Bahá’í Center. It was hard going at first, but the believers were sustained by prayer and devotion and momentum began to build up; enrollments increased; the second stage of the campaign was initiated. All eight neighborhoods were again visited and while individual proclamation and enrollment continued, large meetings were also held with slide presentations and singing while over the radio the message of the coming of Bahá’u’lláh and His healing Teachings were heard. Nightly public meetings held at the Center were now being well attended. Every high school was visited and a large meeting was held at the largest and best known high school, Colegio Técnico Julio Moreno. Sorties were made to nearby villages and six new localities were opened to the Faith. One was the village of the Colorado (means red) Indians where it was necessary to formally ask permission of the tribal Chief to visit and speak of the Faith. The Saracay is both civil and traditional ruler of some 800 souls. As befitted the occasion and to show proper respect, a special team was chosen including Auxiliary Board member Rufino Gualavisi and Mrs. Clementina de Pavon who speak Quichua fluently and reflect that inner love, humility and wisdom possible to those approaching seventy years of age. The Message of Bahá’u’lláh was warmly received by the Saracay and arrangements were made to meet with village leaders the following week. On this occasion, the Faith was again explained and warmly received and a third meeting was called by the Chief to which all Colorado Indians were invited. The last meeting was held during a tropical rain storm. The chief expressed his surprise and pleasure that the friends would keep their word and come during a heavy rain. The Saracay accepted the Faith personally and in behalf of the entire tribe and gave permission for the believers to return and teach each individual so that they could each decide. There were nine declarations.

In the city of Santo Domingo and in several of the surrounding villages, the campaign entered its third stage, consolidation. Children’s classes were held in each neighborhood and preparation for the election of Local Spiritual Assemblies was begun. Again the radio was used effectively to explain further the Teachings as well as fundamentals of Bahá’í Administration. Members of the National Spiritual Assembly were called upon to explain points of Bahá’í Administration and a practice Assembly election was held at an all-day conference on July 23.

A word should be said about the election of the Local Spiritual Assembly in Santo Domingo. Many new believers from eight different neighborhoods came together for the first time! No one seemed to know more than two or three persons present and there was great confusion. But after the spiritual nature of Bahá’í elections was explained and prayers were said, a beautiful Assembly of the most informed and active believers was elected. They held their first meeting that night and their second at 8:00 a.m., the following morning!

And let there be a word of praise, an expression of profound admiration for those precious ones, the soldiers of Bahá’u’lláh. Santo Domingo is a hot, humid, tropical city; the friends were brought together so suddenly from different cultures, different languages, young and old, veterans and new recruits, sleeping on the floor of two rented rooms without adequate facilities, eating in local restaurants, but you would have never known!

The results: 475 declarations, 6 new localities, 3 Local Spiritual Assemblies, 1 new tribe.

What is the secret? What is it that causes our efforts to be crowned with joy and glory? Is it the words of guidance and inspiration of the beloved Guardian and The Universal House of Justice that gradually influence our institutions and the hearts and actions of the believers: “teach the masses, proclamation, consolidation, let the youth arise, all levels of society, redouble your efforts in behalf of your less fortunate sister communities who are not free to teach, increase cooperation at the national level, eliminate all traces of prejudice, be assured of our prayers, live the life”... or is it just that God’s Will will be done and we, without deserving, have been chosen as His instruments?
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Rúhiyyih Khánum
By Violette Nakhjavání, Companion
Part eleven

"Our next stop was in the small town of Kakenge which is central to several villages where many Bahá'ís reside. As there was no Bahá'í home that could receive us once again we went to the Catholic Mission and spent the first night there. The next morning, however, we were politely told we must leave the mission where we had planned to stay two nights. The little Belgian priest was not openly hostile but it seemed the Mission school had a local board of Congolese directors and they had met and insisted the Bahá'ís had no right to use the Mission guest rooms. It was the only experience of this kind we ever had; usually we neither say we are Christians nor Bahá'ís, we are travelers on our way. Rúhiyyih Khánum makes a special point of being kind and courteous to members of other faiths, particularly the Missionaries who are often examples of self-sacrifice and devotion to high ideals. After consultation with some of the Bahá'ís we moved to the village of Budimba five miles away to the home of the dear believers. We were much happier there than at the Mission! For the next two days we visited other villages in that area.

One of the exciting things along the roads in this district are the signs "Bahá'í Center" of such and such a village. Many of these signs were especially decorated with flowers and greens as a token of loving welcome to Amatu'l-Bahá. These numerous Bahá'í Centers are huts built with twigs and branches, some with mud walls and others with open walls and a thatched roof, some quite large. They are cool and adequate for their purpose and they were invariably decorated with flowers and streamers of fancy cut paper as a welcome to the Hand of the Cause.

In the village of Ishamba several chiefs from the neighboring villages, some of them Bahá'ís, came to meet Amatu'l-Bahá and offer their respects. Most of them were ceremonially dressed in their fascinating traditional costumes made of fine rafia cloth and decorated with cowrie shells, beads and skins of wild animals. The Chief wore a small embroidered and woven rafia cap and a fancy bunch of feathers as headgear. Over one hundred attended this meeting. When one realizes that sometimes Bahá'ís had come distances of 50 or 60 kilometers on foot (this seems to be the main and general means of moving about) one appreciates even more the devotion and love of these dear souls.

Rúhiyyih Khánum spoke frequently on the immortality of the soul of man and its continued progress after death. One of the friends asked: "Why is it that a child, often at the beginning of its life, suddenly dies. What happens to the soul of that child?" Amatu'l-Bahá told them of the example `Abdu'l-Bahá gave that a man's life is like a lamp; each lamp has a specific quantity of oil and should burn to the end of that oil. One lamp may have a small amount of oil and will burn out very soon when the oil finishes. How much oil is given to us when we come into this world is not in our hands. The progress and development of a soul which has left this world in infancy or childhood will continue under other conditions in the next world. Then she said: "The Master explains there is another form of death, the accidental death. Presumably the lamp is full of oil and is meant to burn for a full term, but foolishly this lamp may be placed in a draft and a sudden gust of wind blows it out. Through negligence, carelessness or stupidity accidental death can occur. This kind of death could have been prevented." Rúhiyyih Khánum went on to say that `Abdu'l-Bahá had said there are three mysteries in this world which we cannot understand fully while we are here: the suffering of the innocent for the guilty, the nature of life after death and where the line falls between predestination and free will.

The people of Zaire are very musical and the Bahá'ís have composed many beautiful songs about the Faith. One in particular I remember was specially written as a welcome for Amatu'l-Bahá. In almost all our meetings there was much joyous singing as part of the program. In the small town of Kakenge, although the number of Bahá'ís are few, over eighty people gathered to welcome Rúhiyyih Khánum. A question which was asked in this meeting as well as many other meetings was about the meaning of the Trinity and the nature of the Holy Spirit. Amatul-Bahá, in very simple words told them of the unique and beautiful example given by `Abdu'l-Bahá, of the sun, the rays of the sun and the mirror, likening these to Almighty God, the source of light and life; the Holy Spirit, the rays emanating from the sun; the Manifestations of God Who are the perfect mirrors, the recipients of the rays which convey the qualities of the sun. Although these are three separate things, the power and the glory of the sun can be seen in the mirror. She said that this is the Bahá'í explanation of the church doctrine of the Trinity.

Fourteen miles of unbelievably treacherous road took us to the village of Lukembe where over thirty devoted believers, including some pygmies of the Batua tribe, were eagerly awaiting the arrival of their much loved guest."

Five of the Chiefs who welcomed Rúhiyyih Khánum in the meeting at Ishamba village, Occidental Kasai, Zaire.
These people make their livelihood by hunting. Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke specially on the power of prayer and the importance of teaching the children to repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" which in itself is a prayer so that at moments of fear or distress, through repeating these blessed words, they may invoke the help and the protection of God. During the period of questions, a dear old hunter asked: "Is there a special prayer a hunter can use to catch his game?" Rúhíyyih Khánum said: "When you set off to hunt repeat the words ‘Ya-Bahá’u’lláh’ and beg Bahá’u’lláh to assist, guide and protect you on your hunt." He was very pleased and at the end of the meeting he presented Rúhíyyih Khánum with a small deer he had killed that morning.

The next day Amatu’l-Bahá had three meetings in three different villages. In Benalonge, where the community is very new and in need of strengthening, she spoke at length about Bahá’u’lláh referring to His wonderful and significant dream when still a child. Dreams and their interpretation have a very special meaning for the Africans. Rúhíyyih Khánum told them about this dream of Bahá’u’lláh in which He floated on the sea and every strand of His blessed hair was taken in the mouth of a fish. When he awoke and told His father of this dream, the father went to an interpreter of dreams. The explanation given was that this child would bring a great Message to the whole world and the people, like the fishes of the sea, would cling to His Teachings. The glow of ecstasy and rapture on the faces of the audience was a never-to-be-forgotten sight.

In the village of Pianga Matadi Amatu’l-Bahá was ceremoniously received by the chief, a non-Bahá’, but very sympathetic to the Faith. Both he and his wife were dressed in their traditional costumes. They were a very beautiful old couple with noble faces and a noble bearing. During the meeting, when one or two of the rather fanatical members of the audience tried to cause trouble and start an argument, this Chief, with great dignity and authority, ordered them to be silent. He said: "These wonderful teachings of Bahá’u’lláh are to unite mankind and bring about harmony and brotherhood. You should not make them the cause of strife. No one is forcing you to accept these Teachings. If you like it remain here and listen; if you don’t like it, you are free to go and leave others to partake from this heavenly food."

Amatu’l-Bahá confirmed his words by quoting Bahá’u’lláh on the purpose of religion; that it should be the cause of unity and harmony and if it is the cause of inharmony and disunity, to be without religion is better than having it.

The people of the Congo in general and the Bakuba tribe in particular are among the most artistic people in this vast continent of Africa; one of their beautiful handicrafts is rafia woven cloth for their ceremonial costumes which is decorated with cowrie shell, beads and skins of wild animals. The last meeting of that day was in the village of Budimba where over 150 friends from far and near gathered to welcome Rúhíyyih Khánum.

One of the friends asked if among the white people sorcery and witchcraft also existed. Rúhíyyih Khánum said: "maybe not in the form in which it exists in Africa but among the white people, too, there are all kinds of superstitions and manifestations of fanaticism which could be likened to sorcery. It is not confined to any one race."

In the village of Bakua Mbuyi, where we stayed two nights holding three different meetings, the believers were specially blessed as these meetings really were more in the nature of a continuous deepening class. At times over 200 people were crammed inside the Bahá’í Center as well as outside, looking and listening through every opening in the wall! Many of these friends had walked long distances to be present. The audience roared with laughter when a non-Bahá’í asked how Bahá’u’lláh could be the Promised One if he was descended from Kátura and not from Sarah. Rúhíyyih Khánum calmly replied: "Because the Covenant of God was with Abraham and not with his wives!"

 Asked when she thought these wonderful twelve principles of Bahá’u’lláh would be implemented in the world, Rúhíyyih Khánum explained that in the first place it is wrong to say "Twelve Principles" as there is really no such thing. Bahá’u’lláh never mentioned such a thing. "If you stop and count the social principles given by Bahá’u’lláh they come to much more than twelve, and if you study the talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá you will see that He

Amatu’l-Bahá in the village of Budimba, Occidental Kasai, Zaire.

At the left is the house where they slept.
mentioned different principles in His different talks. So it is very misleading to always refer to "Twelve Principles." She pointed out that many of these social principles, since Bahá'u'lláh revealed them, have been implemented by the various nations and leaders of the world, unaware of their source; for example, compulsory education, equality of the sexes, and many others.

In the village of Batu-Mwana-Bende where the Bahá'ís Chief and his two wives received Rúhíyyih Khánum in their ceremonial costumes, she spoke at great length on the importance of preserving the beautiful traditions of their past and being proud of their tribes. She told them how, with every additional tribe represented in the Cause, the beloved Guardian used to add their name to his list and joyously announce it to the Bahá'í world. Then she said: "I also belong to some tribes; I am descended from the McBean, the Sutherland and the Maxwell clans in Scotland." This remark always caused a strong reaction of surprise and joy from the Africans!

Some of the friends related significant dreams that had led them to recognition of the Blessed Beauty. One young man told how a year before he ever heard of the Faith, in a dream he saw a figure dressed in white, shining with a divine radiance, before whose feet he immediately prostrated himself, and was hurt and surprised to see that no other member of his family paid homage to this heavenly figure. When he became a Bahá'í, he recognized `Abdu'l-Bahá as the one before whom he had prostrated himself in his dream. With sadness he finished his story by saying, that no one in his family had accepted the Faith as yet.

Another devoted Bahá'í told us how for some time he had been rejecting the Faith and allowing doubts to keep him from recognizing and accepting the Cause of God. Then on three successive nights he had very strange and significant dreams which led him to wholeheartedly accepting Bahá'u'lláh. The first night he saw the Infant Christ in the arms of His mother. The second night he saw the blazing rays of the sun on the sea making a straight path across it. On the third night he saw the brilliant rays of the sun penetrating his house and filling it with a glow of perfect light. After this his heart was reassured and he accepted the Faith. The friends were spellbound when Rúhíyyih Khánum recounted some of the beautiful dreams her mother had had in her childhood and youth which prepared her for acceptance and recognition of the Message of God.

In the village of Bena Leke the only accommodation available to us was an empty shop on the main road which we rented for two nights. The neighboring family kindly permitted us to use their outdoor toilet facilities and borrow their petrolux lamp. So for two days we had the experience of living right in the middle of the town, where often curious passers by would ask us who we were and what we were doing. In two meetings Amatu'l-Bahá spoke to about seventy believers, most of them from the neighboring villages and some even from far away ones in the bush. One man with his wives and children had walked a distance of sixty kilometers to attend these meetings! Although the number of Bahá'ís living in Bena Leke was small, all these dear visitors from far away were taken into the homes of the local believers and cared for lovingly. A number of very devoted and active Bahá'í women had come from another nearby village so Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke especially on the role and responsibility of women. She spoke of the life and station of such a woman as Táhirih, the martyr and poetess. She also spoke of the influence of a woman on the spiritual destiny of not only her children but also her husband. She told us of an incident in the life of her parents which she had heard from her own mother. Before the birth of her younger brother, her father, Mr. Maxwell, and her mother, Mrs. Maxwell were growing very active and always busy with the work of the Faith (as she always was to the end of her life) Rúhíyyih Khánum's father one day said to her mother that he felt they were drifting apart and he would just spend more and more time on his profession and their marriage would suffer because of this difference in interests. Mrs. Maxwell was upset by these words as they loved each other very deeply and she was afraid that she might lose her husband's love. She felt she wanted to reassure him and tell him that for his sake she was ready to pay more attention to him and be less active in serving the Cause, but her heart would not let her do this. So she said to her husband that he remembered before she married him she told him that this Faith would always come first in her life and if he felt this way, she would just have to go on alone. Mr. Maxwell thought for a while and then took his wife's hand in his and assured her that he was willing to pay the price of his way with her. This was really the beginning of his becoming a Bahá'í. Rúhíyyih Khánum concluded this story by saying that if her mother had compromised and given in to her fear of losing her husband the whole course of her life as well as their life together would have been very different. If she had wavered then, her own faith would have weakened, her husband might have never accepted the Faith. Often Rúhíyyih Khánum was asked what she thought about Simon Kimbangu and the sect he founded, which is now widespread in Zaire. In the early 1930s this devout Congolese Catholic Christian believed that the church should be adapted to more African ways and introduced his own ideas and methods into his congregation or church. He was seized by the colonial authorities and accused of being a disturbing element, and after almost thirty years of unjust imprisonment, died a prisoner. He never claimed any special right or position for himself and had the reputation of being a very good man. However, some years after his death his son took over the ideas his father had preached, professed his father's faith of which Simon Kimbangu himself had never claimed) and also that his religion was a genuine Congolese religion. This sect has already divided into four subsects. Aside from some of its teachings it has now become a tightly-knit commercial enterprise something like a large co-operative which provides businesses on a small scale for individual members, opens schools and is generally profitable.
to belong to, resembling somewhat in this respect Ismailis or followers of the Aga Khan.

Rúhíyyih Khánum explained the difference between a Prophet who claims to be sent by God and a reformer. Simon Kimbangu never claimed to be a Prophet, but tried to introduce some improvements into the religion he loved and believed.

She gave a vivid, original, and beautiful example. She said suppose for many years you have used a special candle, blue in color, sold to you by your village shopkeeper. One day one of your neighbors comes to you and says "Look, I have a red candle, it is made in our own village by our own people, so why should we go on buying the imported blue candle?" There will then be a dispute between the traders who sold the original blue candles and the supporters of the home-made red candles. At this point the government brings to your village electricity and informs you that you can now have electricity in your homes. What, then, is the use of wasting any more time in arguing over the superiority of a red candle over a blue candle? Once you have electricity you do not want candles anyway. The friends immediately caught the point and liked this example very much.

In addition to the two meetings Rúhíyyih Khánum had with the dear Baha'is in this village, a well-attended public meeting was arranged with the help and encouragement of the military district officer. Over forty people came and stayed on asking questions until it was too dark to continue.

The Baha'is of Milamba, many of whom had been attending these meetings requested that when she continued her journey she stop and have some prayers with them and bless their village. We agreed to this request and stopped in Milamba. Next at Tshimbambula there were over sixty believers gathered to welcome her in their Baha'i Center who eagerly listened to her words.

In two well-attended meetings in the village of Tshi­bala, Amatu'l-Baha spoke to over fifty Baha'is and their friends.

A young man, a member of the Apostolic Church which is quite wide-spread in that area, dressed in his long white robe and carrying a shepherd's crook as tall as himself—supposedly in remembrance of the Apostles of Christ, the Shepherds of mankind—asked Rúhíyyih Khánum: "How is it that you, a woman, teach and preach when in the Gospels St. Paul clearly says no woman should do this?"

Rúhíyyih Khánum smiled and said: "When St. Paul, 2000 years ago, made this comment, there were no cars and no radios and your ancestors hunted for their food in the bush and wore no clothes such as the one you are wearing now. If you are ready to go back to living the way they did in St. Paul's time and give up all the things that you have acquired in this modern age, then I am also ready to stop teaching and preaching!" At this answer the women who were sitting at one side of the room broke into thunderous applause and loud laughter. This was the first time we had seen such an open response of complete agreement.

To say, as many foreigners do, that women in Africa are downtrodden and have no rights is a very superficial judgment of things, especially as the situation varies greatly from tribe to tribe. Many tribes afford their women certain rights and privileges which, though they may not be exactly the same rights women have been clamoring for in other parts of the world, are nevertheless very substantial and make the women very independent. One thing was quite clear in Zaire, whether in the villages or in the cities; the purse strings are in the hands of the woman; she runs the home, and often the business too, and controls the money. Many Treasurers of Local Assemblies are women!

(To be continued)
VIEWS—NORWEGIAN TEMPLE SITE

Norwegian Temple site as seen from the road, up the natural stone slope.

Views from the Norwegian Temple site
The symbol on Bahá’í ringstones is a visual reminder of God’s purposes for man, and for Bahá’ís in particular.

### BAHÁ’Í RINGSTONES

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Bahá’í ringstones are now available for distribution through your local Bahá’í librarian or the Publishing Trust or other distribution committee authorized by your National Spiritual Assembly.

The ringstones may be obtained in several colors, sizes and shapes and can be mounted in the setting of your choice by your local jeweler.

The carnelian, white agate and black and green onyx ringstones are made from natural gemstones. The others are made from hard, gemstone-quality long-wearing synthetic spinel or corundum. Each stone is hand-engraved with the symbol above and filled with fine gold.

Prices may be obtained from your local Bahá’í librarian.
Essay Contest Sponsored in Liberia

Youth panel, Baha’is and others, discussing “The Role of Individual Youth in Achieving World Peace.” Second from the left is United States pioneer Don Berkman.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of West Africa appointed a National Youth Contest Committee to plan an essay contest among the non-Baha’i high school youth in Liberia on the occasion of World Peace Day. In collaboration with the National Publicity and Proclamation Committee they chose the topic “The Role Of Individual Youth In Achieving World Peace.” Posters and fly-sheets were made and distributed to the various high schools throughout Liberia. The response from the students was very encouraging, making the choice of the three prize winners a difficult one. The first, second, and third place winners each received a cash prize and a Baha’i book, which was presented by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa at a well attended public meeting where Baha’i youth and other youth of various religious denominations participated in a panel discussion, followed by a highly stimulating talk on the subject of “World Peace.” The young audience, made up mostly of students, later broke up into smaller question and answer groups.

This proclamation event received excellent coverage by radio and television. Several interviews were given before and after the contest, and the national newspaper gave publicity. One radio interviewee asked when the Baha’i would sponsor another such contest because he thought this was very worth while.

CANADIAN Baha’í NEWS may be ordered by sending $4.00 for a one-year subscription (2nd Class) $6.00 airmail.
Write to: Canadian Baha’i News Committee: 729 Leslie St., Thornhill, Ontario, Canada.
The Universal House of Justice

Announces

Adoption of its Constitution

WITH GRATEFUL JOYOUS HEARTS ANNOUNCE ENTIRE BAHÁ'Í WORLD ADOPTION PROFOUNDLY SIGNIFICANT STEP IN UNFOLDMENT MISSION SUPREME ORGAN BAHÁ'Í WORLD COMMONWEALTH THROUGH FORMULATION CONSTITUTION UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE. AFTER OFFERING HUMBLE PRAYERS GRATITUDE ON DAY COVENANT AT THREE SACRED THRESHOLDS BAHÁ'Í HAIFA MEMBERS GATHERED COUNCIL CHAMBER PRECINCTS HOUSE BLESSED MASTER APPENDED THEIR SIGNATURES FIXED SEAL ON INSTRUMENT ENVISAGED WRITINGS BELOVED GUARDIAN HAILED BY HIM AS MOST GREAT LAW FAITH BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. FULLY ASSURED MEASURE JUST TAKEN WILL FURTHER REINFORCE TIES BINDING WORLD CENTER TO NATIONAL LOCAL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT WORLD RELEASE FRESH ENERGIES INCREASE ENTHUSIASM CONFIDENCE VALIANT WORKERS HIS DIVINE VINEYARD LABORING ASSIDUOUSLY BRING MANKIND UNDER SHELTER HIS ALL GLORIOUS COVENANT.

(signed)—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa, Israel
Cable 26 November 1972
Of gentle, aristocratic background, Phoebe Apperson Hearst was born in Franklin, Missouri in 1842. Her parents had social position. They were prosperous owners of slaves. At the age of seventeen, after she had gained some knowledge of French, she became a school teacher.

Two years later, in 1862, against the wishes of her parents, she eloped with rough, but kindly, George Hearst, aged forty-one. He had business interests in San Francisco, where he lived and was possessed of considerable wealth. They went to live in his native city.

In 1863 William Randolph Hearst, her only child, was born.

Extremely beautiful, Mrs. Hearst was firm, determined, and unusually generous. She had a fine moral sense. Although strong and generous like his wife and highly principled in business, Mr. Hearst did not always share her highest ideals. This situation brought her closer to her son and caused her to become a possessive mother.

A biographer has written, "Although she was conventionally God-fearing, she found her chief faith in secular self-improvement and her religion in the upbringing of her child."1

In the spring of 1873, when her husband was living some distance from the city, taking care of his mining interests, she rented their large house on Chestnut Street and left for Europe with her son and his tutor, Thomas Barry.

While travelling in Dublin, she wrote in her diary, "The poorer classes are so terribly poor, Willie wants to give away all his money and clothes too, and really I felt the same way, if we could have relieved even half of them."2

In Rome, characteristically, she succeeded in arranging an audience with Pope Pius IX. "He was so kind and lovely, spoke altogether in French, asked where we came from," she wrote to her husband. "When he came to Willy, he placed his hand on his head, and blessed him." —(February 7, 1874).3

On their return from Europe, she found that her husband had suffered a serious financial reverse. As a result, while he remained away from the city in order to recover his mining interests, she and her son lived in a modest boarding house. But Mr. Hearst had a genius for business. It did not take him long to revive his fortunes and to become much richer than before.

At this time Mrs. Hearst began her philanthropic work in earnest. Without any sectarian bias, she not only gave away enormous sums of money, but also unsparingly devoted her time and energy to worthy causes.

She helped in the foundation of the first Homeopathic Hospital in San Francisco, named after Dr. Hahnemann, the developer of that medical science.

As well as contributing to orphanages and to a children's hospital, she established seven kindergartens in that city.

Several years later Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, President of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, wrote to her: "Your seven kindergartens are a beacon light guiding the little ones to the port of peace—may we all reach the port of peace at last."4

In 1886, the Governor of California appointed George Hearst, Senator. As a result, of course the Hearsts moved to Washington D.C. While there, she established more kindergartens, helped the Polyclinic Hospital, and did much to relieve the suffering caused by an earthquake in Charleston, South Carolina. In their house in Washington D.C. at 1400 New Hampshire Avenue, she gave big receptions, often in aid of some charity or a struggling artist.

In February 1891, Senator Hearst died peacefully. His widow, then forty-eight, now had control of an enormous fortune.

She returned to San Francisco for a short time. The new responsibilities recently thrust upon her combined with the problems that a number of grasping people created for her, led to the breakdown of her health. After resting for some months in the country, she returned to Washington and lived there for the next nine years except when she made frequent visits to San Francisco and occasional trips to Europe. She built the National Catholic School for Girls in Washington. Mrs. Hearst was a co-founder of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) in 1897.

Robert Turner

In a sketch, Louis G. Gregory has informed us that Robert Turner, her Negro butler, held a position of some responsibility in her household and affirmed that "he was faithful, dependable, and wise."5

Some time before 1898, Lua Getsinger, whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá had called Liva (meaning "Banner of the Cause")
visited San Francisco. During this trip she called on Mrs. Hearst and spoke to her about the Baha'i Faith. Even without access to the facts it is not hard to imagine the thrilling scene that ensued. Robert Turner let Mrs. Getinger into the house and showed her into a finely furnished sitting-room. After giving her a gracious welcome, Mrs. Hearst asked her guest to sit down next to her on the sofa. After first serving the tea, Robert stood near to them. In a most moving manner, Mrs. Getinger spoke to them both about the Baha'i Faith. On this occasion and surely on those that followed Robert did all that he could to learn about the Faith and he became a believer.

In God Passes By, Shoghi Effendi has referred to the fact that an American Negro, Robert Turner was "the first member of his race to embrace the Cause of Baha'u'llah in the West." 6

First Western Pilgrims

Deeply moved by what she had heard, in 1908 Mrs. Hearst decided to visit 'Abdu'l-Baha in the Holy Land. She generously invited others to go along with her and made up a party which consisted of Lua Getsinger and her husband, Dr. Ibrahim Khayru'llah, a Syrian doctor, and two English believers, Mrs. Thornburgh and her daughter, Miriam Thornburgh-Cropper. In Egypt, Dr. Khayru'llah's mother and their grandmother joined this historic party. They travelled from Egypt to Haifa in a small, uncomfortable boat. The outbreak of a storm did not make the journey easier.

Because of the serious dangers that constantly threatened 'Abdu'l-Baha, the fifteen pilgrims visited the prison city of Akka in three separate groups.

At nightfall their first day in Haifa, December 10, 1908, the first group which seems to have included the Getingers, Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper, Mrs. Hearst and Robert Turner, took a carriage to the prison house.

As they went upstairs there, Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper has recorded, "a great light followed the way for us with a small piece of candle which cast strange shadows on the walls of this silent place. Suddenly the light caught a form that at first seemed a vision of mist and light. It was The Master which the candlelight revealed to us. His white robe and silver flowing hair, and shining eyes gave the impression of a spirit, rather than of an human being. We tried to tell Him how deeply grateful we were at His receiving us. 'No,' He answered, 'you are kind to come.' This was spoken in a very careful English. Then He smiled and we recognized the light which He possessed in the radiance which moved over His fine and noble face.'

Their first meeting with The Master so overwhelmed the other members of the group that they failed to notice that Robert Turner had not entered the room. Thinking of him immediately, The Master went to the door and found Robert standing outside.

Mr. Gregory has written, "At sight of the Master he dropped upon his knees and exclaimed, 'My Lord! My Lord! I am not worthy to be here!' 'Abdu'l-Baha raised him to his feet," and embraced him like a loving father.

Hand of the Cause of God, Hasan M. Balyuzi, has described another meeting between The Master and Robert. "One day as the Master sat with the pilgrims, He asked whether everybody was there, and then He noticed that the Butler was absent. 'Where is Robert?' He enquired, and as soon as that 'Abdu'l-Baha returned to the room, 'Abdu'l-Baha rose to His feet and greeted Him affectionately. He made Robert, a servant, sit down with the rest, and said: 'Robert, your Lord loves you. God gave you a black skin, but a heart white as snow.' 9"

When The Master led the party into The Most Holy Tomb and even into its innermost chamber, Robert, of course, present. He, of no seemingly worldly importance, brought along at least partly to serve Mrs. Hearst, was greatly affected by The Master's most loving welcome and understanding treatment and became deeply convinced by Him of the Reality of God's Cause for this day. The Master assured him that "if he remained firm and steadfast until the end, he would be a door through which a whole race would enter the Kingdom." 10

A year after her pilgrimage, Mrs. Hearst wrote to a friend, "Those three days were the most remarkable of my life..." Shortly afterwards, in another letter she has described The Master in these words: "I must say He is the most wonderful Being I have ever met or ever expect to meet in this world. Although He does not seek to impress one at all, strength, power, purity, love and holiness are radiated from His majestic, yet humble personality, and the spiritual atmosphere which surrounds Him and most powerfully affects all those who are blest by being near Him is indescribable... I believe in Him with all my heart and soul..." 11

Mrs. Hearst had done an unforgettable service for the Baha'i Cause in bringing the first pilgrimage of believers from a Christian background and from the West to meet 'Abdu'l-Baha and to visit The Most Holy Tomb. As Shoghi Effendi has pointed out, "The return of these God-intoxicated pilgrims, some to France, others to the United States, was the signal for an outburst of systematic and sustained activity, which as it gathered momentum and spread its ramifications over Western Europe and the States and Provinces of the North American continent, grew to so great a scale that 'Abdu'l-Baha Himself resolved that as soon as He should be released from His prolonged confinement in ' Akka He would undertake a personal mission to the West." 12

After her had returned to her home in Washington, D.C. Mrs. Hearst gave a reception there for prominent educators of the Negro race. Mr. Gregory felt that she did more perhaps for the University of that day because of her experiences at Akka and her esteem for Robert Turner. 13 She spoke to them all most ardently about the coming of Baha'u'llah.

Later Years

Unfortunately, as a result of the activities of certain unprincipled individuals who left the Faith and tried to take advantage of Mrs. Hearst's generosity she became estranged from the Cause but she never lost her love for the Master.

In 1900, after selling her mansion in Washington, she returned to California with her niece, Ann Apperson, to live in an attractive house of Spanish architecture, called Hacienda, which she had built at Pleasanton, a suburb of San Francisco.

On her arrival there she began again and continued without ceasing her philanthropic work in California. She did more perhaps for the University of that State than for any other institution. In the summer of 1912 she helped to establish a permanent camp for the Young Women's Christian Association.

During the next October 'Abdu'l-Baha visited California. Although separated from the Baha'i Community, Mrs. Hearst asked Him and His attendants to visit her house in Pleasanton, and at the same time asked many of her friends to meet Him. "Because her invitation was sincere," 14 Arriving on October 13th He stayed there for three nights. The first to bring up the Faith directly, she asked Him..."
to chant again a certain prayer in Arabic that had moved him deeply when he heard Him chant it during her pilgrim fourteen years earlier. Without any hesitation He did so. Her guests seemed greatly affected by His chanting. On the next day He said a prayer for them before lunch. On the night afterwards, the last of His visit, He said one before dinner.

Before leaving, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked to meet all of the servants in the house. He spoke to them like a father and gave each one a present of money.

One can well imagine that He and Mrs. Hearst spoke more than once about her devoted Robert who had passed away some time before. She took Him and His attendants back to San Francisco. During the trip He explained to her that those who tried to extort money from people and were anxious to get hold of possessions belonging to others could not be called Bahá’ís.

After she had strenuously served her country in humanitarian work during the First World War, she died on April 13, 1919.

Mr. W. A. Swanberg, a biographer of her son, has called her, “California’s greatest lady and one of the nation’s most remarkable women.”

In a Tablet to Mr. A. W. Randall (translated by Azzizollah, Mt. Carmel, Published by the Bahá’í Publishing Trust, p. 259), referring to the San Francisco Examiner founded by Senator George Hearst and then inherited by his son and heir, William Randolph Hearst, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has written, “The papers of Mr. Hearst are verily striving for the protection of the rights of the people. I am supplicating that they may become the first papers serving the good of the world of humanity so that they may keep alive the blessed name of Mrs. Hearst and that this name, Hearst, may live permanently till eternity.”

Notes:
3. W. A. Swanberg, Citizen Hearst, p. 16.
15. World Order, Vol. XII, p. 28.

Youth Conference in Honduras

On July 7 through 9, 1972 nearly fifty Bahá’í youth from nine localities of Honduras gathered in La Ceiba, on the Caribbean Coast for a Youth Conference.

Classes covered Bahá’í History, the Administrative Order, the Fund, and “Living the Life”. The Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb was held on Sunday, July 9. The public meeting Saturday night with songs and a slide show attracted nearly a hundred people. When the youth departed Sunday, it was with a clearer and deeper understanding of the Faith.

Proclamation in Chinatown, New York City

"And ye who are the people of the Orient—the Orient which has ever been the dawning-point of lights—from whence the Sun of Reality has ever shone forth casting its effulgence upon the West—ye therefore must become the manifestations of lights. Ye must become brilliant lamps. Ye must shine as stars radiating the light of love toward all mankind. May you be the cause of love amongst the nations. Thus may the world become witness that the Orient has ever been the dawning-point of illumination, the source of love and reconciliation. Make peace with all the world. Love everybody; serve everybody. All are the servants of God. God has created all. He provideth for all. He is kind to all. Therefore must we be kind to all.

I am greatly pleased with this meeting. I am joyous and happy, for there in these western regions I find Orientals seeking education, and who are free from prejudice. May God assist you!"

(Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 342)

These words of 'Abdu'l-Baha, quoted at the Gateway Conference on September 9, 1972, served to bring into sharp focus the aim of the Northeast Oriental Teaching Committee, to bring the Faith of Baha'u'llah to the Oriental peoples of the Northeastern States so that through His power, their true station will be achieved. Although the reader of this passage was unaware of it, the words had still more significance for Stephen Yamamoto, a member of the committee: it was his grandfather who arranged the meeting in Oakland, California at which 'Abdu'l-Baha delivered this talk in 1912.

At our first meeting in Chinatown, New York, (September 16) we got a glimpse of the immense possibilities for spreading the Faith that were ahead. While waiting for the others to arrive, two committee members distributed handouts and talked to people at the corner of Canal and Mott Streets—the heart of Chinatown. We saw how readily we could give out material throughout Chinatown. Standing there we saw single people and entire families, well-to-do people and those of modest means, young and old, strolling or hurrying about their Saturday shopping. Although most people we spoke to were extremely courteous and receptive, we could gauge the response of the youth more easily because they spoke English immediately. We immediately saw the need for having material written in Chinese for older people. (Later we observed that the Chinese language publications also attracted young people's interest.)

On our first visit our aim was to familiarize ourselves with the neighborhood and to locate a place for our first public meeting. We walked around and inquired again and again among residents. Finally one man advised us not to telephone, but to follow up each lead in person. We did this, and were successful in renting the auditorium of Public School 23, on Mulberry and Bayard Streets.

It was vital that we have our first public meeting directly in Chinatown, for it is here that the Chinese live in great numbers and they are reluctant to travel out of its vicinity. Above all, we knew the inestimable value of attracting spiritual power to that area and of demonstrating the love and harmony among people of diverse races working to proclaim Baha'u'llah's Message.

Once the building for our public meeting had been secured, we had flyers, handouts, and a brief pamphlet printed in English and Chinese. At our second meeting in Chinatown (October 14, 1972), we sat in Columbus Park, directly across from Public School 23. As people walked through the park, we noticed that there were watching us—cultural diversity and the love and joy of our committee drew them to us; the flyers in Chinese aroused their curiosity. It was easy to teach!

On the weekend before the proclamation, two committee members and others distributed about sixty posters in Chinese and English among the stores in the heart of Chinatown. We found most merchants cooperative in posting our notices. The following week we were pleased to see that most posters were still up.

Our secretary sent announcements to Baha'i communities in all nine Northeastern States apprising them of the proclamation and inviting them to assist us. These announcements were made at the Feast of Knowledge. In addition, she sent flyers and personal letters of invitation to the Chinese. When the committee members had met—people who had given them leads, advertising men in the local newspaper offices, storekeepers, youth center directors, et al. During the week before the public meeting the committee had notices in Chinese printed in that day's newspapers.

On Saturday, October 28, 1972, twenty-seven Baha'is met at the New York Baha'i Center for prayers and orientation before going to Chinatown to distribute flyers and literature. Despite a steady, heavy downpour, we stood outside and handed out material during the major part of the day. Our aim was to inform people of the meeting the next day, presenting them with an image of dignity and reserve and thereby attracting them to the Faith. This time there was a significant number of older people who responded positively—they readily accepted the material, thanked us for it, and read it carefully. Their gracious attitudes encouraged even the shy ones who had never done street teaching before. Before the group re-assembled at 4:30 p.m. all of us had grown in spiritual strength and confidence, and we truly understood Baha'u'llah's words, "The source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God and steadfastness in His Love." (Words of Wisdom, p. 4)

A large group of the friends gathered at the Baha'i Center in New York City, Sunday morning the 29th. Prayers were read for Divine guidance. Then we all went downtown to Chinatown. The rain had stopped, but the skies were dark and overcast. Still, with hearts full of joy, we began distributing literature. As more friends arrived—from New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Washington, D.C.—our joyous spirits overcame the weather. Again the radiance of our groups attracted the interest of the residents of Chinatown.

Twenty-five Chinese were present at our public meeting, along with about twenty other seekers and about seventy-five Baha'is. Most of the Chinese were of middle age; some brought their whole families. Only a few were unacquainted. All of us were inspired by the program: a multi-media presentation of songs, dance, slides, recitations, readings and instrumental solos by the Baha'i Singers; and a talk by Eric Byrd on "What is the Baha'i Faith?" Most of the Chinese seekers received a booklet in Chinese to take with them. Several persons whom we spoke to at the end of the program said that they would definitely come to our second public meeting, to be held on November 19 in the same place.

Many of the friends found Chinatown to be an area of limitless possibilities. All of us feel encouraged by the fact that twenty-five Chinese have already come to hear Baha'u'llah's Message; our redoubled efforts in the time ahead may attract others in greater numbers; from them we may find those who will become attracted to Baha'u'llah and will remain steadfast in His Cause.

—Ann M. Carpenter
A Triumph in Living the Life—
Institute in New Guinea

The new institute building was in the last stages of completion in Arufa, New Guinea when nearby Bahá'ís began arriving on foot late in October 1972. New Guinea is the large island just north of Australia, one of the last places on the face of the globe to be explored with its tropical rain forests and in the north-east, highlands, even mountains. But the unknown evidently had been faced with confidence by heroic Bahá'í pioneers who had carefully planted the seeds of the Faith and now the harvest was beginning. (Read the exciting story of the river trip of Sue Podger in a different part of the island, Papua, in August 1971 BAHÁ'í News.)

Arufa, in the highlands of the north-east, had reached a high point in its Bahá'í growth, and its first building to house a teaching institute was scheduled to be completed for its first session from October 21 to 27, 1972. The faithful teachers were anxious: would the building be completed in time? Would the village Bahá'ís be able to cope with the visitors? Well they might be concerned for this Institute was to upset hundreds of years of traditional inter-tribal belligerency. On the local level believers would have to divest themselves of prejudice hardened into habitual antagonism. Were believers strong enough to "live the life", to accept former tribal enemies as brothers?

The last day or two before the great event, a calamity occurred. The bridge over the river was removed so no
vehicles could come into Arufa. Surely under these conditions it is impossible to hold the Institute, the pioneers reasoned. But no, some visitors were already arriving through jungle trails and there was no way to send word out to cancel the session. The Institute had to be held. And, lo, it was done!

The building is a traditional round house such as is used by the highland people. It has a wooden frame, plaited bamboo sides, cement floor and a tin and fibre glass roof which can be seen gleaming in the sun for several miles along the highway. Students slept in small grass and bamboo houses in the village.

Daily sessions were attended by as many as twenty students, representing twelve localities. The evening sessions, enlarged by Arufa and Goroka Baha'is, numbered about eighty.

Auxiliary Board member Violet Hoehnke and the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly traveled from Lae to Goroka to assist.

Morning sessions consisted of study classes on the topics of "Progressive Revelation", "The Covenant", "Baha'i Laws", and practice Local Assembly meetings and Feasts. Afternoons were free for rest and gardening. Evenings featured slide shows, discussions and singing. A party was held at the end of the school attended by ninety-one men, women and children. The sessions were conducted by Dan Himes, Noel Bluett, Margaret Bluett, and Violet Hoehnke, who noticed an eagerness to teach and live the life. A telegram was received from the Sogeri Institute, held at the same time, and a reply was sent.

While the school was in session the Local Government Council had a crew of men installing a cement bridge near by, and a large bulldozer worked up and down the hilly track preparing to lay an all-weather road into Arufa. To the Baha'i residents, this modern engineering miracle, coinciding with the holding of the first Institute was a sign that a new age had arrived in their village.

Indeed, this was a demonstration of the power of the Faith to bring about a spiritual change in the hearts of mankind. It is the fervent hope of the National Assembly that this Institute in Arufa, together with the two other Institutes in Sogeri and Madina, will prove to be the most effective means of deepening the believers and inspiring the work of teaching in New Guinea.
The Bermuda Baha'i Teaching Conference held November 23-26 at the Hamilton Princess Hotel was a successful climax to many proclamation activities held in Bermuda during the week preceding the Conference. Most exciting to the Bermuda Baha'is was the acceptance by the Bermuda Society of Arts of the paintings of Mark Tobey, along with strong pictures of Shahokh Makhanian, a Persian artist living in Italy, and sandpaintings of David Villasenor, all Baha'is, for showing during their Annual Exhibition. The Society of Arts opened the exhibition with special thanks to the Baha'is of Bermuda.

There were three television presentations of the Faith. The first was the film "Give Me That New Time Religion" featuring Dizzie Gillespie, Seals and Crofts and Gerardine Jones. This was followed by a half-hour program which introduced Robert Imagire (member International Goals Committee) in his capacity of expert on Japanese flower arranging. Mr. Imagire was interviewed by Lee Johnson of Bermuda, one of the two Baha'i radio announcers on the Island. That program was called "Leaves of One Branch—Flowers of One Garden". On November 22, Dr. Daniel Jordan, Vice-Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States, was introduced on ZBM-TV by Mrs. Annette Lightbourne, Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Devonshire, Bermuda in a program called "Keys to Harmony". Many Bermudians expressed their enjoyment of this program, and the others.

The Baha'is arriving in Bermuda on Thursday, November 23 were met by blustery winds, but were soon warmed by the hospitality of the Bermudians, Baha'i and non-Baha'i alike.

The Conference, having the theme "Arise and Struggle" began Thursday evening with a Unity Feast which was conducted by Mr. Hubert Simmons, Chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Pembroke.

Mrs. Marjorie Gladwin, Secretary of the Bermuda Teaching Committee, gave a detailed and informative history of the growth of the Faith in Bermuda. The Faith was introduced on the Island for the first time in 1949 by Mrs. Pauline Campbell, whose husband was then attached to the U.S. Air Force Base. The first Baha'is to enroll under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh was Mr. Brian Burland, who actually declared in Canada with his Canadian wife, Gail. Together they had many firesides and proclamation events in Bermuda before moving back to Canada. Administratively, Bermuda was served by several National Spiritual Assemblies, lastly by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States. It was the latter who decided that as Bermuda has nine parishes and two cities, it should have eleven Local Assemblies. To date Bermuda has two Local Spiritual Assemblies and seven groups.

These two Assemblies and three of the groups prepared displays on Baha'i themes for the Conference. The St. George group displayed a few of their materials for the archives, which included a receipt from Shoghi Effendi for a sum of money sent to the Fund from Bermudian Baha'is in 1956. The Hamilton group displayed the works of the Guardian under the name of "The Priceless Pearl." The Sandys Group had an interesting display of hand-lettered quotations from the Most Holy Words, artistically arranged with leaves and flowers. The Local Assembly of Devonshire displayed a map of Bermuda made with local shells and sand from the beaches of Bermuda on a blue background. The Assembly of Pembroke composed a verse opposite the name of Bahá'u'lláh written vertically, and called Him "The Prince of Peace"—this against a gold background.

On Friday, November 24, Dr. Daniel Jordan addressed the Conference on the topic—"The Bahá'í Faith and the Individual." Dr. Jordan stressed the fact that the individual living in present day society is bombarded by pressures and illustrated how the Bahá'í prepares himself or gathers ammunition to combat these pressures. Because these pressures are temporary and changing, a non-Bahá'í must have temporary and changing outlets, but a Bahá', through deepening in the ocean of the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, will have a permanent and ever appropriate outlet.

Friday consisted of several sessions and Mrs. Elizabeth Haynes discussed "The Baha'í Faith and the Family". Her most salient points dealt with youth and the aged. She warned parents against cloaking themselves with guilt when their adolescent children become caught up by the mores of the permissive society stating that in this condition, parents could be of little help to their children. Mrs. Haynes also shared her experiences gained in her contacts with the elderly and pleaded for more love and attention for them. Someone in the audience men-
tioned the importance of allowing ourselves to become 'elderly' and related the 'ecology' of family life, and the need of youngsters to have elderly folk around them.

Mrs. Annette Lightbourne, Chairman of the Devonshire Assembly, made the Guardian's writings about the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh clearer in her touching dissertation about the failure of the leaders of the world to lead in the right direction.

On Saturday, Nov. 25, Dr. Jordan once again addressed the Conference. This time the topic was "The Bahá'í Faith and the World."

Bahá'ís in the audience of the various sessions were encouraged to speak at certain times and they took full advantage of this opportunity for participation and imparted some valuable knowledge.

On Friday and Saturday afternoon the visiting Bahá'ís busied themselves all over the island with teaching the Faith and proclaiming Bahá'u'lláh. The majority reported that Bermudians were indeed familiar with the name Bahá'í.

A music festival Saturday evening was hosted by Van Gilmer, known to many for his musical talents. Dr. Jordan once again performed his "Keys to Harmony" and Bermuda Bahá'í Lloyd Williams thrilled everyone with his saxophone and flute. Bermudian artists who participated were the Liberation Dancers and their musicians, soprano Jean Shaw and the Milt Robinson Trio.

At the Silver Leaf Guest House where many of the American Bahá'ís stayed, a gathering after the music festival continued with songs. Here a new Bahá'í declared. He told us that Mr. Leroy Stines, well known Bahá'í from Bermuda (now deceased) told him about Bahá'u'lláh when the Faith was first introduced in Bermuda.

On Sunday, November 26, everyone gathered for the commemoration of the Day of the Covenant. Dr. Jordan was the speaker and advised that the Covenant provided the maximum liberty or freedom that we could attain, while at the same time providing the maximum amount of security necessary for our well being. He spoke of the Power of the Covenant as being the means for bringing together for the Conference such a varied group including people of Jewish, Moslem, Buddhist, Christian and other backgrounds.

The Conference closed with an expression of thanks to the Bahá'ís for coming to Bermuda and for helping the Bermuda Bahá'ís to teach.

Appointed by the Bermuda Teaching Committee, the Conference Co-ordinating Committee consisted of Leighton Rochester, Lloyd Williams, Valerie Stines and Merle Martin. The committee was assisted by each of the Bermuda Bahá'ís, the International Goals Committee and the National Public Information Committee of the United States.
Referring for the adoption of resolutions, which were duly registered, Honorable Mr. Mahmood Ali Qasuri, stating that the right to travel has been guaranteed to all citizens. The Government of Pakistan invited the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is to send a delegate to participate in a Conference of the Religious Minorities. Delegates were also invited from the Hindus, Christian, Parsee (Zoroastrian), Buddhist, Jain, Sikh, Adivasis (primitives) and Scheduled Caste believers.

The conference was held on September 2, 1972 at Islamabad with the Honorable Raja Tridiv Roy, Minister for Minorities, presiding. Some of the delegates traveled 1,000 miles to attend. The Baha'i representative was Mr. A. C. Joshi, in the legal profession in Karachi. Mr. Joshi acted as an informal spokesman for the conference which included only one representative for each group. Col. Ayyoob Partov, Iranian pioneer and member of the Rawalpindi Spiritual Assembly, was able to attend as an observer.

The plenary session of the conference was held in the auditorium of the Secretariat in the afternoon of September 2, 1972. Mr. Joshi made several motions in writing for the adoption of resolutions, which were duly seconded. Among these were: 1) The appointment of a Registrar of Baha'i Marriages to be solemnized according to Baha'i law with marriage certificates to be issued by the Government. This proposal was accepted with the stipulation that such Registrars would be Baha'is who are law graduates of Pakistan who would not make any charge, and that the registration fee (for license) would be deposited in the Government treasury. 2) Declaration of the nine Baha'i Holy Days as optional public holidays.

A victory has been won! A goal of the Nine Year Plan has been achieved! History was made when the Islamic Republic of Pakistan issued a letter from the Law Minister, Honorable Mr. Mahmood Ali Qasuri, stating that all the minority religious communities of Pakistan, including the Baha'is, are free to profess their Faith and that in the Interim Constitution freedom of expression has been guaranteed to all citizens.

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At right is Mr. A. C. Joshi, Baha'i delegate to the Conference of the Minority (religious) Communities. Ayyoob Partov, Baha'i observer, is in the center and Mr. Man­galla, delegate of the Scheduled Caste, is on the left.

Delegates from the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Christian, Baha'i, Jain, Adivasis (primitives) and Scheduled Castes meeting at the Conference of the Minority Communities (religious) of Pakistan. The Baha'i delegate, Mr. A. C. Joshi, is second from the right. The Honorable Minister for Minority Affairs, Raja Tridiv Roy, is fourth from right.

**Temple Site in Pakistan**

The Baha'i Temple site is in Karachi and about seven miles from the General Post Office and four miles from the Baha'i Hall. The plot consists of eight acres of land. The National Spiritual Assembly is putting up a fence around the property. A well was sunk in the middle of the plot and it yielded water at eight feet. A twelve-foot seam of Fuller's earth has been struck. This is a sedimentary clay and has many industrial uses, chiefly in clarifying petroleum and refining edible oils.

**Summer Projecteers in Honduras**

There were two groups of youth teaching in Honduras during the summer of 1972, one in the north, one in the south. As our correspondent was of the southern group, the story can only deal with this part of the effort, and the rest of the story, we hope will be supplied later.

The southern group was composed of Santiago Martinez of Honduras and from the United States, Brett Brennenman, Nel Simonds, Alan Halm, Laurie Roberts with Chris Ruhe, American pioneer assisting. The U.S. visitors were in Honduras from the middle of July to the middle of August. The first week was spent proclaiming in La Ceiba where eighty-five new Baha'is enrolled. Under the guidance of pioneer Bill Stover, they enrolled twenty-eight more.

Next the group journeyed to San Pedro Sula where two weeks were spent proclaiming the Faith in various poor barrios of the city, as well as in two outlying villages. Usually the strategy used by the team was first in the afternoon to pass out invitations to a slide and song program at night. This bore fruit as statistics testify. There were 102 new Baha'is in San Pedro Sula, 67 in Los Caminos, and 42 in Choloma. Two North Americans enrolled, a member of the Peace Corps, and a Medical Aide on a vaccination project in the campo of Honduras. The grand total of enrollments of both the north and south groups was 429 new Baha'is. The story is still not complete, for some youth projecteers were still with pioneer Jere McKinney in Western Honduras.

—Chris Ruhe, Correspondent
**Baha’is at the San Pedro Sula Fair, Honduras**

The geodesic dome constructed by pioneer Dale Morrow has again magnificently served the Faith. (See Baha’i News, Dec. 1971, p. 23). Baha’is of San Pedro Sula received permission to place the dome in the fairgrounds at the annual fair. From early morning until late at night, sometimes until 11:30 p.m., Baha’is manned the dome. It shone like a pastel beacon, attracting thousands to it and its Message of hope for mankind.

The fair lasted for a week, late in June. During this time 7,000 pamphlets were given out. Radio announcements were regularly used, heard all over the fairground. The great majority of the people who entered the dome had never before heard of the Faith. They were attentive and asked many questions. All different viewpoints were expressed, from atheism to vocal evangelism.

There was no campaign, no public meeting, slide show or refreshments. The spiritually hungry horde came knocking at the door.

Our correspondent, Chris Ruhe, added “Every community should have a geodesic dome.”

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**Baha’is of Magetan, Indonesia**

Baha’i community of Magetan, Indonesia at Ridván, 1972. Many in the group are traveling teachers, including girls. In the back row, center, smiling, is Auxiliary Board member for East Asia, (in Java). Mr. Salehanto.

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**Pakistan Summer School**

The 1972 session of the Summer School was held at the Abottabad Hill station 930 miles from Karachi. About eighty young people from all parts of the country participated. The program not only was planned to deepen believers but it had great variety, ranging from quizzes, to outings. Participating were Auxiliary Board members Mr. Bakhtiari and Ilmi, and Mr. Phuladchi, representing the National Spiritual Assembly.
European Youth Conference

The Bahá'í European Youth Conference held at Padova, Italy, from August 1-7, 1972 and then at Pöln, Germany, from August 12-17, was the last of a series of conferences which opened the previous year at Namur. These conferences symbolize the youth campaign to open the doors of the Faith to all the people in Europe, especially the young. Over 1600 participated from more than forty nations. Hands of the Cause of God Mr. Olinga, Mr. Faizi and Mr. Mühlschlegel were inspiring forces of this confer-
ence. Declarations were about 270. The afternoons of this historic conference were dedicated to teaching in the near-by towns and villages. A public conference was held in Padova attended by thousands. Now begins the consolidation work of deepening the new believers and teaching those who have come in contact with the Faith.
The overwhelming success of the international Summer Projects of 1972 was brought about in no small measure by the assistance of two music teams which traveled constantly throughout Europe putting on music programs to assist the teaching teams. These two musical aggregations, titled “New Garden, North” and “New Garden, South” covered over 30,000 kilometers and visited ten countries in a two-month period.

Two not-so-new vehicles were used to transport the teams to the places they were to visit and a frugal diet of salami and cheese sustained them (not the tourist brochure’s idea of a European vacation!). When the team reached a town, they would assist the resident teaching team with pre-show publicity before actually putting on their show. In many areas, they also stayed on a few days to assist with the follow-up work.

The “New Garden, North” consisted of Mike Wood, Mark Harries, Steve Burleson and John Anastasio, all Americans. The “New Garden, South” consisted of American youth Dan Chadwick, Martha Elliott, Sheri Dressler, Charles and Sandi Bullock and Bob Farley along with Reinhart Meyer-Troeltsch of Germany, May Hofman of England, Claude Kuhne from Switzerland and Ada van der Borden of Holland. This international group was a tremendous attraction and also provided facility with language which was greatly needed.

Greg Dahl served as coordinator for the music teams and, with the help of some dedicated and ingenious European Baha’is, was able to bring together youth from very diverse backgrounds and put together groups of united and enthusiastic singers and musicians who brought in great numbers of new believers wherever they went. Both teams also had the added bounty of attending and participating in the Youth Conference in Padova, Italy.

To quote one youth, “... all of us in the singing groups had a fantastic summer, and the benefits in teaching and individual growth can never be measured. I think giant strides were made in mastering the difficult art of international cooperation, and if projects are continued in future I am sure they will be wildly successful and productive of results.”
Impressions of Travel-Teaching in Tasmania

When Mahvash Master asked me to join a weekend teaching team to Devonport, Tasmania, I agreed because I felt I had had sufficient time to adjust to my new way of life and was now ready to go.

Why had I needed the adjusting period? Well, you see, until June 4th, of this year, I had been living in a convent, where I had spent thirty-three years as a Roman Catholic Nun.

I will take this opportunity of adding a little about my life during those years. It was certainly a very happy period of my life and never for a moment did I dream of any other. At the time of embracing the Faith, I was the Superior—that is, the person in charge of the Convent where sixteen nuns were living. There was much love, peace and joy among us.

Through personal contact with two very wonderful Baha'is, I became interested in the Faith and reached the "point of no return". Then followed the hardest decision I have ever had to make—to leave that loving happy community of nuns who looked up to me for guidance, strength and companionship. But the grace of God is stronger than any earthly ties, so here I am to continue with my impression of Devonport.

Mahvash, Peter Seery, a Monash University student, and myself were to comprise the team. Peter unfortunately took ill and was unable to go. However, Helen Perkins replaced Peter and this meant we were an "all girl" team, the first I believe in Australia.

Having decided to go, I posed the question at a Nineteen Day Feast—"Why go travel teaching when there is so much to be done on the local scene?" Would it not be better to concentrate on one's own area? Back came the answer like a breath of fresh air—"Still water becomes stagnant—keep an ever-flowing stream through the pool and you maintain fresh, invigorating water". How true I found this to be.

We were going away to teach—a fresh responsibility was ours, therefore we were on our toes. The Tasmanian Baha'is were expecting us, they were on their toes. Their contacts knew they were going to be introduced to Baha'is they had not met before. This would be another insight into the Faith for them.

I could talk about the air-hostess who was so interested in the Faith—the joy of being met by the Devonport Community at the airport, the sweet thrill of knowing a young devout Roman Catholic girl whom I had known in Melbourne was open enough to stop and talk with two of the team. I had passed Julie by, choosing not to upset her by making myself known. Tears were in my eyes on learning that Julie accepted the Faith and signed the declaration card.

Then there were the other two teenagers who told us God was dead, and that they had long since finished with religion. Had they? To their own joyful amazement, they both declared and remained the whole afternoon for deepening.

The two firesides, attended by contacts of the local community and others whom we had invited during the mass teaching were further enlivened by the presence of Baha'is who had traveled from as far away as Hobart. I felt so proud of our Tasmanian Baha'is. Their answering of questions so clearly and concisely showed that a deep study and living of the Faith was theirs.

Devonport is not so large a place, and some may consider we did not meet a great number of people. I feel the grace of Baha'u'llah touched many hearts. Speaking for myself, I know I am a better person for having been part of the team.

Those of you who have experienced travel-teaching will understand what I am trying to say. To any Baha'i who has not yet had the privilege, I implore you to exert yourself in the Name of Baha'u'llah.

—Kate Dwyer

—Australian Bahá'í Bulletin
Our one week stay in the capital city of Occidental Kasai, Luluabourg, (recently changed to Kananga) was very fruitful for the Cause. This city is divided into four townships, each with a separate Local Assembly. The representatives of these Local Spiritual Assemblies called on Amatu’l-Bahá formally at her hotel and with her help and advice arranged for the program of the week she was to be with them. A week-end conference was planned for all the friends to attend not only from these townships, but also for the villages surrounding the city. This was a very wonderful occasion and over 180 Bahá'ís from 21 centers came to the Saturday afternoon and Sunday sessions, eagerly listening to Amatu’l-Bahá and asking many questions on different aspects of the Faith.

The Bahá'ís in this area are wonderful singers and have one of the finest choirs in the whole of the continent. Beautiful addresses of welcome were read. Then Amatu’l-Bahá spoke on the meaning and purpose of creation. She said: "The story of creation, according to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, is really a most beautiful love story. Almighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth and all therein, felt the desire to love and to be loved in return, therefore He created man and endowed him with the most precious gift of all, an immortal soul. The soul of man, unique in all creation, yearns to return to God and so the journey of the soul begins from the moment a child is conceived. It is a long journey, it is the journey of a lover towards the Beloved One. This material world is the first step in the journey of man towards his Creator, and should prepare him to be worthy of appearing before his Beloved in the next world. Here we must develop the spiritual qualities we need in the next life, the eternal life. This is why, while he is living in this world, it is so important for man to recognize the Manifestation of God. We might liken the period of each Manifestation, in other words the Dispensation each one of them brings, to the electric current we have in the walls of this building; there are outlets, from which, if we plug into them, we can receive the power of the electricity. We can light a lamp, run a radio, a refrigerator, a television set, a motor, depending on what we plug in. In other words each individual receives power in accordance with his capacity. The important thing is for every human being to make this connection now with the divine source in the world today. Our responsibility as Bahá'ís is to ensure that this connection is made.

A question often asked in Zaire, both in the cities as well as the villages, was about the portrait of
Baha'ullah and whether it is possible for them to see it or not. Ruhiyih Khanum would explain that because it is the picture of the Manifestation of God it must be treated with great respect and reverence and cannot be made available for every one to have in his home as the pictures of Christ which are sometimes treated with irreverence and disrespect. Then immediately the next question was: ‘Please tell us what He looks like!’ The beautiful black eyes of the friends would gaze at her and try to visualize the blessed face she was describing and to picture its beauty and majesty. It was very touching. Their love for Him was written on their shining, eager faces.

In one meeting they asked if any member of Baha'ullah's descendants had remained firm in the Cause. Ruhiyih Khanum explained what this Covenant of God is and how from the beginning of time, since Cain slew Abel, this principle of light and darkness has existed, often caused by the jealousy of a brother. This process had repeated itself at the time of the appearance of every Manifestation of God. She told them how the Covenant-breaking had begun with the jealousy and hatred of the young half-brother of Baha'ullah, and how this poison had penetrated one generation after another until at the time of the passing of Shoghi Effendi, not one soul of the blessed Root had remained firm. Baha'u'llah then said this is why in the Writings we read special prayers supplanting the mercy and protection of God so that we may remain firm to the last hour of our earthly life.

She told the friends of the wonderful services, the loyalty and steadfastness of the Hand of the Cause of God Mr. Tarazu'llah Samandari who had remained firm and devoted through three periods of the growth of the Cause. He had had the privilege and bounty of meeting Baha'u'llah as well as serving both 'Abdu'l-Baha and the beloved Guardian and had lived until the age of ninety-three, yet just a few days before his passing in Haifa, when she went to the hospital to see him, his last words—after almost a century of devoted service to the Cause of God—had been: ‘Pray for me that until my last breath I remain firm in the Faith’.

During her visit to the villages of Tshingana and Mampanyi Tambwe, not too far from the city of Lubumbashi, someone asked Amatu'l-Baha if the person of Satan was a real being. She answered that evil is not a specific being or object like the sun, the object and source of light. The absence of the sun automatically produces darkness. Good is a positive force and its presence is evil; otherwise evil has no reality of its own.

The Mayor of Luluabourg

On the last day of our stay in this city we were able to meet the Mayor of Luluabourg as well as the mayor of one of the townships. It was a very friendly and cordial visit lasting nearly forty minutes. The Mayor himself had called the local newspaper reporter to be present and ask questions. Later on an interesting article about the Faith and Ruhiyih Khanum was published. The Mayor presented Ruhiyih Khanum with several beautiful artifacts of this Province and wished her a very safe and successful journey. He was eager that a public meeting be arranged and was willing to make all the preparations through his office. Unfortunately, however, due to our plans for leaving the city and reaching and successful journey. He was eager that a public meeting be arranged and was willing to make all the preparations through his office. Unfortunately, however, due to our plans for leaving the city and reaching the village of Bena Kasukuila on a terrible road, for the first time in almost 23,000 miles, we had the indignity of getting stuck in mud and having to be pulled out by a truck. Fortunately there was a truck and we had a towline!

Sometime that afternoon we reached the village of Bakwa Kayembe. We slept two nights there in the home of a believer and had a very nice meeting with the friends. Over 129 from many villages had gathered and eagerly listened to Amatu'l-Baha. One of her main objectives in talking to the village Bahais in particular is to widen the horizon of their understanding. With patience she would explain in detail and show them that this world is far more immense than they imagined. Although Christianity is the religion they have heard about, it is but one religion in a world full of other beliefs and ideas. There is such a thing as what we call science and the truths of science. The villagers are eager and thirsty to acquire knowledge and were always fascinated by her explanations.

How to Banish Superstition

Many times the questions would be on the subject of witchcraft and its relation to the teachings of Baha'u'llah. One must remember witchcraft has never ceased to exist in Africa and still exerts a profound influence over Pagan, Christian and Muslim, educated and uneducated alike. As a matter of fact it is on the increase all over the world as men frantically try to find answers to their problems. Ruhiyih Khanum developed an original and convincing approach and answer to this question that satisfied her hearers.

The way to dispel dark and superstitious beliefs is with the light of Baha'u'llah's Teachings, clinging to His Words and His prayers. This acts exactly like the rays of the sun which dispel the night. The Chief of that area, a very dignified old man, the fourth generation of chiefs in his family, had come to this village to personally welcome Ruhiyih Khanum and stayed and listened to her talk until the end of the meeting.

In the village of Bena-Vvula over sixty Bahais and their friends, gathered in their beautifully decorated Baha'i Center to welcome and listen to Amatu'l-Baha. As many women were present she decided to speak on the role of women in this age and the great mercy and bounty of Baha'u'llah in giving women equal rights with men for the first time in the history of mankind. She then explained that the meaning of the equality of the sexes does not necessarily mean that both have the same functions. In the city of Mbuji Mayi, the capital of Oriental Kasai where we spent two nights, Amatu'l-Baha was able to meet with the Bahais and also visit the friends in the village of Bena Kasukuila. When we reached this village sixteen miles away from the city, over very treacherous sandy tracks, we learned that all the Bahais men with one exception, having heard on the
Amatu’l-Bahá with the Baha’is of Tshingana village, Occidental Kasai, Zaire. Front row, second from the left is Auxiliary Board member Sylvain Ngandu, who acted as translator.

radio that Amatu’l-Bahá was in the city, had left to meet her there. The Bahá’í women, who could not leave their children and homes, were thrilled to not only have this unexpected privilege of meeting their beloved guest but having her all to themselves in an unexpected meeting and learning from her that she was going to stay and talk especially to them. Several ladies and many children recited prayers by heart. This is a very wonderful thing one sees all over Zaire, the friends memorize the Bahá’í prayers. That evening on our return to Mbuji Mayi Rubiyiyth Khánúm spoke to the villagers and the town Bahá’ís on the power of the Word of God. She said the Word of God is like a grain of corn. When planted in the soil of the heart it grows and multiplies and yields a rich harvest of knowledge and understanding. Obedience to the laws and ordinances of God causes spiritual growth and maturity. She quoted the words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá who said: “I desire for you distinction.” The Bahá’ís through their deeds and characters must be distinguished so that people will recognize us as Bahá’ís through our behavior.

Three days of tiring travel over awful roads—almost 700 miles—brought us to the end of our visit to Zaire. The week we spent in the beautiful city of Lubumbashi, formerly called Elisabethville, brought back to Amatu’l-Bahá memories of her stay there in 1940 with our beloved Guardian when they crossed the continent during the war. They were a number of times in Kisangani, formerly Stanleyville. She said, “In 1970, it was thirty years since I was there with Shoghi Effendi and now here a thirty-two years since we were here together in this city!” She recalled how that visit to the Congo had fulfilled a life-long desire of the beloved Guardian to see that country. Truly an eternal blessing was showered on this land!

Meetings Forbidden

Unfortunately as the result of an emergency decree, meetings of any sort were forbidden throughout Zaire just at this time and so the Baha’ís of Lubumbashi were not able to hold a meeting for their dearly loved Hand of the Cause. In small informal groups they came to the garden in our hotel and over refreshments we were able to have a number of visits with them. One of the believers in this city, a Bahá’í of eighteen years who had embraced the Cause through the efforts of dear Rex and Mary Collison in the early days of its introduction into the neighboring country then called Ruanda Urundi, told us of the sufferings he had endured in the path of God. Twice through the instigation of a priest he was imprisoned because he was a Bahá’í. He is a staunch and valiant defender of the Cause of God.

The unanimous cry of the believers in this vast and uniquely receptive country is for more pioneers. From Kinshasa to Lubumbashi, a distance of almost 2,000 miles, there is not one single pioneer. The teaching possibilities in Zaire are unlimited. The villagers as well as city Bahá’ís all asked that more pioneers come from abroad, saying the demonstration of the oneness of mankind, when whites and Africans work together, has much more effect than when they teach alone.

The sorrow of parting from our newly found friends is always the saddest part of our trip. Somehow leaving Zaire was even more difficult than usual. We had come to deeply love this country and its people. Our one consolation is the fact that God willing, we shall once again enter it, next time to visit the Province of Kivu, where the vast majority of the Bahá’ís of Zaire are to be found.
The Falkland Islands Spiritual Assembly was recently elected, thus filling an important and difficult goal, and is already busy with many activities. A showing of "It's Just the Beginning" was accompanied by a display on the theme of progressive revelation, and showed the Bahá'í Temples in different parts of the world. The correspondent, John Leonard, wrote: "There were pictures clipped from Baha'i News showing Bahá'ís throughout the world, and these excited great interest, as I suspect many people had the idea that the small group of Bahá'ís here were all that existed."

He continued: "We now appear to have two further declarations pending, and if these actually take place we will have an active community of twelve. This gives us no feeling of complacency, as several of them expect to be leaving within a year, but despite that, it seems quite incredible to have so many Bahá'ís in the Falklands. We feel tremendously confirmed ... and are grateful beyond words."

Members of the first Local Spiritual Assembly of the Falkland Islands, formed October 20th, 1972. Left to right, front row: Mrs. Winona Hardy; Mrs. Brenda Whitney; Mrs. Sally Steer; Mrs. Margaret Leonard, Chairman. Left to right, back row: John Leonard, Treasurer; David Hardy, Recording Secretary; Gregory Edwards, Vice-Chairman; Martin Dibble; Bernard Steer, Corresponding Secretary.

In front of the display in connection with showing the film "It's Just the Beginning" are some of the Assembly members with Mrs. Christina Edwards. Mr. Edwards is wearing the checked shirt and Mrs. Edwards is next, right. The child is one of the two Hardy children.
The Argentine Winter School was held from July 27 to 30, 1972 in Presidencia Roque Saenz Peña and was a great success. Present were three members of the Continental Board of Counsellors: Mr. Mas'ud Khamsi, Mr. Donald Witzel and Mr. Hooper Dunbar. Also present were Auxiliary Board members Mrs. Matalynn Dunbar of Argentina and Mr. Ramon Moreira of Uruguay. About 200 friends gathered from all over the country, representing the Toba, Pilagás, Mataco and Mapuché tribes. Mr. Jorge Fragnaud represented Paraguay.

The first day of the school bad news was received that several who were on their way to attend the school had an accident. Also it was learned that four-months old Virginia Bufi, traveling with her mother, had died. This news created a great spirit of unity among those attending, who continuously prayed for those who were in this accident, and anxiously waited for news of them.

Because Counsellor Athos Costas, scheduled to participate, could not come and Mr. Moreira of Uruguay was late, due to the accident, it became necessary to make some changes. All classes, however, were given as scheduled.

In the evenings public talks were held at the school attended by not only the inhabitants of Saenz Peña, but also some tourists. With permission from the Mayor, a Bahá'í exhibit was held in the main plaza during the school sessions.

The National Proclamation Committee was active in using the occasion of the school to gain publicity. A week before the school members of this committee and the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly went to the Chaco to complete details of this important event. Some of the Committee went to Saenz Peña while others stayed in Resistencia, Capital of the Chaco Province, to begin there a proclamation of the Faith.

In Resistencia the news services were immediately contacted and several articles about the Faith were published. With permission from the radio director of the President's press office in Buenos Aires, a series of six talks, five minutes each, was given at the Radio Nacional. The day before the beginning of the school the Governor of Chaco Province granted an interview to a group consisting of three Counsellors; representatives of the Toba, Mataco, Pilagás, Mauché tribes: Americans and Persians. Another interview was held with the Mayor of Resistencia. Each of these officials was presented with the volume The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh.

Meanwhile, members of the Proclamation Committee in Saenz Peña were in touch with newspapers and radio, obtaining news publicity and a series of radio talks. A press conference was scheduled and the next day the radio station phoned requesting some Bahá'ís for a radio interview as many people were phoning in asking for information about the Bahá'í Faith.

The Mayor of Saenz Peña granted an interview and the proclamation volume was presented to him. The Mayor commented that it was the first time anyone came to the Mayor's office to offer something without asking for anything.

On Saturday during the school a luncheon was held, attended by the Mayor, various authorities and important people of the city with National Spiritual Assembly members, three Counsellors, representatives of the various tribes of the area and other Bahá'ís. Counsellor Hooper Dunbar gave a welcoming speech. In his reply the Mayor expressed his happiness at being with the Bahá'ís and wished them much success in teaching this Message of love and unity.

After this lunch, the Bahá'ís and many residents of Saenz Peña gathered in the main plaza to let loose some 250 balloons to spread an awareness of the word “Bahá’í” to more distant places.

Luncheon in honor of the Mayor of Saenz Peña Mr. Enrique Gomez (standing). Seated to his right is Mrs. Angelica Costas, National Spiritual Assembly Secretary, and to his left, Mrs. Costas. On the left side are the Continental Counsellors Mr. Hooper Dunbar (corner). Next to him, Mr. Mas'ud Khamsi—and across the table Mr. Donald Witzel.
Three Counsellors, members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Argentina and members of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Saenz Peña during the International Winter School. Kneeling, left, Counsellor Donald Witzel; standing, to left, Counsellor Hooper Dunbar; tall man standing behind the little boy in front row is Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi.

Four Bolivian travel-teachers entertaining the friends at the National Study Course with native music.

Traveling teachers and pioneers of Bolivia attended a National Study Course at the National Institute, Cochabamba, Bolivia on July 3, 1972. It was preceded by a one-day Conference for pioneers. The purpose of the gathering was to encourage universal participation and consolidate the local institutions, as requested by The Universal House of Justice. The friends were summoned to heroic activity—and recalled the cry of Mullâ Husayn: “Mount your steeds, Oh heroes of God”. So the Bolivian friends responded by mounting their burros in the mountains, their bicycles in the flat Alto Plano, and their own two feet.

Bolivian Regional Study Course

Quechua, Aymara and Spanish languages were used in teaching at the Regional Study Course of Cochabamba Department for volunteer teachers held in the Bahá’í National Institute in Cochabamba, Bolivia, from September 19 to 23. Visual aids in giving the Message were demonstrated, supplemented with a compilation. Topics of discussion were the functioning of the Local Spiritual Assembly and Nineteen Day Feasts. Each participant was asked to make a definite plan of activities to carry out after the Study Course. More than twenty part-time volunteer teachers were deepened in the course.

Part-time teachers attending the Regional Study Course at Cochabamba Department, Bolivia. Pioneers shown in the photo are Miss Beverly Bennett, Mr. Stephen Pulley, Mrs. Ellen Sims, Mrs. Crystal Baker Shoat, and Bolivian pioneer Sr. Sabino Ortega. Two Bolivian Auxiliary Board members (not in the photo), Mr. Manucher Shoat and Sr. Andrés Jachakoillo, contributed greatly to the spirit of the course.
Fourth National Bahá'í Youth Conference in India

A successful National Youth Conference, inaugurated by Hand of the Cause Mr. A. A. Furútan and aided by the presence of Counsellor S. Vasudevan, National Assembly representative Dr. Munja and Auxiliary Board members B. Afshin, Mrs. S. Kermani and S. B. Mobedzadeh ended in Poona on May 7, 1972, when forty-five delegates from twenty-five youth centers pledged to open 260 colleges and 560 new localities to the Faith, construct seven local Hazratu'l-Quds, consolidate 238 old villages, have model Bahá'í villages, send representatives to neighboring countries, bring in 17,000 new believers and send nineteen youth pioneers to the goal towns in India.

Press reporters were present in one of the sessions of the Conference and the proceedings of the gathering appeared in five leading newspapers.

IN INDIA

Bahá'ís of Surat district gathered at Broach for the election of a delegate. Auxiliary Board member A. S. Furudí is in the center.
Audio-Visual Materials

PANAMA TEMPLE DEDICATION

Motion Picture, Filmstrip and Slide Programs

To celebrate the completion of the Panama House of Worship, the culmination of a four-and-a-half-year labor of love, in April 1972 nearly four thousand Bahá'ís from more than forty countries gathered in Panama to participate in the Dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America, the Mashriqu’-l-Adhkar, the Dawning Place of the Mention of God.

A new 15 minute 16 mm. sound color motion picture film, The Dedication in English, El Alba in Spanish, shows the simple beauty of the Panama House of Worship and recreates the sights, sounds and uplifting atmosphere of the historic, momentous hours of the Dedication. They are suitable for presides, television, public meetings and other proclamation events as well as deepening sessions such as Bahá’í institutes and schools. The movies show in vivid color some of the many people from diverse backgrounds—Guaymis from the mountains of Chiriquí, Cunas from the San Blas Islands, Chokus from the jungles of Darién, farmers and professional people, men, women and children from all over the world arriving in Panama to share in the important events to come. The unity of their purpose can be seen in the faces of the participants as they listen to Amatu’l-Bahá Ruḥiyih Khánum’s inspiring message, the prayers and readings of other speakers and as they hear the chorus in songs of praise and joy.

Another audio-visual program, The Dawning Place of the Mention of God, explains the spiritual significance of this singularly beautiful Bahá’í House of Worship and traces the history of the construction of the Temple from the laying of the cornerstone in October 1967 through its completion, the dedication ceremonies and the conference that followed during Ridván 129, 1972. The Dawning Place of the Mention of God is available as a filmstrip or slides with English narration book, and with or without an English cassette sound track. Particularly suitable for proclamation and teaching, it contains a fine collection of views of the newest Bahá’í House of Worship and makes an excellent companion piece for showing with the motion picture as it contains more detail and treats the subject from a different viewpoint.

All of these new teaching aids will be welcome, valuable additions to Bahá’í teaching and proclamation activities, as well as for Bahá’í libraries and archives.

Because it is a timely subject, the film or the slides may be of keen interest to television program directors. Public Information representatives are urged to consider contacting the television stations as soon as possible.

Shrine of the Báb, Haifa, as seen in the slide and filmstrip program “Carmel... The Mountain of God.”

The profoundly inspiring and beautiful slide program, “Carmel... The Mountain of God,” is available for distribution. It links Carmel, the “Mountain of the Lord” to which “all nations shall flow” with the Central Figures of the Faith and emphasizes the unique association of the spiritual and physical realities existing from ancient times in the Holy Land.

This enthralling program is ideal for deepening the friends and those who are close to the Faith. It is:
— a treasured addition to Bahá’í community, school and personal libraries
— an untiring assistant to traveling teachers
— and a fertile source of slides for a program on a different theme.

Views include Mount Carmel, the room in Shiráz where the Báb declared His Mission, the ták of Bahá'u'lláh, the house where the Suniy-i-Mulúk was revealed, the original Tablet of Ahmad, the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, the House of 'Abbúd, and Mazra'áth. The narrative and music of the sound track adds a professional touch to the presentation and greatly increases involvement of the audience. It is not recommended for general proclamation as it requires a considerable understanding of the Bahá’í Faith.

Copies of these programs as well as prices and delivery information may be obtained through your local Bahá’í librarian or the Publishing Trust or other distribution committee authorized by your National Spiritual Assembly.
Members of the National Assembly of Kenya

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Kenya elected on April 29, 1972 at the Annual Convention held in Kisumu, Kenya. From right to left: Laban Wekesa; Frank Mkuoyani; Christopher Musambai; Julius Makanda, Chairman; John Alvachi, Vice-Chairman; M. Sohaili, Treasurer; Justus Wekesa; Bonaventure Wafula, Secretary; and Joel W. Kundu.

He That Hath an Ear to Hear, Let Him Hear

Auxiliary Board member for Propagation in Chad, Mr. Ernest Ndouba, attests that it is the heart of man which receives the Message of our Lord.

In the village of Mata, to the south of Chad, following the visit of Miss Mona Yazdi, traveling teacher, with Mr. Ndouba and two pioneers, a deaf man embraced the Faith. For some months, the Auxiliary Board member had noticed that this young man had stayed somewhat apart from the people gathered to hear his teaching. But on this occasion, no doubt attracted by the especially radiant spirit of the visitors, he came closer and closer to the group until he reached Mr. Ndouba. Sensing by the expression in the eyes of the deaf man that his spirit was ready to embrace the Cause, he thought, “How can I give the Message of Bahá’u’lláh to this soul?”

Suddenly, inspired it seemed by the Holy Spirit, the Auxiliary Board member began to explain the Bahá’í Faith in sign language, demonstrating to the deaf seeker the unity of the whole world—the unity of the races—the unity of religions; and, pointing to Miss Yazdi—the equality of men and women.

Without words, the lamp of the deaf man’s heart was illuminated. Bahá’u’lláh’s love had reached him. Asking for a declaration card, he signed his name as a Bahá’í.

Physically, this new Bahá’í is deaf. But, spiritually, he hears.

—JOURNAL DE L’UNITÉ, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1972, Published by the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF CHAD

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Kitáb-i-Aqdas:
Synopsis and Codification
to be Published at Ridván

Joyfully announce completion synopsis codification Kitáb-i-Aqdas for publication Ridván synchronizing celebration 100th anniversary revelation most holy book fulfilling world centre goal nine year plan. Confident release this publication envisaged by beloved Guardian and whose main features he outlined will constitute another significant step path leading Baha'i community full maturity establishment world order Baha'u'llah

—The Universal House of Justice

Haifa, Israel
January 19, 1973
Thornton Chase, First Baha’i in the Western World

By O. Z. Whitehead

Soon after I became a member of the Baha’i community in Los Angeles on July first of 1930, I heard that Thornton Chase was not only the first believer in the United States of America, but also in the Western world. I often wondered what sort of a man he was. What indefinable quality did he have that enabled him to recognize the Station of Baha’u’llah before anyone else in such a large part of the planet?

I heard the distinguished old believer, Willard Hatch, at that time Secretary of the Spiritual Assembly say, “Thornton Chase and I were friends.”

One morning I telephoned him and said, “Mr. Hatch, may I come to see you? I want to hear more about Thornton Chase.”

“Well, bless your heart,” Mr. Hatch answered warmly. “The Spiritual Assembly has invited me to say a few words about him at his grave in Inglewood on the afternoon of September 30, the anniversary of his passing, when ‘Abdu’l-Baha wished the friends to meet there.”

“What was Mr. Chase’s profession?” I asked directly. “He was an insurance salesman, but he had one of the best baritone voices that I have ever heard.” Despite my obvious encouragement, Mr. Hatch said no more about him.

The cemetery in Inglewood, a suburb of Los Angeles, was composed of lawnlike stretches of low lands with only a few trees and a view of distant hills. Since the anniversary took place on a weekday only a few of the believers were able to attend. Helped by a cane, Mr. Hatch got out of a car in which an old friend had driven him to the cemetery and, with much dignity, limped to the side of the grave. He sat down on a chair that someone had placed there for him. Stockily built, he had a strong face with few lines and full of character. His hair was white. He looked seventy, his actual age.

The other believers gathered around the grave. The quotation on the gravestone is what the Master said: “This is the illumined resting place of the holy soul, Thornton Chase, who is shining in the horizon of eternal life ever like a star.”

Mr. Hatch spoke in a plain, direct, and forceful manner. I can remember a few sentences of his short address.

“Thornton Chase was living in Chicago when he came into the Cause there in 1894. He was an insurance salesman and travelled from place to place for his work. Towards the end of his life he became more and more interested in the Faith and less and less interested in his work. The number of years that he was a Baha’i is not important. That he was the first Baha’i in the Western world and that he served the Cause faithfully until his passing is extremely important.”

After his talk during prayers I was privileged to read the one by ‘Abdu’l-Baha which begins:

“O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated in the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees and render this just government victorious . . . .”

Always moving, this prayer seemed particularly so at that moment when I thought of many tragic events, including two catastrophic wars that had afflicted the United States of America since the passing of Thornton Chase all coming about because of man’s disobedience to Baha’u’llah.

I felt in the group not only a deep realization of the spiritual blindness that still existed among the people, but also a heartfelt belief that through the Revelation of Baha’u’llah this country was going to achieve what ‘Abdu’l-Baha fervently prayed that it would. A strong atmosphere of peace seemed to fill this holy spot.

Early Life

Thornton Chase was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, on February 22, 1847. His childhood home, a photograph of which he showed his close friend, Carl Scheffler, was “a large, rather ornate, white frame building, located at the intersection of two sharply converging streets.”

Thornton Chase attended Brown University. He was a Captain in the Civil War. He was fond of fishing, had a love of music and a magnificent singing voice. Carl Scheffler thought that at one time his friend might have sung in opera. Always deeply interested in religion and not content with partial acceptance of any prevailing doctrine or sect of which there were many always springing up, “he was,” he said, “convinced that this undoubtedly was ‘The Day of God’” and he was determined to spare no pains to discover what God had brought to mankind.

A few years before he had heard of the Baha’i Revelation he became a follower of the great mystic of eighteenth century Sweden, Emanuel Swedenborg. Not content with these noble teachings which have satisfied many brilliant, highly constructive people, Mr. Chase still looked for what he thought must be a greater light that God had already unveiled to the world.

According to Carl Scheffer’s essay on Thornton Chase, a friend of his, William F. James, told him that he had met a man who had said, “God walked upon the
earth." ¹³

Mr. Chase wanted to meet this man without delay. As a result Mr. James took Mr. Chase to see Dr. Ibrahim Khayr’u’llah who had made this overwhelming statement. Shortly before his passing Mr. Chase wrote about this meeting:

"In the month of June 1894, a gentleman in Chicago desired to study Sanskrit, in order to further pursue his search into ancient religious teachings. While seeking an instructor, he met a Syrian who had come to Chicago from Egypt a short time before, and who told him of the Bahá’í teachings. A big hit among the students of the life of Baha’u’llah and his son, ‘Abbas Effendi, the ‘Greatest Branch,’ otherwise known as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, according to the declarations of numerous sacred prophecies, and with the age-long expectations of mankind, it was deemed of value to investigate those claims as far as possible." Other seekers for truth became attracted to the study of these matters, with the result that five accepted the teaching as true during the year 1894.¹⁴

During those early years many people showed an interest in the Faith, even asked to be enrolled in the community, but a large portion of them had only a superficial understanding of what the Faith meant. As a result, when Dr. Ibrahim Khayr’u’llah, who up to that time had received high praise for his teaching from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, blinded by self-love and ambition, turned against Him and broke the Covenant of God for this day, more than a few left the Faith in doubt and confusion. This tragic and heart breaking event in no way affected those like Thornton Chase who truly believed.

He mentioned the arrival in the United States of America during 1906 of other fine teachers, among them Mirzâ ‘Abu’l-Fadl, a scholar and historian, famous in the Orient for his learning and sincerity, one who had given up a position of the highest honor in Persia as President of the Royal College of Tihrán to embrace the Bahá’í Cause, which resulted in his imprisonment for three years in Persian dungeons.³

Mr. Chase stressed the enormous service that these teachers had given in bringing an entirely correct knowledge of the Bahá’í Writings to those already believers and to the sincere seekers of truth. Many who had mixed up the Cause with occult and psychic experiments and held views based on superstition and imagination left the Cause. Others through the instruction of these great teachers became deeply confirmed in their belief and found it possible for man to obtain.

Because of his position with an insurance company it was necessary for Mr. Chase to travel a great deal. In each city he visited he planted seeds for the Faith. When the people began to seriously investigate it and some to join the community, he was able to teach and deepen them.

John Bosch, an emigrant from Switzerland in 1879 joined the Bahá’í community on May 29, 1905. After first mentioning that he "bought all the available pamphlets, mostly by Thornton Chase"¹⁵, Marziah Gail has given a delightful report of the following incident between the two gentlemen.

In those days Thornton Chase had an important insurance position in Chicago, with a salary of $750 a month which he believed was much better than the $50 he made when he was secretary to the St. Louis office. "The Faith meant more to him than his business. Whenever he was coming to San Francisco he wired John; they would stop at different hotels, but dined together. He was very tall—about six feet two. He always ate two or three ice creams after supper; this never seemed to make any difference to his digestion. His appetite was enormous. After dinner he would lie out of the middle of the table and start with. Around eleven o'clock, he used to say, ‘Now, John, I guess it’s about time to take you home.’ Arm in arm, they would go to John’s hotel, talking steadily about the Cause. They would sit in the parlor. About one o’clock I [John Bosch] used to say, ‘Now, Mr. Chase, I guess it’s about time to take you home.’ We used to wonder what the policeman on the beat thought about us. One night we brought each other home till four in the morning."¹⁶

Never feeling that he had sufficient knowledge of the Cause, Mr. Chase was always trying to find out more. But despite the absence of much authentic material he could explain clearly aspects of the Cause that others found difficult to understand. As the Master gradually unfolded the Administrative Order Mr. Chase eagerly received each new piece of information. He entirely appreciated the great importance of the Spiritual Assembly and did all that he could to uphold its authority, while many not realizing why such an institution should exist left the Cause. The serious problems and turmoil that the early communities went through in no way interfered with his constant and inspiring service.

Pilgrimage

In April of 1907, Mr. Chase, with Mr. Agnew, his wife, son, and Mr. Scheffler, made a pilgrimage to Akka. Mr. Chase has described this journey in a short book, no longer in print, called In Galilee.

After first staying for four days in Haifa at the Cathedral of our Lord Jesus Christ, during which time they had the precious experience of visiting the Tomb of the Bab, Mr. Chase and Mr. Scheffler took the beautiful drive along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to Akka.

At the entrance to the house where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá lived, three Persian gentlemen led them to the room where they were invited to stay, next to the room of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Soon, Mr. Chase wrote, "Someone said, ‘The Master’—and He came into the room with a free striding step, welcomed us in a clear, ringing voice —’Mehriabba! Mehrabba!’ [Welcome! Welcome!] and embraced us with kisses as would a father his son, or as would brothers after a long absence... He bade us be seated on the little divan. He sat on the high narrow bed at one side of the room, drew up one foot under Him, asked after our health, our trip, bade us be happy and expressed His happiness that we had safely arrived. Then, after a few minutes, He again grasped our hands and gently left us."¹⁷

During the five days that Mr. Chase and Mr. Scheffler spent in the Greatest Prison, they saw the Master several times each day, once in His room, sometimes in their or someone else’s room and at meals in company with other believers. Mr. Chase pointed out, "Each conversation started with some simple reference to a natural thing, the weather, food, a stone, tree, water, a garden or a bird, our coming, or some little act of service, and the base would be woven into a parable and teaching of wisdom and simplicity, showing the oneness of all Spiritual Truth, and adapting it always to the life, both of the individual and of mankind."¹⁸

In one of the most moving passages in his book Mr. Chase has written, "And, as each hungry pilgrim comes to that prison house, that banquet hall of heavenly gifts, He takes him in His arms and draws him to His breast with such sincerity and enthusiasm of love that the petty cares, thoughts, and ambitions of the world vanish away, and one is at peace and in happiness because he has reached home and found love there."¹⁹

On the Sunday of their pilgrimage the two friends had the unforgettable experience of going to see the photograph of Baha’u’llah. Mr. Chase wrote: "It is a majestic Baha’u’llah, almost in tears, stern man, yet filled with an indescribable sweetness."²⁰ Soon after the two friends had returned to their room the Master visited them there. On this occasion as on several others He
spoke of His love for them and expressed the hope that when they returned home the effect on them of their experience in the Holy Land would bring happiness to the believers in the United States of America and increase their understanding.

Because of troubles that enemies of the Cause were constantly stirring up, the Master felt obliged to cut short the visit of the two friends. On the last day in the prison house 'Abdu'l-Bahá stressed to them the great importance of unity among all the believers, explained that only with it could the Cause progress, and said that the building of the Temple should help to achieve this unity.

Mr. Chase described his last meeting with Him. "Soon after the noon meal 'Abdu'l-Bahá met me in the little upper court. He embraced this servant, and, moving away a few feet, He turned, looked steadily and pronounced a promise that is a precious memory and hope." Mr. Scheffler has informed us that as they walked down the old stone steps that led out of the prison house, Mr. Chase said to him, "The Master has assured me that I will return to this place soon. This reconciles me to this unbearable departure." After leaving there the two friends visited the Tomb of Baha' u'llah, which Mr. Chase described as "the culmination of pilgrimages," and in the garden of the Ridván where Baha' u'llah used to sit and returned to spend the night again in the Hospice of the Little Child.

Mr. Scheffler has remarked that in spite of Mr. Chase's deep understanding he still had many wrong conceptions that 'Abdu'l-Bahá gently corrected. Mr. Chase responded to His love like a devoted son.

Shortly after his return from the Holy Land the company for which he worked transferred him to California. According to Hand of the Cause H. M. Balyuzi, the company decided to do this in the hope that Mr. Chase would spend more time in working for the company and less time in service to the Faith. The contrary took place. His professional work still took him from city to city.

Mr. Balyuzi wrote: "A secretary in an office which he had to visit from time to time, spoke in later years of the electrifying presence of Thornton Chase. She recalled that whenever he came into the room people felt elated; joy wafted in with him; his face radiated light." In 1918 his well-known book "The Baha'i Revelation" was published. It was most valuable at that time as there was a scarcity of Baha'i Holy Writings and reliable works on the Cause available in English. Like in Galilee, it enables us to look into the mind and heart of the first believer in the West and try to understand a little how he taught the Cause.

It contains a short history of the Cause, starting with the declaration of His Holiness, the Bab, in 1844, briefly describes His Dispensation, gives a brief outline of the life of Baha' u'llah, and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In the conclusion of this history Mr. Chase assures the reader that 'Abdu'l-Bahá is spreading the Divine Word that His Father Baha' u'llah revealed for all parts of the planet and that "the fearless lovers of Truth" are embracing His Cause.

In a most moving chapter, "What Shall I Do to Be Saved?" he has made many beautiful observations about faith, prayer, and obedience: "Faith is not an intellectual yielding to argument, through force or conviction that certain statements are correct, but it is rather from a hunger of the soul, a knowledge of personal helplessness, and the perception of a possible mighty helpfulness." "Prayer, in its essence, is the abandonment of the personal will in favor of the Will of God. Men will be saved, He said, if they love the Law of God and can be answered." "Man is always a servant; he obeys something; how much better for him to serve the Wise One, the True One, the Beautiful One, instead of his own ignorance and greed." In a chapter, entitled "The Baha'i Revelation Makes All Things New," he most clearly wrote: "Old doctrines and beliefs are being tested in the courts of modern judgment, for this is the Day of Judgment, and the chaff of these teachings is being cast into the fires of ridicule and rejection. On the one side are scholarly efforts to destroy both wheat and tares together to make way for new material philosophies; on the other are anxious hearts looking for the Truth of the Eternal God and lifting their eyes to the hills to behold the coming of their Helper and their Lord." In a published letter called "What Is Truth?" after first stating that "Truth is single like light," he has logically explained how through false imaginings and misconceptions only a fragment remains, not sufficient to transform the lives of men, and has given an example of what happened to the Teachings of Jesus Christ, when through opposition, hatred and denial, they became divided through the establishment of many cults and sects.

Several weeks before his passing Mr. Chase wrote a poem about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which was published in The West. Dated August 9, 1912, composed of nine verses that show a most powerful love for Him, the poem concludes with this verse:

Thou Lion of the Tribe of Judah!
Thou Lamb of the Sacrificial Love!
Thou Baptizer of Evanscence!
Thou Sum of Spiritual and Human Perfection!
Thou Mystery of God!

On August 10, 1912, John Bosch in a telegram to the Master then in Dublin, New Hampshire, begged Him to visit California and included among others Thornton Chase's name.

"John, don't you think it's too soon? The Bahá'ís aren't ready," said Mr. Chase. "Well, I'm ready for Him," said John.

Passing

As the Master reached San Francisco, down in Los Angeles, Thornton Chase died. "It was too much for him," said Mr. Bosch.

With the exception of those tablets which he had sent to the archives of the Bahaí Temple, Thornton Chase left all of his papers and books to John Bosch. Unfortunately Mrs. Chase burned several hundred of her husband's letters before John could get to Los Angeles.

'Abdu'l-Bahá made a special trip to Los Angeles so that he might visit Thornton Chase's grave. On Saturday, October 19, at one o'clock in the afternoon 'Abdu'l-Bahá together with about twenty-five Bahá'ís of that city arrived at Inglewood Cemetery. He walked silently to the grave ahead of the friends who followed Him. After He had scattered over it flowers that He had brought and those that the friends had handed Him, He stood at the head of the grave, turned towards the East, raised His Hands to heaven and chanted a most beautiful prayer. In the Master has referred to Thornton Chase's rising to serve the Cause, his pilgrimage to Akka, his return to the United States, and his proclamation of the Cause there until his passing, and concluded the prayer with these words, "Submerge him in the ocean of Thy Lights."
After this prayer the Master gave him most high praise. Among other remarks He said: "This is a personage who will not be forgotten. For the present his worth is not known, but in the future it will be inestimably dear. His sun will be ever shining. His stars will ever bestow the light." 28

In a talk that He gave that evening in Los Angeles about Mr. Chase, the Master said: "As many times as possible—at least once a year—you should make it a point to visit his tomb, for his spirit will be exhilarated through the loyalty of the friends and in the world of God will it be happy. The friends of God must be kind to one another, whether it be in life or after death." 29

On Sunday, October 20, in Los Angeles, the Master concluded his final talk there with these beautiful words of assurance: "For I loved Mr. Chase very much indeed. His heart was pure. He had no other thought except service to the Cause. He had no other aim except service and in the world of God will it be happy. The friends of God must be kind to one another, whether it be in life or after death." 30

In the not too distant future when man's present spiritual blindness has been at least partially healed historians will certainly honor Thornton Chase who despite the conflicting voices, false ideals and worldly ambitions of those around him not only became the first in the entire Western world to recognize His Lord, but despite serious upheavals and countless misunderstandings in the Bahá'í community itself, remained as the Master has described him "steadfast" until his passing.

No one now living can correctly estimate the great importance of what he accomplished. We can only read what 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian in perfect knowledge have written about him.

NOTES:
2. Ibid., p. 152
3. Ibid., p. 135
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p. 33-36
10. Ibid., p. 33-34
11. Ibid., p. 35
12. Ibid., p. 29
13. Ibid., p. 66
15. Thornton Chase, In Celilee, p. 69
16. H. M. Balyuzi, "'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Center of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh," Chapter VI, Disciples in the West, p. 67
18. Ibid., p. 123
19. Ibid., p. 125
20. Ibid., p. 127
21. Ibid., p. 173-174
22. Thornton Chase, "What is Truth?" The Bahá'í Magazine (Star of the West) Vol. XXI
23. Star of the West, Vol. IV, Sept. 27, 1913, No. 11
24. H. M. Balyuzi, Disciples in the West, p. 37
25. Ibid., p. 37
27. Ibid., p. 199
28. Ibid., p. 199
29. Star of the West, Vol. IV, Nov. 4, 1913, No. 13, p. 225
30. Ibid., p. 226

Thornton Chase Memorial Service, October 1, 1972

An annual memorial service for Thornton Chase is held at his grave in the Inglewood Park cemetery, Inglewood, California. The most recent one in memory of the sixtieth anniversary of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was held on Sunday, October 1, 1972 at 2:00 p.m. There were about 200 persons present.

Children placed flowers on the grave while the Bahá'í choir sang "Alláh-u-ÁÁbhá." The story of the dedicated life of Thornton Chase once more renewed the friends. Paul Kurokawa said the opening prayer, followed by the "Prayer for America" said by Jolin Murphy, and later the prayer revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for Mr. Chase was said by Howard Jacobs. Readings from The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh were given by Blanche and Walter Grant. Don Addison read Hidden Words in the Mandarin dialect, and gave Chinese musical selections. Kamran Nejati read from Gleanings passages regarding the soul of man. Campbell Thompson, Inez Shannon and Loreda Kocher made short talks about the life of Thornton Chase, the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to America and the growth of the Faith. The musical group "Wednesday's Children" presented selections.

Many of the friends lingered to visit after the service and left refreshed and inspired.
The Heavenly Army

"Oh, how I long that it could be made possible for me to travel through these parts, even...on foot and with the utmost poverty, and...cry at the top of my voice "Ya- Bahá'u'l-Abhá!"

'Abru'l-Bahá — Tablets of the Divine Plan

Our pioneers write of the hardships they encounter such as the discomfort associated with sleeping on skins and dirt floors, scratching fleas and eating nothing but potatoes. Sicknesses are caused by amoebas and worms.

They tell of all the other difficulties related to serving in primitive areas, but most important—they tell of walking for half a day through primitive country only to come over a mountain top and view a small community of perhaps three or four adobe huts and be greeted by the children—some not old enough to talk well—with "Alláh-u-Abhá." Upon entering one of the huts, the visitor is greeted by a hand-written paper sign—Bahá'í Center—and a small photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. That makes it all worthwhile.

As one pioneer wrote: "One can see that a new World Order is unfolding, even in remote Indian villages in the Andes."

Meeting with the Regional Teaching Committee of Andamarca, Bolivia on August 25, 1972. This is near the Chilean border. Auxiliary Board member Andres Jachakollo, Isidro Jachakollo and Dorothy Hansen Baskin with some of the local teachers. They have a strong Regional Teaching Committee and Local Spiritual Assembly. All appreciated a plastic globe of the world, a gift of Larry Day, pioneer, who brought it from Panama to Bolivia as a teaching tool.

A two-day trip was made over barren flat altiplano to Chipaya, near the border of Chile, to fulfill a goal of the Nine Year Plan, translation of Bahá'í prayers into Poguina. The party consisted of Auxiliary Board member Andres Jachakollo, Isidro Jachakollo, Jim Self and Dorothy Hansen Baskin. The barren, frozen, windy altiplano is about 20,000 feet in altitude. The distant mountains are in Chile. As the jeep entered the river the first time it began to sink, so the driver, Jim Self, backed up, saving all. The three men decided that they could go no farther but Dorothy Baskin declared: "I'm not coming this far for this goal and then turn back," so she waded in measuring the Rio Lanoa to see where the jeep could cross and get to the distant village. She was successful, so the men rode over in the jeep. Dorothy was protected, because she did not even catch cold. All had a good laugh about the determination of some women pioneers.

Taking translations in Poguina, the language of the Chipaya tribe, in order to fulfill one of the Bolivian goals of the Nine Year Plan on August 26, 1972. The altitude is around 20,000 feet, the coldest spot in Bolivia. Left is Auxiliary Board member Andres Jachakollo, the brothers Quispe, Bahá'í's helping with the translations, and Dorothy Hansen Baskin, who is writing linguistic interpretations of this unusual language which is not related to either Aymara or Quechua. Not shown in the photo but in the party are Isidro Jachakollo and pioneer Jim Self who drove the jeep.
The end of the road—a thousand foot gorge stopped the jeep of pioneers so Domingo Mamavu, Aymara driver (left), slept in the jeep in the freezing 18,000 foot altitude while native pioneer Sabino Ortega, Lucas Marca and Dorothy Baskin followed Aymara guides down the 2,000 foot trail for a half-day to Taliya, Department of Cochabamba where a large and devoted Bahá’í community resides with a functioning Local Spiritual Assembly. There loyal friends walk out in great numbers to attend Conferences held by the Counsellors.

A family of devoted Aymara traveling teachers in Huayllama, Bolivia, Lucas Marca, in center with hat, is a local judge as well as a musician and all his sons play in a small band. He is an excellent translator in Aymara, and visits Assemblies in his area on foot, deepening and teaching. He is accompanied by Sabino Ortega, native pioneer and Dorothy Hansen Baskin.

The party on August 27, 1972 with new Bahá’í Chipaya family in front of their small round house where they slept on skins and ate only quinca, a very nutritious grain that grows only at about 15,000 ft. altitude.

Some of the about seventy Bahá’ís who gathered for a deepening day with teaching team Lucas Marca, Sabino Ortega and American pioneer Dorothy Hansen Baskin. The hostess, Sabina Yapiticora is shown at left. She is a Local Assembly member and leading citizen of her village Taliya, Bolivia, where about fifty Bahá’ís reside. The team slept in her home on skins.
Yauri-Khoya Bahá’í community with Aymara teacher Lucas Marca (standing on right with white “chulu”), and pioneer Dorothy Hansen Baskin. Here friends have built their own Bahá’í Center similar to the one in the background, although the location was only opened a year ago by Lucas Marca. To reach this 16,450 foot altitude location it is necessary to walk a half-day from the main dirt roads through valleys and hills where farmers till their potatoes with wooden instruments.

Women of Yauri-Khoya, Bolivia with pioneer Dorothy Hansen Baskin during a teaching, deepening trip on October 8, 1972.

TANACROSS

Tanacross was in the middle of a four-day Potlatch, celebrating the death of the Chief’s son a year ago, and the Massive Encounter team of Alaska was invited to participate. Finding out that Hazel Lovelace, our coordinator for this trip, was a Tlingit Indian, the Chief said that it would be an honor if she would dance with them and say a few words. He beamed as he saw how the Bahá’ís are attempting to dance and be a part of their activities. Even our dearly loved National Spiritual Assembly Chairman, John Koltoe, danced with the people, and all shared in the festivities. This is a good example of indirect teaching—not much said about Bahá’u’lláh, but they knew who we were by our Bahá’í buttons.

We were invited to come back for the last day of the Potlatch. For five hours they gave out blankets and guns to selected people who had come from all over the state for the festivities. Hazel Lovelace and Victor James each received nice blankets from the Chief.

The next day we put on a program at the Tanacross Community Hall and invited everyone to come. The village has only one generator, which often refuses to function, and we were blessed with poor service on that afternoon. All the people were attracted to seeing a film and weren’t about to leave as long as we were working on the generator. During the next several hours the team talked on a personal level, and twenty-three became Bahá’ís, including Chief Isaac.

Finally the generator was running and the film began. The funny part of it all was the generator didn’t run at a constant speed. Consequently, neither did the projector, and at times female voices took on a male quality and vice versa. For those of us who see these films almost daily it was quite a test not to burst in laughter. At times like that entire afternoon one realizes how we have to lay all our affairs in God’s hands.

As we were getting ready to leave, the Chief made a speech on how grateful he was that we had come with the glorious Message of Bahá’u’lláh. We had the feeling that the natives may never have related to us if we hadn’t come to their celebrations the previous days.

—Alaska Bahá’í News
Nov. 1972

Chief Isaac of Tanacross
Expanding Our Horizons
The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh
By Barbara Casterline

A BOOK REVIEW

These are some of the most searching questions which any seeker might ask about the Faith: Why must religious be institutionalized? How are your institutions any different from those we have had in religion before? What, basically, is the Bahá’í Faith all about? How is it different from other religions? How and when will the world commonwealth you speak of come about? With old institutions collapsing all around, what makes you think the Bahá’í Faith will do any better? Maybe you have been asked some of these questions. The answers are all to be found in The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh, a series of letters which Shoghi Effendi wrote to the Western believers between 1929 and 1936 to help them understand the relationship of the new administration they were building to what was happening in the world at large—the relationship of God’s plan for the Bahá’ís to God’s plan for mankind—and to help them understand more fully the import of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation.

Why Institutions?
In the first letter, “The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh,” Shoghi Effendi described the origins and character of the Bahá’í institutions (pp. 3-9) and then showed why institutions are necessary—to “insure, amid the storm and stress of a struggling civilization, the unity of the Faith, the preservation of its identity, and the protection of its interests.” (p. 10) He said that the administration of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh “should be regarded as a channel through which His promised blessings may flow.” (p. 9)

The succeeding letter, “The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh, Further Considerations,” additionally demonstrates the need for this Order, for “...the spirit breathed by Bahá’u’lláh upon the world... can never permeate and exercise an abiding influence upon mankind unless and until it incarnates itself in a visible Order, which would bear His name, wholly identify itself with His principles, and function in conformity with His laws.” (p. 19) This Bahá’í Administrative Order is a very “pattern for future society.” (p. 19) Its ways are the future world ways.

In this letter, Shoghi Effendi also warned of the likelihood of attacks by clergy: “...So soon as the full measure of the stupendous claim of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh comes to be recognized by those time-honored and powerful strongholds of orthodoxy, whose deliberate aim is to maintain their stranglehold over the thoughts and consciences of men, this infant Faith will have to contend with enemies more powerful and more insidious than the crudest torture-mongers and the most fanatical clerics who have afflicted it in the past.” (p. 17)

It is necessary for Bahá’ís to be ready to defend the Faith against such attacks. And they must accordingly, sooner or later, “face this searching question: Where and how does this Order established by Bahá’u’lláh, which to outward seeming is but a replica of the institutions established in Christianity and Islam, differ from them?” (p. 18)

The answer involves a comparison between the lack of clear instructions from either Jesus or Muhammad as to successorship or organization (pp. 20-21), and the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh, which has provided its followers, in clear language, with “all the laws, the regulations, the principles, the institutions, the guidance, they require....” (p. 21) Both the administration and the matter of succession of authority are irrefutably established in the Writings. “Therein lies the distinguishing feature of the Bahá’í Revelation.” (p. 22)

Where to?
Just where the world is headed, and what part the Faith will play in the subject of the next three letters. “The Goal of a New World Order” describes the chaotic conditions of worldwide depression present in 1931 and foresees the likelihood of another world war. The worldwide unrest of the time was due mainly to the failure of world leaders “to adjust their system of economic and political institutions to the imperative needs of a rapidly evolving age.” (p. 36) And how should they reshape their governments?—“according to those standards that are implicit in Bahá’u’lláh’s supreme declaration of the Oneness of Mankind.” (p. 36) Shoghi Effendi called this principle “the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh revolve.” (p. 42) It is what the Faith is about.

Nothing short of Bahá’u’lláh’s Divine Program can bring lasting peace—no man-made system or efforts in statesmanship. (pp. 33-34) Shoghi Effendi feared that another war (or wars) was inevitable, as, “We have but to turn our gaze to humanity’s blood-stained history to realize that nothing short of intense mental as well as physical agony has been able to precipitate those epoch-making changes that constitute the greatest landmarks in the history of human civilization.” (p. 45)

But when might we expect the era of world commonwealth to begin? It began with the erection of The Universal House of Justice in 1963. For Shoghi Effendi forecast it: “Might not the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh mark the inauguration of so vast an era in human history?” (p. 46)

In “The Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh” we see the contrast between the slow and steady growth of the Faith and the meteoric rise—and fall—of man-created movements (pp. 51-55) and between the “courage and restraint,” “magnanimity and power,” and “broad-mindedness and loyalty” (p. 55) of the heroes of the Cause as compared with the bitter dissensions that characterized even the early days of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. (pp. 56-57)

The Bahá’í Faith does not belittle these religions, though, for:

Its teachings revolve around the fundamental principle that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Revelation is progressive, not
final. Unequivocally and without the least reservation it proclaims all established religions to be divine in origin, identical in their aims, complementary in their functions, continuous in their purpose, indispensable in their value to mankind. (p. 58)

The only difference, Shoghi Effendi said, is that the present age is "infinitely more advanced, more receptive, more insistent to receive an amplification of Divine Guidance than has hitherto been vouchsafed to mankind." (p. 60)

In "America and the Most Great Peace," Shoghi Effendi recalled 'Abdu'l-Bahá’s prediction that America would "lead all nations spiritually." (p. 76) The Guardian had said that "future historians" would show how the administrative center of the Faith moved to America, then the "mainspring and chief fulcrum of its fast evolving institutions." (p. 76) But he himself gave the outline of that history, summarizing the first four decades of the Faith in America climaxed respectively by the pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to America, the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly, and the completion of the superstructure of the House of Worship. (pp. 80, 81-94) He called upon America to eclipse these past achievements by those of the future.

Who Is Bahá'u'lláh?

In "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh" we get a glimpse of the "incomparable greatness" of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation and begin to see its relation to the Revelations of the past, which it fulfills, and to those of the future, which it is destined to overshadow. (p. 111)

For our "first obligation" and the object of our "constant endeavor" as Baha'ís should be, Shoghi Effendi said, "to strive to obtain a more adequate understanding of the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's stupendous Revelation." (p. 100)

Rúhíyyih Khánum remembers that "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh" "burst upon the Baha'is like a blinding white light... All the frontiers of our understanding flew outwards; the glory of this Cause and the true station of its Central Figures were revealed to us and we were never the same again." (The Priceless Pearl, p. 213)

As a way of getting to know this beautiful letter, let Shoghi Effendi's own introductory words serve:

"Dominating the entire range of this fascinating spectacle towers the incomparable figure of Bahá'u'lláh, transcendental in His majesty, serene, awe-inspiring, unapproachably glorious. Allied, though subordinate in rank, and invested with the authority of presiding with Him over the destinies of this supreme Dispensation, there shines upon this mental picture the youthful glory of the Báb, infinite in His tenderness, irresistible in His charm, unsurpassed in His heroism, matchless in the dramatic circumstances of His short yet eventful life. And finally there emerges, though on a plane of its own and in a category entirely apart from the one occupied by the twin Figures that preceded Him, the vibrant, the magnetic personalty of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, reflecting to a degree that no man, however exalted his station, can hope to rival, the glory and power with which They who are the Manifestations of God are alone endowed. (pp. 97-98)

Besides Shoghi Effendi's own masterful exposition of the subject we are given a great treasure-house of selections from the Writings which he has translated for us as only he could. And in this letter he pointed out what is "the most distinctive feature of the Bahá'í Dispensa-

What is Going On?

In the final letter, "The Unfoldment of World Civilization," Shoghi Effendi has taken the chaotic puzzle of our "travelling society" and put the pieces together for us. This age can be understood when we realize that its convulsions are "the death-pangs of the old order and the birth-pangs of the new." (p. 169) The one is a process of disintegration, tearing down "the antiquated barriers that seek to block humanity's progress towards its destined goal." (p. 170) The other is a process of integration, the building up of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

Examples are given of the old institutions that have fallen or are crumbling: the German Empire and the Sultanate, the Caliphate, and the Shi'i hierarchy in Islam have fallen; the Christian Church is weakening before materialism, Communism, and nationalism; the signs of moral downfall are clear; many political and economic structures have broken down; and the League of Nations proved impotent. (pp. 171-194)

Then the Baha'i Faith is shown—"this healing Agency, this levying Power, this cementing Force." (p. 195) We see how it has changed peoples lives, "burned away their prejudices," and "transformed their outlook." (p. 197) The Baha'is have held steadfastly to their beliefs (pp. 198-199) and upheld their laws (pp. 199-200). In these and other ways (pp. 200-201), "The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is proving beyond doubt its virility and capacity to counteract the disintegrating influences to which religious systems, moral standards, and political and social institutions are being subjected." (p. 201)

The last few enthralling pages describe to us "the unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh..." (p. 203) And when that is established, "Who can measure the heights to which human intelligence, liberated from its shackles, will soar? Who can visualize the realms which the human spirit, vitalized by the outpouring light of Bahá'u'lláh, shining in the plenitude of its glory, will discover?" (p. 206)

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh shows the source and reason for Bahá'í institutions; their distinction from all other institutions, religious or political; and their destiny, as those other institutions crumble, to serve as "the nucleus and pattern of the world civilization emerging under divine inspiration at this focal point of human history." (p. vi) It shows how Bahá'u'lláh has taken the world and "caused every soul to expire," and then, in His mercy, "called into being a new creation." (p. 206)

Prayers at the Mountain Top

Members of the little Indian Bahá'í community of Yauri-Khoya, Bolivia, a group of men and women believers recently climbed to the summit of a mountain exactly at midnight and proceeded to pray tearfully for the forgiveness of all their past faults and sins. Then they prayed together for The Universal House of Justice, the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia and for all the Bahá'ís of the world. It was followed by a period of meditation in total silence and afterwards they descended the mountain. Is it not such humble, sincere and pure-hearted souls who compose the Kingdom of God today?
Dedication of the Mathew Kaszab Institute in Alaska

The Mathew Kaszab Institute, located in the Greater Anchorage area of Alaska, was dedicated on Sunday, November 12, 1972 in an afternoon program which was planned by the National Spiritual Assembly.

John Kolstoe, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, acted as Chairman on the occasion. He pointed out the significance of Baha'i Institutes for deepening in the Teachings to further the spiritualization of Alaska.

Rowena Currington gave the dramatic story of Mathew Kaszab, pioneer to Nicaragua in 1939, who suffered persecution and hardships for the Faith.

Auxiliary Board member Jenabe Caldwell read a letter from the Continental Board of Counsellors reminding those attending that Alaska is “caught in a trap of its own glory.” At least one percent of the population of Alaska is now Bahá’í but the goal since the 1971 Convention has been that Alaska become the first all-Bahá’í state in the world.

The Windflower musical group entertained with songs. Members of this group are Victor Wong, Kitty Patel, Marshall Murphy, Gavin Reed, David Rychetnik, Zonettah Varley and Gary Lamar. Layli Caldwell read the prayer “Blessed is the Spot” to close the meeting.

Refreshments were enjoyed by the large crowd which attended.

Mathew Kaszab heard and accepted the Bahá’í message while a student at the University of New York and became aflame with love for his new Faith. He worked at anything that would allow him time to study the Bahá’í Writings. When Shoghi Effendi’s ‘Advent of Divine Justice’ was published in February of 1939, it contained words that lighted a flame in his heart.

Without delay Mathew set out for Panama where he wrote articles for all the leading journals, gave Bahá’í talks on the radio and brought into the Faith our first Panamanian believer.

He next went to Nicaragua where his fare was constant disappointment and discouragement. He served first at Blue Fields, working in the mines and eventually felt himself a failure in his efforts towards bettering conditions of deplorable poverty, vice and ignorance, so returned to Managua where he was arrested while walking on the street, on the alleged charge of criticizing the Nicaraguan government.

He was released after about three weeks of imprisonment and, sensing danger, commenced plans to leave the country. When he arrived at the airport to fly out of Nicaragua, he was again arrested and imprisoned for three months, during which time he contracted a serious illness. When he sufficiently recovered to travel, he was put on a plane for Mexico City then to Brownsville, Texas, in which city he died all alone a few days after his arrival.

On his tombstone appear these prophetic words of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi: “His services are unforgettable”. The Bahá’í World, Volume IX carries an impressive story of the labor he thought he lost but which will exercise its influence forever.

—Adapted from ALASKA BAHÁ’I NEWS, Sept. and Dec. 1972

Passing of Well-Known Pioneer and Teacher — Mrs. Joy Earl

Many Bahá’ís both in the United States and in the Far East will be grieved to learn of the passing of Mrs. Joy Earl in Ann Arbor, Michigan on November 27, 1972, following several weeks of hospitalization. Although Mrs. Earl had suffered greatly from ill health for many years, she never ceased teaching. Indeed, one of her last services was to speak at a gathering in August in Malaysia where she and her husband, Dr. David M. Earl, were on a travel teaching tour. For a number of years when the Faith was only beginning to grow there she pioneered with Dr. Earl in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan.

In acknowledging news of Mrs. Earl’s passing The Universal House of Justice on November 30, cabled:

GRIEVE PASSING FAITHFUL HANDMAID BAHÁ’U’LLAH JOY EARL HER EXEMPLARY SERVICE PIONEER FIELD FAR EAST OVER LONG PERIOD AND TEACHING HOMEFRONT GREATLY VALUED. ASSURE DEVOTED HUSBAND PRAYERS HOLY THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL.

—The Universal House of Justice
Enthusiasm and joy intensified the deepening process at the more than sixty Covenant Institutes, sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors of North America, which have been carried out during this past fall and winter, with at least one being held in every state of Continental United States. These Institutes were programmed and arranged by the Counsellors, in collaboration with their Auxiliary Board members, for the purpose of increasing the understanding and appreciation of the Covenant by the many new believers, and for the general welfare and strengthening of the National community. Additional Institutes are anticipated to occur, almost to the close of the current Baha'i year, the entire series of such gatherings resulting in a total attendance of approximately 6,200. In this nationwide task the Continental Board of Counsellors and its Auxiliary Boards have been vastly aided by the ready and loving assistance of the National Spiritual Assembly.

More compelling than the unusually large attendance by the old as well as the new believers, those carrying out this series of Institutes have been impressed by the power and unifying spirit which has been generated and by the enthusiasm and eagerness for ever deeper knowledge of the Faith which featured these sessions. Some of the Baha'is traveled from one Institute to the next, declaring that depth of understanding stimulated desire for further knowledge.

Gems from the Writings were discovered and re-discovered. The sessions began with the Eternal Covenant of God, with its golden thread of truth linking all Revelations into one total Religion. The discussions continued into the Covenant made by Baha'u'llah with His followers. This unique Lesser Covenant contained appointment of 'Abdu'l-Baha as the Center of this Covenant. It was continued through the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha with its appointment of Shoghi Effendi as Guardian, its expanded understanding of the authority of The Universal House of Justice along with provisions for that Body's election, and its delineation of the appointment by the Guardian of the Hands of the Cause of God.

In addition there was discussion regarding designation by the Guardian in 1957 of the Hands of the Cause as "Chief Stewards of the Faith", and of their stewardship between the passing of the Guardian and the election of the first Universal House of Justice. Historic steps taken by The Universal House of Justice since its inception were outlined, these steps including appointment of Continental Boards of Counsellors to carry into the future the functions and duties of the Hands of the Cause of God.

Much time was allowed to clarify what Covenant-breaking is and is not. Complete freedom featured the question and answer periods, giving great opportunity for audience participation. Guidance for dealing with incidents of suspected Covenant-breaking was spelled out—that believers should report these to their Administrative Institutions, Auxiliary Board members, Counsellors, or Hands of the Cause, and the one contacted would then make the proper referral.

Many exciting and dramatic instances took place: re-dedication on the part of some; confirmation for others. At each Institute gratitude was expressed for the new edition of the pamphlet The Power of the Covenant provided by the National Spiritual Assembly. Deep appreciation was also extended to the many Local Spiritual Assemblies and District Teaching Committees who aided in arranging facilities, registering attendants and providing hospitality. Special praise was given to the high quality of interest and perception of the Baha'is who attended, which completed the composite of joyous productive cooperation of the entire project.

A regular monthly institute held in Province Chaco, Argentina, for adults and children. Mrs. Isabel Costas, at extreme right, is a visitor from Burzaco. Next to her is Mr. Eugene Dornbrook, resident pioneer.
Youth Conference in Guatemala

The climax of five weeks for youth projecteers in Guatemala who had taught hundreds of people was a Youth Conference held in the National Bahá'í Center in Guatemala City, on August 19-20. Projecteers from other Central American countries were invited. Among the speakers was Auxiliary Board member Edith McLaren, whose topic was "The Covenant". Her son, Peter McLaren, who was visiting at the time also made a talk and showed slides at a public meeting. Attendance at the meeting was about sixty people.

The tie binding these youth was their dedication to telling about the Bahá'í Faith. This group demonstrated what the future world will be like with unity in diversity. When parting time came, it was with tears of sorrow—they could hardly pull themselves away from each other and go back into the old world again.

Publicity in Leading Dutch Newspapers

On September 30, 1972, in one of the nation's leading newspapers Het Parool, on page five appeared a short item under the caption "Bahá'ís Want to Promote Peace". Data were received from Mr. M. Kleyne, a member of the Amsterdam Bahá'í community. It stated that the Bahá'í Faith strives to educate men towards universal thinking, to develop a consciousness of responsibility and obedience of people to their respective governments, the elimination of prejudices, and to constantly focus on the best interests of mankind. The editor permitted Mr. Kleyne to state: "We believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the One foretold in the Bible as the return of the Messiah."

"If you have inner peace, there is no further problem" was the statement introducing an interview with "Dizzie" Gillespie in the Algemmen Dagblad, a leading Dutch newspaper on October 28, 1972. Mr. John Birks Gillespie is among the foremost jazz musicians since World War II. Through his appointment as "Musical Ambassador" under the direction of the State Department in Washington, he undertook a worldwide goodwill trip. Whenever he speaks with journalists he always brings his religion to the fore and tells where he finds zest for living. Algemmen Dagblad wrote: "He takes a little book out of his case and lets us see it. This is my Bible", he says. "I am a convinced supporter of the Bahá'í Faith. Its source is Iran and now there are followers all over the world. I am for Christian religions, but they have, according to me, gone too little with the times."

Under a sub-title "Love" is this excerpt: "The Bahá'í Faith, in the first place, preaches inner peace which I often speak about, and a loving relation with all your fellow-men... Read about it some time, discover the prescription and be my friend. That's what the world needs."
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum

By Violette Nakhijavání, Companion

Part thirteen

On February 1, 1971, we crossed the border of Zaire and entered our twenty-second African country, Zambia. During the stay of Amatu'l-Bahá in this country which ended on March 10 she was able to bring the Faith to the forefront of press, radio and television.

In an unforgettable audience with President Kaunda which lasted half an hour, she was able to speak freely about the principles of the Faith. She assured the President of the loyalty and obedience of Bahá'ís to their respective government and their abhorrence of lawlessness and anarchy. President Kaunda, a charming, distinguished educator and leader, received Rúhíyyih Khánum, who was accompanied by the Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Lusaka and myself, in his private office in his home. He expressed his pleasure at meeting Amatu'l-Bahá. He said, “I have been studying the Bahá‘í file and am impressed by the similarity of some of your principles to my personal belief and ideas.” When Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke of the cruel prejudice of the educated class against the uneducated and the illiterate, the President smiled and retorted: “Madam Rabbani, if you were not a visitor in my country I would have said you were spying on my thoughts, as I have just prepared a talk which emphasizes the same points.”

He was greatly impressed when told about our African tour, and commented on its length, asking if any disasters had been met with. Rúhíyyih Khánum told him that the greatest compliment she could pay to Africa was that two women traveled alone across this vast continent and were not afraid. She said that we had realized the villagers everywhere would be kind and helpful. The President smiled and said “This is two-way traffic Madam; it is your attitude which has created such an atmosphere for you.”

Rúhíyyih Khánum with the well-known Chief Ikeleme of Zambia.

Rúhíyyih Khánum said she wished to present him with a copy of the pamphlet “Obedience to Government” but unfortunately had not been able to locate one and asked if she could send it to him. The President replied that he would like to have it and then asked Mr. Makwakwa, Chairman of the Local Assembly, to send him any new Bahá‘í literature that was available. Amatu'l-Bahá was surprised and said: “Your Excellency, with all the burdens of state resting on you and all you have to read, you do not have time to read this literature.” He replied: “I have set aside a special time on Sunday after I return from Church for study and reading such material.”

Lusaka, Zambia, Bahá‘í community meeting with Amatu'l-Bahá.
The President is a great leader and has a vision of bringing his people up-to-date while preserving the traditions and virtues of tribal society. He knows about the Faith and seems impressed by its Teachings. When one of the top television interviewers met Ruhiyyih Khânûm he told her he was planning to emphasize the Safari rather than the Bahá’í Teachings as he had recently done a long interview on the Bahá’í Teachings and felt it unwise to repeat so soon. However, after five minutes he began asking questions about the Faith and became so interested that he sent a note to the staff telling them to lengthen the half-hour interview with Ruhiyyih Khânûm to forty-five minutes! There were two additional radio interviews and a number of favorable articles in the press.

At a public meeting in Lusaka in the auditorium of the Evelyn Home College, more than 400 people listened with rapt attention to the talk of Amatu’l-Bahá on “The Spiritual Destiny of Africa.” During the question period a young man asked: “Why is it that almost a century ago people such as Livingstone and Rhodes and now yourself, came to us telling us of our potentialities and capacities and warning us of the evils of losing our racial virtues and beliefs, yet none of our own people tell us such things?”

The answer of Ruhiyyih Khânûm was brilliant. The audience spontaneously broke into applause. She said: “In the first place there are great men in this continent who are also saying the same thing and trying to uphold such ideas and your President is one of them. In the second place we must learn to be objective and impartial. We must recognize what is universal and not regional or racial. In this room we are all enjoying the gift of electricity. This gift came to you through the white man, yet it is yours and does not belong to any one group of men because it is a principle, a universal principle. Religious truth, likewise, is a universal principle and belongs to whoever accepts it. Bahá’u’lláh belongs to me because I have accepted Him and love Him, but He also belongs to you if you accept Him and love Him.”

Meeting with the Bahá’ís of Mwinilunga, Zambia.
happy to hear later on that it had been completed.

It was the pineapple season. An amusing scene took place. Without understanding a word, we were able to follow the movements of a husband and wife and understand all that was said. When the couple arrived bringing a basket of pineapples as a gift for Ruhiyyih Khanum and they saw a dozen or so pineapples already pulled up, the wife told the husband to take theirs back as there were already too many. We quite agreed with her reasonable attitude.

During meetings it was necessary that every word be translated into two languages—so much time wasted. We all felt the urgent necessity for the universal auxiliary language foreseen by Bahai’s. In the mining town of Chingola during a very short stop-over some of the friends had the bounty of meeting with Amatu’l-Bahá. In Kitwe, a beautiful town in the heart of the copper mining district, before Ruhiyyih Khanum became ill and had to cancel her program she had a very interesting press interview which resulted in the publication of a long article on the Faith. She also had a radio interview in the same town. These interviews attracted a great deal of attention because of Ruhiyyih Khanum’s unique trip across Africa in a Land Rover.

In Livingston

Amatu’l-Bahá’s tour of Zambia was completed when several months later she was able to cross over the Rhodesian border into the southern town of Livingston and meet the active and devoted Bahai’s community in the village of Mokuni. These dear friends who were disappointed in the month of March because Ruhiyyih Khanum was too ill to visit them, rejoiced in her presence and presented her with a wood carving they had specially made for her. In Livingston itself, at the home of the only pioneers there, a young Persian couple, she was able to explain the fundamental principles of the Faith to a selected group of seekers. This famous spot in Africa, where David Livingston first came upon the majestic sight of Victoria Falls—known by the local inhabitants by the name of “Musi-o-Tunya,” meaning “the smoke that thunders,” was blessed by the presence of the beloved Guardian himself. Amatu’l-Bahá told us that in 1940, when Italy entered the war and the Mediterranean was closed to Allied shipping, Shoghi Effendi, with her father and herself had been forced to return to Palestine from England via South Africa, crossing the continent from Cape Town to Cairo. Shoghi Effendi had made a special trip to these falls to show them to her as
right to rise up against it because he considers it unjust and to overthrow it, for when the next government comes into power those holding the opposite views can likewise judge, condemn and decide to overthrow the new government. Where then do we find law and order? This is anarchy and anarchy is forbidden by Bahá’u’lláh. In the Teachings there is one thing which is considered even worse than war, and that is civil war.”

Many of the clergy and educators present were obviously pleased by this answer but some of the youth were not satisfied. Rúhiyih Khánum told them to reflect upon it, as it was a new idea very different from the one they read about but that they should consider it seriously.

When being given a vote of thanks at the end of this meeting, the Principal of the school, an Indian educator said: “I have no doubt in my mind that if the world was to choose one religion and live by it, it should be the Bahá’í Faith as its views on religions and mankind are broad and universal so that it can embrace all men.”

Many of the pioneers had brought from his commercial rose garden over 500 beautiful blossoms and at his suggestion Rúhiyih Khánum invited each of the audience to take a rose away as a little remembrance of this meeting. When this mixture of races in a country increasingly agitated by racial distrust and misunderstanding left this meeting each person was carrying at least one fragrant rose, symbolic of the Bahá’í Teachings that we all flowers of one garden. One could not but feel hope for the future, that a rose from the paradise of the Words of God, the perfume of the Message of the Blessed Beauty, would change men’s deeds.

The joyful occasion of the celebration of the Bahá’í New Year we shared with the believers of Salisbury and neighboring areas on the evening of March 20. Over 150 of the friends gathered to dine together and break the last day of their Fast with Rúhiyih Khánum. After dinner and the start of the Naw-Rúz meeting, she told the friends that thirty-two years ago she and Shoghi Effendi had traveled through Rhodesia and this visit of the beloved Guardian had blessed their wonderful land. She spoke of the tremendous power released through the Word of God and through obedience to His laws and ordinances.

In the homes of Bahá’ís she was able to speak to them and their friends on a number of occasions.

A Bahá’í Funeral Service

One of the unforgettable incidents during this period was a Bahá’í funeral which took place in the community of the Salisbury Motel, seven miles outside the city limits. A three-month old baby of a Bahá’í couple died. The father is a teacher at the Motel School which Mr. Lawrence Haupt has maintained free for over fifteen years on his property at which over a thousand children have received a primary education. All the legal procedures of the funeral had been attended to in an unbelievably short time: permission to bury the baby in a small African cemetery on the property was secured, a beautiful coffin was obtained; the long prayer for the dead (page 250, Prayers and Meditations of Bahá’u’lláh) was translated into the Shona language.

Over 200 people gathered at the site, a small hilltop overlooking flowering fields and beautiful green rolling country. Many non-Bahá’í relatives, including grandparents, had come from long distances to attend the funeral. Africans have a profound respect for the dead and a feeling of obligation to bury them respectfully. The school children, well over a hundred holding bunches of wild pink and white cosmos in their hands marched the half-mile from the schoolhouse to the grave side, chanting “Ya-Bahá’u’lláh.” They arranged themselves in a block then remained silent and disciplined throughout the long ceremony. One of the Bahá’í school teachers read aloud most beautifully in Shona the long funeral prayer while all stood and faced ‘Akká. The intense spiritual vibration which the repetition of the verses released, each verse said nineteen times, profoundly stirred all of us.

At the end Amatu’l-Bahá spoke a few words on the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh about life after death and the condition of the soul. She told of the assurance of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that the innocent soul of a child which did not have a chance to grow in this world will be watched over and helped in the next world to develop and progress spiritually.

At the end of her talk, knowing some of the relatives were not Bahá’ís she asked a woman who had moved forward to the open grave to say a prayer. This dignified, elderly lady, whom we later learned was one of the grandmothers, said a few words we thought were a prayer but learned afterwards they were words of gratitude. She said that she had never seen such a funeral before where an atmosphere of love and joy prevailed in place of the usual wailing and weeping, and peace and tranquility had filled their hearts. The grandmother later accepted the Faith and in her own village repeated the story of the funeral of her grandchild. The effect of this unique prayer for the dead is so profound that Amatul-Bahá urged the Rhodesian National Spiritual
Assembly and other National Assemblies she has since visited, as well as individual friends everywhere, to have it translated into the different native languages and make it generally available to the friends.

She told a personal experience, how in 1940 when the news of the sudden passing of her beloved mother reached her, her whole being "filled with such sorrow and longing that she asked permission from the Guardian to visit the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh alone. In that holy spot she recited this prayer out loud and as she repeated nineteen times each of its powerful verses, she felt as if the words, like drop by drop of refreshing water, washed away some of the sharp pangs of her sorrow and distress. (To be continued)

Chicago Commemorates 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Visit

In honor of the sixtieth anniversary of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Chicago, the Bahá'í community of the city held a reception and dinner on October 29, 1972 at the McCormick Place Lindheimer Room.

The reception was held from 5:00 p.m. until dinner at 6:00 p.m. The occasion was attended by around 350 people from the Chicago community and surrounding suburbs. The press was represented, as well as two guests from the Conference of Christians and Jews. Those Bahá'ís who were in Chicago at the time 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited were especially recognized.

The enjoyable dinner was enhanced by entertainment by Dorothy Morrow, violinist; Reuben Anthony, guitarist; the Haghghi brothers Syrus and Kiumas provided musical selections on ancient Persian instruments, the santour and the zrb; the Bahá'í Chorus of Chicago sang under the direction of Mrs. Verna Jean Harreld. The guest speaker of the evening was Mr. John von Thurn-Taxis who recounted the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Chicago.

Baha'í Group in Hottest Place on Earth

Sibi, in Baluchistan, is now considered the hottest place in the world, having taken the record away from Jacobabad in Sind, Pakistan.

On October 1, 1972, three Bahá'ís traveled to Sibi where there were no believers. Mr. A. C. Joshi, from an orthodox Hindu Brahmin background, had some acquaintances in the location and in a specially convened gathering presented the Faith to them. Four Hindu merchants accepted the Faith and signed declaration cards.

Mr. Joshi was accompanied by Mr. Anisur Rahman of Muslim background and Mr. Khurov Afsaro, a member of a Zoroastrian family.

Mr. Joshi is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Pakistan, a Senior Practising Lawyer of the High Courts of West Pakistan, a graduate in the Sanskrit language, a scholar of Gita, and has had experience in broadcasting from Radio Pakistan for more than fifteen years.

The Nine Year Plan stipulated that ten groups should be established in Baluchistan and this goal has now been achieved.
United Nations Day Observed in the United States

Over fifty Bahá’í communities throughout the United States observed United Nations Day on October 24, 1972, marking the twenty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. This year’s theme was “The Promise of World Peace.” Celebrations included international dinners, picnics, public meetings, and participation in festivals sponsored by local United Nations Association chapters.

Mrs. Annamarie Honnold, Alternate Delegate of the Bahá’í International Community of the United Nations, addressed 150 members of the Problems of Democracy Classes at Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania, Area High School. In Amherst, Massachusetts, Mrs. Mabel Garis, the U.S. UN Representative for the Bahá’ís, spoke about the effectiveness of the United Nations. In Alexandria, Virginia, Dr. Arthur Lyon Dahl spoke about the United Nations Environmental Conference held in Sweden last June which he attended as the representative for the Bahá’ís. Dr. Edward H. Buchrigh, author of several books and articles concerning the United Nations spoke to the gathering of fifty Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís in the International Center on the Indiana University campus in Bloomington, Indiana. Dr. Buchrigh was involved with the early development of the United Nations. Bahá’ís in Cottage Grove, Oregon; Town of Hempstead, New York; Portland, Oregon; and Rogers, Arkansas, also held public meetings. All meetings were well received and all had good newspaper publicity.

Nearly 100 people attended an international buffet sponsored by the Bahá’ís of Las Vegas, Nevada. Wendy Hill Ayhub, noted Bahá’í singer and songwriter from London, England, who has worked with the United Nations in London, was guest speaker. The observance received excellent publicity—articles in three newspapers, coverage on three television channels, seven radio stations, and interviews on two talk shows. Other successful international dinners were held in Evanston, Illinois; Santa Rosa, California; South Portland, Maine; Mishawaka, Indiana; Fargo, North Dakota; and Hillsborough County, Florida.

The Bahá’ís of Alameda, California, commemorated UN Day with a diversified program. Some Model UN Clubs from surrounding high schools participated, one club holding a mock UN Security Council meeting. Mr. Jamshed Fozdar, who has served the Faith in many countries throughout the world, was the speaker for the evening. Two films, “And His Name Shall Be One” and “The Games of Peace” (the latter provided by the United Nations Association in Berkeley), were shown. A representative from the UNA attended the meeting to see how the Bahá’ís were going to present the film. He was so pleased with the entire program that he promised to write to the United Nations telling them they should cooperate much more with the Bahá’ís!

The communities of San José and Los Gatos, California, participated in the annual United Nations Cultural Festival held in Los Gatos. This festival’s theme was “One World, One Hope for Peace.” Many people stopped at the Bahá’í booth, asked questions, and took literature when they left. The Bahá’ís not only placed an ad in the official souvenir book for the festival, but also received good press coverage. A similar, but smaller United Nations Day festival was held in Needham, Massachusetts on the town common. The Bahá’í group there also manned a booth and distributed literature to interested seekers.

Some communities took advantage of the celebrations sponsored by local organizations. Bahá’ís in South Dade, Florida, attended a UNA sponsored dinner. Bahá’ís in Marion, Indiana, participated in activities, including a festival, symposium, and public meetings, all emphasizing the United Nations. In Littleton, Colorado, Mrs. John Fiore, the Executive Director of the Colorado UNA, spoke to the Bahá’ís on the vital role the United Nations is playing in trying to meet the diverse problems of the world.

“Experiment in Internationalism” was the theme for the commemoration in Issaquah, Washington. More than thirty people learned folk dances from many areas of the world, including everything from stately English country dances to the fancy footwork of Balkan line dances. Afterwards, all enjoyed a display of handicrafts from Northwest American Indian tribes, Iceland, Java, Israel, and Nigeria, plus a sampling of international foods.

A study of the United Nations Charter and a discussion of the revisions proposed by the Bahá’í International Community of some of the Charter’s articles were the topics of the meeting sponsored by the Bahá’ís of Sacramento Municipal Court District. This informative session also received newspaper publicity.

Needless to say, all the Bahá’í communities celebrating United Nations Day 1972 contributed greatly to spreading the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and creating a better awareness of the United Nations. Most of these communities plan to follow up their activities with firesides, public meetings, and further cooperation with the United Nations Association wherever possible. Several are even contemplating new activities for United Nations Day 1973.

Mrs. Annamarie Honnold, Alternate Delegate of the Bahá’í International Community of the United Nations, addressed classes of the Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania, Area High School, at right. At left is Mrs. Ann Williams who introduced her and Jack Pencek, class adviser.
FALKLAND ISLANDS

The Bahá'ís of the Falkland Islands observed United Nations Day 1972 with exhibits and film showings that did much to help the people of these remote islands become aware of the larger world beyond their shores, acquainting them both with the aims and activities of the UN and with the universal scope of the Bahá'í Teachings.

Preparations began in April when the Bahá'í International Community office in New York received a request for a film and other materials. Since there is no local or regional United Nations Information Center with services for the Falkland Islands, the Radio/Visual Department of the Office of Public Information at UN Headquarters graciously made available a film, "Workshop for Peace." This was shipped to the Falkland Islands by the Bahá'í UN office along with UN posters and pamphlets, as well as the new Bahá'í brochure, "The Environment and Human Values—A Bahá'í View," prepared especially for the recent UN Conference on the Human Environment.

The Bahá'ís of the Falkland Islands now report the success of their efforts: "We received authority to display the material in the largest store in town, and it was shown from Friday, October 20, until Saturday, October 21. . . . Many people passed through the store and saw the exhibits. . . . A notice was broadcast over the local radio station announcing the display. . . . Previously, we had loaned the materials to the senior school in Port Stanley, and one of the teachers arranged for them to be displayed so that the pupils could see them and discuss the work of the United Nations. . . . We had arranged for the film, "Workshop for Peace" to be shown at several outlying settlements where it was combined with the Bahá'í movie, "It's Just the Beginning." On the 22nd of October we were lucky enough to have it screened in the local cinema to a packed house of over 250 people. The audience was quiet and receptive, and many must have associated the screening with the West Store exhibit and, therefore, with the Bahá'í Faith. In the store we had put up little notices saying that the exhibit was by the Bahá'ís of the Falkland Islands through the representatives at the United Nations. Altogether, we think that the exibition and screening have done a lot to make people aware of the manifold tasks undertaken by the United Nations, and that it also helped to indirectly proclaim the Faith."

United Nations Day, 1972, observed in Monrovia, Liberia.

HAWAII

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands sponsored an observance of United Nations Day, October 24, at Spalding Hall at the University of Hawaii. Mr. Salvatore A. Pelle spoke on "Do We Need the United Nations?". Mrs. Sue De Sena, Chairman of the Wahiawa Spiritual Assembly, presided and Miss Elahe Vahdat, of Iran, provided a musical program with songs in Japanese, Persian and Filipino. Among those attending the public meeting was Mrs. Fern McQuesten, representative of the United Nations Association of Hawaii.

The Mayor of Honolulu sent a letter of gratitude to the National Spiritual Assembly of Hawaii. "Through the combined efforts of many civic minded individuals and organizations", he said, "the UN Day Committee has achieved great success in promoting understanding and support of the United Nations organization. For your cooperation and participation in this community service, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation and I shall look forward to continued assistance from your very fine organization."

LUXEMBOURG

The Bahá'ís of Luxembourg sponsored a public meeting in celebration of United Nations Day, the only observance held in the Grand Duchy. Professor Nicholas Janus spoke on the theme "The UN—Can it Bring Us Peace?". Among those in attendance was the President of the United Nations Organization in Luxembourg. A most attractive invitation was sent to important personalities and distributed widely throughout the country. Through this extensive mailing and free newspaper publicity, many people were made aware of Bahá'í support of the aims and programs of the United Nations.

LIBERIA

Commemoration of United Nations Day in Liberia this year provided another unique opportunity to proclaim the Faith and to present the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh dealing with world problems and mankind's quest for peace. ELTV, the National Television Network for Liberia, produced a seventy-minute video-tape program on the United Nations. The film opened with "Highlights on the United Nations," featuring as special guest Miss Georgia M. Sanchez, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of West Africa. During the thirty minutes allotted to the Bahá'ís, she explained some of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh dealing with world problems, also referring to the important contributions of the Bahá'í International Community, as a Non-Governmental Organization, to the aims and programs of the United Nations. Thanks to the office of the Bahá'í International Community, which supplied slides from the United Nations Development Program, and other appropriate materials, the program was well presented, and the station expressed its gratitude. Further evidence of the program's success came when the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa received a copy of a letter sent by Mr. Curtis Campagne, United Nations Development Program Resident Representative for Liberia, to ELTV requesting the video-tape to send to UN Headquarters in the United States.
LIBERIA, continued

In addition, a fifteen minute radio interview with Mr. Jamshid Fanaiyan was broadcast twice on UN Day, on ELBC, as a radio special on the United Nations. Mr. Fanaiyan explained the Bahá’í view on the UN and gave a glimpse of world peace in the future.

This impressive evidence of Bahá’í cooperation with the United Nations coincided also with a well-attended public meeting held at the U.S.I.S. Auditorium, featuring a panel discussion and the showing of UNDP slides. The news of this meeting, with comments, was announced by ELBC. Further, an article entitled “Let Us Support the United Nations”, featured in the Liberian Star, covered in detail Bahá’í support of the goals of the Charter of the United Nations.

CHAD

The Bahá’ís of Chad celebrated UN Day with a public presentation—the first sponsored by their community. A great deal of interest and enthusiasm was generated and the United Nations Development Program Resident Representative of Chad, Mr. Finn Bonnevie, responded with wholehearted cooperation. He made available a delightful young man who spoke on the programs of development in Africa, especially Chad. He also contributed a large supply of literature for distribution, and honored the Bahá’í community by coming personally to the program. A young Bahá’í student presented the Bahá’í principles relevant to the occasion, and young Persian pioneers decorated the Center for the event. Announcement of the program was made over Radio Tchad, and Info Tchad, the only newspaper published in Chad, and read by everyone, carried an advertisement of the meeting for two days. About fifty people attended the meeting—a modest beginning—but the Bahá’í community was very encouraged.

AUSTRALIA

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Australia reports the outstanding success of an Inter-Faith World Brotherhood Youth Service held in observance of United Nations Day, sponsored by the United Nations Association. Arrangements for the service were made by a three-person committee which included Mrs. Judy Hassall, a Bahá’í, who was appointed by UNA to help. The program, which was inspired as a result of the Youth Service held in the Bahá’í House of Worship last year, gave clear recognition to the Bahá’í Faith.

Among the 700 people attending the service, held in the main auditorium of the Sydney Town Hall on October 22, were church dignitaries and official representatives from various organizations. Advance publicity included 2,000 United Nations invitations distributed throughout the area and posters placed in universities and colleges. A television station, at their own request, featured a panel of four youth from Bahá’í, Muslim, Christian and Jewish backgrounds. On this national telecast centered on the forthcoming program, the youth expressed their thoughts as to how unity could be established throughout the world. Five newspapers had articles about the service and mentioned Bahá’í participation. Four commercial radio stations announced the program, and mentioned Bahá’í participation, and ABC National Radio reported three times that this was an “historic service,” mentioning that Bahá’í Writings were included in the program. Copies of the program were sent to all state branches of the UNA throughout Australia and some overseas countries, including England, New Zealand and New Guinea.

Seven Bahá’í young people were actively involved in this program, including Scott Stafford, 17 years old, who gave the main talk, entitled, “One God, One World, One Brotherhood of Man.” His speech was taped for radio and replayed on two occasions. Karuna, a magazine published by the UNA of Australia for free circulation to Secondary Schools, reprinted the talk. The Bahá’í community of the metropolitan area of Sydney gave massive support to the event, and through their fine cooperation this program resulted in increased recognition and prestige for the Faith in Australia.

On the evening of October 28, United Nations Week ended with a special service at the Bahá’í House of Worship, Mr. John Serisier, LLB, State President of the United Nations Association and a member of the State Parliament of New South Wales, read one of the selections from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh.

BELIZE

Once again the Bahá’ís of Belize provided the main event for the United Nations Day celebration. Apart from the Bahá’í program, the UN flag was raised in a brief ceremony at the capital of Belmopan, and Radio Belize released a program prepared by the UN with talks by the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly. The Bahá’í program was cited, therefore, as the main celebration and given first place in all radio news, as well as in the press with continual announcements during October 23 and 24.

The program featured a Round Table discussion under the title “Youth Looks At The United Nations.” As a background, the Bahá’ís had made large cardboard flags of UN member nations. These were hung in tiers on the backdrop of curtains, presenting a most colorful picture vividly illustrating the concept of unity in diversity. Students from five high schools participated, including one Bahá’í student and one Bahá’í youth now out of school. At the table were three UN representatives—Dr. R. K. Richardson, Coordinator for Pan American Health

Young Bahá’ís who participated in the Inter-Faith Youth Service held in Sydney, Australia, in observance of United Nations Day.
BELIZE, continued

Organization and World Health Organization projects in Belize; Mr. Vincent Lawrence of the United Nations Development Program, an advisor on youth work; and Mr. Ian Robertson, also of the UNDP, who is advisor on fisheries.

Questions from youth enabled these representatives to clarify many aspects of the structure and work of the UN and its agencies. They gave many interesting and informative explanations of the problems of the United Nations, its powers and limitations.

An audience of some 250 attended, a large proportion of them youth, and the speakers held their attention. Following the discussion, a new short film, "The Story of UNICEF" was shown, providing a wide and touching coverage of the tremendous work being done by this UN agency.

Between the discussion and the film, youths collected donations to be forwarded to UNICEF in the name of the Government of Belize, through its Minister of Education.

It was an enjoyable and informative evening, demonstrating once again the universality of the Baha'i concept and our concern for mankind which Ministers of the Belize Government have previously commended. It is interesting that, in reply to a request for UN films, the UN Area Representative in El Salvador expressed pleasure that the Baha'is were again in the forefront of United Nations Day celebrations.

GAMBIA

The Baha'i community of Gambia observed United Nations Day for the second year, holding a public meeting in the Gambia High School, the most attractive meeting place in the country, acceptable to all people. The Baha'is added to its attractiveness with an informative poster display with captions from the Bahai Writings, the United Nations Charter, and other documents. They also hung a world map of UN member nations and a large banner on the stage reading "Baha'is observe UN Day." Literature about the Baha'i Faith and the United Nations was displayed.

The meetings opened with the Bahai prayer for Unity, followed by a Bahai prayer in Wolof, the local language, and the introduction of the Chairman, Mr. Seedy Njie. The speaker, Auxiliary Board Member and Lecturer at Yundum Teacher Training College, Mr. Muhammad Al-Salhi, spoke on "The Baha'i Faith and the United Nations." The meeting closed with the Bahai Prayer for Mankind.

The Baha'is sent invitations to one hundred dignitaries and officials and printed publicity in two local newspapers, whose editors attended the meeting. The following day the Gambian Press commented: "From the address one could gather that this Faith fulfills the promise of respect for the human personality." Preceding the program, the Baha'is arranged to have the Preamble to the UN Charter printed in the same newspaper.

Other members of the audience included a minister, five United Nations experts, three senior civil servants, three UN office workers and one diplomat. Some of the school's students also attended.

The talk was repeated that evening at the Yundum Teacher Training College to an audience of about 100 students and twelve adults, including the Principal, Vice-Principal, lecturers and senior civil servants.

PAKISTAN

United Nations Day 1972 was observed by the Bahai's of Pakistan with public meetings, symposia and film shows. The communities of Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Hyderabad and Rawalpindi participated in the activities. The celebration in Karachi, held at Baha'i Hall, included prayers for unity, world peace and justice. The speaker was Mr. Asrar Hussain Siddiqui, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahai's of Pakistan. He spoke of the strong support which Bahai's give to the aims and programs of the United Nations in the interest of all mankind, and explained the role of the Bahai's International Community as a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with the United Nations. Mr. A. C. Joshi, National Spiritual Assembly Chairman, who presided over the meeting, then gave an entertaining talk on the formation of the United Nations.

A group of young Baha'i's sang songs as their contribution to the program.

FINLAND

In Finland, all Local Spiritual Assemblies celebrated UN Day. Espoo held a public meeting which was announced in two of the largest newspapers with nationwide circulation. Helsinki devoted time at its weekly fireside to a United Nations subject. Kangasala had a public meeting which resulted in an article in a local newspaper explaining the Bahai's view of the UN. Kuopio had an exhibition at the main library. Lahti and Turku sponsored public meetings. Maarianhamina held a public meeting at the main library and received local newspaper and radio coverage. Tampere organized three public meetings, drawing an audience of 125. Bahai groups from Jyvaskyla, Vantaa, Varkaus and Salo also recognized UN Day, holding public meetings and slide shows.

Bahai's broke new ground in the town of Savonlinna where they initiated efforts to celebrate UN Day, contacting different clubs and organizations to invite participation. A town arrangements committee was formed of persons of different religious, political and social backgrounds. The meeting was very successful. Maj Wallenlid, a member of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Savonlinna, who helped to organize the UN Day celebration, was asked to open the meeting with a short talk. Mr. Matti Isovittu from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave an informational talk on UN topics, explaining Finland's part in helping underdeveloped countries. The Mayor sent a representative and a donation for UNICEF. Money for UNICEF was also raised through the sale of UNICEF cards, calanders and drawing books. Good coverage of the meeting was given by the newspapers, and Uusi Suomi, a well known Finil newspaper, stated that Savonlinna was the first town to arrange a meeting of this kind for UN Day in that country.

VENEZUELA

United Nations Day activities in Venezuela were focused on Ciudad Bolivar and Baruta, El Hatillo, near Caracas. The UN celebration in Ciudad Bolivar, part of a week of programs publicizing various aspects of the Baha'i Faith, was held in the Conference Room of the Gran Hotel Bolivar. Governor of the State, Architect Manual Dario Garrido Mendoza and his distinguished
wife had expected to attend, but urgent last minute mat-
ters demanding the attention of the Governor made this
impossible. Dr. Weldon Woodard, Chairman of the Na-
tional Assembly of Venezuela, addressed an audience
of over fifty people, many of them youth. During the day
an open air exhibit was held at the Orinoco plaza, with
large posters depicting a variety of United Nations pro-
grams and explanations of the principles of that world
organization. The Bahá'ís received good publicity from
several newspapers and three radio stations covered
both the UN event and the Bahá'í proclamation in Cri-
dad Bolivar.

In Baruta, El Hatillo, a UN Day program was held in
the School of Campa Alegre as the result of intensified
cooperation between the national Bahá'í community and
the United Nations Development Program office in
Venezuela. At the invitation of the Bahá'ís, Mr. Bruce
Frank, UNDP Officer, spoke to an audience of three
hundred persons.

National Youth Conference in Kenya

On August 26 and 27 a National Youth Conference was
held in Kisumu, Kenya on Lake Victoria. Present were
about seventy-five friends from all parts of Kenya as
well as newly arrived travel teachers on their way to
other parts of Africa in response to the call from The
Universal House of Justice. Two Counsellors were pres-
ent; Mr. Vasudevan for West Asia and Mr. Yazdi from
East and Central Africa. A guest from the United States
was Dr. Alfred K. Neumann.

Mr. Fannanapazir was among the speakers. Topics
included history of the Faith, teaching methods, the role
of youth in the Nine Year Plan and a very interesting
summary of the history of the Faith in Africa.

The local radio stations were so impressed they spoke
of the conference on each of their hourly news broadcasts.
These were later picked up on National News Service.

Only after a lapse of several months is it possible to
see the fruit of this conference. From the spirit gen-
erated there and by later visits by Hands of the Cause of
God Dr. Rahmatu'llah Muhajir and Mr. Enoch Olinga
the youth have enrolled 2800 believers in schools around
Kenya, established at least one youth in each of more
than 116 schools, some of which have over 100 believers,
and have boosted enrollment in the correspondence
course to over 1,000. They have formed many new youth
committees in villages and schools around the country.

Group of Kenyan Bahá'í youth at the National Bahá'í Youth Conference where the theme was “Students Mass Teaching.”
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NEPAL CLASS

The first Teaching Conference in Nepal was held at Birganj on November 20, 1972 under the guidance of Sh. P. M. Roy. The Principal was Sh. Basant Ghose and the teachers were Sh. Biswanath Prasad Gupta, Sh. Ramjalal Agrawal, Sh. Yegine Lal Stethla, Sh. Uttam Sager Dangul, Sh. Gourish Shankar Duvedi, Sh. Balran Prasad, Sh. Bindhayachal Prasad, Sh. Muktir Nath Bidnyavathi and Sh. Shyam Krishna Mabergan.

Delegates came from the Assemblies of Narayan Zone. The Assembly of Birganj helped in arranging food and as well as the classes. Sh. Biswanath Prasad Gupta taught the history of the Faith. Bahá’í Administration was taught by Sh. Bosant Ghose. Sh. Shyam Krishna Mabergan taught various aspects of the moral and spiritual Teachings of the Faith. A workshop was held under the guidance of Sh. P. M. Roy which included the mock election of a Local Spiritual Assembly.

All the friends were happy to gain fresh understanding of the Faith. They dispersed with a determination to carry on the work in their respective areas.


BAHA’I NEWS

Subscription is $6.00 a year (payable in advance) in the U.S. and Canada, and is for Bahá’ís only.

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WORLD ORDER is a quarterly for Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís which is intended to stimulate, inspire, and serve thinking people in their search to find relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings and philosophy. Domestic subscription $4.50 ($3.50 for students); foreign subscription $5.00. Payable in advance.

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Portico of the Shrine of the Báb

Photo by
Paul Slaughter
Queen Marie of Romania
Renowned First Royal Believer
By O. Z. Whitehead

Queen Marie of Romania was a charming and radiant personality; she was talented and devoted to all humanitarian enterprises. The Message of Baha'u'llah brought to her by Martha Root, an ardent and audacious pioneer, evoked an almost instantaneous response in this illustrious Queen. Marie thus became the first Crowned Head to embrace the Baha'i Faith.

Born at Eastwell, Kent, England, in 1875, Marie was the eldest daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh, the second son of Queen Victoria. She was the granddaughter of Czar Alexander II, through her mother. In 1893 she married Prince Ferdinand, nephew of King Carol and Queen Carmen Silva of Rumania. Prince Ferdinand and Marie became King and Queen of Rumania in 1914.

This young English Princess who, until her marriage had always remained sheltered from the harsh realities of life, found it difficult to be the wife of a foreign prince and to live in Rumania. At first she had neither close friends nor a suitable occupation. She felt useless and lonely. After the birth of her first child, Prince Carol, however, she began to feel more at home in her new country.

The Queen recounts her life in considerable detail in her autobiography The Story of My Life, from its beginning until the end of World War I. This was first published in 1934 in an American magazine of wide circulation, The Saturday Evening Post, and was later published in book form by Cassell of London.

From the outbreak of the war she was keenly opposed to the policies of the German government. Despite strong opposition from many prominent people in Rumania, she did not hesitate to make her views entirely clear. Through Marie's strong influence, Rumania declared war against Germany. Deserted by its close ally, Russia, because of the revolution in that country, Rumania suffered greatly. With a large amount of its territory occupied, the situation was desperate for a period of many months. Sincerely grateful when King George V offered safe residence in England to herself, King Ferdinand and their children for the duration of the war, she still did not accept it.

Always confident of ultimate victory for her country, Marie never for a moment relaxed in her efforts to help achieve it. Without fear for her own safety, she visited soldiers in trenches close to the scene of battle, organized field hospitals for the Red Cross, and took care of some of the wounded soldiers personally. Professor Seton-Watson in his The History of the Rumanians has written the following passages about her courageous services:

At this point it would be unpardonable to omit a brief eulogy of the sustained heroism of Queen Marie. For months she courted danger daily amid the epidemics of the hospitals and the overcrowded city and set an example of calm and confident endurance which many Rumanians are proud to follow, and which did much to uphold British prestige in southeast Europe.¹

To raise money for the Rumanian Red Cross in English-speaking countries, she wrote a book, published in 1917 called My Country. This book describes with fine feeling the simple peasants of Rumania, its beautiful countryside, interesting historic buildings, and the death on October 20, 1916, of her youngest son, Mircea, not yet four years old. Deeply grieved at losing Mircea, Marie consoled herself with the thought that possibly his death was necessary then, so that he would be in the next world to welcome those brave soldiers who were dying for their beloved country.

Martha Root in Rumania

During the last week of January 1926, Martha Root, already well-known through the Baha'i world as a great teacher, but certainly not known to Queen Marie, arrived for a visit of two weeks. Without delay Martha sent the absorbing and comprehensive book Baha'u'llah and the New Era by the distinguished Dr. J. E. Esselment, together with a note, to Her Majesty. This was the first Marie had ever heard of the Cause. The Queen was so impressed with this book that she sat up until three o'clock in the morning reading it. The next day she invited Martha to call on her two days later on January 30, 1926, at Contracemi Palace, situated about a half-hour drive by carriage from the center of the city of Bucharest.

Martha has vividly described her journey there through the crowded road until she saw in the distance "the splendidly wooded grounds of the palace," which she likened to "a winter fairyland, enchanting with light
snow and icicles, half revealing, half concealing their forest greens." As men in liverty and the butler had guided her into the palace and up a wide circular stairway to a drawing room a lady in waiting led her down wide halls into a beautifully furnished music room. The Queen appeared immediately. After she had done so, the Lady in Waiting whispered to Martha, "Her Majesty," and left the room. After a warm greeting, the Queen said to Martha, obviously in reference to the contents of the book that she had sent her, "I believe these Teachings are the solution for the world's problems today." One cannot help reflecting for a moment on the joy that must have filled Martha's heart when she heard the Queen make this overwhelming statement.

As they sat together by the table Her Majesty spoke to Martha about the responsibilities that fall upon a King and Queen to do all in their power to help develop their country, and explained to her how when "justice has not been found anywhere else, theirs is an ear that can still listen, a hand that can still give, a heart that can still perform," and that never can a King and Queen refuse to see someone who is in need. She spoke about religion. The Queen felt that religious intolerance only dissipated human love and that what gave vitality to religion was the spirit, not the form.

She asked Martha some questions about the Bahá'í plan for world peace. The Queen showed a deep interest in the Bahá'í principles and in what Bahá'u'lláh has revealed about the progress of the soul. As she was saying goodbye to her, Martha gave the Queen The Seven Valleys.

Greatly elated by the Queen's spontaneous acceptance of the Bahá'í Teachings and filled with admiration for her as a noble, wise and beautiful Queen, Martha left the palace with this most inspiring thought, "Though one can hardly vision it with earthbound eyes, those thousand years of peace foretold in the Bibles of the world are to begin in this century." Martha naturally informed the Guardian about this historic interview.

The Queen's Testimony

As a result of Martha's meeting with her, without further prompting, the Queen wrote her first testimony in support of the Bahá'í Revelation in her syndicated series, entitled "Queen's Counsel," which appeared in newspapers throughout the United States and Canada on May 4, 1926. She has stated, "It teaches that all hatreds, intrigues, suspicions, evil words, all aggressive patriotism even, are outside the one essential law of God, and that special beliefs are but surface things, whereas the heart that beats with divine love knows no tribe or race—it is Christ's Message taken up anew, in the same words almost, but adapted to the thousand years and more difference that lies between the Year One and today... If ever the name of Bahá'u'lláh or 'Abdu'l-Bahá comes to your attention, do not put your writings from you. Search out their books and let their glorious, peace-bringing love-creating words and lessons sink into your hearts as they have into mine."

On May 29, 1926, the day after he had received a copy of the Queen's testimony from Canada, Shoghi Effendi wrote to Martha that this is "a well deserved and memorable testimony of your remarkable and exemplary endeavours for the spread of our beloved Cause. It has thrilled me and greatly reinforced my spirit and strength: yours is a memorable triumph, hardly surpassed in its significance in the annals of the Cause." The Guardian wrote the Queen herself a joyful expression of his gratitude for her public testimony. She answered him with an unforgettable letter.

Bran, August 27, 1926

Dear Sir,

I was deeply moved on reception of your letter. Indeed a great light came to me with the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It came as all great messages come at an hour of dire grief and inner conflict and distress, so the seed sank deeply. My youngest daughter finds also great strength and comfort in the Teachings of the beloved Masters.

We pass on the Message from mouth to mouth and all those we give it to, see a light suddenly lighting before them and much that was obscure and perplexing becomes simple, luminous and full of hope as never before. That my open letter was balm to those suffering for the Cause, is indeed a great happiness to me, and I take it as a sign that God accepted my humble tribute.

The occasion given me to be able to express myself publicly, was also His Work, for indeed it was a chain of circumstances of which each link led me unwittingly one step further, till suddenly all was clear before my eyes and I understood why it had been. Thus does He lead us finally to our ultimate destiny.

Some of those of my caste wonder at and disapprove my courage to step forward pronouncing words not habitual for Crowned Heads to pronounce, but I advance by an inner urge I cannot resist. With bowed head I recognize that I, too, am but an instrument in greater Hands and rejoice in that knowledge.

Little by little the veil is lifting, grief tore it in two. And grief was also a step leading me ever nearer truth, therefore do I not cry out against grief? May you and those beneath your guidance be blessed and upheld by the sacred strength of those gone before you.

Marie

Late in the summer of 1926, the Guardian heard that the Queen planned to visit the United States of America.
For this reason he wrote, through his secretary, instructions to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada: "We read in The Times that Queen Marie of Rumania is coming to America. She seems to have obtained a great interest in the Cause. So we must be prepared and have a Baha'í book and set her back. Should Effendi desire, that in case she takes this trip, the friends will behave with great reserve and wisdom, and that no initiative be taken on the part of the friends except after consulting the National Assembly."16

During her trip the Queen wrote further "open letters" which appeared respectively on September 27 and 28 in the same syndicated series as the first one.

She has written "God is the voice within us that shows us good and evil. But mostly we ignore or misunderstand this voice. Therefore did He choose His elect to come down amongst us on earth to make clear His Word, His real meaning. Therefore the Prophets; therefore Christ, Muhammad, Jesus, and Wisdom, and that no initiative be taken on the part of these passages to Martha.

She has given the Queen an illuminated sheet, inscribed with a prayer of Baha'u'llah and a lock of His hair. This was a sacred gift from the Baha'is of Mashhad, Persia. The Queen was so delighted with this gift that she decided to have a special frame designed to hold the hair and a small photograph of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

On October 25, 1927, in a letter to Martha Root, Shoghi Effendi emphasized the great importance of that trip and her meeting with the Queen and Princess Ileana had given him and concluded by asking Martha to extend his warm invitation to them both to visit Baha'u'llah's Home in the Holy Land.

Early in 1928 Martha received an invitation from Princess Ileana saying, "Mama and I would be so glad to have you take tea with us at half past four, Ileana." As soon as Martha had entered the royal drawing room, Princess Ileana and the Queen arose to give their guest a warm greeting. The Queen spoke of the meaning of God and true religion. She made this beautiful statement: "The ultimate dream which we shall realize is that the Baha'i channel of thought has such strength, it will serve little by little to become a light to all those searching for the expression of Truth."18

A Gift from the Queen

Many years before she had heard about the Baha'i Faith, the Queen's royal relatives in Russia had given her a precious brooch. It consisted of "two little wings of wrought gold and silver, set with tiny diamond chips and joined together with one large pearl." As she picked up this brooch and held it in her hand, Her Majesty said to Martha, "Always you are giving gifts to others, and I am going to give you a gift from me." With apparent delight the Queen clasped the brooch onto Martha's dress. During the same week of this meeting Martha sent the brooch which she had received from the Queen to Wilmette, Illinois, as a gift to the first Baha'i Temple of the West. At the National Baha'i Convention in Ridvan of that year this question came up: "Was it right to sell this brooch that had belonged to the first Queen who had served the Faith of Baha'u'llah?" After some consultation it was decided that because of the urgent need of money to continue building the Temple that it would not be wrong to sell the brooch. Mr. Willard Hatch of Los Angeles, California, already an ardent believer for many years, bought this precious brooch. In 1931 he took it with him when he went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and with the Guardian's approval it was placed in the Archives on Mount Carmel to remain there always.

Martha has referred to another happy meeting that she had with the Queen in October 1929 at her beautiful summer palace Tehna-Yuva at Balicic on the Black Sea. The following beautiful letter from the Guardian to Her Majesty certainly indicates that this meeting like all the others had important results.

Haifa, Palestine
December 5, 1929

To the Dowager Queen Marie of Rumania

Your Majesty:

I have received through the intermediary of my dear Baha'i sister Miss Martha Root, the autograph portrait of Your Majesty, bearing in simple and moving terms, the message which Your Majesty has graciously been pleased to write in pen and ink to me. This most excellent portrait, and I assure you, that the Greatest Holy Leaf and the Family of 'Abdu'l-Baha share to the full my feelings of lively satisfaction at receiving a photograph of a Queen whom we have learned to love and admire.

I have followed during the past few years with profound sympathy the various happenings in your beloved country, which I feel must have caused you much pain and concern. But
whatever the vicissitudes and perplexities which beset Your Majesty's earthly path, I am certain that even in your saddest hours, you have derived abundant sustenance and joy from the thought of having through your glowing and historic utterances on the Bahá'í Faith as well as by your subsequent evidences of gracious solicitude for its welfare, brought abiding solace and strength to the multitude of its faithful and long suffering adherents throughout the East. Yours surely, dearly beloved Queen, is the station ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in the realms beyond to which the strivings of no earthly power can ever hope to attain.

May I, in closing, reiterate the expression of profound appreciation and joy which the Family of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Bahá'ís in every land universally feel for the powerful impetus which Your Majesty's outspoken and noble words have lent to the onward march of their beloved Faith... Shoghi

Not long after she received this letter Queen Marie, while traveling through the Near East with Princess Ileana, made known her intention of visiting the Holy Land. In the hope that she would do so Shoghi Effendi saw to the careful preparation of a gift for Marie. It was to be the Tablet that Bahá'u'lláh had sent to her grandmother, Queen Victoria "copied in fine Persian calligraphy and illuminated in Tihrán."22

The Queen at Haifa

Failing to receive news from the Queen when she was in Egypt, on March 8 the Guardian sent her a personal cable in which he warmly renewed his invitation and stressed not only the historic importance of such a visit, but also the joy and hope that it would bring "to the silent sufferers of the Faith throughout the East."23 Still not hearing from her, on March 26 he cabled her another invitation and concluded, "Deeply regret unauthorized publicity given by press."24 As he later informed Martha, "Reporters who called on me, representing the United Press of America, telegraphed to their newspapers just the opposite I told them. They perverted the truth.

Shoghi Effendi learned that Her Majesty had actually sailed for Haifa. For this reason he was of course encouraged to think that she would succeed in making her pilgrimage. Two days after Shoghi Effendi had sent his second cable to the Queen, the Rumanian minister in Cairo answered: "Her Majesty regrets that not passing through Palestine will not be able to visit you."25 This was not the truth. The Queen and Princess Ileana actually arrived in Haifa on their boat, but members of her government met her at the dock, cruelly forbade her to stay in Haifa even for a few moments, led her into an automobile and quickly drove her out of the country. In the meantime The Greatest Holy Leaf waited for many hours in the Master's house for the Queen and her daughter who never arrived.

On April 2, 1933, in a letter to Martha, the Guardian explained fully the unhappy events that had ruined the Queen's plan for her pilgrimage and suggested to Martha that she write to the Queen explaining and assuring her of his great disappointment. He concluded, "I cherish the hope that these unfortunate developments will serve only to intensify the faith and love of the Queen and will reinforce her determination to arise and spread the Cause."26

On June 28, 1931, the Queen wrote Martha: "Both Ileana and I were cruelly disappointed at having been prevented from going to the holy shrines and meeting Shoghi Effendi; but at that time we were going through a cruel crisis and every movement I made was being turned against me and being politically exploited in an unkind way. It caused me a good deal of suffering and curtailed my liberty most unkindly... But the beauty of truth remains and I cling to it through all the vicissitudes of a life become rather sad."27

On August 8, 1932, and again in February 1933, the Queen and her daughter, Ileana, then Archduchess Anton of Austria, received Martha at the latter's home near Vienna. At this meeting Her Majesty made a now famous statement quoted on the front page of The Bahá'í World, Volume IV.28

The Bahá'í Teaching brings peace and understanding.

This is like a wide embrace gathering together all those who have long searched for words of hope. It accepts all great prophets gone before, it destroys no other creeds and leaves all doors open. Saddened by the continual strife amongst believers of many confessions and wearied of their intolerance towards each other, I discovered in the Bahá'í Teaching, the real spirit of Christ so often denied and misunderstood:

Unity instead of strife, hope instead of condemnation, love instead of hate, and a great reassurance for all men.

Deeply moved by Her Majesty's sustained interest in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh despite the ever increasing tragic events to which her country was being subjected, and her own advancing years, on January 23, 1934 Shoghi Effendi wrote her a letter which expressed his "heartfelt and abiding gratitude"29 for a new appreciation that she had just written for The Bahá'í World.

A few weeks later on February 16, the Queen received Martha for a second time in Contrcoeni Palace in Bucharest. Martha has written, "How beautiful she looked that afternoon, as always, for her loving eyes mirror her mighty spirit; a most unusual Queen is she, a consummate artist, a lover of beauty and wherever she is there is glory... She received me in her private library where a cheerful fire glowed in the quaint built-in fireplace, tea was served on a low table, the gold service set being served on a low table, the gold service set being..."30 At this meeting Martha told the Queen that the Rumanian translation of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era had just been published in Bucharest. Her Majesty was most happy to hear that her people would now be able to read this precious book.

The Queen made this beautiful statement which was published in The Bahá'í World, 'The Bahá'í Teachings bring peace to the soul and hope to the heart. To those in search of assurance the Words of the Father are as a fountain in the desert after long wandering.'31

On February 4, 1936, Martha had her last meeting with Her Majesty. It took place again in her softly lighted library at Contrcoeni Palace. Large bowls of yellow tulips adorned the apartment.32 The Queen spoke with much feeling about a dear friend of hers since childhood, Lillian McNeill. The Queen and her friend had heard about the Cause and recognized the Station of Bahá'u'lláh at about the same time. The friend was now living near 'Akka in the Mansion of Mazra'ih where once Bahá'u'lláh had lived.

The Queen and Martha at Haifa during 1938 but because of Her Majesty's failing health and the unsettled condition of Palestine such a plan became impossible. After a painful illness that lasted many months Queen Marie died in July 1938.

Hand of the Cause George Townsend has made this moving comment: 'Her death and obsequies were attended with all the ceremonials that befitted the passing of a Queen. But who can tell what was the greeting that awaited her on the other side where she learned in an instant how true had been her intuitions of the Manifestation of God and where she saw unobscured now by any
mortal veil the white eternal splendor of the Truth that she, alone among the earth's queens, had risen to proclaim."

The Guardian has assured us, "Queen Marie's acknowledgment of the Divine Message stands as the first fruits of the vision which Bahá'u'lláh had seen long before in His Captivity and had announced in His Kitáb-i-Aqdas. 'How great,' He wrote, 'the blessedness that awaits the King who will arise to aid My Cause in My Kingdom, who will detach himself from all else but Me!""

Notes:
2. The Bahá'í Magazine, Star of the West, Vol. 17, No. 3, p. 84, June 1926.
3. Ibid., p. 84.
6. Ibid., 87.
9. Ibid., p. 108.
10. Ibid., p. 107.
15. Ibid., p. 369.
16. Ibid., p. 369.
18. Ibid., p. 172.
20. Ibid., p. 394.
22. Ibid., p. 113.
23. Ibid., p. 114.
24. Ibid., p. 114.
25. Ibid., p. 114.
26. Ibid., p. 114.
27. Ibid., p. 115.
32. Ibid., p. 102.
33. Ibid., p. 103.
35. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p. 395.

Passing of Distinguished Teacher,
Winston G. Evans

Winston G. Evans, well-known among the Bahá'ís of the United States for his many years of active and successful proclamation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to prominent Christian scholars and clergymen and to college students and faculties, passed away in Sewanee, Tennessee on January 13 following several months of illness. He was buried January 15 in nearby Shelbyville, Tennessee, his birthplace, following a beautiful Bahá'í service where again he gave the message of the vision which Bahá'u'lláh had seen long before in His Captivity and had announced in His Kitáb-i-Aqdas. 'How great,' He wrote, 'the blessedness that awaits the King who will arise to aid My Cause in My Kingdom, who will detach himself from all else but Me!"

The following messages were conveyed to Mr. Evans' family after his passing:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING WINSTON EVANS
DEVOTED SERVANT BLESSED BEAUTY INDESTRUCTIBLE TEACHER HOMEFRONT AND PIONEER CARIBBEAN AREA. HIS DEDICATED EFFORT CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH WITH EMINENT CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS CLERGY CONSTITUTE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION ANNALS FAITH AMERICAN COMMUNITY. EXPRESS SYMPATHY FAMILY ASSURE PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL KINGDOMS GOD.

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
January 15, 1973

GRIEVED PASSING WINSTON EVANS DISTINGUISHED UNTIRER TEACHER FAITH BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. SALUTARY EFFECTS HIS SINGLEMINDED EFFORTS RECONCILE DIFFERENCES AMONG RELIGIONISTS WILL SHINE AS CANDLE TO HIS MEMORY. PLEASE CONVEY OUR CONDOLENCES HIS BEREAVED RELATIVES.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES
January 14, 1973

A Wedding in Finland

The wedding of Marjorie Seiffert and Daniel Williams, both Bahá'í pioneers from the United States to Finland, was the occasion for more than a three-page spread in a leading magazine APU, published in Helsinki. "The First Bahá'í Wedding In Kuopio" was the headline.

Issue No. 44 for November 1972 also included a photo article read up on the title page, referring to the complete article. A reporter for the publication was invited to the wedding and wrote the story which not only described the occasion in detail but commented extensively on the Faith: how, without clergy, the wedding was performed, and the joyous spirit which included all who attended—a departure from the usual behavior of reserved Finns.
Passing of Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Matthew W. Bullock

Mr. Bullock lived a life of distinguished service in many areas of activities including sports, law, and the Bahá'í Faith, which will be recounted in an In Memoriam article concerning him in a forthcoming volume of The Bahá'í World.

In 1949 and 1950 Mr. Bullock pioneered in Haiti and Europe. While a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, to which he was first elected in 1952, he resigned in 1953 to pioneer in Curacao and was named by the Guardian as the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh who opened the Dutch West Indies to the Faith. In 1960 he moved to Jamaica briefly and later, after a period of time at home in Roxbury, Massachusetts, he visited Curacao periodically until 1964 when he returned to his law practice in Roxbury. In 1966 he moved to Philadelphia. At the time of his passing he was living in Detroit, Michigan.

San José, Costa Rica, Site of International Youth Conference

The first international Bahá'í Youth Conference held in Costa Rica was a great success. It was sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America and the National Spiritual Assembly of Costa Rica through its National Youth Committee for youth of Central America, Panama, and Mexico. The location was the Dr. Ugo Giachery Baha'i Institute near Alajuela, a lovely spot in the beautiful countryside where a large tent borrowed from the Government had been raised to provide additional sleeping facilities for the boys and girls who attended.

Two days before the Conference the devastating earthquake in Managua, the capital of neighboring Nicaragua, cast a shadow on preparations. It seemed to mean that no one could come from Nicaragua or even El Salvador or Honduras to the North. However, through heroic sacrifice and the infallible protection of Bahá'u'lláh, a minibus full of young people came through Honduras with only minor difficulties. A bit late, two Nicaraguan youth got through. Total attendance was about seventy-five persons from Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras, Iran, the United States and from different sections of Costa Rica. Many more came daily from the capital area near San José.

The youth were active in teaching all classes except one by Resident Counsellor Artemus Lamb on “The Importance of the Administration” and one by Auxiliary Board member Rodrigo Tomás on “The Covenant”. Evenings were devoted to discussions, music and practice classes on public speaking, all handled by the youth. On the final day of the school the morning was devoted to discussion of teaching the masses and selecting teams for the afternoon mass teaching and proclamation effort in a park of a suburb of San José. The afternoon provided valuable experience but no new declarations. The youth were inspiring in their enthusiasm; their loving service was evident throughout the event. Resident Counsellor Artemus Lamb wrote: “Surely the immediate future of the Faith lies with the youth and any and all efforts made with them will pay off huge dividends.”
Counsellors Sponsor Youth Conference
in The Gambia

December 29-31, 1972, the Continental Board of Counsellors sponsored the first West African Bahá’í Youth Conference in conjunction with the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa. The Conference was held in The Gambia on the campus of Yundum College some fifteen miles from the capital city of Bathurst. Youth representing nine countries in this zone attended: Nigeria, Upper Volta, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, Senegal and Mauritania, plus pioneers originating from the United States, Mauritius, Malaysia, Iran, and Iraq. A young Bahá’í from Sweden was able to greet the friends during a brief stop on a boat cruise. Counsellors Mr. H. R. Ardikani and Dr. William Maxwell Jr., were present as well as six of their Auxiliary Board members, Mr. Amos Agwu, Mr. Muhammad Al-Salihi, Mrs. H. Vera Edwards, Mr. Friday Ekpe, Mr. Shidan Kouchekzadeh and Dr. B. Sadiqzadeh. A total of fifty-six persons attended.

Unprecedented publicity was given to this Youth Conference by the government news media and four other papers. The National Teaching Committee of The Gambia prepared full-page spreads on the Faith as well as numerous articles which appeared almost daily for two weeks. The articles covered the Conference news and the history, principles, Central Figures, Administration and Laws of the Bahá’í Faith. During the week of this happy event nearly all Gambians living in the Bathurst area heard the name and basic facts of the Bahá’í Faith. The Parliamentary Secretary who opened the public meeting said he had known nothing of the Bahá’í Faith prior to this Conference.

Counsellors Mr. H. R. Ardikani (far left) and Dr. William Maxwell, Jr. (far right) with their Auxiliary Board members at the Conference: (from the left) Mr. Muhammad Al-Salihi, Mr. Friday Ekpe, Dr. B. Sadiqzadeh, Mrs. H. Vera Edwards, Mr. Shidan Kouchekzadeh, Mr. Amos Agwu.

Counsellor Maxwell addressing the public meeting. Seated to his left (with the white cap) is the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Social Welfare.

Counsellor Dr. Maxwell was interviewed on Radio Gambia, the official government station, as was a Gambian youth, and the impromptu singing group formed by youth of Ghana, Liberia and Senegal and was featured at the public meeting.

Conference sessions included several aspects of Bahá’í history. Dr. Maxwell reviewed God Passes By, noting the cycles of crisis and triumph which mark the epoch-making progress of the Faith. Mr. Ardikani reviewed the history of the Faith in Upper West Africa since its introduction in this area in 1953. Mr. Kouchekzadeh spoke on youth in the heroic age of the Faith citing the life of Mulla Husayn, his example, and concluded with “Let deeds not words be your adorning.”

The Nine Year Plan was reviewed in terms of the goals and achievements in West Africa. Dr. Maxwell explained the seven stages of the Faith from obscurity to the Bahá’í World Commonwealth and pointed out that most of the National Spiritual Assemblies in the world are striving to go from stage three—emancipation; to stage four, recognition, through the goals of the Nine Year Plan. “Some Bahá’ís sit around and dream of stage seven” said Dr. Maxwell, “others long for stage five. But the thing to do is to act, following the guidelines of the infallible Universal House of Justice given in the Plan, and help the National Spiritual Assembly and therefore the Bahá’í Faith to go on to the next stage of development.” Heartening reports were given by the National Spiritual Assemblies represented at the Conference and their progress toward these goals.

A panel discussion was held on the best ways to teach the Faith. Participants were Auxiliary Board member...
Mr. Friday Ekpe, Chairman of the Conference; Dr. B. Sadiqzadeh and Mr. Shidan Kouchekzadeh. Conclusions reached were: 1) Live the Baha’i life, 2) Study the Teachings deeply, and 3) Teach the Faith in its purity.

Auxiliary Board member Mrs. H. Vera Edwards gave a class on the Institutions of the Hands of the Cause and the Continental Boards of Counsellors. She observed that all Baha’i Institutions are divinely ordained. Regarding the Hands she said that the Hands of the Cause serve the needs of the Baha’i Faith throughout the world. The Continental Boards of Counsellors have been appointed by The Universal House of Justice to assist the Hands in the “protection and propagation of the Faith” since no more Hands can now be appointed. The Auxiliary Boards were established by the Guardian originally to aid the Hands in their administrative tasks and leave them free to carry on their devoted and inspiring teaching. They now aid the Continental Boards of Counsellors.

Saturday evening featured a public meeting attended by over 100 people, including the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Social Welfare who opened the meeting and welcomed the Baha’i youth; the Permanent Secretary of the same Ministry; and several other dignitaries and high ranking civil servants. This meeting was held in The Gambia High School Hall. The Permanent Secretary, an alumnus of the school, stated that he had never seen the hall so attractive.

Dr. Maxwell delivered a talk “A Challenge to Youth: World Peace”, a thought-provoking and enlightening introduction to the Faith with references such as these statements of ‘Abdu’l-Baha: “Oppose the thought of war with the thought of peace,” and “Mankind has tried war for 6,000 years. Now let’s try peace. If we don’t like it, we can always go back to war.”

Sunday morning Dr. Maxwell made an inspiring presentation of fundamental Baha’i laws to illustrate that God’s laws are a blessing, not a privation. After a lively question and answer session, advice from the National Spiritual Assembly of Upper West Africa and brief remarks by the Counsellors, the Conference closed with all the friends joining hands in a large circle which filled the room, all singing “Allah-u-Abha.”

Throughout the Conference songs were shared in many languages. An evening of slides and mass teaching was added. The keynote of the whole Conference can be summed-up in the oft-repeated words of the song, “Will you give your life to Baha’u’llah?”

West African Baha’i Youth Conference, December 29-31, 1972 held at Yundum, The Gambia
DUTCH WINTER SCHOOL

The inspiring surroundings of the Kapellerput in Heeze, Holland, provided the setting for the Dutch Winter School, December 29, 1972 to January 1, 1973. Some 140 attended from all parts of the country. The daily programs of prayers, classes, recreation, informal evening activities, singing, fellowship and the co-operation of all contributed towards a truly fine School. Classes focused on the central theme: "The Faith and the European Continent". They revolved around informative topics: "The Beginnings of Christianity in Europe" by Mr. Gert van der Garde; "The European Travels of 'Abdu'l-Bahá" outlined by Mrs. Rigtje Fienieg; "Establishing the Faith in Europe" and "The Divine Plan" explained by Auxiliary Board member Mr. Lout van Veenendaal; "Applications of Education" by Mr. Theo Schoenaker; and a workshop devoted to the Administrative Order, lead and organized by Mr. Charles Hamburger. The guest speaker, Mr. Adib Taherzadeh, from Ireland, conducted several inspiring sessions on "The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh." Simultaneous sessions were held for young Bahá'ís on corresponding subjects. Classes were provided for the many children, creative and educational.

Highlights from the variety of evening programs were the showing of two films "Give Me That New Time Religion" and one on the recent Padua Youth Conference, a slide program about Iran taken by a Dutch Bahá'í youth during a recent visit, a Bahá'í club, and a special prayer gathering on the eve of December 31, 1972.

The celebration of the Feast of Honor on the afternoon of December 31, 1972 was beautifully arranged and was the high point of the school. A chain of declarations—eight of them, charged the atmosphere. An enthusiastic reception was given to the announcement by the National Teaching Committee of the first National Teaching Conference to be held in February to inaugurate a large-scale summer teaching plan. To The Universal House of Justice was sent a cable from the school announcing: "We have entered a new phase of action in Holland!"

Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhájir spent two days in Holland, enroute to other European countries and the Dutch Bahá'ís were afforded the unexpected bounty of meeting with him. The first day, November 30th, 1972, Dr. Muhájir journeyed to the northernmost city, Groningen, to meet with the ever-swelling Bahá'í Community there, and was greeted with joyous love. He greatly inspired the group that gathered in the home of a local friend. The next evening, December 1, 1972, the Dutch Community was privileged to meet the Hand in the National Hazratu'l-Quds. Over one hundred and twenty Bahá'ís from all parts of the country flocked to listen intently to his highly illuminating and challenging talk, followed by a question and answer period. Long shall the bright, warm memory of the visit of this dear Hand glow in the hearts of the friends.
A Pioneer from India in Tanzania

During November 1972 Mr. A. K. Forudi, a pioneer from India, traveled and taught the Faith in towns and villages in northern Tanzania far from the border. His reports to the National Assembly of Tanzania tell of long hours of walking, of difficulties in finding sleeping accommodations, of carrying food and water long distances, and of the joy of finding villages where the great majority are Baha’is and of bringing the healing message of Baha’u’llah to those who had not heard of it before. Village officials, teachers and even clergy in many instances gave him a warm and interested reception and the opportunity to address classes and congregations. Most of his journey was in the company of one or two traveling teachers who could serve as interpreters.

Accompanied by Mr. Karyokai, Mr. Forudi set out for Musoma, first by bus and then by foot for eight hours. In this area, the Ngorim area and virgin territory for the Baha’is, the villagers were hospitable and ready to listen. The Governor, Dr. Samson, invited them for an interview, the Faith was proclaimed and more than fifty declarations were received, making it possible to form two Assemblies.

Deepening classes were held in Mugumu, a town that could be reached only by walking for one hour. Students attending had to bring water and then walk a long distance to find room for their meals. Mr. Forudi told one of them: “I’m really very sorry that you all have to spend two hours every day in walking.” His listener replied: “But you told us that Badi walked three months to deliver the Tablet of Baha’u’llah to the King of Iran and how he suffered. What are these two hours compared to that?”

Deepening classes were an important part of achieving the goals. One young Baha’i attending said: “I have learned two things from the deepening class and it helped me a lot. One is that Baha’u’llah said to mention His Name in the presence of big people and not to be afraid. Second: I only opened my mouth in the teaching of the Faith and the rest is with Baha’u’llah. These two points in teaching made me brave and hold fast unto Him.”

In Musoma Mr. Forudi was able to give the Message to the Regional Director of Education who said it was the first he had heard of the Faith and that he would read the books and would like to be a Baha’i and work for these principles for which he had been waiting.

An incident in Ramadi village indicates the hidden powers of Baha’u’llah to influence the hearts. One evening a priest of the area came on a visit and started asking questions and wanting proofs of Baha’u’llah. He did this in a loving way. Mr. Forudi, to test his intentions, told him: “Our purpose and your purpose are the same. You should continue to serve humanity in your area and let us continue in the way Baha’u’llah wants us to progress.”

The priest then assured Mr. Forudi: “I am very eager to know fully about this Faith because some power is attracting me. Please do not deprive me. I have come alone in order to be free to ask all sorts of questions.” Then they had a loving discussion until midnight. The priest said: “Please consider me a Baha’i. We are four pastors, I am going to explain this Cause to all of them and I do not know our destination. Let us pray to Baha’u’llah.”

In Mugumu the pastor of the church, after a long discussion with the Baha’i visitors, invited Mr. Forudi to his home and to speak in his church. As a token of appreciation the audience gave him a gift of flowers and eggs.

In the villages of Iseyne and Lwam Changa deepening classes were held outdoors under the trees, the classes lasting for six hours. Also in the Maru region deepening classes were held for five days, attended by over twenty students.

On November 17 five teachers walked nineteen miles over mountains and across rivers to reach the village of Namona where the Baha’is greeted them with “Allah-u-Abhá” until the mountains echoed. A meeting was held in a school hall, Baha’i songs were sung and a three hour deepening session was held. There were seven declarations, including a lady teacher. In the next village visited, Mayambe, they found the same exultant spirit.

In this area at night one can hear rhinoceros, wild buffalo and other animals. Mr. Forudi invites those who love nature to come to this area and see what God has created.

At the hut where Mr. Forudi was staying a knock on the door disclosed a weary traveler, thirsty and tired. After he had a drink of water he said: “My name is Elisha John. I come from a far village. I know most of the Bible by heart and I am teaching the people. But I have heard that you came here to spread the Baha’i Faith.” After a visit of a few hours Elisha John declared himself a Baha’i, received some books with gratitude and affection, and returned to his village.

Mr. Forudi closed his report with this plea: “Is there anyone in the big cities to tell others that there are many like this man waiting for the Message of Baha’u’llah and crying for help like children who are sick and lamenting for assistance and refuge? Are you not going to give a little of your time, a little of your money … for this Divine Plan before it is too late? … I have just come back from a long and tiring journey, crossing so many rivers, water up to the waist and continuous walking except for a few hours each night. When I looked in the mirror I found myself ten years older—but I should have come here ‘ten years sooner!’

National Spiritual Assembly of Sweden

National Spiritual Assembly members for Sweden are, front row, left to right: E. Jazayeri, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Mehri Afsahi; Allan Petersson, Treasurer; Paul Ojermark, Secretary. Back row: Hans Odemry, Chairman; F. Golmohammadi; Torleif Ingebjok; Ozen Mardo; R. Golmohammadi, Vice-Chairman.
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Rúḥíyyih Khánum

By Violette Nakhjavání, Companion
Part fourteen

The official tour of Rhodesia did not begin until Amatul-Bahá returned from her historic trip to Panama where she dedicated the Mother Temple of Latin America for public services and in Barbados attended the first Convention of the Windward Island Bahá'ís for the election of another pillar of the august body of The Universal House of Justice as its special representative.

A group of university students had invited Rúḥíyyih Khánum prior to her departure for Panama to give a talk on the Faith and its influence on society. This was held in an informal atmosphere in one of the smaller halls at the university campus in Salisbury, attended by over forty students, most of them Africans. An atmosphere of freedom of discussion and exchange of thought was markedly present, in the spirit of students all over the world today. They especially wanted to know if there is really a need for religion or not.

Rúḥíyyih Khánum explained that religion acts like a brake on society. It controls and protects society from the danger of freedom carried to extremes. She also spoke of the destiny of Africa and the great hopes of the Bahá'ís for its future, based on the words of Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Afterwards a number of serious minded and eager students invited Amatul-Bahá and those accompanying her to the cafeteria for refreshments and the discussion was continued. Among this group was a young white post-graduate who was a student of theology, fanatical in his view regarding Satan as a personified being and with power over individual souls. This student's views were so narrow and illogical that after we left one of the young African students said: "It is this kind of religion that has made us abhor and resent and deny the necessity of any religion at all! According to people like him our ancestors were idolaters, damned forever, yet our ancestors believed in one God and in a life after death and were tolerant of other people's beliefs."

The month-long tour of Rhodesia, from May 11 to June 10, 1972, was packed with many happy incidents. As a preliminary Rúḥíyyih Khánum was able to meet with the National Spiritual Assembly and discuss her program and hold a number of meetings in the Salisbury area. In the class room of the Salisbury Motel Bahá'í School many of the Bahá'ís came to see some slides of the Panama Temple and Conference and were thrilled by Amatul-Bahá's description of these places and events.

The youth had arranged for a youth meeting in the community hall of Highfield, one of the African communities near Salisbury where some Bahá'í young men from Swaziland joined with the local youth in a festival evening of music and singing. At this meeting Amatul-Bahá gave a brief address on the Faith which was followed by animated questions from the young people attracted by this informal entertainment.

Mr. Shidan Fat'he-Aazam, one of the Counsellors for the Southern region of Africa, accompanied us on a three-day trip to a number of villages. In Mudarikwa where there is a strong Local Spiritual Assembly we were delighted to find some wonderful Bahá'í ladies actively educating the children in the Faith. Rúḥíyyih Khánum spoke to them on the importance of the role of women in...
the community and pointed out that wherever the women are strong Bahá'ís find a strong and active community.

In Chidenga, deep in the interior over a very rough road, we met with a small group of believers who had recently achieved Assembly status but were eager to learn more and expand their activities. We were also able to visit with some of the Bahá'ís in the village of Musanhi near Mrewa.

On returning to Salisbury from this excursion Amatu'l-Bahá met with the believers, mostly the pioneers for the last time of this stay. She spoke of the importance of their services and the tasks entrusted to the believers, particularly the pioneers. She said she vaguely recalled a story she had read as a child about St. Anthony who, in the garb of a beggar, knocked at the door of a woman who was baking bread and asked for something to eat. The woman took a loaf out of her oven to give him but felt the loaf was too big and too good to part with. So she baked a smaller loaf and still it seemed too good to give to the beggar. In the end she baked a very small loaf and gave it to St. Anthony. He was annoyed and said, "I came to your house to bless you but because of your greed I shall give you nothing at all." Rúhíyyih Khánum said, "Bahá'u'lláh has knocked at the door of our hearts; we must not deny Him the best we have which is His right." She urged the women to arise and participate actively in the teaching work, going out to neighboring towns and villages where the friends are longing to receive help and instruction. She pointed out that women, and especially women who take their children with them to the villages, can reach the women better than anyone else. She said: "Your children are most precious to you, and if you take what is most precious with you the villagers feel that you trust and love them." One of the Africans confirmed this and said that when families take their children to a village the news spreads very rapidly.

In the beautiful mountain district of Umtali, 150 miles from Salisbury in the African township of Sakuba, Bahá'ís and their friends gathered to welcome their distinguished visitor and as a number of them were not Bahá'ís Amatu'l-Bahá's talk was an introduction to the Faith and its principles.

The last function Rúhíyyih Khánum attended in Salisbury on the eve of our departure was the celebration of the declaration of the Bab at the Salisbury Motel. She explained to them various sides of the Bahá'í Holy Places.

Two happy days were spent in the Gokwe district in the village of Mufungwo which is in the middle of the wilderness. We met with about sixty wonderful adults and children. Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke on the importance of Bahá'í education for the children. "This," she said, "primarily falls on the shoulders of the women as the mother is the first educator in society." The sub-chief in this village is a Bahá'í and regular children's classes are held as well as a special ladies' club where a devoted young woman teaches them the Writings, prayers and some handwork such as sewing, knitting and embroidery. She proudly exhibited the work of her club and the writings and colored drawings of the children. There is no regular school in this area and the united cry of the villagers was for a school. It was truly pathetic to see the need, not in one place alone, but multiplied by dozens and dozens of places, and yet know that at this stage it is not possible for the Faith to embark on such projects. Amatu'l-Bahá, with great love and reasoning, explained to them that our Faith is like a big family, and like a well-organized family everything must be carefully planned and budgeted. If in a family there is not enough money then naturally they have to cut down and deprive themselves of certain things. Our situation in the Faith at this point is that we cannot, alas, afford schools in the hundreds of villages all over the world where mass teaching is developing.

Chief Nemangwe, one of the principal chiefs in Rhodesia who represents his people in the National Council of Chiefs, is a Bahá'í. For two nights we were his guests in the village of Nemangwe. He gave us the village Court House for living quarters while Mr. Fathe-Aazam slept in his own tent outside. We were very comfortable and hung our clothes on the prisoner's dock, put our stove on the raised platform where the Chief presides as Judge and ate our meals off the Recording Clerk's table. We turned the main hall into a delightful dining room-living room and slept in one of the adjacent empty rooms.

This Chief has given land for an endowment for the
Faith as well as a Bahá’i Center. He is a loyal defender of the Cause of God.

Under the thatched grass awning outside the Court House people can meet and attend to their affairs protected from the sun in the hot weather. Some thirty people gathered there to hear the wonderful news of the Coming of Bahá’u’lláh. The questions and discussions centered on the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh regarding life after death and the purpose of this life. Ruhiyyih Khánum gave ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s example of the unborn babe, how in the womb of the mother it grows and develops the members of its body it does not need or use before it is born; and yet, if it should not grow these hands, feet, eyes, ears, etc., it will be forever deprived and handicapped after birth. She said: “This world also is a period of preparation for the eternal world and we must develop here what we will need in the next world after death.” The Chief was greatly impressed and excited by this example and said, “Now for the first time I understand why we are unable to ever understand the conditions and the state of the next world.”

In the village of Karambe, where the sub-Chief is a Bahá’í and has also given a piece of land for the Bahá’í Center, we likewise met with a number of believers and their friends.

Near Enkeldorn, in the village of Unyetu, in explaining the difference between the Word of God and all other words. Ruhiyyih Khánum used the example of a stone and a grain of corn. She said: “If you plant this stone, in a hundred years it will not change; but if you plant this grain of corn in a short period it will grow and yield a hundredfold. The difference is that the grain of corn has life while the stone has no life. When we plant the Word of God in the soil of the heart it grows, blossoms and multiplies because the Word of God is endowed with spiritual life.”

An Audio-Visual Lesson

In the village of Daramombwe, where over fifty people gathered to hear about the Faith, Ruhiyyih Khánum gave a vivid example of how man, through ignorance covers up the light of God and therefore the need arises for the renewal of this Divine Light. Practically the only audio-visual aid she ever uses is her kit of about seven different colored ladies’ handkerchiefs, including black ones, carried in her handbag. She uses any handy object; a glass, a bottle, a pocket flash light to help illustrate her point. This object is imagined to be a lamp; in it the light of God is burning as left in this world when Jesus Christ was crucified. She then takes up one of the handkerchiefs and puts it over the supposed lamp, saying: “After a passage of time, a man, through his love for the lamp shining with the Light of God, decides to offer a beautiful covering in order to make a gift to the light he loves. As time passes more and more people want to make gifts to the lamp, each saying ‘I can give something better than the other man’.”

While she is talking Ruhiyyih Khánum keeps on adding one handkerchief on top of another, ending up with the black ones. Of course everyone can see there is less and
less light. But if one man would say to the other 'Take your covering off!' this would cause anger, and quarreling as another would say, 'Don't touch my gift, remove your own which is obscuring the light.' 'The result of all this'. Rúhiyyih Khánum says 'is that God looks down at this world and sees nothing but darkness, so he calls Baha'u'lláh and says to Him 'Go down and see what has become of my light.' Baha'u'lláh comes to the world, He looks for the light, He sees the coverings put on it by men and He removes them.' At this point Rúhiyyih Khánum lifts off the whole bunch of handkerchiefs. ‘Once again’, she says, ‘the light of God in all its splendor is revealed to man.’ She then explains that the coverings are like the different sects of Christianity, each sect interpreting the Teachings of Christ in its own way until no Divine Light remains, in spite of the fact that Jesus was one person, and gave only one Teaching. This example she uses not only in villages but often in her public lectures in cities where it is equally well received.

Finding ourselves with a day of rest we went to the famous Zimbabwe Ruins and spent a peaceful morning climbing about them before continuing on our way on May 31 to Bulawayo, Rhodesia's second largest town. There in addition to meeting more than once with our local Bahá'ís she had a press conference which resulted in a very favorable article on her travels and on the Faith in the Daily Chronicle, a local newspaper. During a six-minute television interview she was able to mention the name “Bahá’í” and some of the major Teachings of the Faith several times. In the Y.W.C.A. hall a public meeting was attended by over fifty people. Rúhiyyih Khánum's subject was “Progressive Revelation and the Purpose of Religion in the World.” A three-day trip to Wankie, a big mining town in the North West, enabled Rúhiyyih Khánum to meet with a number of friends. It was on this evening that one of the believers burst into the room with the news of the birth of a baby girl, and that she was to be named Rúhiyyih in her honor because the baby arrived on the same day as Amatu'l-Bahá to their town.

We also visited the village of Chikandakubio, forty-five miles from where the Wankie Bahá'ís had been actively teaching. Here Rúhiyyih Khánum spoke on the purpose and importance of prayer. She used the example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, explaining that the heart of man is like a mirror on which the desires, temptations and cares of life fall each day and dust on the mirror prevent it from reflecting the heavenly virtues. Prayer wipes away this dust from living and enables the heart again to receive the light of God within it.

(To be continued)
El Salvador’s Successful Proclamation

For the third time in the past six years, the Salvadoran Baha’i Community has made use of the biennial “Feria Internacional de El Salvador” to proclaim the Faith to the Central American area. This year’s fair, held from November 3 to 20, 1972, had stands from twenty-eight nations. While primarily it had stimulating exhibits that always included cultural and other exhibitions and provides an ideal opportunity for an extensive public presentation of the Message.

Both by its situation and its design, the Baha’i stand was particularly successful in attracting a large proportion of the 390,000 visitors to the fair. A wide scale radio campaign of well-made musical spots—over 400 in all—invited the public to view the stand and to investigate the Faith.

The Continental Board of Counsellors held a scheduled meeting in San Salvador during the opening week of the fair. Press coverage, a radio and a TV interview for that occasion also helped to attract attention to the Faith and to the stand. The anniversary of the Birth of Baha’u’llah provided another opportunity and an attractive and informative article appeared in three of the leading newspapers.

The stand itself was designed by close collaboration of the National Spiritual Assembly, a Fair Committee and two young architects who are interested in the Teachings. Its technique was to attract at first glance, associate the name Baha’i with unity and harmony and leave the viewer with a positive, unconfused impression. The design consisted of a raised plywood mural of a heterogeneous group of races, silhouetted against an illumined background. This took up most of the curved wall area. To one side in raised bold letters the words: “So powerful is the light of unity that it can illumine the whole world.”

—Baha’u’llah—This was in Spanish. Near the outside in order to be readily seen by the approaching public was a circle upon which was superimposed a white, nine pointed star which served as a screen for the projection of a series of short slide programs. These consisted of three slides each accompanied with recorded words such as: “A new era, a new name: Baha’i. The fulfillment of the ancient prophecy, one mankind, one faith. Investigate the Baha’i Faith.”

A very attractive pamphlet was edited and printed especially for this occasion, to be given to those who choose to investigate. This pamphlet had both color and black and white photographs of Haifa, Temples and varied groups plus text. It also included a postal paid reply card for those who wished further information.

The volunteer believers (mostly youth) who attended the stand were instructed to offer the pamphlet, but not to insist. In the two previous fairs 51,000 and 73,000 pamphlets (in simple black and white) were distributed during the three week period. The National Spiritual Assembly had designated 100,000 for this occasion but it was not enough and it was necessary to offer other literature on the last day. About 108,000 pamphlets in all were distributed, many books were sold and some even accepted the Faith at the stand. About 28 percent of the total attending the Fair received literature.

Volunteers not only took turns at the stand, but helped to fold the cards into the 100,000 pamphlets. They, the Fair Committee, the Proclamation Committee, and the National Teaching Committee under the direction of the National Spiritual Assembly made this multi-pronged effort of bringing the Faith to the public eye and ear, by far the most successful proclamation to date in El Salvador.

The arrival in El Salvador of a teaching-team of twelve youth from the United States who spoke Spanish, more or less, was an exciting event this past summer.

In one pueblo, San Pedro Puxtla, there were no Bahá’ís, and no proclamation had ever been held in the vicinity. On the first day of arrival the youth announced an open meeting for that evening where slides would be shown with music.

The Salvadorians love the guitar, so at dusk the people began assembling in the village square numbering 200. Fortunately there were loudspeakers. The townpeople were very receptive and the first night there were thirty-two declarations; every day there were more, and by the fourth day there were sixty Bahá’ís, over half adults. They elected their Local Spiritual Assembly.

The sense of responsibility rested strongly on the new Assembly members at their first meeting, but they expect to establish a vitally functioning community through keeping in close touch with the National Office in El Salvador.

Some of the youth of San Pedro Puxtla went on the next teaching trip with the visiting youth—and further trips were planned with guitars and songs.

Another village, Salcoatitan, in the same part of the country, received its first proclamation from a youth trip, and there were forty-five enthusiastic declarations.

In still another village a lone Bahá’, who had been in correspondence with Bahá’ís for two years, now had a visit in person with other Bahá’ís and was so happy. In Conghagua there had once been a hundred Bahá’ís who had become inactive. Now the youth were finally able to locate a few souls willing to carry on Bahá’í activities. One entire family made their declarations.

In the all-Bahá’í village of San Isidro, Labrador, the children sing Bahá’î songs frequently during the day. The youth visited during the rainy season and without rain gear it was difficult to travel. A meeting was announced for the end of the second day—and no one arrived! The youth packed to leave but the roads were impassable, so they simply sat waiting, when people began to appear, eager with questions. Several of those who came to the group were men living in Portio del Norte, up steep hills a mile and a half north. They are building a rock road with their own hands so the Bahá’ís will be able to come to them and their families and teach them about the Faith.

The volume The Proclamation of Baha’u’llah was presented to Mr. Louis Santos, Mayor of Davao City, Philippines, in September 1972 by Mr. Soheil Rowshanzamir and Miss Shakin Rouhani, both pioneers from Iran, and Sara and Allan Lewis, American pioneers.
GERMANY AND ITS GOALS

Five new Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed in Germany from October 28, 1972 to November 10, 1972. These are Bitburg, Augsburg, Mainz, Berlin-Zehlendorf, and Fürth.

Needed before Ridván: 18 Assemblies and 124 new locations where Bahá'ís reside. Locations already achieved number 377.

The plea goes out for assistance: “If you think you cannot teach, you can make a cup of tea, have a friendly smile, radiate love and invite some friends.”

The Stuttgart community has a Bahá'í bus with signs and posters displayed, which brings many opportunities to teach in surrounding areas.

A teaching group from Iceland and Canada were touring Germany in December, all from ages eighteen to twenty-eight.

Information week was held in Ludwigshafen/Rhein from September 18-24. Hand of the Cause of God Mr. A. Furútan presented a book to the Mayor of the town. Four new believers enrolled as a result of Information Week.

On September 2, 1972, 20,000 young people attended a pop-concert in Koblenz. Among them were ten Bahá'ís from five countries. They had three information tables and gave out 13,000 pieces of literature. The name “Bahá'í” became known and many firesides resulted.

The young Bahá'ís who took part in the summer teaching project were greatly appreciated. Special mention was made of the singing group, “The New Garden”, and a special note of appreciation was given to Roberta Barrar, American coordinator, and Foad Hedayati, coordinator for Germany, for outstanding services.

—Translated from BAHÁ'Í NACHRICHTEN, September-December, 1972

Some participants of the summer project in Germany were, front row, left to right: Inese Grikis, Bonnie Hogue, Patricia Gorman, Gene Granrath, Karen Thurston, Tom Rockwell. Second row, kneeling: Julia Devendorf, David Rome, Terri Rome, Rosana Velrich, Deborah Sanden, Barbara Jennrich. Top row, standing: Roberta Barrar (American coordinator), Emily Frontezak, Phil Johnson, Jan Hutton, Jim Law, Dennis Lovell.
College Courses on the Bahá'í Faith

Miss Schole Raoufi teaching at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Miss Schole Raoufi, a twenty year old Junior from Iran, is now teaching an accredited course at the University of California, Santa Cruz on the Bahá'í Faith.

She submitted a plan for her course on “Iran—Birthplace of the Bahá'í Revelation” to the University authorities, which was approved. In her description she made a careful outline of content. The first part is devoted to the historical and cultural background of Persia, its ancient glory, leading to its present situation. The second part concerns the birth, rise and struggle of the Bahá’í Faith, its main figures, its impact on Iran and its historical relation to the world at large. The third part relates to Bahá’í principles and goals as related to the social needs of our time, showing the emergence of a new type of community in Iran. This includes a study of the method of Bahá’í administration with its provision for local, national and international units evolving to a worldwide unity, the unfoldment of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh as in operation today.


The student is expected to write a term paper, also to give an oral report to the group, thereby encouraging discussion, intended to develop some awareness of current social problems and their relation to Bahá’í Teachings.

Miss Raoufi assured the authorities of the University that she was prepared to provide aids such as films, tapes, and to invite outside speakers.

The University of Yale is offering an accredited course on the Bahá’í Faith, taught by Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States.

In addition to the two courses reported above, a number of unaccredited classes have been held in numerous “Free Universities” in widely scattered parts of the United States, including Mobile, Alabama; Denver, Colorado; and Evanston, Illinois.

God willing, this will begin a new phase whereby the Faith can be taught on campuses throughout the United States!

High School and College Bahá’í Clubs in the United States

Although high school Bahá’í clubs are a fairly recent development in the United States, there are now sixty-three of them. Where there are two or more Bahá’ís on a high school campus, the National Spiritual Assembly encourages the formation of a club. Each Bahá’í club is sponsored by either a Local Spiritual Assembly or a District Teaching Committee and is assisted by an advisor appointed by the sponsoring body. The Office of Youth and Student Activities at the National Bahá’í Center in Wilmette serves in a coordinating capacity and sends out mailings each Bahá’í month. These consist of suggestions for teaching and deepening, news events, club functions, etc., and encourage reports. The emphasis is in improving the quality of spiritual life and encouraging club members to set personal goals.

All Bahá’í college clubs in the United States were encouraged to fulfill the following goals: 1) To bring to the awareness of everyone on campus the Message of Bahá’u’lláh; 2) To make special efforts to reach all minorities and foreign students on campus; 3) To adopt a small college as a teaching goal; 4) To attend a “WE” Institute; and 5) To encourage all Bahá’í students on campus to strive always to be at the head of their classes through hard study and true merit and to help them to accomplish this in whatever way possible.

Among reports is one from the University of Michigan telling of a Tri-State Bahá’í College Club Conference held from October 6 to 8, sponsored by the Bahá’í Student Group of the University of Michigan. Those who attended shared stimulating ideas which had already been tested and came up with some new, exciting and dynamic ways to promote the Faith.

The University of Chicago Bahá’ís, in an effort to reach everyone on campus held a concert featuring “Sphere”, a musical group comprised of Bahá’ís of different nationalities who play a variety of musical instruments, and put to music some of the verses of Bahá’u’lláh. Afterwards some from the audience approached to ask questions about the Faith.

Kent State University Bahá’í club started planning early to book Seals and Crofts, successful and popular musicians who have composed Bahá’í songs and use them extensively in their performances in the United States and abroad. Finally the concert occurred on January 19. Following the concert there was a balside attended by 200 to 250 non-Bahá’ís. Both the club and Seals and Crofts received excellent publicity in the campus newspaper.

The University of North Dakota at Grand Forks has a large number of young Bahá’ís, who, besides teaching on their own campus have been involved in teaching at three high schools and in the town. Almost every Sunday morning club members meet for devotions. The club has adopted Devil’s Lake Junior College, and is in touch with a new Bahá’í there in order to assist in teaching and deepening.
Baha'i club members at the University of Wisconsin at Madison meet for prayers once a week and club meetings once every two weeks. They are attempting to reach other groups through firesides directed toward them: the Afro students, the Latin-American and Japanese students, etc. Firesides are announced on campus bulletin boards, both campus newspapers, the campus activities calendar and over both campus radio stations.

Smith College at Northampton, Massachusetts, has a Baha'i club which gives firesides every Thursday night, conducted by black couples and interracial couples. A deepening class is held each Wednesday night. They have selected Northampton Junior College and Northampton High School as teaching goals.

The Baha'i club at St. Cloud State College, Minnesota, has been placing emphasis on reaching foreign students who are contacted individually as well as in small groups and receive invitations to firesides which are held weekly on campus. They are adopting nearby St. John's College where they plan to present the film "It's Just the Beginning."

-Adapted from The American Baha'i, December 1972

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Teaching Institute in Paraguay

A Teaching Institute in the Chaco region of Paraguay. Victor and Janet Alexander, pioneers from the United States, are in the center. Their son, Bradley is in the left foreground with his dog. Janet Alexander wrote: "Here we are in one of the most remote spots of the world, in the least inhabited part of a country with a very small population, three million for the whole nation, so, what happens? The world comes here. In the last four months we have taught these different peoples: Indians in the area, civilian Paraguayans, members of the military, families from California and Oregon and a man from Georgia, someone from Canada, Germany, Israel and the Japanese Ambassador who upon arriving asked especially to visit the Bahá'i Institute and asked questions for one and a half hours about the Faith. We also shared the Message with several radio announcers and newspaper men from the Capital, Asuncion."
Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica, Holds Institute

The village of Puerto Viejo on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica was recently the scene of its first Bahá’í Teacher Training Institute. Richard Mirkovich, long time pioneer to Costa Rica, has established his home there and it was there the Institute took place. Many Negro and some Latin people live in this area, it is also adjacent to the Indian territory of Talamanca where a large portion of the Indians are Bahá’ís.

The Institute was held for six days in a beautiful spot on the brink of the sea. Classes were given throughout the day on all facets of the Bahá’í Faith with much practice of vital subjects such as: how to give a fireside, electing Local Spiritual Assemblies and their officers, and how to elect delegates to the National Convention. Favorite classes were on prayer and meditation. There were special classes on the history of the Indian people, emphasizing the greatness of their past. This class was very popular and many questions were asked.

By way of recreation, there was swimming in the hot afternoons, and singing and the telling of Bahá’í stories in the evenings. The classes were kept small so all could consult, ask questions and practice giving Bahá’í talks. At general meetings mostly in the evenings there were as many as forty people coming from miles around, but most were living right there for the duration of the Institute. Spirits were at all times high and happiness reigned throughout the week.

All participated in the hard work of preparing food for so many. Friends came from as far away as the community of Newcastle, 60 kilometers away down the coast, to help in the kitchen. Sharing became a reality, the students bringing foodstuff from wherever they came. All departed for their homes after six days of intensive training, full of enthusiasm for the teaching work which lies ahead, sad at parting, but happy to have been living and working so happily together.
Dutch Community Commemorates Birth of Bahá'u'lláh

Over 300 Bahá'ís and their friends gathered for a nation-wide celebration of the commemoration of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh on November 12, 1972 in the heart of the land, Utrecht at the University House.

The official welcome at 11:00 a.m. was followed by a befitting program set against the background of soul-stirring music.

A point of interest was an illuminated "Greatest Name" surrounded by nine white lighted candles and white roses.

The friends shared a meal together. Later a moving account of the greatness of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation was presented.

A tape recording was played recounting the visit with the Blessed Beauty by the late Hand of the Cause of God Tarazu'llah Samandari.

Light refreshments were served after which all gathered to listen to a lively program of joyous Bahá'í songs by the Dutch Song Group "The Great Day._

The many Bahá'í children present took part in various activities, seeing a film, children's class, recreation, and joined in the singing session.

All viewed the slide program "Carmel, the Mountain of God._

The Chairman, in closing urged all to take an ever increasing share in proclaiming the Faith.

Five waiting souls declared their faith in Bahá'u'lláh.

The Utrecht Local Assembly, which was responsible for the arrangements for the day, felt pleased over the response.

Netherlands Launch Teaching-Deepening Plan

A joint effort aimed at forming eighteen healthy Local Spiritual Assemblies by Ridván 1973 was set in motion in September 1972 by the National Teaching Committee and the National Consolidation Committee of the Netherlands.

Embracing all areas of the land, each effort is sponsored separately by the responsible committee. Included in the plan are teaching weekends in goal cities or places needing support and institutes for intensive study and fellowship. Children's classes and recreation are also included. These teaching weekends have attracted favorable publicity and knowledge of the Faith is more widely spread because of the devoted direct teaching efforts of the friends.

St. Thomas, Virgin Islands: As a result of a successful teaching project just completed by a team of five French speaking Bahá'ís from Canada, close to one thousand new Bahá'ís were enrolled in the French Antilles thereby doubling our national membership.

Additional settlers are presently on their way from Canada and the United States to take up residence in the French Islands.

—St. Thomas Bahá'í Newsletter, February, 1973

Argentine Believers Present Library Books

A group of Bahá'ís in Tactagal, Salta, Argentina, when presenting books to the local public library during a teaching project in July. Left to right: Mr. Gustavo Zamora (Mateco Indian); Mr. Eugenio Aragón (native Argentinian); Mr. Aldo Bustos, Director of the library with copy of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era in his hands; behind him, Mrs. Barbara Genge, American pioneer; Mrs. Lola de Caballero, Argentinian, member of the National Spiritual Assembly; Mr. Juan Millalaf, Mapuche Indian from the South of Argentina; behind him, wearing glasses, Mr. Deane Genge and two friends.

Observing the Fast

"It is essentially a period of meditation and prayer, of spiritual recuperation, during which the believer must strive to make the necessary adjustments in his inner life, and to refresh and reinvigorate the spiritual forces latent in his soul."

—Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í News, March 1936

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Belize, British Honduras elected at Ridván, 1972. Standing, left to right: Miss Helen Taylor, Mrs. Bernice Yorks, Mr. Nathaniel Neal, Mrs. Grace Grant, Mrs. Gladys Stuart, Mrs. Lois Nolen, Seated, Mrs. Shirley Warde, Mrs. Rezvan Ahmadiyeh, Mrs. Emma Lawrence.
Ethiopia Inaugurates Haziratu'l-Quds on Bahá'u'lláh's Birthday

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh the evening of November 11, 1972, the first program was held in the new national headquarters in Addis Ababa. Nearly one hundred people attended.

Mr. Gila Michgan Bohta, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, presided. Several appropriate selections from the Sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh were read which deepened the appreciation of those attending the celebration of this twin event. Prayers were read in English and Amharic and chanted in Persian.

Guest speaker was Auxiliary Board member Mr. Foad Ashraf who with his wife, Maghbule, flew from Kenya for the event. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ashraf were formerly pioneers in Ethiopia. He expressed his delight in returning to the country and having the opportunity of greeting the friends, many of whom he had personally introduced to the Faith, some now members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Mr. Asfaw Tessema, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, gave a detailed report of how the friends began to make plans to build the Haziratu'l-Quds after this goal was assigned by The Universal House of Justice at the beginning of the Nine Year Plan.

Dr. and Mrs. Farhaumond, pioneers from Iran who have spent eighteen years in Ethiopia, donated the land on which the Haziratu'l-Quds is built. They were warmly thanked for their gracious gift and many years of outstanding service.

At first the project seemed impossible. Mr. Tessema related how funds seemed to arrive mysteriously from abroad and from pledges made by Ethiopian friends.

Special congratulations were extended to Mr. Mehtzun Tedia, a building engineer, for his beautiful design of the Haziratu'l-Quds and to Mr. Techesta Ahderon, city planner and architect, both members of the National Spiritual Assembly, who saw the building to completion. Mr. Sertzu G. Meskel, construction engineer, though not a Bahá'í, was praised for his Bahá'í manner and patience displayed in the many problems involved in the building.

On Sunday morning, November 12, 1972, a public meeting was held in the new building with attendance of over one hundred, including children. Bahá'í literature was displayed and a large photograph of the Bab's Shrine was presented to each guest. The second edition in Amharic of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era was available for those interested in more information about the Faith.

Dr. Farhaumond spoke eloquently on progressive revelation and told many stories of the tragic and heroic events of Bahá'í history. Another speaker was Dr. Malik, of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. He stated that the spiritual life must be lived according to the revelation of the prophets of the various religions, and if mankind did this, the world would not suffer from its present division and conflict.

In the evening "A New Wind" was shown for the first time in this country, again to about a hundred people. This film was a gift of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for the celebration of the dedication of the Haziratu'l-Quds and was deeply appreciated. It favorably impressed guests with the world scope of the Faith.

Friends at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, who devote several hours each week to mass teaching and holding discussion meetings. They find the students broadminded and tolerant, eager to build a new world, socially aware of man's plight and disenchanted with the old world systems.
Teachers and Pioneers in Bolivia

In Pareden, Chuquisaca, Bolivia, Augustin Garca, native teacher, and pioneers Lynn Anille and Al Cannon are standing in back. Manigeh Cannon is holding her seven-month-old daughter Jamaliyyeh. One sleepless night she protected the baby from a dangerous insect, the vincha, whose bite weakens the heart. Another time, entering an Indian community where there was an epidemic of scarlet fever causing deaths of both children and adults, Manigeh called out: "Oh, Baha'u'llah, please take care of my baby" and went on teaching.

In Melbourne, Australia recently, National Spiritual Assembly members assisted in mass teaching. Some of them with the friends are: front row, left to right: Dr. Ray Myers, Joy Stevenson, Mahvash Master, Len Jackson and Frank McLeod. Back row, Pieter de Vogel, Joy Vohradskey, Rhonda Andrews, John Walker, Saba Payman and Ken Robinson.

A study course in Mesa Verde, Chuquisaca, Bolivia. Auxiliary Board member Manucher Shari is at right, next to him a devoted woman of Quechua background. Illiterate, and in need, she was assisted by her National Spiritual Assembly to obtain a small piece of land from the government where she can raise her own garden and poultry or goats.

On a teaching trip in Yamparaez, Chuquisaca, Bolivia with Sergio Ortiz from Puerto Rico teaching a youth group. At right is Manigeh Cannon and her new daughter, Jamaliyyeh. Six youth and three adults made their declarations of belief in Baha'u'llah.
BAHÁ'Í NEWS

Subscription is $6.00 a year (payable in advance) in the U.S. and Canada, and is for Bahá'ís only. FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS to BAHÁ'Í NEWS: Local Assemblies, groups and individuals in countries other than the United States and Canada must inquire of their own National Spiritual Assembly. It is shipped in bulk to each National Assembly for distribution within their national area.

WORLD ORDER is a quarterly for Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís which is intended to stimulate, inspire, and serve thinking people in their search to find relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings and philosophy. Domestic subscription $4.50 ($3.50 for students); foreign subscription $5.00. Payable in advance.

CHILD'S WAY is published six times a year. It is interesting, attractive, and useful. Subscription is $4.50 in the U.S. and $5.00, foreign. Payable in advance.

For the above publications write: Bahá'í Subscriber Service 415 Linden Ave. Wilmette, Illinois 60091

CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í NEWS may be ordered by sending $4.00 for a one-year subscription (2nd Class) $6.00 airmail. Write to: Canadian Bahá'í News Committee: 7290 Leslie St., Thornhill, Ontario, Canada

Mayor of Monaco Receives Bahá'ís

The National Spiritual Assembly of France reports the new Mayor of Monaco, Mr. Jean-Louis Medecin, granted an audience to Bahá'ís on November 3, 1972. Mrs. Andrée Blagovestensky, Chairman of the Monaco Spiritual Assembly, and Miss Anne-Marie Dupeyron were courteously received in his private office.

The occasion was used to present the Mayor with The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, while informing him that this book had been given to over 140 Heads of State in 1967, in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the sending of letters by Bahá'u'lláh to the kings and religious leaders of His time. Quite touched, Mr. Jean-Louis Medecin thanked them and also showed interest in the last French edition of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era which will give him a general idea of the Faith. He promised to read these two books.

In the course of the conversation the Mayor expressed the idea that only a spiritual authority would be able to unite men from all over the world and give them an ideal capable of inspiring them to build a new civilization. He accepted the Bahá'í belief that Divine Revelation is continuous and progressive. He listened with much interest when the two delegates from the Assembly explained the functioning of the Administrative Order and the plan for World Order given by Bahá'u'lláh.

Among other things, the Mayor inquired about such matters as Bahá'í marriage and burial, Bahá'í Holy places, temples, the expansion of the Faith throughout the world. Though the interview lasted only thirty-five minutes, the Mayor of Monaco proved to be open minded concerning the need for a universal renewal in the world.

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Next Global Plan to be Launched 1974

To: All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

As the Bahá’í world approaches the triumphant conclusion of the Nine Year Plan it gives us the utmost gratification to see that a few National Spiritual Assemblies have already formulated plans for activity during the coming Bahá’í year.

The next global plan will be launched at Ridván 1974 and you will therefore have twelve months to prepare for it. We call upon you all to take the greatest possible advantage of that year to:

Strengthen the foundations of your achievements through developing and enriching Bahá’í community life, fostering youth activity and through all means suited to your circumstances; and

Continue expansion of the Faith, trying new openings and possibilities not fully explored when you were under the pressure of other priorities.

Obviously conditions differ in the various areas under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assemblies, and the goals which each Assembly adopts must be suited to its particular circumstances and possibilities, but, as the beloved Guardian once pointed out, “The broader the basis” of such a campaign, and “the deeper its roots, the finer the flower into which it shall eventually blossom.”

We ask you to make your plans now and to send us your report of them to reach us as soon as possible and not later than 1st April 1973 so that we may present a consolidated summary to the International Convention. We feel that such a summary will be an inspiration and a source of new ideas to the delegates when they are consulting upon the challenges that lie before the Bahá’í community in the years ahead and which must be faced during the next global plan. Moreover, the achievements of the coming year, added to the great victories of the Nine Year Plan, will enable the worldwide Bahá’í community to enter with even greater assurance upon the next stage of its ever-unfolding destiny.

We pray at the Holy Shrines that the blessings of Bahá’u’lláh may guide and assist you with a fresh measure of His divine grace in the few months separating us from the glorious festivities of next Ridván.

Bahá’í World Centre
Haifa, Israel
January 14, 1973

With loving Bahá’í greetings,
—The Universal House of Justice
Obeying the Law of God in Our Own Lives

The following statement is taken from a letter written by The Universal House of Justice in response to the questions of an individual believer:

Just as there are laws governing our physical lives, requiring that we must supply our bodies with certain foods, maintain them within a certain range of temperatures, and so forth, if we wish to avoid physical disabilities, so also there are laws governing our spiritual lives. These laws are revealed to mankind in each age by the Manifestation of God, and obedience to them is of vital importance if each human being by his own development, and mankind in general, is to develop properly and harmoniously. Moreover, these various aspects are interdependent. If an individual violates the spiritual laws for his own development he will cause injury not only to himself but to the society in which he lives. Similarly, the condition of society has a direct effect on the individuals who must live within it.

As you point out, it is particularly difficult to follow the laws of Bahá'u'lláh in present-day society whose accepted practice is so at variance with the standards of the Faith. However, there are certain laws that are so fundamental to the healthy functioning of human society that they must be upheld whatever the circumstances. Realizing the degree of human frailty, Bahá'u'lláh has provided that other laws are to be applied only gradually, but these too, once they are applied, must be followed, or else society will not be reformed but will sink into an ever worsening condition. It is the challenging task of the Baha'is to obey the law of God in their own lives, and gradually to win the rest of mankind to its acceptance.

In considering the effect of obedience to the laws on individual lives, one must remember that the purpose of this life is to prepare the soul for the next. Here one must learn to control and direct one's animal impulses, not to be a slave to them. Life in this world is a succession of tests and achievements, of falling short and of making new spiritual advances. Sometimes the course may seem very hard, but one can witness, again and again, that the soul who steadfastly obeys the law of Bahá'u'lláh, however hard it may seem, grows spiritually, while the one who compromises with the law for the sake of his own apparent happiness is seen to have been following a chimera: he does not attain the happiness he sought, he retards his spiritual advance and often brings new problems upon himself.

To give one very obvious example: the Bahá'í law requiring consent of parents to marriage. All too often nowadays such consent is withheld by non-Bahá'í parents for reasons of bigotry or racial prejudice; yet we have seen again and again the profound effect on those very parents of the firmness of the children in the Bahá'í law, to the extent that not only is the consent ultimately given in many cases, but the character of the parents can be affected and their relationship with their child greatly strengthened.

Thus, by upholding Bahá'í law in the face of all difficulties we not only strengthen our own characters but influence those around us.

The Bahá'í teaching on sexual intercourse is very clear. It is permissible only between a man and the woman who is his wife. In this connection we share with you extracts from four letters written on behalf of the Guardian which throw light on various aspects of the matter. One of them contains the paragraph that you quote in your letter.

"With reference to the question you have asked concerning the Bahá'í attitude towards the problem of sex and its relation to marriage:

"The Bahá'í Teachings on this matter, which is of such vital concern and about which there is such a wide divergence of views, are very clear and emphatic. Briefly stated the Bahá'í conception of sex is based on the belief that chastity should be strictly practiced by both sexes, not only because it is in itself highly commendable ethically, but also due to its being the only way to a happy and successful marital life. Sex relationships of any form, outside marriage, are not permissible therefore, and whosoever violates this rule will not only be responsible to God, but will incur the necessary punishment from society.

"The Bahá'í Faith recognizes the value of the sex impulse, but condemns its illegitimate and improper expressions such as free love, companionship marriage and others, all of which it considers positively harmful to man and to the society in which he lives. The proper use of the sex instinct is the natural right of every individual, and it is precisely for this very purpose that the institution of marriage has been established. The Bahá'ís do not believe in the suppression of the sex impulse but in its regulation and control."

(From a letter dated September 5, 1938 to an individual believer)

"The question you raise as to the place in one's life that a deep bond of love with someone we meet other than our husband or wife can have is easily defined in view of the Teachings. Chastity implies both before and after marriage an unsullied, chaste sex life. Before marriage absolutely chaste, after marriage absolutely faithful to one's chosen companion. Faithful in all sexual acts, faithful in word and in deed.

"The world today is submerged, amongst other things, in an over-exaggeration of the importance of physical love, and a dearth of spiritual values. In as far as possible the believers should try to realize this and rise above the level of their fellowmen who are, typical of all decadent periods in history, placing so much over-emphasis on the purely physical side of mating. Outside of their normal, legitimate married life they should seek to establish bonds of comradeship and love which are eternal and founded on the spiritual life of man, not on his physical life. This is one of the many fields in which it is incumbent on the Bahá'ís to set the example and lead the way to a true human standard of life, when the soul of man is exalted and his body but the tool for his enlightened spirit. Needless to say this does not preclude the living of a perfectly normal sex life in its legitimate channel of marriage."

(From a letter dated September 28, 1941 to an individual believer)
"Concerning your question whether there are any legitimate forms of expression of the sex instinct outside of marriage; according to the Bahá’í Teachings no sexual act can be considered lawful unless performed between lawfully married persons. Outside of marital life there can be no lawful or healthy use of the sex impulse. The Bahá’í youth should, on the one hand, be taught the lesson of self-control which, when exercised, undoubtedly has a salutary effect on the development of character and of personality in general, and on the other should be advised, nay even encouraged, to contract marriage while still young and in full possession of their physical vigor. Economic factors, no doubt, are often a serious hindrance to early marriage but in most cases are only an excuse, and as such should not be over stressed."

(From a letter dated December 13, 1940 to an individual believer)

"As regards your question whether it would be advisable and useful for you to marry again; he feels unable to give you any definite answer on that point, as this is essentially a private affair about which you, your husband, and the friends you feel you may count on in your Local Assembly are in a much better position to judge. Of course, under normal circumstances, every person should consider it his moral duty to marry. And this is what Bahá’u’lláh has encouraged the believers to do. But marriage is by no means an obligation. In the last resort it is for the individual to decide whether he wishes to lead a family life or live in a state of celibacy."

(From a letter dated May 3, 1936, to an individual believer)

You express surprise at the Guardian’s reference to “the necessary punishment from society”. In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas Bahá’u’lláh prohibits sexual immorality and in the Annexe to that Book states that the various degrees of sexual offenses and the punishments for them are to be decided by The Universal House of Justice. In this connection it should be realized that there is a distinction drawn in the Faith between the attitudes which should characterize individuals in their relationship to other people, namely, loving forgiveness, forbearance, and concern with one’s own sins, not the sins of others, and those attitudes which should be shown by the Spiritual Assembly, whose duty is to administer the law of God with justice.

A number of sexual problems, such as homosexuality and trans-sexuality can well have medical aspects, and in such cases recourse should certainly be had to the best medical assistance. But it is clear from the Teaching of Bahá’u’lláh that homosexuality is not a condition to which a person should be reconciled, but is a distortion of his or her nature which should be controlled and overcome. This may require a hard struggle, but so also can be the struggle of a heterosexual person to control his or her desires. The exercise of self-control in this, as in so very many other cases, is the key to success.

"As a Bahá’í, you know that what Bahá’u’lláh teaches about the purpose of human life, the nature of the human being and the proper conduct of human lives, is divinely revealed and therefore true. However, it will inevitably take time for you not only to study the Bahá’í Teachings so that you clearly understand them, but also to work out how they modify your professional concepts. This, of course, is not an unusual predicament for a scientist. How often the factors of research is a factor discovered which requires a revolution in thinking over a wide field of human endeavour. You must be guided in each case by your own professional knowledge and judgment as illuminated by your growing knowledge of the Bahá’í Teachings; undoubtedly you will find that your own understanding of the human problems dealt with in your work will change and develop and you will see new and improved ways of helping the people who come to you. Psychology is still a very young and inexact science, and as the years go by Bahá’í psychologists, who know from the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh the true pattern of human life, will be able to make great strides in the development of this science, and will help profoundly in the alleviation of human suffering."

—The Universal House of Justice

German Travel-Teaching in a Bus

Dr. Frank Haendel and Mrs. Haendel, from Massachusetts, U.S.A., for a number of weeks have been traveling throughout Germany in a camping bus. With untiring efforts this couple are helping to fulfill the goals of the Nine Year Plan for Germany. Dr. Haendel became a Bahá’í five years ago in Massachusetts. As director of the Harvard University Drug Clinic in Boston he was in contact with countless youth.

The goal city of Oldenburg reports that during the Winter School in Bremen they learned that the Haendels were coming to their city and had only forty-eight hours to make plans. The youth were contacted and they provided a meeting place, took care of a display and sent out personal invitations. Even youth who were not yet Bahá’ís participated in the preparations.

The Haendels were reinforced with four more Bahá’ís who came with them. About sixty youth attended the meeting. Many of them sat on the floor while Dr. Haendel spoke of mastering the drug problem through the Bahá’í Faith. Following the talk a lively discussion lasted far into the night. After the heating system shut down, candles, hot tea and music dispelled the cold.

The teaching effort in the goal city lasted for two afternoons and the evening. Good cooperation was secured by the North-West Newspaper which announced the meeting, and afterward carried a report of an interview with Dr. Haendel.

There were two declarations and many interested persons as a result of this teaching effort.

—Adapted from BAHÁ’Í NACHRICHTEN, 7. Februray 1973
A current reference to the travel of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the United States in 1912 is given in an article "Shades of an Important Past" published in the Winter 1972-73 issue of The Mohonk Bulletin. The article relates some circumstances of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Lake Mohonk, New York, and His address there on the topic of universal peace.

In August, 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had written to the founder of the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, Mr. Albert Smiley, and also to the secretary of this organization, Mr. C. C. Philips. To the latter, 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed these words:

"Baha'u'llah has clearly stated that this Universal Peace is the cause of the tranquility of the realm of creation. Now as the International Conference on Arbitration is organized in America and as this problem is a branch which will ultimately bring about the unity of the world, therefore we remember you with the utmost respect, that praise be to God, you have arisen to perform such a universal service. God willing, that Conference will progress day by day and will bring about all-embracing results and will establish reconciliation and universal love between the different nations, races and peoples of this world."

To Mr. Smiley, 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed these words:

"Today in the world of existence there is no more important and greater cause than this (peace and arbitration) for it is conducive to the promotion of happiness in the commonwealth of humanity and is the cause of tranquility of all the nations and countries and the prosperity of the individuals of the human world."

One of the purposes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in visiting the United States was to be able to be present at this Peace Conference at Lake Mohonk at which He was invited to speak.

"Shades of an Important Past"

The account from the winter 1972-73 edition of The Mohonk Bulletin is given below:

A gift of great interest has been received from Mrs. Beverly Hunsaker, who left us two books on Bahá'í: 'Abdu'l-Bahá by H. M. Balyuzi, a biography of one of the leaders of this religion, and Foundation of World Unity, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. On page 193 of the biography the following appears:

The next three days, May 14th-16th (1912), 'Abdu'l-Bahá spent by Lake Mohonk, having been invited to attend the Conference on Peace and Arbitration held there. The first evening He delivered an address, and the audience, composed of some of the leading men and women of America, as well as representatives from other lands, clapped and clapped, asking for more. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá had to decline, because He was tired and had to rest His voice. When He left to return to New York He made a gift of an exquisite Persian rug to the president of the Conference."

The Persian rug is still in use in the Mountain House; it is indeed an exquisite one. A check of the

The Mohonk Mountain House on Mohonk Lake where 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a Peace Conference on May 14, 1912. The location still attracts serious minded people who love the outdoors. In addition to being used as a summer resort it is used in winter for ice skating, sledding and skiing.
House register for 1912 confirmed 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit: He occupied room 156, and His entourage included six friends from His native Persia, two from Washington and one from San Francisco. His speech, reproduced in the 1912 Arbitration Report, contains points of considerable contemporary interest. He looked upon the 20th Century as one of light and bounty: "In the past, the unity of patriotism, the unity of nations and religions was established: but in this century, the oneness of the world of humanity is established; hence this century is greater than the past." His plea for universal love and peace is not dated; it is as current as our thinking this very moment.

'Abdu'l-Bahá concludes His enumeration of the beliefs of Bahá'í with the statement: "It is the Holy Spirit of God which insures the safety of humanity, for human thoughts differ, human susceptibilities differ. You cannot make the susceptibilities of all humanity one except through the common channel of the Holy Spirit."

**Dr. Baghdadi and the Rug**

The story of the rug was told by Dr. Zia Baghdadi, one of those who accompanied the Master on the Lake Mohonk trip, and is given below:

On May 14, 1912, the International Peace Society held its Conference at Lake Mohonk, N.Y., and 'Abdu'l-Bahá was invited to address the members. Here He remained three days... On May 15, 1912, about nine o'clock, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "We have to leave this place tomorrow and I wish I had one of my Persian rugs here, that I might give it as a present to our host, Mr. Smiley, President of the International Peace Society." Those who were in His company told Him that it would be impossible for anyone to go to New York and return in one night, as all have to leave about ten o'clock in the morning. Then He looked at this servant and asked, "Well, what do you say?" I said, "I am not afraid to try anything for you, my Lord." He handed me

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**Origin and Continuity of Mohonk**

By Virginia Viney Smiley

Mohonk's century of service began in 1869 when Albert K. Smiley, a Quaker school teacher, idealist and humanitarian, became entranced by the beauties of the Shawangunk Mountains. In operating the quiet resort he established, he stressed the eternal values, and refused to be diverted by fads and trivialities. In 1883 Albert initiated a series of Conferences of Friends of the American Indian, an outgrowth of his appointment as a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners. It was his belief that understanding could more readily be achieved in the quiet, unhurried atmosphere of Mohonk than in Washington.

A few years later, in 1895, Albert invited to Mohonk leaders in world affairs, for a Conference on International Arbitration, which has become an annual affair, until interrupted by the events of World War I. Each spring and fall for many years from 250 to 400 men and women of integrity and high purpose were entertained by Albert for a week, at his own expense, while attending these two conferences. It was written at the time: "Perhaps the chief value of the conference (International Arbitration) is not in the resolutions adopted as much as in the influence that results from the assembling for a common purpose of more than 300 persons of many opinions and of almost every known calling, most of them prominent in public affairs."

It was said, also, that the influence of these arbitration conferences "resounded through the halls of The Hague" during the formation of the League of Nations. The atmosphere created by these conferences was surely directly contributory to the development of what is sensed by all new visitors, and is known as the "Mohonk spirit."

Albert, dying childless, left his resort and his ideals in the care of a dedicated half-brother, Daniel, who, with his sons and grandsons have guarded carefully the treasured traditions, while maintaining Mohonk as a home, rather than as a relic of the past. In their turn the grandsons, Daniel, A. Keith, and Gerow, concerned for the future of the land they love and the ideals they cherish, should anything happen to the resort business, in 1963 formed The Mohonk Trust, a charitable and educational enterprise. Their hope was to carry on the long-term interests in the areas of man's relation with man and with nature, in the belief that independence in its finest sense—man at peace with man, and all men in harmony with their natural environment—is a requisite for survival.

The Mohonk Trust celebrates its 10th anniversary next month, with its trustees happy in the knowledge that contributors have believed sufficiently in their hopes to make it possible to conduct 10 conferences of international students, with a total of 273 young people from 92 countries participating. The Trust has also co-sponsored conferences of United Nations Diplomats, the International Peace Academy, and meetings on Latin America and the Implementation of Global Development Studies.

The site is just ninety miles north of New York City and is open to the public on a moderate fee basis. Studies are under way to find means of coping with increasing public demand, without reducing the esthetic and spiritual quality of the outdoor experience.

Tradition, unless it is a living thing, is sterile and worthless. The Trust hopes, through constant self-evaluation, to maintain the vital elements of the past, while accepting the challenges of the present, for a future encompassing the best of the old and the most valid of the new.
His key and said, "Take this and go to my room and bring a rug. May God bless you."

From Lake Mohonk I hired a carriage to take me to the railroad station. To my disappointment, I learned on arriving there that there was no passenger train at that hour for New York, but a freight train was just leaving. I jumped the tracks and made a wild dash as fast as I could run. Finally I caught the rear end of that speeding train and succeeded in climbing up without mishap. Then while I was trying to catch my breath, the conductor came and protested my action and ordered me to get off at the next station. I showed him my professional card and told him that I was going on a very urgent mission. "O you are a doctor! That is all right." Fortunately, the kind conductor did not ask what the nature of the urgent call was.

About two o'clock in the morning I reached 'Abdu'l-Bahá's apartment and had to awaken Mrs. Grace Ober and her sister, Miss Ella Robarts, to let me in. They were very kind and asked me to have something to eat and to rest a while, but I thanked them and told them that I was in a great hurry. Then I selected one of the most precious rugs from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's room and hastened to the railroad station. I took the first early morning train. It was about nine o'clock when I landed at Lake Mohonk station. From the station it would take one hour to reach Lake Mohonk by carriage, and I had to be there at ten o'clock. I looked around and there was no vehicle of any kind in sight. But finally, the mail-carrier appeared with his little wagon and got off at once to receive the mail. I got on the little wagon and awaited his return.

When he came and saw me, well! was I nervous? It was certainly one of the embarrassing moments of my life. However, I explained my position to him, namely, that I was in the service of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whom we regarded as our spiritual king, and I showed him the rug that had to be delivered right away to Mr. Smiley, President of the International Peace Society. Then as a last resort, I suggested that in case it was against the law to let me go with him, he could at least let me relieve him that morning because I knew how to drive a horse, and if it was necessary, he might consult with the postoffice or the police. O what a relief came when he said, "It's all right; I guess, I am going up there anyway."

We arrived at our destination just at the time when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was shaking hands with Mr. Smiley and preparing to leave. He took the rug with a smile and presented it to Mr. Smiley to keep as a souvenir. "Why this is just what I have been seeking for many years!" Mr. Smiley exclaimed. "You see we had a Persian rug just like this one, but it was burned in a fire and ever since my wife has been broken-hearted over it. This will surely make her very happy." Afterward the Secretary of the International Peace Society, who was the last one to leave, came and said to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "We all appreciate your blessed visit and we believe what you said is the truth."

Notes:
1. Star of the West, Volume 11, No. 13, p. 3-4
2. Star of the West, Volume 3, No. 3, p. 3

Deepening Conference held in Siguatepeque, Honduras in November, well attended from all parts of the country. Host pioneers were Nematolah and Ruhi Mandegari, Khalil and Jacky Cornell and Fred Kluss.
Robert Turner, First Black Believer of the United States

By Louis G. Gregory

Bare outlines of the story of Robert Turner, the first American Negro to become a Baha'i, have been related to the writer, over a long period of years. Those who mentioned him have been Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, early Baha'i and mother of the well known publisher of that name. Robert Turner’s post was one of unusual responsibility, carrying with it largely the stewardship of his wealthy and socially prominent employer. He was faithful, dependable and wise.

When Mrs. Hearst was given the Baha'i message by Mrs. Getsinger in Paris, Robert Turner, from the vantage ground of his service station, listened with eager interest to words not addressed to himself. He sought opportunities to know more about so wonderful a Faith, was taught and became a firm believer. In the year 1900 he accompanied the Hearst-Getsinger party to Akka, Palestine, to see Abdu'l-Baha, still a prisoner under despotic and corrupt government rule.

When the party entered the room of the Master, they assumed that Robert Turner who was with them would of course follow. After greeting them with His welcome, Abdu'l-Baha waited with His face turned toward the door, in evident expectation. The ladies looked around, and to their surprise they found that Robert was not in the room. The Master then went to the door on the outside of which Robert stood in an attitude of deepest humility. At sight of the Master he dropped upon his knees and exclaimed: “My Lord! My Lord! I am not worthy to be here!” Abdu'l-Baha raised him to his feet, giving him a most affectionate, fatherly embrace. The exceedingly great kindness of the Master to Robert Turner was most impressive.

On one occasion the honor was bestowed upon him of sharing the Master’s servitude. He was also assured that if he remained firm and steadfast until the end, he would be a door through which a whole race would enter the Kingdom.

During those early days the confirmations were mighty, but the tests and trials were also great. Many trees were uprooted by the storms of trials. But those that were firm took deeper roots. Robert Turner, with what our Persian brothers call “Iron Sight”, had his clear vision of reality. Henceforth he refused—to use his own expression—to “let the world throw dust in his eyes.”

After a few years there came to him an illness which proved fatal. It came at a time and place that surrounded him with non-Bahá'ís. His attendants heard him often repeat, even when delirious, an expression strange and unknown. After his passing inquiry revealed that his last word was the Greatest Name. Thus he measured up to the divine standard of faith and loyalty, and constantly increasing are those who owe so noble a character gratitude and reverence. Following his death, which was really the portal to a richer and more exalted life, a Baha'i burial ring-stone was placed upon his finger by Mirzá ‘Ali-Kuli Khan.

An incident closely connected with this sketch is that Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, prompted no doubt by her experiences at Akka and her esteem for Robert Turner, upon returning to her Washington, D.C. home, invited there a number of the most prominent educators of the colored race to meet her. They were entertained in her sumptuous home not only by material attractions, but with heavenly food, the glad tidings and the Great Message. Radiantly she announced to them that the Deliverer of mankind had indeed come!

Note: Mr. Louis G. Gregory, author of this article, at the time of his death was named a Hand of the Cause of God by the Guardian.


“In the estimation of God there is no distinction of color; all are one in the color and beauty of servitude to him. Color is not important; the heart is all-important... He whose morals and virtues are praiseworthy is preferred in the presence of God; he who is devoted to the Kingdom is most beloved. Therefore strive earnestly and exert your utmost endeavor toward the accomplishment of... the cementing of this bond of fraternity and unity of the colored and whites will be an assurance of the world’s peace.”

—Baha’i World Faith, pp. 267-269
Travel-Teaching in the Pacific

Reported by Greg Dahl

Pua Pua Village, American Samoa, November 1972.
Baha'is are playing volleyball before a meeting with travel-teacher Greg Dahl.

Tahiti—November 16-19, 1972

I was met at the airport by Terri Pae, oldest native believer in Tahiti, and his wife. This was planned by the Continental Pioneer Committee and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Southwest Pacific. There are sixteen believers in Tahiti, and only two are foreigners, a young French couple named Solange, and he is with the French Army. The Sailhacs, pioneers from France, moved six months ago to Moorea, ten miles distant, to form a group there. The third Baha'i is a young Chinese, Silion Tehan Lo, the only mechanic on the island, a sincere, very busy young man. There is language difficulty and French-speaking travel teachers are needed.

American Samoa—November 19-20, 1972

Probably the most beautiful island I shall see, American Samoa has one of the most attractive Baha'i communities. The spirit and music are not easily forgotten. The village people are undoubtedly the most ready for the Faith.

Western Samoa—November 20-22, 1972

The people here impressed me as being culturally and socially advanced. I was also impressed with some of the pioneer youth in teaching and deepening in the villages, especially Phil Beattie who spends full time in this work. During my brief visit the friends organized an informal meeting for me with the Baha'is at which I was able to show slides and sing songs; a public meeting attended by some thirty non-Baha'is in Apia; an interview with the Director of the Department of Economic Development, Hans Kruse, which proved to be very cordial and productive; and a visit to Baha'is in villages on the main island.

Tonga—November 23-25, 1972

Tonga is an isolated country with many similarities to the Gilberts. I met several pioneers there during my stay: Grenville Kirton from Australia; Bob Dutton, pioneer from the United States here only three weeks; and Nan Greenwood, from Canada en route to the Cook Islands. In Fiji I met a young American leaving for Tonga in the Peace Corps, Jeff Hougland, whom I had known in Virginia. My host was Auxiliary Board member Mosese Hokafonu who seems to be universally loved wherever he has traveled. During my stay a teacher training institute was in progress attended by about ten students. Activities arranged for me were as follows: a very dignified public meeting attended by about fifty, chaired by the Mayor of the capital city, with translation by the Principal of the largest high school; an interview with the Secretary of the Government, which was very informative and ended cordially; a unity feast attended by forty Baha'is with delightful Polynesian dancing, singing, sumptuous food and an opportunity for me to show slides. An article with pictures appeared in the eight-page weekly newspaper.

Fiji—November 25-28, 1972

Hospitality was given me in the home of Australian pioneers in Suva, the Lucas family. I joined a teaching team which consisted of twelve young Baha'is fresh
from a week-long institute, and led by an Australian youth pioneer, Tom Vudrag, veteran of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. This team was based in the home of a chief in Volivoli Village and teaching took place in surrounding areas. After the first week of a planned three-week campaign, there were fifty-six new Baha'is. Efforts were being made to bring the new believers to their base during the day for deepening.

Funafuti, Ellice Islands—November 28 - December 2, 1972

Funafuti was devastated by a hurricane a month before my arrival. Dr. Tilinga, the only doctor for the Ellice Islands and an islander himself, offered me hospitality. Unfortunately he had to leave soon after I arrived and so I lost my translator. There are four believers in this location.

Tarawa, Gilbert Islands—December 2-7, 1972

According to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mabel Aritiera, a pioneer for fifteen years, there are 2700 believers in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands together, with 51 Assemblies. It would take two years for one person to visit all the islands, so travel-teachers are necessary, with thirteen now being sponsored. One other pioneer here is Joe Russell, who arrived in 1959 and

Tonga Baha'is Mele Taulalele, left, and Paea Fifiu, right, with pioneer Bob Dutton of the United States, center.

Volivoli Village, Fiji, November 1972. Baha'i youth teaching team in the Chief's house.
now is married and has a family. His fluent Gilbertese is a great asset. Another is John Thurston from Hawaii living in Betio and operating a youth club, a singing group. Other pioneers are Kurt Munchmayer and Greg Wagner, from Hawaii and Canada, respectively, traveling on other islands. The Tafakis are here, with a new baby (Irene is British). Activities arranged for me included meetings with Bahá'ís at the National Center in Bikenibeu, an informal meeting in Betio, a twenty-minute radio interview with songs, and an interview with the government economist.

Japan—December 15-22, 1972

I stayed in the Tokyo center with pioneer Tom Mandeville from the United States. The language barriers are very difficult. After the friends discovered I could sing, tapes were made and a special fireside in the home of the Schwerins was held. During my stay the singing group from the United States managed by Marcia Day were in Japan and unprecedented publicity resulted. In Osaka I was a guest of the Katirai family. At the meeting held at the Vahdat home about forty attended, mostly youth. The program consisted of group singing, short talks, the viewing of my slides, with two declarations of faith resulting.

Korea—December 22-29

Auxiliary Board member Toni Mantel went with me to Seoul where we were the guests of Captain Kelley of the U.S. Navy and Mrs. Kelley. Three meetings were held, two at the National Center and one at the home of Counsellor John McHenry. The smaller meeting was devoted to learning songs which I understand the friends are now singing there. I hope they begin to learn songs in Korean. From December 23 through 26 was spent with Counsellor McHenry in the southern part of Korea in and near Young Chun and Gyeong-Ju (Kyong-Ju) attending a teacher training institute held in the village school, teaching in the villages, and visiting with Regional and Area Committees in the Bahá'í Institute in Gyeong-Ju. I was impressed by the spiritual receptivity of the Korean farming people. But the effort is inadequate to the task of deepening the 13,000 on the list. Armies of teachers are needed.

Taiwan—December 29 - January 5, 1973

Toni Mantel and I proceeded together to Taiwan where we were joined by Philip Marangella of Hong Kong. Accommodations were in International House where Mr. Edgar Olson of Guam is staying. Two meetings were held in Taipei, one on the topic of "Bahá'í
Economics" and a Nineteen Day Feast at which we sang songs. We met Victor Tom, a pioneer there. On January 2, Phil Marangella, Toni Mantel and I went by train to Kaohsiung, Southern Taiwan, where Canadian pioneers Nancye Becker lives. We had a small but warm meeting in her little apartment. The next day she accompanied us to Tainan where the Suleimani family have been pioneering since October 1964.

Hong Kong—January 5-9, 1973

Phil Marangella preceded me to Hong Kong where my time was well used. The Mockons, from the Philippines and Charles Duncan, all pioneers in Macao, came over for a day. A highlight of my stay was an afternoon spent in one of the parks where we formed ourselves into a singing group. The Hong Kong friends were inspired to see the success of this method of teaching. A public meeting in the Center in Kowloon was attended by about fifty persons mostly new people, and with one young man making his declaration. Young pioneers from Malaysia have greatly contributed to this community. David Mockon in Macao has composed some impressive songs which I recorded.

Philippines—January 9-19, 1973

My visit to the Philippines was very full. The first day was spent with a leading industrialist, Eligio Tavanlar, adviser to President Marcos on agrarian reform and a friend of the Bahá'ís. On January 11, I flew to Davao, Mindanao, for four nights where eleven meetings were scheduled. A total of 2,600 attended, mostly in the University of Mindanao. My schedule also included a visit to Kidapawan. The spirit among the pioneers in Davao is exemplary and confirmations astoundingly abundant. Perhaps these are some of the fruits of the soil so recently watered by martyrs' blood.

The highlight of a visit filled with highlights was a songfest at the University of Mindanao attended by some 600 to 800 high school and college students and teachers. Many Bahá'í songs were sung, including a simple round "World, World, Why do you reject your Lord? When will you receive your Savior, Baha'u'llah?" Several days later pioneer Dale Eng heard a classroom of high school students singing this round for fifteen minutes while waiting for their teacher to arrive. Such is the power of song!

Cibu was visited on January 15 and 16, where there are seven Iranian students and a few native believers. A public meeting was held. Following this I appeared on TV with two of the Iranian students for a friendly twenty-minute interview.

There was a meeting in Manila on January 17 which brought some interested seekers. Tonight, January 18, a meeting is scheduled in Los Banos, one hour from Manila by bus. Tomorrow, God willing, I proceed to Djakarta.

All Efforts for the Faith Are Rewarded

The following report from Lakeland, Florida, of their activity on January 20, 1973 will be an encouragement for those who have had or may have similar situations to deal with. May the friends be inspired by the faith and stamina displayed by this group of fellow believers.

The report follows:

Our expectations were high for the program planned at the Neighborhood Service Center in Lakeland, a social services coordinating agency located in the heart of the major black residential area. After our encouraging meeting in Winter Haven that afternoon, all the friends were hoping for great victories with a spiritually receptive group. Arriving at the Center, we were stunned to be greeted by a dark, empty looking building. Something was wrong! Attempts to reach staff members of the Center proved fruitless. What were we to do? After some hasty prayers, the Director of the Center appeared on the scene. She had thought that the program was next week. The only reason she had come by tonight was because a friend she had with her needed some materials from the Center!

By now, the scheduled beginning of the program had long since passed and no inquirers were in sight save the Director and her friend. We went ahead, setting up a literature table, projector for the films, etc. Still, no one appeared. The community wasn't coming to us, so the friends decided to try to meet them half-way. We all congregated on the front steps of the building and gave a half-hour concert of Bahá'í songs, our unrehearsed professionalism perhaps overshadowed by our

(Continued on page 20)
The project began with a briefing of the team with the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward and Virgin Islands in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands on December 16. During this meeting the team demonstrated its teaching materials and methods while the National Assembly related its enrollment policy, described the work previously done in the French Antilles and assured the team of its full administrative support. Auxiliary Board member for Central America Mrs. Marjory Hamer was present.

The team proceeded to Guadeloupe for a ten-day stay. During the first days of teaching the team was impressed with the spiritual receptivity in the French Antilles. There were over fifty declarations that first day. From the start it was necessary to adapt to the tempo of the work and try to keep the process of consolidation running at the same pace. Along with declarations that came flooding in daily, deepening meetings were organized for the new believers consisting of slides, films, songs and talks on the Faith. Institutes were held whenever possible in homes of new believers or in hotels where team members were staying. These institutes in Guadeloupe and in the other islands covered the points that The Universal House of Justice suggested: the three main figures of the Faith, the spread and stature of the Faith, laws of prayer and teaching, Bahá'í administration, the Nineteen Day Feast and the Fund.

New believers were provided, whenever possible, with the opportunity of teaching the Faith with the team. Numerous new Bahá'ís opened their homes to teaching, took team members to see their families and friends and aided in many ways in opening new areas to the Faith. An important lesson the team learned early was to always put the new believer first. In this way many souls were confirmed and became experienced teachers.

Two Local Spiritual Assemblies were elected while the team was on the island of Guadeloupe, one in Petit Bourg and one in Gosier. Both elections were with a wonderful spirit and had a representative number of new believers attending. During this time on Guadeloupe part of the team made a teaching trip to the island of Marie Galante which was very successful, resulting in forty-five declarations in one day. A deepening meeting was held and a Local Spiritual Assembly on that island was organized. When the team left Guadeloupe the numerical results were as follows: 346 enrolled, 2 new Local Spiritual Assemblies, 6 new communities opened to the Faith.

Martinique was a striking phase of the project because by this time the team had developed a method combining teaching and consolidation suitable to the location. It was a three phase method involving a first day of teaching and an invitation to a meeting the next night; a second day of teaching and presenting in the evening the film "It's Just the Beginning" and slides illustrating the principles of the Faith as well as songs; a third day of teaching, holding the election for the Local Spiritual Assembly in the evening. In each phase, teaching and consolidation are combined and each part of the sequence of events prepares for the next part; thus enthusiasm is sustained and new believers are integrated into the Faith. The election was supplemented by institutes and in many cases after the election there was an institute about electing officers. The team was divided in such a way that on any given night there would be perhaps a deepening meeting in one place and an election in two other different areas.

During the stay in Martinique the team was assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Martial, believers native to the island. Baha'i friends in Martinique.
First International Youth Conference of Mexico

The recent Youth Conference held in Puebla City and the Amelia Collins Institute at Acatepec was a tremendous success. Many youth and adults from all over the Americas attended. Bahá'í representatives traveled from El Salvador, Guatemala, Ecuador, New York, Iowa, New Mexico, California, Texas, Mexico DF, Oaxaca, Morelos, Guanajuato and many towns.

The first day of the Conference only about forty Bahá'ís had arrived. By the last day there were over 200. The Conference was officially opened with many beautiful prayers and all were welcomed by members of the National Youth Committee. Many talks were given with special appeal to Bahá'í youth. "How to live the Bahá'í life", for instance, covered subjects such as drugs and the damage they do to the soul, and the importance of following the Laws and Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. It was pointed out that one must not condemn or judge others when they backslide, but must always attempt to love and help all. Another talk was on the Bahá'í attitude of life after death and the importance of understanding this level of existence. Also it was stressed that by developing and striving toward the attributes of God as revealed by Bahá'u'lláh we gain this understanding and growth.

Carmen Burafato, Resident Counsellor, spoke to the group twice. Her main theme was the New World Order and our part in it. She stressed the importance of obedience to the Administrative Institutions and our comprehension of them. She also pointed out the importance of Bahá'í youth to the Faith, mentioning the ages of the Báb and the early martyrs.

An interesting discussion took place on the topic of "The economy of the Bahá'í youth." As many Bahá'í youth are in school it is difficult, sometimes impossible, for them both to study and work. Much emphasis is put on the importance of education in the Writings and the Bahá'í youth understand this. But the youth feel that they must put forth every effort to contribute to the Fund by going without extras and thereby learning the mystery of sacrifice.

There was also a talk on Bahá'í courtship and conduct between men and women. There were many questions on this subject and The Advent of Divine Justice was often quoted.

Most of the talks ended with a lively question and answer period. Carmen Burafato and Paul Lucas, Auxiliary Board member, helped clarify many points in the Teachings, also quoting directly from the Writings.

The Conference was well balanced with prayer, consultation, music and socializing. There was a tremendous sense of harmony and unity among those present because all shared in the activities.

There were two young students, one from Brazil and one from the United States, who spent quite a lot of time at the Institute. They said they would get in touch with the Baha'is in their home communities.

The Committee worked very hard and their efforts were well rewarded. Everything went very smoothly. All participated and everyone was well fed, warm and very happy, including many seekers.

We pray the Conference brought to all the needed spiritual energy to help us reach all of our goals for the last few months of the Nine Year Plan.

—Counsellor Carmen de Burafato
Report of Human Rights Day Observances

SRI LANKA (CEYLON)

An all-day seminar on human rights was organized by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Negombo, in celebration of the 24th Anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Important speakers from the private and public sectors and the United Nations addressed a large audience at Browns Beach Hotel, Negombo. Mr. Neil Kulatunga, on behalf of Dr. C. Hart Schaaf, Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program for Sri Lanka and the Maldives, in giving the welcoming address, expressed his pleasure at receiving an invitation from the Bahá'ís, who enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations through the Bahá'í International Community, a non-governmental body, and noted particularly the non-political character of the Bahá'í Faith. Following Mr. Kulatunga, in the morning session, Mr. D. S. Karannagoda, Deputy Commissioner of Probation and Child Care, Colombo, discussed “Youth and Human Rights.” Mr. J. P. Delgoda, Superintendent of Prisons, Prison H. Q., Colombo, spoke about “Society and the Criminal”, and Professor L. G. Hewage, Dean of Arts and Professor of Education, University of Sri Lanka, spoke on “Education and Human Rights.” During the afternoon session, Mr. Lalith De Mel, Managing Director, Reckitt and Colman, Colombo, discussed the subject of “Business and Human Rights.” Bahá'ís—and UN Expert—Edward Parker, Project Manager setting up the telecommunications school at Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, explained the role of the United Nations in the field of Human Rights, and Band of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone appeared on the program to comment on “Religion and Human Rights,” saying that the hearts of men need to be reoriented in their relationship to God so that human rights may be applied by governments and individuals with proper spirit and motives. He also mentioned the need for the United Nations' Covenants on Human Rights to be ratified and implemented throughout the world. Mr. Raymond Peter, member of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Negombo, made the closing remarks, noting that the topics of the seminar were carefully selected to take participants from stage to stage—Youth, to Society and the Criminal, to Education, to Business, to the United Nations and finally to Religion, the foundation for the education of the morals of man. He expressed the hope that the seminar would help to lay a basic foundation for the unity of mankind.

At left, one of the speakers for Human Rights Day in Negombo, Ceylon, Mr. T. R. Mahmood, Chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Negombo; second from left, Mr. Raymond Peter, Bahá'í; and at right the Chairman of the Negombo Lions Club.

The observance of Human Rights Day at Negombo, Ceylon.

FINLAND

Human Rights Day 1972 was observed by all the Bahá'í groups and Local Spiritual Assemblies of Finland. Recognition was given to the day in a variety of ways. The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Espoo held a public meeting, featuring a slide show, a talk, and films. Hundreds of invitations were distributed at the shopping center of Tapiola, and some 50 people attended the program. In Kangasala, the Local Spiritual Assembly sponsored a panel discussion and a film-showing. The Bahá'ís distributed invitations in the streets and placed an ad in the local newspaper. The Bahá'ís of Tampere sold 800 UNICEF cards at their public meeting, and the Bahá'í community of Mariehamn hung posters and purchased a newspaper ad to publicize their public observance, which included a film-showing and a talk. The Local Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of Helsinki, Lahti, Kuopio, Savonlinna, and Turku, and the Bahá'í groups of Jyväskylä, Naantali, Salo, Tornio, Ypäjä, and Varkaus, discussed the Bahá'í Faith and Human Rights at their weekly firesides.

At left, one of the speakers for Human Rights Day in Espoo, Finland, Mr. B. M. Nikkilä, Chairman of the Espoo Spiritual Assembly; second from left, Mr. Antti H. Rössö, Manager of a business enterprise, and Mr. Peter Eränen, member of the Spiritual Assembly; and at right, Mr. Eero Hagman, President of Lions Club, Espoo.
PAKISTAN

The Baha'i community of Lahore, Pakistan held a highly successful Human Rights Day program on December 10 at the Hotel Intercontinental, at which the Honorable Muhammad Haneef Ramay, Finance Minister of Punjab Province, was chief guest. The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Lahore sponsored the event. One hundred and forty civic leaders and Baha'is from various centers of Punjab Province attended the observance.

As Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Isat'u'llah Sheikh, Vice Chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of Lahore, began the meeting by giving a brief description of the work of the Baha'i International Community as a Non-Governmental Organization accredited to the United Nations. Mrs. Edward Filstrup, representing the Baha'is, followed with a talk on the history of human rights, stating that the greatest proclamation of human rights had come from the Prophet-Founders of the world religions. She also told of the work of the United Nations in the field of human rights, particularly the work of the Human Rights Commission. The Honorable Muhammad Haneef Ramay, speaking for the people of Punjab, then gave tribute to the principles of peace taught by the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and 'Abdu'l-Baha and spoke words of appreciation for the work of the Baha'i International Community. (Mr. Ramay's speech was later heard on Radio Lahore.)

Following the talks, Mr. Ramay cut a special Human Rights Day cake decorated with the United Nations flag and the flags of the member-nations; and as tea was served the guests were entertained by Baha'i music from around the world.

HONDURAS

The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, arranged a public meeting for Human Rights Day with assistance from the local office of the United Nations Development Program. The UNDP office contributed a selection of pamphlets for distribution and kindly provided some beautiful photographs which were used along with flowers to decorate the meeting room. Articles in the local press announced the program and invited the public to attend. Señor Rene Sanchez Barrales was the speaker for the occasion. About fifty people gathered to hear his talk which stimulated many questions and comments. The program concluded with refreshments and music from different lands.

Members of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Sri Lanka (Ceylon). Standing, left to right: Raymond Peter; R. D. David; B. D. Saleh, Treasurer; K. C. Suwarnaraj; K. G. Chandradasa, Seated, V. Chitravelu, Secretary; Mrs. B. A. Cadir; Anwer Cadir, Chairman; M.L.C. Chandrasekera, Vice-Chairman.
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Ruhiyyih Khanum
By Violette Nakhibavani, Companion
Part fifteen

During almost all of her visit to the Southern countries of Africa, Amatu'l-Baha was accompanied by one or the other of the Counsellors for that area. Sometimes it was our good fortune to have them both with us at the same time. Again we were joined by Counsellor Shidan Fat'he-Aazam for the month we spent in Botswana. Challoner Chute, Junior, a Bahá'í youth and a cousin of Ruhiyyih Khanum was also with us on this part of the tour, having come from the United States at her invitation to join us for six weeks.

On June 9 we crossed into Botswana, which, unlike Rhodesia, is an arid country largely composed of the Kalahari desert. It has a peculiarity of its own in that at certain seasons such as the time we were there, one has difficulty in finding the people in their towns or villages. In order to eke out a living, they have a home in a town or village, another on their bit of farming land and still another place where they graze cattle near a bore hole. Often, on arrival at a village where a meeting had been arranged, we would find only a few, the majority being away at either of the other two locations.

In Selebi-Pikwe a public meeting was arranged in a local school house. The Chief of the area, a very distinguished elderly gentleman, attended and was keenly interested in the Faith. A dear pioneer couple who live in this town were truly exemplary. We were surprised and touched when a young mother carrying her one-week old baby in her arms was the first to meet us, an hour's drive from the town. All hearts were drawn to her. The villagers were deeply touched by her demonstration of love for the Cause and her confidence in bringing such a young baby with her.

In the interior of the country at the village of Ratholo, Amatu'l-Baha met with and addressed a group of teachers, speaking on the purpose of creation and the journey of the soul of man throughout the worlds of God.

All of us spent a night in a government High School compound in Moeng as the guest of a young pioneer who is a teacher there. Ruhiyyih Khanum was able to meet with some of the teachers who had shown an interest in the Faith.

A most satisfactory feature of the Botswana Bahá'í community to us was that the three pioneer families all reside in different areas of the country and are thus able to be of greater service. In some other countries, regrettably, pioneers are often clustered in the capital city while the rest of the country has to do
without them. Sometimes this is due to job difficulties.

Botswana has very well built huts with beautiful thatched roofs but most of our meetings were held in the center of the village, the place where the village court and councils are held, a typical practice of the country. Often we met under the shade of a huge tree in the lotus fence enclosure made of bales of trees.

In Seleka a number of teachers and farmers, including the Chief, gathered around Ruhiyyih Khanum in such a spot about the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, His Teachings on the state of the soul of man in the next world, and so on. This subject of life after death is a never-ending source of interest to the Africans. Amatu'l-Bahá often speaks of it and if she doesn't, I have noticed that it usually brought up in the question period.

In the township of Serewe, Ruhiyyih Khanum spoke to a hundred girl students in the Teachers' Training College on the “Role of Women in Modern Society.” She said that one of the distinguishing aspects of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is the fact that, for the first time in the history of religion, the Manifestation of God has decreed equal rights for men and women. She said in the Teachings of the Bahá'í Faith humanity is likened to a bird; one wing men, one wing women; when the two wings of the bird are equally strong the bird can fly high. She pointed out that in a woman as well as a teacher by a wonderful honor and privilege as women are the first teachers of the human race. It is from his mother that a child learns to eat, to walk, to talk and learns the difference between right and wrong. If the mother is endowed with a good character as well as an education she can shape the new generation to follow in the right path.

An interesting question was asked by a young lady: “From what I understand you have no priest or paid clergy in the Bahá'í Faith; therefore is this religion only for educated people who can read and understand for themselves?” Ruhiyyih Khanum replied, “No, this is not true. Bahá'u'lláh has brought the principle of universal education and we see clearly in the world today that the circumstances of civilization are making it possible to eliminate illiteracy all over the world in one or two generations. But faith and recognition of the truth from God is not dependent upon book learning. There are two doors through which people can recognize spiritual truth: the door of mind or intellect and the door of the heart or intuition. The illiterate man instinctively knows in his heart whether it is the truth or not. This is why, I am proud to say, we have so many teachers of thousands of village Bahá'ís all over the world who are illiterate, yet deep and convinced believers.”

In the capital city, Gaborone, that same evening Ruhiyyih Khanum addressed a select audience in Lady Khama Center. An American missionary asked an interesting question: “Do the Bahá'ís believe in the power and existence of evil spirits?” Amatu'l-Bahá explained that the difference between the animal and man is in the fact that animals are governed by instinct but man has the power of reason, of choice and free will. “At every moment of our lives we have the freedom to choose which way we will go. Evil is not a concrete power in itself, but rather the absence of good. Good is like light, it is a positive force, whereas evil is like darkness, which is only the absence of light, just the way cold is the absence of heat. If we turn away from God and His Teachings we place ourselves in spiritual darkness and then the lower forces of our nature derive strength and we become evil. But we do not believe in Satan as a being, a personification of evil, as God is of God.”

At a village meeting in Bonwapitse Ruhiyyih Khanum spoke to a group of Bahá'ís and their friends on the importance of prayer and the meaning of “Alláh-u-Abhá”, which is in itself a short prayer of Bahá'u'lláh and should be taught to the children for their protection.

While in the village of Mmutlane, she addressed the school children and their teachers and later spoke to the believers and their friends on the subject of dreams and their significance, a fascinating subject to the Africans who are great believers in dreams. She related how Bahá'u'lláh in His childhood dreamed He was floating on the sea and His long hair was spread out on water and each hair was held in the mouth of a fish. Bahá'u'lláh told His father about this dream who asked an interpreter of dreams what it signified. He was told that his son would give a Teaching to the world, and all the people, like the fishes in the sea, would attach themselves to His Teachings. “We Bahá'ís all over the world are the fulfillment of that dream,” she said.

She also recounted the prophetic dream of the Báb when He stood before the severed head of Iman Husayn and held out His hands to catch some of the precious drops of blood which with great respect He drank, and how, when He awoke from this dream He knew that God had chosen Him to proclaim His Message.

In Mahalapye some of the Bahá'ís were able to come to the hotel to meet their beloved guest and spend a happy and sociable evening with much discussion. In Pallard nearly forty people, mostly seekers, gathered under the shade of the village tree to hear about the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and held long discussions on the proof of His claim based on the Biblical references.

Ruhiyyih Khanum gave a beautiful example of the way different individuals react to spiritual matters. She told how some years before her marriage, she, on one of her pilgrimages to Haifa, with another pilgrim who also later became a Hand of the Cause, were taken to view the archives. When the mirror used by Bahá'u'lláh was shown to them she said they each reacted entirely differently. He took the mirror in his hand and with joy and wonder looked into it, probably saying to himself, “I am looking into a mirror where the blessed face of the Manifestation of God was once reflected.” Ruhiyyih Khanum, however, held the mirror far from her, thinking, “I dare not reflect my face in a mirror wherein the face of the Blessed Beauty was once reflected.” Then she pointed out how different these two reactions were, but both pure and genuine, based on the love of Bahá'u'lláh, and added that we should not condemn a man because his understanding or reactions are the opposite of ours.
A typical village meeting in Botswana. Paths Road Bahá'ís and their friends meet with Amatú'r-Bahá.

The Kalahari Desert

The highlight of this tour was a four-day trip into the Kalahari desert which fulfilled a life-long desire of Rúhíyyih Khanum. Always keenly interested in the variety of ethnic groups everywhere, and to see the Bushmen of the Kalahari had long been one of her dreams. Our guide was the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of Botswana, who is a linguist and is studying the language of the Bushmen. We were very happy to have him accompany us. As at this time there were only two or three Bushmen in the country who were believers, the object of the trip was to visit them, rather than to teach them the Faith as this would require that one remain near and communicate with this highly nomadic people. The bands of Bushmen are constantly moving from place to place in search of food and water. Nevertheless, the possibility of all-Bushman Local Assemblies in the future is an exciting goal which the National Spiritual Assembly is actively working to accomplish.

We were able to see several groups of Bushmen in four different places. They call themselves "the harmless people" and are one of the rare treasures of Africa, still living in the stone age. They ask for nothing but to be left alone and are but dimly aware of the outside world which is being forced upon them, threatening their integrity as a people. The Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are the only thing which can possibly sustain such minority groups, cherish them and lovingly help them to come into the twentieth century without losing their God-given qualities of gentleness and goodness. These five days, often driving over 180 miles a day in deep sand tracks which the Land Rover could barely go through even in low gear power drive, were very exhausting for the driver, Rúhíyyih Khanum. But the scenery was strange and beautiful, the people a joy to meet.

We drove from Gaberone to Lethlakeng where we picked up our young guide and from there on the roads became progressively worse. Our first two nights were spent in a tiny village called Kungwane in the great grass land desert of the Kalahari with its sparse sprinkling of mostly stunted thorny trees no larger than bushes.

Mr. Fat'he-Aazam had kindly loaned us his tiny tent which we decided to sleep in after surveying the two mud huts of a villager at our disposal which were in a little circular compound surrounded by a fence of piled up thorn bushes, mainly to keep the goats out. The three men would use one hut and the other would be used for stores and eating. As this was during the coldest part of the winter we had brought along a gas cylinder with a heating unit. We kept this lighted all night in the tent in the eighteen-inch space between our sleeping bags and the ground. We were in peril of being burned to death, but that was preferable to being frozen to death.

We had brought a large three-legged iron pot and this over a fire of twigs and wood was used to boil water to make porridge for breakfast. Lunch usually consisted of sandwiches and supper was a bowl of soup if we had enough strength left to make a fire and heat the water.

Two nights were spent with this arrangement, and two more, deeper into the desert at an equally hospitable home. This time it was the dwelling of the white Afrikaan traders who ran the only store and petrol pump at Kang, half way to Khanzi, the ultimate jumping-off place in the desert, too far for us to reach. Life is so wild and hard in this part of the country that without this kindness and hospitality no one without full equipment of expedition facilities could visit it.

We drove one day farther west to find Bushmen at Digby's Well and Lone Tree, both of which are water bores for cattle. They simply consist of a couple of tin shacks, a petrol pump and most importantly water in troughs in order to supply the vast herds grazing in the Kalahari.

Some of the little Bushmen families we met were living without even the rough branch shelter they usually erect. They were seated on the earth around their fire used for heat and cooking, with their quivers of arrows, their bones, leather bags for extra grain. A few meager rags of clothes were hanging in the...
branches of a thorn tree nearby. The people are very friendly, quite musical, and give the impression of being
ergetic by nature. We felt that they can play a valu­
able part in the Faith if pains are taken to teach them
deeply and enable them to find their way into a useful
role in the world surrounding them.

In pursuit of these elusive nomads, one evening we
drove literally miles over the wilderness following a
foot path in the high grass, visible only to the local
guide we had picked up. We were rewarded by finding
Bushman families living next to a village of Bantus,
and they sang and danced for us that night around the
fire. We were so enthralled by this unique opportunity
to be with them socially and happily, that we ignored
what lay ahead of us in trying to find our way back
home (over forty miles) in the dark. Even our local
guide lost his footpath a number of times but we
eventually climbed back up our own roadless hill and
in and out of trees until we located our thorn fence.
Frozen and exhausted we ate our soup and crawled
into our welcome fire-trap, to doze uncomfortably
with the vision of Bushmen dancing before our eyes.

Amatu'l-Bahá and Shidan Fathe-Aazam met with
members of the Botswana National Spiritual Assembly
who occasionally have special meetings when they
spend their time studying the Faith and discussing dif­
ferent aspects of teaching and Bahá’í Administration.
The theme of this session was “consultation” and they
asked Ruhiyyih Khanum to speak on this vital topic.
She said that the believers in the future this topic will
be taught in the schools to the children. “People do not
know how to consult or the meaning of consultation.
Often a member gives his view as if putting it on the
table but then does not take his hand off it, but holds it,
restates it over and over, considers it his precious right;
the result is waste of time for everyone. We should be
objective about our views and willing to submit to the
majority view.”

She was asked whether or not it is permissible to
loan the money of the Faith to an individual believer
who was in need. Ruhiyyih Khanum said: “The Assem­
bly is only a trustee of the Bahá’í Fund; they do not
own it and, therefore, how can they presume to spend
it on matters which are not directly connected with the
work of the Faith?” She explained that the money of
the Faith is sacred, it is given with much love and often
real sacrifice. “If we do not expend it for the specific
purpose for which it is given we have greatly erred and
are responsible to God.”

In the village of Themaga a small number of believers

Students and teachers at the meeting where Amatu’l-Bahá spoke at Mmutlane, Botswana.

At Digby’s Well, Kalahari desert, Amatu’l-Bahá with Bushmen.
met Rúhíyyih Khánum and joyously told her that they have given a piece of land for an endowment. The friends proudly took their guest to see the site of the future Bahá’í Center to be built on this property. It has been legally registered and thus fulfills one of the goals of the Nine Year Plan for Botswana.

Many people heard the Message of Bahá’u’lláh during a radio interview and also at a well-attended public meeting held in Gaborone, the capital city. Among others attending this meeting were the Honorable E. S. Masisi, the Minister of Agriculture, and his wife. Both showed great interest in Rúhíyyih Khánum’s subject: “The Bahá’í Faith and the Social Order.”

At Lobatsi, one of the larger towns of Botswana, Amatu’l-Bahá spoke at the Teachers’ Training College on “The Role of Youth in Modern Society.” She said: “Youth are the future of any society and today they are becoming increasingly international minded as the result of modern means of communication. In the field of education, more or less the same subjects are taught all over the world. Music and art are increasingly the same in the East, West, North and South. The restlessness of Western youth has communicated itself to the rest of the world. Eager and idealistic youth, if enlightened, can change society for the better.” She pointed out: “The force and influence of an individual on society can be tremendous; one man, Shakespeare, had a tremendous impact on English literature; one Pasteur left his mark in the world of medicine; likewise one Napoleon created such havoc in Europe that he earned the title ‘butcher of Europe.’” Rúhíyyih Khánum said: “We should not be discouraged by the force of the masses of humanity and say ‘What can I, an individual, do in the face of millions and billions of people?’ Each one of us in this hall is contributing to the level of the society of all of us; if I am a better individual, the total value will be higher. If I am worse, I debase the standard by that much. It is the same principle as the amount of gold; twenty-four carats is pure gold, but nine carats means a baser alloy makes up the rest. We can add individually, so to speak, to the gold in our society and cause it to have a higher value.”

At the end of this talk the Headmaster caused a great deal of laughter when he said: “Madam Rabbani, I have a confession to make. When I heard that a lady, a religious teacher was coming to give a lecture in my school I had some misgivings. I thought she would most probably be one of those strange females with strange ideas in a long dress with strange colors who would speak on all kinds of mystical, incomprehensible, metaphysical subjects and I truly did not look forward to it. However, I owe you a special vote of thanks for such enlightened thoughts and ideas.”

On our way out of Botswana, in the small town of Good Hope, Amatu’l-Bahá spoke to a large gathering of mostly non-Bahá’ís. The Chief called a special meeting to hear about the Bahá’í Faith but was ill so the sub-chief acted as Chairman. When Rúhíyyih Khánum asked him if he knew anything about the Bahá’í Faith, he said: “No, and I do not know if I would like it.” Rúhíyyih Khánum said that was fair enough, he could like it or not as he pleased. After the talk he said that he did like it! Two of the very early believers of this part of Africa were present and we were most happy to meet this couple.

It was late in the afternoon of June 29, 1972 when we in the Land Rover, and Challoner Chute with Mr. Shidan Fat’he-Aazam in his car, crossed the border into the Republic of South Africa where Amatu’l-Bahá was eagerly welcomed by the Chairman and Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly and Counsellor Mrs. Bahá’í Ford, a friend of hers since childhood.

At the Good Hope, Botswana, meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Moncho, early African believers, with Rúhíyyih Khánum and Violette Naqjavâni.

(Continued from page 11)
West African Summer School, Bomi Hills, Liberia

Once more Baha'is and friends of various national and racial backgrounds from different parts of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and Nigeria came together in Bomi Hills and made the West African Summer School December 22-30 a scene of lively and joyous activities. Classes were held on "Administration", "Baha'i History", "Baha'i Conduct", and "Mass Teaching." In the evenings friends from the different localities entertained the participants with interesting programs, cultural shows with skits especially from the friends of Sierra Leone, some quite amusing.

Mr. Sterling Glenn, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of Ghana, was present for a few days and entertained with his guitar and singing. Among others attending were two Auxiliary Board members, Mr. Shidan Koucheckzadeh of Sierra Leone and Mr. Friday Ekpe from Nigeria, who added to the singing and happiness.

Our newest believer, seventy-two years old Mrs. Bertha Corbin, was present. Whenever she speaks of Baha'u'llah her eyes flash with enthusiasm. She repeatedly emphasizes that Baha'u'llah has come to Africa and this is the day for Africa to receive its spiritual bounty. Recently President Tolbert of Liberia awarded her the Star of Africa Medal of Honor for her meritorious services to Liberia.

Among the non-Baha'i participants were the National Secretary General of the Y.W.C.A., an intellectual person with a beautiful spirit, and her three year old son. She is now making a thorough study of the Faith.

The school closed with a public meeting at which the Mayoress of Tumanburg City (Bomi Hills) and the representatives of the Superintendent were present. Guest speaker was Mr. Kenneth Best, Assistant Minister of the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs of Liberia. Speaking of Baha'i literature he had read he said: "It filled me with a deep sense of appreciation for the inspired teachings of Baha'u'llah." Each guest received a Baha'i book presented by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of West Africa.

News of the Baha'i Summer School was broadcast by radio several times during the sessions. Newspapers also announced the event, and parts of Mr. Best's speech were published in both national newspapers.

Group photo of those attending the West African Summer School at Bomi Hills, Liberia.
Southern Ute Indian Reservation
Site of Teaching Conference

The Spiritual Assembly of Durango, Colorado, sponsored a teaching team and conference, December 26-30, 1972, on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, a very successful event.

The team consisted of five Bahá'ís, including a coordinator from Durango. They visited many people on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and invited them to the conference on December 29th and also gave them Bahá'í literature if they were interested.

The conference, dedicated to Hand of the Cause of God Louis G. Gregory, opened with a special briefing for the Bahá'ís of the area on “Guidelines for Indigenous Teaching,” presented by Mrs. Rhoderi Myers of Durango. The afternoon session was open to the public and included a puppet show, music and a filmstrip about the Faith. A number of children attended along with the several adults.

Guest speaker Mr. Chester Kahn, from the Navajo Reservation in Arizona, gave the evening talk to an audience of mostly Ute peoples plus the area Bahá'ís on “The Oneness of Mankind.” The tribal newspaper editor, Mr. Eddie Box, Sr., attended the program and took pictures for the tribal newspaper. Carol Brooks from Denver, Colorado, provided musical entertainment. Each person attending received a gift copy of the pamphlet, “Above All Barriers,” which is about Louis G. Gregory. About eighteen local residents were present despite a heavy snowfall that same day.

Weekly follow-up teaching trips are scheduled to the Ute Reservation by the Durango believers.

Mr. Chester Kahn, at right, speaking at the Southern Ute Community Center on “The Oneness of Mankind,” on December 29, 1972. In the center of the audience is Mr. Eddie Box, Sr., Editor of the Southern Ute Tribal newspaper.
Notes from Japan

Hokkaido: A deepening institute was held in Sapporo under the sponsorship of the National Teaching Committee over the weekend of December 2. Kimiko Schwerin, National Teaching Committee member, was the coordinator. Terry and Cathleen Riggins provided their home for the occasion. Auxiliary Board members Mr. Umagea and Mr. Suzuki were present along with thirteen Hokkaido Bahá’ís. One declaration was made.

Sandai: Tom and Donna Mandeville are pioneers who have recently arrived from the United States and are now living in Sandai and holding regular Feasts and firesides. Neither speak Japanese so help is needed. Tom works in Tokyo and commutes but Donna is home at all times.

Direct teaching was conducted in the Sandai area from December 26 to January 7. It began with a pre-team composed of the Mandevilles, the Riggins and Miss Watamabe from Hokkaido and Jim Jamison from Nagoya. This team put up posters, visited universities, and libraries and newspapers. Kimiko Schwerin, National Teaching Committee coordinator, arrived on January 3 with the rest of the team. Tim Mauldin and Keiji Hayashi from Tokyo. Teaching started with three teams composed of one Japanese speaker and two speakers of English. The first day brought two declarations, and another on the last day. Each team used a teaching book which combined pictures with the principles of the Faith, an effective and easy method of teaching. The declarants were acquainted with the rest of the team, Tim Mauldin and Keiji Hayashi.

Kanto: The Kanto youth have been active in providing social activities for Bahá’ís and their friends. A hiking trip was held in November with fifteen attending. A skiing trip was made in December with thirty attending, two-thirds, pre-Bahá’ís.

Ube: Yamaguchi University was the site of intensive proclamation during November resulting in several declarations and the formation of a university club.

Tokyo: In December Tokyo was set ablaze by visits of outstanding American Bahá’ís. Greg Dahl, noted musician and producer visited Tokyo on his way around the world on a travel-teaching trip. Some of Greg’s songs were recorded for possible use in Japan.

A musical group composed of England Dan and John Ford Coley, accompanied by their manager, Marsha Day, were in Tokyo for commercial engagements. They held many press, radio and television interviews in which half the time was devoted to discussion of the Bahá’í Faith. At all their five concerts they mentioned Bahá’u’lláh and the Faith. On the eve of their last concert in Japan they held a fireside at their hotel attended by forty people. It is estimated that because of their efforts approximately three million people were reached with the Message of Bahá’u’lláh.

Sandai: England Dan and John Ford Coley held a free concert at the Konsai University, attended by about 1,000 students. Literature was distributed and an invitation extended to a fireside that evening. Greg Dahl was also in the Konsai area and held a youth meeting.

India - Faith Overcomes Prejudices

American pioneers attending the Bangalore Teacher Training Institute were invited to speak at the Cooperative Training College there. The first meeting was with around thirty-five members of the faculty and student body. The next evening they addressed 250 students who were taking a special course. In introducing the speakers the Principal of the school stated that he had invited the Bahá’ís to speak because he felt that a religion which had succeeded in fostering brotherhood among the members of many religions should be studied by people in the cooperative movement.

Dick Grover began the program with songs in three languages: Hindi, Hebrew and English, all with the same message: “God is One”. He then introduced LaNelma Johnson and Jane Grover who each spoke briefly on the principles of the Faith and told how they felt that living in India helped them and their families to be better Bahá’ís. Dick Grover then spoke on progressive revelation. Many questions were asked, and a spirit of love and mutual respect grew between the people in that gathering.

At the close a faculty representative gave a special tribute of thanks. He described his unfavorable picture of the typical American and then said, “But these friends from America have shown us a different image. They have told us that there are many Bahá’ís in America, who, like themselves, love and respect all the peoples of the world. We hope that this religion will spread quickly to change the hearts of all mankind and bring about peace and unity in the world.”

First Local Spiritual Assembly of Phuentsholing, Bhutan, elected on April 21, 1972 with Mr. Kamal Singh Sisodia, young pioneer to Bhutan from India, in the center of the front row. He had reached Bhutan in July 1971 with another pioneer from Sikkim and their joint efforts resulted in bringing twenty-five people into the Faith.

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Honduras. Left to right: Chris Ruhe, Recording Secretary; Cesar Laborte; Bill Stover; Nelly de Vasquez, Corresponding Secretary; Jere McKinney; Olinda Sierra Andrade; Carlos Vaquez, Treasurer; Luis Bouche, Chairman; and Jose Lopez Ochoa, Vice-Chairman. The photo was taken by Auxiliary Board member Parvis Rohani.
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Mansion Mazra'ih Purchased

March 15, 1973
Haifa, Israel

OCCASION NAW-RÚZ 130 JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE BAHÁ'Í WORLD ACQUISITION BY PURCHASE MANSION MAZRA'IH RESULT SEVERAL YEARS PATIENT PERSISTENT DETERMINED NEGOTIATIONS THEREBY ADDING TO BAHÁ'Í ENDOWMENTS HOLY LAND FIRST RESIDENCE BAHÁ'U'LLAH AFTER NINE YEARS SPENT WALLED PRISON CITY 'AKKA. CONTROL THIS HOLY SITE RE-ACQUIRED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN AFTER LAPSE MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS WHEN HE SECURED LEASE MANSION 1950 EXTENDED TO PRESENT TIME. PURCHASE INCLUDES LAND AREA APPROXIMATING TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND SQUARE METERS HIGHLY SUITABLE EXTENSION GARDENS CULTIVATION. OFFERING PRAYER THANKSGIVING SACRED THRESHOLD THIS GREATLY CHERISHED BOUNTY.

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
Shared Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Baha

Rare, first-hand memories of the Center of the Cov­
enant, ‘Abdu’l-Baha, were shared by seven Bahá’ís who had the honor of meeting Him, when they addressed the Inter­calary Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, February 24 and 25, sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Shorewood. More than 200 attended the special dinner Saturday evening, with Counsellor Miss Edna True as guest speaker.

Other speakers at the event included: Mrs. Muriel Ives Newhall, daughter of Howard Colby Ives, of Santa Fe, New Mexico; Mrs. Rouhieh McComb, of Glenwood Landing, New York; Miss Sophie Loeding, Miss Marie Bohman and Miss Elfie Lundberg, of Chicago and Wil­mette; and Wisconsin Bahá’ís, Miss Muriel Peterson, of Racine, and Mrs. Grace Anderson, of Waukesha. Mr. Glenford Mitchell, secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, and Mr. Wyatt Cooper, for many years superintendent of the Bahá’í properties in Wilmette, were also guest speakers at the Conference.

"Long before His visit to the West, ‘Abdu’l-Baha was known to the believers in the Western world through the flow of His tablets, and through news brought by returning pilgrims," commented Miss True. "He taught us that He was not unhappy in prison. He was unhappy only when the friends were disunited. On my first pil­
grimage to Haifa, in 1919, it was recalled by members of the Holy Family how, during the period between Baha’u’llah’s exile from Adrianople and His arrival in Akka, His small band of followers and family would each day be subjected to fresh rumors that they were going to be separated from Him and sent to other prisons. They were much distressed. At each stage of their journey, they were in anguish at the possibility of separation. When they finally reached the prison cell in Akka and the doors were locked behind them, they burst into song, so grateful were they to be united with their Beloved!

"It is this unity," continued Miss True, "which the Master sought to bring amongst the believers through­out His travels in the West. When He traveled in this country, He frequently said that we could be the cause of His happiness, if we were united." With similar stories, Miss True brought to her hearers glimpses of the compassion, vitality and love of the greatest Mystery of God, the Perfect Exemplar.

It was especially delightful for those attending the Conference to gaze on an enlargement of a picture of the Master with an eight-year-old child, sitting next to Him in 1912, and then listen to the memories of that child, Mrs. Rouhieh McComb. Making her first appearance at any Bahá’í Conference, Mrs. McComb drew on a wealth of small incidents which she had witnessed or expe­rienced with the Master.

She recalled the moment, seated beside Him at a table in New York, when the host was busy with his many guests and didn’t respond to her request for a glass of water. The Master took the glass from His own place and gave it to her, filling her plate with food at the same time. In the same manner, her childish fear that the fruit which He was giving to visitors bidding Him fare­well on board the ship, before His departure for Europe, might be finished before her turn, was quelled when He not only filled her hands with fruit and wrapped candies, but also gave her the basket.

Mrs. McComb shared a number of tablets from the Perfect Exemplar, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, including this one:

Mrs. McComb (far right), with her son, Robert, and Mrs. Muriel Ives Newhall (left).
HE IS GOD!
Oh thou maid-servant of God!
I ask God that thou mayest become firm and steadfast in the Covenant and Testament and be engaged in the Kingdom of God.
The maid-servant of God, Rouhieh Musette Montana Jones, must pray at the Threshold of God and say:
"O Thou God! I am a child; train me under the shade of Thy Providence. I am a new flower; water me by the downpour of the Cloud of Thy Mercy. I am a plant of the orchard of Thy Love; make me a fruitful tree. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful and Thou art the Kind, the Wise and the Seer."
(signed) 'Abdu'l-Baha Abbas

(Translated September 1, 1909, Chicago, Illinois)

The Conference opened Saturday morning with reminiscences of Howard Colby Ives by his daughter, Mrs. Muriel Ives Newhall. She recalled the dynamic energy and enthusiasm of her father, his personal transformation through the example and presence of the Master, and his later service to the Faith as an ardent and sacrificing teacher. "It seems fitting to have heard recently," she mentioned, "that following a big proclamation program near the place in Arkansas where father is buried, the youth drove to the cemetery, circled his grave, said prayers and recounted the victories."
"Father was always so interested in the progress of the Cause," she continued, "and to the end of his life worked to achieve goals which had been set by the Master and by the beloved Guardian." Mrs. Newhall, whose enrollment in the Faith occurred twenty years after the visit of the Master, shared vivid memories of being in His presence in the company of her father.

A general tribute to the Master was given by Miss Sophie Loeding, who described the courses of classes held in the earliest days of the Faith in America. "At that time, interested persons came to a series of classes held weekly, and at the closing class were told the Greatest Name and then permitted to enroll." She displayed wooden prayer beads sent by 'Abdu'l-Baha with Mrs. Lua Getsinger for herself and members of her family.
"Young people today have a great opportunity to be of service guiding at the House of Worship," said Miss

Miss Elfie Lundberg
Miss Marie Bohman.

Mrs. Newhall speaking of 'Abdu'l-Baha Saturday evening, with Mrs. Grace Anderson and Mrs. Muriel Petersen on her left, and Miss Sophie Loeding, far right.

Marie Bohman. "In the time of the Master, the House of Worship was a dream. Now it stands, and attracts people from all corners of the earth. As guides, we have the privilege of meeting and speaking with these people. Let us serve the Master, as He served us—this is one way it may be accomplished."

In a touching, word-picture of her mother by Miss Elfie Lundberg, the audience heard of the days when Mrs. Lundberg, a Swedish immigrant who had been widowed, operated a small bakery in Chicago. Although very busy, she still found time to serve dinner to the Baha'i community when they met for Feasts in her home, and was shown many kindnesses by the center of the Covenant, during His visit to Chicago.

Each speaker in turn mentioned her unworthiness to attempt to speak of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Then, in simple phrases, each brought to life for the audience varied aspects of His appearance and Teachings. The guests of honor received specially-mounted portraits of the Master, prepared by Sam Dadian, of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, and the dinner guests received a reprint of the

(Continued on page 16)

L. Wyatt Cooper, Superintendent of Properties, Wilmette, for many years. Counsellor Miss Edna True.
The Nine Year Plan

In April 1964 The Universal House of Justice, the supreme governing body of the Bahá’í world community, unveiled a Nine Year Plan of growth and expansion. The call to action, contained in its message to the Bahá’í world, had been eagerly anticipated and therefore did not come as a surprise. Moreover the Bahá’ís already had a century-old tradition of propagating their Faith. The latest plan, they knew, was to be only one of a series of world-circling enterprises that would eventually lead to the establishment of a peaceful society, a World Order, and a world civilization.

Yet as they read the text of the April 1964 message, the Bahá’ís were staggered by the magnitude of the task placed before them. In the short span of nine years they were to triple the numbers of localities where Bahá’ís reside; build new institutions; acquire a large number of temple sites, national centers, local centers, and teacher-training institutes; translate Bahá’í literature into a hundred languages; establish several new publishing trusts; increase the financial resources of the Cause; and achieve a great number of other significant objectives.

From its very inception the Bahá’í Faith imposed upon its adherents the obligation to spread the Teachings and promote the Cause of God. The belief that the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh had initiated a new cycle in the religious history of mankind and inaugurated the era of universal brotherhood was in itself a compelling reason for sharing the knowledge of the new Revelation with the rest of mankind.

Soon after the Báb proclaimed His mission in Shiráz in 1844, He gathered His early followers and urged them to: “Ponder the words of Jesus addressed to His disciples, as He sent them forth to propagate the Cause of God. In words such as these, He bade them arise and fulfill their mission: ‘Ye are even as the fire which in the darkness of the night has been kindled upon the mountain-top. Let your light shine before the eyes of men.’ Like Jesus before Him, the Báb asked His followers to pray that “no earthly entanglements, no worldly affections, no ephemeral pursuits, may tarnish the purity, or embitter the sweetness” that flowed into the world through them.

I am preparing you for the advent of a mighty Day. Exert your utmost endeavor that, in the world to come, I, who am now instructing you, may, before the mercy-seat of God, rejoice in your deeds and glory in your achievements. The secret of the Day that is to come is now concealed… Scatter throughout the length and breadth of this land and, with steadfast feet and sanctified hearts, prepare the way for His coming. Heed not your weaknesses and frailty; fix your gaze upon the invincible power of the Lord, your God, the Almighty… Arise in His name, put your trust wholly in Him, and be assured of ultimate victory.

The eighteen initial disciples of the Báb, called Letters of the Living, traveled through Persia and Iráq, bringing the Báb’s Message to hundreds who, in turn, took it to thousands more. When the Báb was martyred in 1850, the Faith had been firmly established in two countries: Irán and Iráq.

Bahá’u’lláh, like the Báb, urged the believers to teach the Faith:

It is incumbent, in this Day, upon every man to place his whole trust in the manifold bounties of God, and arise to disseminate, with the utmost wisdom, the verities of His Cause…

Say: Teach ye the Cause of God, for God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds…

God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of teaching His Cause. Whoever ariseth to discharge this duty, must needs, ere he proclaimeth His Message, adorn himself with the ornament of an upright and praiseworthy character, so that his words may attract the hearts of such as are receptive…

The Bábí veterans were now joined by thousands of new converts who, during the forty years of Bahá’u’lláh’s Ministry, took the Faith to Turkey, Egypt and the Sudan, India and Burma, the Caucasus and Turkestan. When Bahá’u’lláh passed on in 1892, Bahá’í communities existed in at least thirteen countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa.

It was during the ministry of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, however, that the Faith first received worldwide attention. His American and European travels in 1911-1912, during which He visited France, Germany, Britain, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Canada, and the United States, provided the Bahá’ís with a model of love, dedication, determination, wisdom, and sacrifice that set the example for all their subsequent teaching activities. By the time ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left this world, thirty-five countries had been opened to the Faith.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá constantly urged the Bahá’ís to perfect their individual character and teach the Cause:

Consort with all the peoples, kindreds and religions of the world with the utmost truthfulness, uprightness, faithfulness, kindliness, goodwill and friendliness, that all the world of being may be filled with the holy ecstasy of the grace of Bahá, that ignorance, enmity, hate and rancor may vanish from the world and the darkness of estrangement amidst the peoples and kindreds of the world may give way to the Light of Unity. Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you, show your fidelity unto them; should they be unjust toward you, show justice towards them; should they keep aloof from you, attract them to yourself; should they show their enmity, be friendly towards them; should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls; should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful…

During World War I ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed to the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada a series of epistles, or tablets (alvâh), in which He invited every one of them to spread the Faith on the American continent and beyond. In the first message, dated April 8, 1916, He called for Alaska, Mexico, the Central American republics, the West Indies, and all of South America to be opened to the Cause. The second message, dated April 11, 1916, directed the attention of His North American followers to the Pacific with its thousands of islands, to Asia, Africa, and Europe. In these and sub-
sequent messages, the last one dated February 15, 1917, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave the North American Bahá’ís a comprehensive plan for the propagation of the Faith throughout most of the world. The epistles, immediately named Tablets of the Divine Plan, became the charter of teaching activity for the Bahá’í’s of the United States and Canada and, ultimately, of the entire world.

The implementation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s design necessitated long and thorough preparation. Before they could embark on worldwide teaching campaigns, the Bahá’ís had to create the institutions that would mobilize, sustain, unify, and lead the community. Thus the building of the Administrative Order became the main concern of the Bahá’í community after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away in 1921. During this period of building the rate of the expansion of the Cause slowed down appreciably; and a casual observer could very well have concluded, with the British Orientalist, Sir Denison Ross, that the Faith had proved a transitory phenomenon which had reached the natural limits of its growth in the early years of the twentieth century. Such observers, of course, were totally unaware of the achievements of the Bahá’í community in the years between 1922 and 1937.

Under the leadership of Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Cause of God and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s successor as Head of the Bahá’í community, the Bahá’ís built the institutions ordained by Bahá’u’lláh. These consisted of Local Spiritual Assemblies in every locality where the number of adult adherents reached nine, National Spiritual Assemblies, and a complex of ancillary bodies charged with the performance of hundreds of services needed by the community.

The rate at which these institutions were built varied from country to country. In the United States and Canada the initial phase of the process was completed by 1936. American and Canadian Bahá’ís were now ready to begin carrying out the task assigned them in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. That same year Shoghi Effendi called upon them to initiate their first systematic teaching campaign and thus to begin discharging the sacred duty imposed upon them by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá twenty years earlier:

A systematic, carefully conceived, and well-established plan should be devised, rigorously pursued and compassed by the leadership of the Bahá’ís. Initiated by the national representatives of the American believers, the vanguard and standard-bearers of the radiant army of Bahá’u’lláh, this plan should receive the wholehearted, the sustained and ever-increasing support, both moral and financial, of the entire body of His followers in America. Its supreme immediate objective should be the permanent establishment of at least one center in every state of the American Republic and in every Republic of the American continent not yet enlisted under the banner of His Faith. . . . The American community must muster all its force, concentrate its resources, summon to its aid all the faith, the determination and energies of which it is capable, and set out, single-minded and undaunted, to attain still greater heights in its mighty exertions for the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.

The goals set by Shoghi Effendi struck the American Bahá’ís as daring and difficult. Was he not himself to characterize the Bahá’í as ‘relatively negligible in its numerical strength; . . . bereft in the main of material resources and lacking in experience and in prominence; . . . having to contend, ever since its inception, and in an ever-increasing measure, with the forces of corruption, of moral laxity, and ingrained prejudice . . . ’? Indeed, their numbers were few, their abilities limited, their financial resources small. Yet they had already compiled a brilliant record of achievement.

What other community (Shoghi Effendi asked) has been instrumental in fixing the pattern, and in imparting the original impulse, to the administrative institutions that constitute the vanguard of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh? What other community has been capable of demonstrating, with such consistency, the resourcefulness, the discipline, the iron determination, the zeal and perseverance, the devotion and fidelity, so indispensable to the erection and the continued extension of the framework within which those nascent institutions can alone multiply and mature? . . . What other community has produced pioneers combining to such a degree the essential qualities of audacity, of consecration, of tenacity, of self-renunciation, and unstinted devotion, that have prompted them to abandon their homes, and forsake their all, and scatter over the surface of the globe, and hoist in its uttermost corners the triumphant banner of Bahá’u’lláh?

Thus their material weakness was outweighed by a spiritual strength that permitted them to transcend their limitations and win magnificent victories. The same spiritual characteristics would now assure the fulfillment of the first Seven Year Plan.

The termination of the first Seven Year Plan coincided with the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Faith in May 1944. Two years later Shoghi Effendi inaugurated the second Seven Year Plan. In addition to domestic objectives, American Bahá’ís were charged with the establishment of National Spiritual Assemblies in Canada, Central America, and South America. However, their most pressing objective was “the initiation of systematic teaching activity in war-torn, spiritually famished European continent, cradle of world-famed civilizations, twice-blessed by Bahá’u’lláh’s visits, whose rulers Bahá’u’lláh specifically and collectively addressed, aiming at establishment of Assemblies in the Iberian Peninsula, the Low Countries, the Scandinavian states, and Italy.”

No sooner had the objectives of this Plan been achieved than the Bahá’í world community, now established in no less than 125 countries and dependencies on every continent of the globe, was propelled into a new and even mightier enterprise: the Ten Year International Teaching and Consolidation Plan, calling for the doubling of countries and territories open to the Faith, the quadrupling of National Spiritual Assemblies, the seven-fold multiplication of national administrative headquarters (Haizaratu’l-Gaids), the establishment of six national Bahá’í publishing trusts, the translation of Bahá’í literature into ninety-one additional languages, the acquisition of land for eleven future temples (three in America, three in Africa, two in Asia, two in Europe, and one in Australia), and the accomplishment of hundreds of various goals on every continent.

The distinctive characteristic of the Ten Year Crusade, as this Plan became known, was its completely international nature. Though its principle executors were to be the twelve then existing National Spiritual Assemblies, the achievement of the goals assigned to each required constant cooperation among them. Joint activity could not fail to produce a greater sense of international commitment and of membership in a multinational, varied, yet unified, world community. The hundreds of pioneers (teachers privileged to open virgin
territories or to establish Bahá'í administrative institutions in newly opened areas), who immediately responded to Shoghi Effendi's call, came from every part of the world, spoke dozens of languages, and represented dozens of ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds.

Though an enterprise of such magnitude could not possibly be carried out without the benefit of a plan, the list of all that was achieved in the context of the original objectives due to unforeseen changes in circumstances, the Ten Year Plan was a resounding success. The degree of maturity and strength achieved by the Bahá'í community was dramatically demonstrated in 1937 when Shoghi Effendi, its beloved leader for thirty-six years, passed away. The staggering loss did not cause disarray in Bahá'í ranks, and the unity of the Cause was not breached by a few who tried to sow confusion and advance their own interests and ambitions. The great Crusade was pursued with redoubled determination under the stewardship of the Hands of the Cause of God, outstanding individuals appointed by Shoghi Effendi in his lifetime to protect and propagate the Faith. Like the healthy young organism that it was, the Bahá'í community quickly recovered from the blow and proceeded to win the goals set for it by its departed Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

The accomplishments of the Ten Year International Bahá'í Teaching and Consolidation Plan are too numerous to be summarized here. However, a few highlights must be mentioned. Preliminary measures had been taken for the future construction of Bahá'u'lláh's Sepulchre in the Holy Land. The number of countries and territories penetrated by the Faith had been more than doubled, with forty-three having been opened in Asia, thirty-seven in Africa, twenty-one in Europe, and thirty in the Americas. Bahá'í literature had been translated into two hundred additional languages. Two more Maḥqíqí-Adhíkárs (houses of worship) had been built—one in Africa and one in Australia. The original goal of eleven sites for future temples had been surpassed with the purchase of no less than forty-six such sites. Twenty-two National Spiritual Assemblies had been formed in the Americas, thirteen in Europe, eight in Asia, three in Africa, and one in Australasia. Seven new publishing trusts had been established. The Crusade came to a triumphant conclusion in the spring of 1963 with the election of The Universal House of Justice, the supreme governing body of the Faith. The degree of maturity and strength achieved by the Bahá'í community whose growth made all statistical material obsolete as soon as they were published.

In the United States the Bahá'í community grew at least six-fold in nine years. In January 1972, a year and a half before the termination of the Plan, the number of localities where Bahá'ís resided surpassed the goal by 1,761 and stood at 4,761, while the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies reached 800, surpassing the goal by 200. Thousands of Blacks joined the Cause, particularly in South Carolina which in 1972 had more Bahá'ís than there were in all of the United States in 1937. The influx of more races changed the character of the Bahá'í community, making it even more diverse and dynamic. Simultaneously, the unprecedentedly large proportion of youth among the new converts, radically changed the age distribution and brought additional vigor to the community.

In the very message that launched the Nine Year Plan The Universal House of Justice spoke of the requirement of moral development, quoting the words of Shoghi Effendi that "One thing and only one thing will unfaithfully and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendor of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh."

Behind the impressive statistics of territories opened to the Faith, Local and National Assemblies formed, temple sites and Hazíratú'l-Quds acquired, literature translated, there lay the even more impressive substance of love, devotion, and enthusiasm. Personal experience and spiritual growth, however, are elusive entities, hard to capture on paper and impossible to quantify. The unyielding determination of the pioneers, their sacrifice made by the thousands of pioneers, itinerant teachers, and humble workers in the administrative institutions of the Cause, without whom neither this nor any other plan could have been achieved.

College students, doctors, nurses, mechanics and technicians, teachers, farmers, alone and in families, the pioneers made their way to tropical islands, to mountain villages, to the frozen expanses of the Arctic, to teeming cities in distant lands. Some were struck with disease, some died at their posts, all suffered from loneliness, a few had to return, but a vast majority are still in the field.

For most of them pioneering has become the central experience of their lives. Having obeyed Bahá'u'lláh's command to arise and teach the Faith, they have of necessity deepened their own knowledge of the Writings. Having given up the security of home for the unknown trials in foreign lands, they have experienced self-denial and renunciation which could not fail to affect their spiritual development. Thrown upon their own resources abroad, they could not do other than rely on God's assistance and protection, deriving strength and assurance from the Source of all strength. While a very few proved unable to withstand the strain, most grew in stature and achieved inner confidence and peace.

At the conclusion of the Nine Year Plan the Bahá'í community, proud of its accomplishments, cannot for-
get the magnitude of the tasks that lie ahead. The Plan whose triumphant fulfillment we now celebrate is only one of a long series of crusades destined to bring Bahá'u'lláh's healing message to mankind. At a comparable moment twenty-one years ago, Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Cause, addressed to the Bahá'ís of the world these impassioned and immortal words:

No matter how long the period that separates them from ultimate victory; however arduous the task; however formidable the exertions demanded of them; however dark the days which mankind, perplexed and sorely-tried, must, in its hour of travail, traverse; however severe the tests with which they who are to redeem its fortunes will be confronted; however afflictive the darts which their present enemies, as well as those whom Providence, will, through His mysterious dispensations raise up from within or from without, may rain upon them ... I adjure them, by the precious blood that flowed in such great profusion, by the lives of the unnumbered saints and heroes who were immolated, by the supreme, the glorious sacrifice of the Prophet-Herald of our Faith, by the tribulations which its Founder Himself, willingly underwent, so that His Cause might live, His Order might redeem a shattered world and its glory might suffuse the entire planet—I adjure them, as this solemn hour draws nigh, to resolve never to flinch, never to hesitate, never to relax, until each and every objective in the Plans to be proclaimed, at a later date, has been fully consummated.

Extracts from the editorial in the Spring 1973 edition of WORLD ORDER Magazine

International Youth Conference, Paramaribo, Surinam

The first International Bahá'í Youth Conference held in Paramaribo, Surinam, South America, took place December 29 through 31, 1972 at the music school, Volks Muziek Centrum. The Conference was especially for Bahá'í youth of Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Guyana, Surinam, and French Guiana.

The first activity on Friday morning was a courtesy call on the Governor of Surinam, His Excellency Mr. Johan Ferrier, made by a delegation from the Conference. Miss Ilse Fenseca presented the volume The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh. Mr. Marcel MacNack of Paramaribo gave a selection of pamphlets about the Faith.

The Governor recalled the visit he received three years earlier from Hand of the Cause Ruhíyyih Khánum and said it was always a pleasure for him to meet Bahá'ís and that he hoped the Faith would make progress in Surinam. When, in the conversation it was mentioned that all people are “the fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch” he expressed his feeling that this described Surinam with its variety of peoples. After photos were taken the delegation departed. Later that morning another delegation paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Education, Mr. Jan Adhin.

The Conference began at 5 p.m. at the music school. Three languages were used; English was translated into Taki-Taki and Dutch by Rosanne Franklin, a youth from Surinam. Counsellor Donald Witzel, the first speaker, used the theme “Living the Life”. He developed the ideas by visual aids, illustrating the human body and discussing characteristics such as truthfulness, courtesy, humility, purity of heart, unity, love, moderation and justice.

On Saturday morning Counsellor Hooper Dunbar led a discussion about life after death. There were many interesting questions, some related to the death of infants and children, and before birth. All of these, including the Bahá'í teaching regarding reincarnation were presented in full. After lunch Mrs. Helen Hornby of Colombia posed a question to the youth for a prize, which was correctly answered by Anthony Dumont from Allen Dale, Guyana, who received a photo of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She pointed out the important role of youth in the future.

On Sunday morning after gathering at the music school, all took a long journey to Cole Kreek to meet with the Bush Negroes. Their clothes of many colors represented a beautiful flower garden of humanity and many photos were taken after prayers and songs. Mr. Lennard Wilkie of Trinidad presided over the meeting and a short discussion was held on why the Faith is important. Talks were given by Counsellor Dunbar, and Auxiliary Board members Jamshid Arjomandi and Habib Rezvani, who spoke about Badi who delivered the important Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the Shah of Persia. Ed and Ellen Widmer of Georgetown talked on the life of Ethel Murray, United States homefront pioneer who moved to the Cherokee Reservation in South Carolina in response to the call of the Guardian.

After a time out for swimming and other recreation, the program continued with a talk by Counsellor Witzel about firmness in the Covenant and promotion of the Faith. Then came the long journey back to Paramaribo. The youth left the Conference singing the praises of Bahá'u'lláh.
Irish Hand of the Cause of God, George Townshend

By O.Z. Whitehead

Perhaps Hand of the Cause George Townshend had in mind his own destiny when he wrote in The Heart of the Gospel the following:

"The whole Bible gave voice to God's demand from man of ... increasing spiritual effort, but no one else sets the demand so high nor insists upon it with such sternness as the Lord Christ. Every other effort, He urges, and every other aim is to be subordinated to this. Every other loyalty is to be postponed to it. None is to allow any danger to deter him nor any difficulty to discourage him. If need be, pain, persecution, shame and even death must be faced; at any cost, the effort to walk in God's way and to follow after righteousness must be maintained. No other effort is so richly rewarded; and neglect of this effort brings its own dire retribution."

Painstaking historians of the future will undoubtedly write in great detail about the life of George Townshend. His family is listed in Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland. Born at Hatley, Burlington Road, Dublin, on June 14, 1876, his father sent him to the United States of America. After he had graduated from College in 1899 he returned to Dublin and studied for the Irish Bar. During part of this time he did leader writing for The Irish Times. Called to the Bar in 1903, he was apparently not satisfied with his profession or with life in Ireland. After a year his father sent him to the United States of America.

In 1906 he became a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City, Utah. Placed in charge of a mission in Provo for the next four years he worked among the Mormons and American Indians. In 1910 he accepted an appointment to the staff of the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. Two years later he was made Assistant Professor of English at the same University.

Although he had already become an American citizen in July of 1916, on a trip back to Ireland he decided to live there again. Shortly afterward he started to work as a curate at Booterstown, County Dublin.

The Baha'i Faith Comes to Townshend

A year after his return to Ireland George Townshend received from a friend in America a few pamphlets with quotations from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. As a result of reading them he was never to be the same...
ears bestowing heavenly susceptibilities upon the souls and quickening upon the spirits. It is my hope that your church will come under the Heavenly Jerusalem. Be assured thou are under the favors of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh. Unto thee be the glory of Abhá!

(Signed) ‘Abdul-Bahá ‘Abbás
December 19, 1920.

(Translated by Lutfulláh S. Hakím)

Townshend and the Church

In 1932 his fellow clergymen elected George Townshend, among eight others, a Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral. A year later he became Archdeacon of Clonfert. Some time after this he twice refused a Bishopric. George Townshend had thought at first that the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh would reform the Christian Church from within. He could not understand why he should leave the Church. In the Master's lifetime many Bahá'ís remained in the Church. It was not until some time after the Guardian's ministry had begun that the believers were instructed to leave their Churches.

In 1936 the Guardian was asked to represent the Cause at the World Fellowship of Faiths in London. In his place he sent George Townshend who went there in his clerical vestments in July and read a paper called "Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan of World Fellowship." The abdication of King Edward VI on the next day kept his paper from attracting much attention.

The writer had occasionally met with Townshend's son, Bryan, and the two often had lunch together in Dublin. On one such occasion Bryan was asked if his father ever mentioned the Bahá'i Faith to his congregation. The reply was: "Yes, when he was giving a sermon as a Canon at St. Patrick's Cathedral, just after the fall of France in 1940. His remarks were: 'There is only one person who can heal the world of its present ills. His name is Bahá'u'lláh!'" After the service Townshend asked Bryan if he heard what was said, and the reply being in the affirmative Townshend continued: "That is the first time that anyone has mentioned Bahá'u'lláh publicly in Ireland."

St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Ireland
Photo by Courtesy Irish Press, Dublin

This enormous Cathedral of St. Patrick deserves further mention. It was begun in 1220 and finished in 1260, built on the site of a succession of earlier churches. A tradition links the Irish Saint Patrick to a holy well, near the site of the Cathedral. The building interior has an atmosphere of belonging to another age. "On a sunny day, when brilliant shafts of light slant down from above making the dark corners of this massive building even more than usually silent and mysterious, St. Patrick's can evoke the most convincing illusion of peace and security", thus wrote Desmond Guinness in his Portrait of Dublin.

The writer recalled a visit to this Cathedral, accompanied by Hand of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi and Adib Taherzadeh. Upon entering they slowly walked around it, each saying a prayer, doubtless as Dr. Townshend had prayed countless times in these same places, that the congregation and people would dispell their illusive veils and be enabled to recognize the Spirit of Truth. Mr. Faizi mentioned that the Master had prayed that Dr. Townshend's congregation would follow him into the Faith.

Bryan Townshend had said that his father wrote books about the Bahá'i Faith while still in the Church and wanted to leave it in 1939 and put all his energies into work for the Faith. He was not able to do this. Though Townshend's wife had a small income it was not enough for the family to live on. A pilgrim's remark after visiting the Guardian assured Dr. Townshend that he would finally leave the Church.

In 1947 a clergyman of the Church of England in India wrote the Archbishop of Canterbury that George Townshend's books were converting people to the Bahá'i Faith. The Archbishop sent this letter to the Archbishop of Ireland. The Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, a friend of Dr. Townshend, took him into a private room and said that he must either refute what he had written or resign.
Just at this time the Guardian cabled the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles that it was imperative that George Townshend leave the Church. He did resign, that same year. In doing so he faced not only much criticism from the Bishops, the clergy and members of his congregation but probably ridicule, too, from many. His wife, Nancy, was at first opposed to his resignation from the Church but when the Bishops asked him to refute his writings, she stood by his decision and followed him in the Faith.

Naturally, he lost his house and pension. He moved with his family from Ahascragh Parish in Galway to Dublin and there became a member of the first Spiritual Assembly of Dublin.

In The Old Churches and The New World Faith, written directly after his resignation from the Church of Ireland, Dr. Townshend addressed all Christian people in general, but more especially the Bishops and clergy of his former Church and pleaded with them to fairly investigate the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. He wrote:

“To them who have recognized Christ's voice again in this age has been given in renewed freshness and beauty the vision of the Kingdom of God as Jesus and the Book of Revelation gives us in the same vision, but clearer now and on a larger scale and in more detail.”

King George VI received a copy of his pamphlet. It was also sent to 10,000 men of influence in various professions throughout the British Isles. Much to Dr. Townshend's disappointment he received only one response and that in the negative.

The Guardian felt that the clergy, many of whom received a copy, were not ready for the Cause and said not to bother with them. The question was asked of the Guardian (when the writer was on pilgrimage in January 1935), "Why do so few of the clergy, many of whom are certainly sincere ...." But the Guardian stopped him and replied: "I have heard this question before. They do not come into the Faith because their understanding of Christianity is superficial."

Appointed a Hand of the Cause

George Townshend was deeply spiritual and very humble. He could hardly believe it when he received a cable from the Guardian in December 1931 which conferred upon him the station of Hand of the Cause. Dr. Townshend was named in the first contingent of the Hands, one of the three for Europe.

Abdu'l-Bahá, in His Will and Testament, describes the work of a Hand 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 earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words."

Townshend's Writings

"George Townshend was the best of the Bahá'í writers" said the Guardian to the writer when in Haifa on pilgrimage. In The Priceless Pearl, Rúhíyyih Khánum wrote that for years Shoghi Effendi "sent his translations and manuscripts to George Townshend, whose command and knowledge of English he greatly admired. "In one of his letters to Townshend, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "I am deeply grateful to you for the very valuable, detailed, and careful suggestions you have given me.""

His first book The Altar on the Hearth, published in 1926, is composed mostly of prayers, meditations and poems. He stated: "The purpose of this book is to bear witness to the truth that the power of God is now abroad among men in its fullness and that happiness in the home (and elsewhere) is to be attained only through conscious communion with that power." Although this book is now out of print many of its pieces are happily included in The Mission of Bahá'u'lláh.

His search for spiritual truth is very moving as in this prayer and the meditation that follows it:

O My Lord!

I have sought Thee all my life, yet I still wander in a chequered world of light and shade. Oh! lift me at last into the pure splendor of Thy Truth beyond the reach of any darkness that I may behold Thee as Thou art, and live in Thy continual presence evermore.

The darkness changes and pales, but no light breaks. Error grows intolerable, but Truth still is hidden out of sight. I rest not, but I never reach my goal. Yet, do I not ask anything, but to journey onward and onward. My path is of Thy making, and Thou leadest me on the way. I ask no more, and I desire no more.

In "The Vision of God's Triumph", he described with much power his awakening, and concluded:

There shall be no more death nor oppression nor tears.

God has ascended His Throne. He has taken possession of the hearts of men.

Therefore from the darkness with hymns of light I sing the Source of Light, and from the depths give answer to the heights.

The inspiring contents of this book show a devoted churchman progressing from an acceptance of orthodox doctrines, first to a realization that a New Age of God has come, and finally to a realization that Bahá'u'lláh is its Lord.


Mr. Townshend wrote of Blake, "More than a century ago a great Poet (himself of Irish stock) uplifted in England a strange new song of victory and triumph and foretold the approach of an age when hypocrisy and tyranny would be dethroned and when man would recognize at last the hidden truth about himself and the world in which he lives and would enjoy the rights of a law abiding Citizen of the Universe. He deliberately bent all his powers to aid in that tremendous struggle which must precede the final victory of the powers of good on earth." Mr. Townshend concluded, "These poets saw drawing near to a negligent and unbelieving world an Era of Justice and Freedom, of Unity and constructive Peace."

Greatly impressed with the noble genius of certain idealistic writers in the United States, he devoted most of his essay "The Language of the Commonwealth" to them. He wrote: "The work in prose or verse of Emerson, Whitman, Lanier, Whitier and Hawthorne runs through many moods, but if there be one noble trait which in each and all stands out more boldly, it is this idealistic frame of mind."

In his essays, "The Beauty of Ireland" and "Irish Humor," although he makes plain his opinion that the cities of Ireland are not worthy of an earth so lovely and majestic and that the Irish have not learned once more to laugh together, he still describes with much love his country, its beauty, the enormous charm of its people, and their most delightful humor. He wrote of this last: "The real distinction of Irish humor is to be found less in its character than its superabundance. It is not found chiefly in any locality, but belongs to all the people in all sections."

He did not refer to Bahá'u'lláh in any of these essays.
Mr. Townshend included the name-essay, "The Genius of Ireland," in a rich and fascinating collection of essays, prayers, meditations and poems called The Mission of Bahá'u'lláh that George Ronald published in 1952.

By this time Mr. Townshend had revised this essay and explained that ignorance of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh and consequent blindness to the reality of the New Age has been a cause of serious limitation in even the great Irish poets.

After careful reflection about the past spirituality of the Irish, he "became filled with hope that Ireland may not be slow to catch the vision of the New Day of the coming of the Kingdom of God, and that she may do for mankind now such service as she did long ago in the hour of its darkness and its need." 13

Many contributions of Dr. Townshend appeared in World Order Magazine published in New York, including in the November 1936 issue the paper he read at the World Fellowship of Faiths in London. After he had left the church and come into the Bahá'í Community he saw fit to revise both his The Promise of All Ages and The Heart of the Gospel.

After a long life of exacting scholarship and writing to his credit, well over thirty years after he had recognized the Station of His Lord, George Townshend started to write what Shoghi Effendi has described as "his crowning achievement, Christ and Bahá'u'lláh." 14

In the epilogue of his book he made this most moving appeal:

O Christian believers! for your own sakes and for the sake of the Churches, for the sake of all mankind, for the sake of the Kingdom, cast away your conflicting dogmas and interpretations which have caused such disunity and power to the Father and heart and soul, throw yourselves into his Cause. 15

Simply written with deep conviction of passionate belief, this book is obviously of major importance. It has already helped to lead many people into the Bahá'í Community. As increasing numbers of dissatisfied people leave the Church and many more even than today suffer from the unhappiness and worldly anxieties that agnosticism is sure to bring, certainly this book and all his other writings will find an enormous public.

His Last Years

Dr. Townshend liked Bahá'í fellowship, but owing to circumstances beyond his control he could not always get it. He used to work on Christ and Bahá'u'lláh early in the morning when his household was quiet. During the day he often did some of the housework. He used to go everywhere on his bicycle. When he was seventy-seven he fell from his bicycle. From that time on he had difficulty in using his hands to write.

The last few years of his life were filled with difficulties. He wrote much of Christ and Bahá'u'lláh in a nursing home. He had Parkinson's disease and it grew steadily worse as he grew older. Toward the end of his life he could not speak. He had to whisper the last part of Christ and Bahá'u'lláh to his son, Bryan, and his daughter, Una. Naturally at this time he could not write.

David Hofman, a member of The Universal House of Justice since its election in 1963, said of George Townshend: "He did not ask for an easy, secure life. He prayed to God to make him suffer as long as that suffering brought him closer to God." 16

The Guardian's cablegram sent to The National Spiritual Assembly of The British Isles at the time of George Townshend's passing, gives perfect evidence of what he had achieved:

27 MARCH, 1957.

DEEPLY MOURN PASSING DEARLY LOVED, MUCH ADANCED, GREATLY GIFTED OUTSTANDING HAND CAUSE GEORGE TOWNSHEND. HIS DEATH MORTAL PUBLICATION, HIS CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT ROBS BRITISH FOLLOWERS BAHÁ’U’LLÁH THEIR MOST DIGNIFIED COLLABORATOR AND FAITH ITSELF ONE OF ITS STOUTEST DEFENDERS. HIS STERLING QUALITIES, HIS SCHOLARSHIP, HIS CHALLENGING WRITINGS, HIS HIGH ECCLESIASTICAL POSITION UNRIVALLED ANY BAHÁ'Í WESTERN WORLD, ENTITLE HIM RANK WITH THOMAS BREAKWELL, DR. ESSELMONT, ONE OF T HREE LUMINARIES SHEDDING BRILLIANT LUSTRE AN NALS IRISH, ENGLISH, SCOTTISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITIES. HIS FEARLESS CHAMPIONSHIP CAUSE HE LOVED SO DEARLY, SERVED SO VALIANTLY, CONSTITUTES SIGNIFICANT LANDMARK BRITISH BAHÁ’Í HISTORY. SO ENVIOUS POSITION CALLS FOR NATIONAL TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY BY ASSEMBLED DELEGATES VISIT ON FORTHCOMING BRITISH BAHÁ’Í CONVENTION. ASSURE RELATIVES DEEPEST LOVING SYMPATHY, GRIEVOUS LOSS. CONFIDENT HIS REWARD, INESTIMABLE ABBA KONGDOM.

The grave of Hand of the Cause George Townshend is in the cemetery of the Church of Ireland overlooking the charming village of Enniskerry, and is near the great house, Powerscourt. On the stone is written a quotation from Revelation XXI:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth."

In the Abá'í kingdom is not Townshend even more greatly empowered to help in the spiritualization of Ireland than he had been while on this earth? In future years one can visualize many people from all over the world coming to pray and meditate at this holy spot.

Notes:

7. Ibid. p. 125.
10. Ibid. p. 71.
11. Ibid. p. 79.
12. Ibid. p. 16.

(O. Z. Whitehead, author of the above article, has been a pioneer from the United States to Ireland since 1963 and received much of the information printed here from persons who had been associated with Dr. Townshend.)
Hand of the Cause of God Inspires Teacher Training Session

Saturday and Sunday, January 20 and 21, coinciding with the ninetieth day since its dedication, the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute at Hemingway, South Carolina, was host to teacher training sessions devoted to the study of the Local Spiritual Assembly. This occasion was marked by the special bounty of the presence of Hand of the Cause of God William Sears and the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh.

After opening prayers and an orientation period by Mr. Harold Jackson, Dean of the Institute, Peter and Jolie Haug eloquently presented to an eager and receptive group of students, the purpose and functions of the Local Spiritual Assembly.

After a break for lunch, Gerald and Gail Curwin continued the training session. The Curwins opened the period with a short slide program, later dividing the students into groups of nine for discussions on the formation and function of the Local Spiritual Assembly. Questions prepared by the Curwins expertly guided the direction of the discussions. The effort put into these well-planned training sessions by all the leaders made it possible for the students to obtain a clear understanding of this vital institution.

Some of the audience attending the session on the Local Spiritual Assembly.

At the book counter, Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute.

Hand of the Cause of God William Sears at the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute.

After a beautiful day, many people with great anticipation gathered that evening in the auditorium to meet with the Hand of the Cause William Sears. For many, this was the first opportunity to see and hear a Hand of the Cause of God. Mr. Sears is the first Hand of the Cause to visit the Louis G. Gregory Institute.

After being introduced by Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Mr. Sears, assisted by Dr. Kazemzadeh, took us on a slide program tour of the Bahá'í Holy Places of Persia and Israel. These slides, depicting places so dear and precious to the believers, brought to mind the sacrifices and suffering of the Central Figures of the Faith and the devoted early followers.

This program was a source of inspiration serving to spur the believers present to greater service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. With thanksgiving and prayer the evening session came to a close.

On Sunday, January 21, after a morning session of further study on the Local Spiritual Assembly, a record crowd again assembled at 2:00 p.m. to hear William Sears. Mr. Sears most ably summarized through words, diagrams and quotations from the Writings the theme and presentations of the training sessions. He emphasized that love is the prime requisite for the successful functioning of the Local Spiritual Assembly. "Without love the institution will surely prove to be ineffective," he said. Mr. Sears' talk was given with delightful humor, and warmth. The many children present seemed to enjoy every minute.

"... the Manifested Light, Bahá'u'lláh, in this glorious period has revealed in the Holy Tablets that singing and music are the spiritual food of the hearts and souls." Many joined in songs of joy and thanksgiving.

It was gratifying to see volunteers come forth immediately when need for help was made known. Willing workers of all ages offered their services in any and all areas required for these sessions and for future sessions.

This successful effort again demonstrated the love and devotion among the friends, the dedication of the youth and the willingness of all to assist in making these sessions a continuing success.
Passing of Pioneer Mrs. Marion Little

HAVE CABLED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FRANCE QUOTE ASCENSION ABHA KINGDOM MARION LITTLE STEADFAST DEVOTED SERVANT BAHÁ'U'llÁH MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS TEACHING PUBLISHING PIONEERING UNITED STATES SOUTH AMERICA EUROPE DEPRIVES AMERICAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY ONE ITS BRIGHTEST ORNAMENTS EUROPE ONE MOST RADIANT PIONEERS. HER LOYALTY CHEERFULNESS COURAGE UPLIFTED SPIRITS FRIENDS ASSURES BOUNTIEOUS REWARD. OFFERING PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL RECOMMEND GERMAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICE MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE. END QUOTE.

March 12, 1973

The foregoing cablegram from The Universal House of Justice announcing the passing in Paris, France, on March 10, of Mrs. Marion Little, United States pioneer in Europe since 1947, recounts briefly a half century of devoted service to the Faith of this beloved Baha'i at home and abroad. Not only was Mrs. Little one of the first Baha'is to serve on the Baha'i Publishing Committee when it was organized more than forty years ago, but she was also a member of the National Teaching Committee, and the Inter-American Teaching Committee which, for a number of years, conducted orientation classes with her close friend, Mrs. Loulie Mathews, at the former Temerity Ranch Baha'i Summer School in Colorado for Baha'i's planning to pioneer in Latin America. Before going to Europe in 1947, Mrs. Little settled in New Orleans, Louisiana, and was a very active pioneer and teacher in the Southern States. She had hoped to pioneer in Latin America but when the call came from the Guardian for traveling teachers in Europe, she responded at once. She helped to form the first National Spiritual Assembly in Italy. Her ability to speak French fluently made her a most valuable pioneer and teacher in Switzerland and France where in later years she served as a member of each of these National Spiritual Assemblies.

CENTRAL AFRICAN YOUTH CONFERENCE

Over the weekend of the 23rd and 24th of December a wonderful gathering of Baha'i youth took place, the first Regional Youth Conference in Central Africa. The participants came to Yaoundé Cameroon from all parts of East and West Cameroon. The Conference was organized by the National Youth Committee of Cameroon, with the help of Yaoundé pioneers, Mr. and Mrs. Weck (recently arrived from France) and Mr. and Mrs. Yeganeh. Those participants who came from Chad rode buses for three full days over 1,000 miles, while those who came from the Central African Republic traveled four days through 800 miles of African bush in the car of one of the believers. One of the heroic groups suffered several car accidents while the other battled sickness.

A joyous Unity Feast in the home of the Yeganeh's opened the Conference on Friday evening. For the weary and tested travelers who had come so many hundreds of miles it was wonderful to sit down together for prayers of thanksgiving and join in the singing of many Baha'i songs. Singing continued throughout the Conference, and a special treat was the première of a number of original songs by some of the Baha'i's of the Yaoundé area.

Over fifty youth attended. The spirit was greatly enhanced by the participation of young traveling teachers from the Philippines, Malaysia, India, Iran, Canada and the United States who had come on a special project for six months to help fulfill the remaining goals in Chad and Cameroon before the end of the Nine Year Plan. The Conference, conducted in both French and English, had two main goals: the first, to help Cameroon in her teaching efforts to win the Nine Year Plan goals; the second, to deepen the Baha'i youth and give them the opportunity to exchange views and build the feeling of international Baha'i consciousness. In this part of the world where travel is so expensive and difficult, it was the first time that many of the Baha'i youth had met their Baha'i brothers and sisters of neighboring African nations.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Yaoundé granted permission for the use of the Grand Amphitheatre of the Law School for all the Conference sessions. A large banner was placed at the entrance, "BAHA'I YOUTH CONFERENCE-ALL ARE WELCOME" which attracted university students during the sessions.

Classes covered such subjects as the Role of Youth in the Faith, the Covenant, Baha'i Community Life, the Baha'i University Club, the Response of Youth to the Faith, plus panel reports of the progress of the goals and activities in each of the three countries. Three Auxiliary Board members, Mr. Jacob Mbeng of Cameroon, Mr. Jawad Mughrabi of the Central African Republic and Mr. Fred Ramirez of the Philippines, were present throughout the Conference and offered helpful advice through their classes and consultation with individuals.

Several very successful proclamation efforts were made during the Conference. On Saturday afternoon all participants divided into teaching teams to go out and invite people to the public meeting of that evening. Al Lincoln's talk entitled "The Role of Baha'i Youth in the World Today" attracted over 100 people, many of them university students, ten of whom decided to join the ranks of Baha'u'llah that evening.

All meals were eaten in a small African restaurant a walk of a few minutes from the campus. Our presence there attracted the curiosity of a number of people who wanted more information about the Faith. The young Cameroon woman who runs the restaurant was among the ten who became Baha'is during the public conference. This was particularly exciting as we are all making an effort to reach more women in our teaching work.

Finally two successful radio interviews were held—one featuring five Baha'is from five different countries and another during which Joany Lincoln was interviewed singing songs about the Baha'i Faith.

(Continued on page 24)
On fire with the love of God and with this prayer in our hearts, we eleven projectees (ten youth and one National Spiritual Assembly representative) set out for Punta Arenas, Chile, on the straights of Magellan, southernmost outpost of the Faith in the world, with one thought in mind: teach! teach! teach! This was the first time that such a teaching project had been organized in Chile, and it was of special importance because the local institution was in jeopardy. Recognizing the need for immediate action on a great scale, the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile, with support from The Universal House of Justice, proposed this project which was then worked out by the National Teaching Committee. We had two weeks to rally our energies.

Arriving on January 27, we were warmly received by the local Bahá'ís and settled ourselves in pensions and hotels. The next day we met with the Spiritual Assembly of Punta Arenas and worked out general objectives and a format for the project.

Each morning thereafter we projectees met for prayers and consultation to discuss the work and assign people to certain tasks. We had decided that the most efficient way to organize our efforts was to appoint commissions, giving responsibility to everyone. The rest of the morning and afternoon was spent in the plaza, the streets and outlying areas of the city, in direct teaching, and inviting people to the evening public meetings as well as special events, also revisiting new believers and seekers. Public meetings were held every evening at the centrally located Casa de Cultura (House of Culture) across the plaza.

Contacting The Authorities

Remembering the three-fold plan for Proclamation as outlined by The Universal House of Justice: to reach the authorities, the masses, and follow-up, a major project was to contact the Intendente (Governmental representative for the Province), Alcalde (Mayor) and the Carabineros (Police), and present them with official letters of greetings from the National Spiritual Assembly and a small packet of books. Probably our most significant teaching effort among the authorities was with the police. After meeting with the Commandant, he invited us to give a program for the entire force! The commission for this project designed a program of slides accompanied by music, as well as a short presentation by Mr. Alvaro Palacio, a former policeman himself. The response was very favorable and, during the informal part of the program, many asked questions and requested literature.

The visit with the Alcalde was highly significant as he warmly received the commission and the gifts of books for the public library as well as his own copy of Baha'u'llah y La Nueva Era. He gave us a signed map of the city and gifts for each member of the commission. The city map greatly aided us in our mass teaching plans.

Special invitations were printed for over twenty officials holding positions of authority in Punta Arenas for the special program at the Teatro Municipal (Municipal Theater). These were all hand delivered and private interviews were held.

Informing The Public

The three radio stations amply covered our project with over one hour and a half of radio time, including interviews and the songs of "Rainbow". An announcer at one of the radio stations was so excited and interested in the Faith that she invited us back for another program a couple of days later! This was especially significant as at this time, Chile was preparing for its political elections and little radio time was allocated for other uses. One of the stations, Presidente Ibañez, where we had taped and aired a thirty-five minute program, was broadcast to Argentina as well as Chile and was probably our most complete presentation of the Faith.
Both of the local newspapers, The Prensa Austral and El Magallanes, responded favorably to the visit of our "Embajada Bahá'í" (Bahá'í embassy), as the editor of the Magallanes put it, with over sixty-two column inches of four well-written articles as well as two different photos. The Cine Cervantes (Cervantes Theater) also entered photos and an ad for the spot presentation made by "Rainbow" (our musical group) during an intermission. This was a totally unexpected proclamation to over 300 people! The National Spiritual Assembly, before our arrival, had placed a daily paid ad in the newspaper for two weeks to put the name of the Blessed Beauty into the consciousness of the people.

Reaching The People

Our first experience in direct teaching was in Río Seco, where personal contact was made. We were warmly received by the country people. We sang and taught at the local meeting house and were served hot "empanadas" (Chilean meat pies).

In our future visits to other parts of the city, we found we could cover more ground if we split up into smaller groups and travel to different areas to spread the healing word. Many new believers were found as a result of this effort and the spirit was building. During the second week of direct teaching, we visited a community called Río de los Ciervos, (River of the Pawne), where our hearts were touched by the simplicity and warm heart­edness of the people. Immediately, two souls accepted the Message and we were invited to return and meet the rest of the family, nine in all! We returned to bring deepening materials and books and the rest of the family then embraced the Faith! No words could express our joy and the uplift of our hearts. We were just beginning to feel a drop in our energy level, the result of low attendance at our public meetings. This experience in Río de los Ciervos, which we later renamed "Río de los Siervos" (River of the Servants) recharged our spiritual batteries for still greater efforts and victories.

Singing and teaching in the Plaza brought many souls to the Faith, mostly youth. One afternoon "Rainbow" attracted a group of youth from the Chilean Air Force. After an hour of singing/teaching in the rain, five of them embraced the Faith, followed by three onlookers. Our poor Spanish was not adequate for their questions which were fast and direct, but our Chilean brothers and sisters came to the rescue.

Deepening The Believers

Visiting new believers, bringing books and deepening materials, was an important part of the project. It was through these repetitive visits that our hearts and those of the new believers were cemented together in our love of the Blessed Beauty. Recognizing the importance of consolidation, a designated commission planned a mini-school for the closing weekend of the project. Such topics as the Covenant, Administration, and Bahá'í unity were stressed as well as answering specific questions from Bahá'u'lláh's new followers.

Unity

There are so many personal stories to relate, so many individual miracles that occurred, that it would be impossible to tell about them all. Suffice it to say that...
Group of Chilean youth and American pioneers who worked together on the Punta Arenas teaching plan, at the office of El Magallanes newspaper. Third from right, back row, Miss Laurel Schaeffer, pioneer in Punta Arenas, Chile.

they combined to give the group, collectively, a sense of unity of purpose and the realization of what it means to move and teach the Cause of God. Everyone participated and the experience and talents of each were put to use. The variety of teaching activities provided an avenue for each person to participate in the way most comfortable for them and at the same time introduced some new ways.

Just as we were about to leave on February 12 and saying our last good-byes at the airport, we were receiving the aid of a resident of the pension where some of us stayed and where pioneer Laurel Schaeffer resides. This resident works at the airport and helped us through customs. At the last moment, he quietly asked to be a Baha'i and the airport rocked with excitement as another soul embraced the Cause of God!

Before our departure, Alexander Reid, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Chile, had said that this project was not only important for Punta Arenas, to help strengthen their Assembly, but also would have an effect everywhere in the country. Little did he know that during these two weeks, eleven of the thirty-four new believers would be from other parts of the country, and they, along with the projecteers, would be taking great enthusiasm from the spiritual victories to their respective localities!

Yes, the doors were opened and the way provided. After not having a new believer in four years, Punta Arenas now has twenty-three young plants to help build the Garden of God.

(Continued from page 3)

picture of Mrs. McComb as a girl, with the Master.

An exciting summary of the achievements of the two Seven Year Plans, the Crusade, and the current Nine-Year Plan, was presented by Mr. Glenford Mitchell. "We may be sure that the future will bring us many opportunities to promote the interests of the Faith," he commented, "and the youth of today are, hopefully, preparing themselves to make the greatest contribution possible towards these significant goals."

The conference concluded Sunday morning with two slide programs—one, an historic collection of slides of the early believers, and the building of the House of Worship, narrated by Mr. Wyatt Cooper, and the other, slides of the Holy Land, shown by Robert McComb, of Glenwood Landing, New York. Mrs. Donna Kime of Wilmette, and Miss Mary Lynn Knipfel of Milwaukee were guest soloists at the Conference.
BAHAMA ISLAND TEACHING TRIPS

The Local Spiritual Assembly of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, is sponsoring teaching trips to the Bahama Islands. Arrangements have been made at minimum cost for an eight-place twin engine plane to make a trip a couple of times a month so that a Baha'i teaching team can help the Bahamas win their goals for the Nine Year Plan in these last important remaining months.

The first trip began on the weekend of January 26. Jeanne and Maylo Murday, Pat Meier, Roy Easton, Jene Bellows, Dave Hauck and Bob and Jeremy Phillips took flight on Friday afternoon from the Fort Lauderdale Airport and were lovingly greeted half an hour later in Freeport by pioneer couple, Sandy and Charles Bullock and son Poova.

The weekend’s activities began with a delicious curry dinner prepared by one of the new Jamaican believers at the Bahá’í Center. Thus fortified, all departed for a meeting with the Bahá’ís of Williamstown, a short distance from the Bahá’í Center. This little fishing village has many beautiful new Bahá’ís. The group met many of them that night, said prayers together, sang songs, showed slides and gave the message of Bahá’u’lláh to two young men who arrived in the middle of the meeting.

The next day began with dawn prayers and songs. We literally sang from dawn until dark all weekend. After breakfast we consulted on the day’s activities, prayed together, formed the teams and the teaching began. There are many Haitians on the Island and we were fortunate to have a French speaking Bahá’í or two on each team. All the people we met were told about Bahá’u’lláh and the great new Revelation for our Day. All were invited to the Bahá’í Center for an evening of music, to hear more about the Faith and to see the gift from God for which she had been waiting. Three of the people we met that morning became Bahá’ís.

In the afternoon Jeanne, Sandy and Charles, the “New Era Trio” of a few summers ago, sang at the shopping center while the rest of us passed out Bahá’í fliers inviting the people attracted by their music to an evening meeting. It was a full day of proclamation and was joyfully capped off by an exciting gathering at the Center that night. Many, many people came. Prayers, music and laughter rang out and the echoes of love and unity actually bounced off the walls!

The dawn of the next day brought the weary but happy group together to begin another day of teaching, this time to an area known as Hunters-Pinters. This village has a Local Spiritual Assembly. We formed teams to contact the many Bahá’ís living there to invite them to an institute on the Local Spiritual Assembly. The community of believers gathered and Mr. Russel Grant, the chairman of the Assembly, conducted the meeting and invited the visiting Bahá’ís to speak. Bob Phillips gave the institute which was again followed by songs and prayers. This joyous meeting was so large that it had to be held in Mr. Grant’s front yard and attracted many curious onlookers. As a result of this day’s teaching, four more people declared their belief in Bahá’u’lLáh.

Sandy and Jene arrived late at the institute. Just as they were leaving their teaching area a young man stopped them with “My sister wants to be a Bahá’í . . . what does she do?” They were invited into her home with a babble of French and Creole, a language similar to French. After about one-half hour of answering questions, several prayers, and reassurance that the Faith is not political she said that she believed Bahá’u’lláh was the Promised One and that the Bahá’í Faith came from God. She became the seventh declaration of the weekend. We hardly needed an airplane to fly us home, we were all flying so high already from our two days of teaching experiences.

The second trip to Nassau was equally successful. Bob and Karin Leonard and their daughters, Cindy and Christine, hosted the group at their home. Some of the Bahamian team members had their first experience in direct teaching, and a new spirit was breathed into the colony. An eighty-five year old lady declared her belief in Bahá’u’lláh, and thanked the Bahá’ís for bringing her the gift from God for which she had been waiting.

More trips are scheduled for Nassau and Grand Bahama Island right up until Riḍván. Ron Hauck of the Fort Lauderdale community has volunteered the services of a pilot and one of his charter planes for each trip, no small contribution to the teaching campaign.

More teachers are needed to contribute their week-ends to this effort, and to share in the unlimited bounties of travel teaching for Bahá’u’lláh. The unity and dedication exhibited on these, the first two trips scheduled, continued and carried forward into the following trips, will insure the winning of the goals in the Bahama Islands.

—Jeremy Phillips and Jene Bellows

Some of the team with new believers in the Bahamas. The woman in the center is a new French-speaking believer—the seventh declarant of the weekend.
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum
By Violette Nakjivani'
Part sixteen

In the afternoon of June 29, 1972, Amatu’l-Bahá in her "Rabbani African Safari" (name of her Land Rover), left Botswana and entered the Republic of South Africa. The border city of Mafeking, the administrative capital of Bechuanaland in the early years of the Ten Year Crusade, brought the thought of dearly loved Hand of the Cause of God John Robarts to our hearts. It was there that he earned the title "Knight of Bahá'u'lláh" from the pen of our beloved Guardian for opening the country to the Faith. Some of the early devoted believers throughout that region are the spiritual children of the Robarts. Indeed, the friends even showed us the Robarts home, recalling with deep affection the days they served there.

Counsellor Shidan Fat’he-Aazam, who so lovingly had accompanied Amatu’l-Bahá on her tour of Botswana, now entrusted her to his able and distinguished fellow Counsellor Mrs. Bahiyyih Ford, a childhood friend of Rúhíyyih Khánum. This reunion was a cause of great joy to both of them. The Chairman and the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of South Africa had also come from Johannesburg especially to welcome Amatu’l-Bahá to their land.

On a one day stop in Mafeking, Rúhíyyih Khánum was able to spend some time with a few distinguished believers of that area. Although unable to go into the African location because permission for foreigners must be obtained now from Pretoria, she met with some of the Baha'ís of the Soweto community. This is one of the African locations near the city which is divided into municipal limits where several Local Spiritual Assemblies have been formed. In this meeting two of the African Auxiliary Board members were present. As circumstances and long distances oblige people to go home early, all were grateful for the opportunity for even a short visit with Amatu’l-Bahá.

One of the friends asked Rúhíyyih Khánum: "How can a man under pressure and subject to so many injustices, pray to God?" She replied: "That is a very strange question. Prayers are the inner communion of the soul of man with his Creator, a private and individual relationship, and no one can prevent it. The Manifestations of God are themselves the greatest proof of this. Their lives are the essence of suffering. They are heaped with injustice from all sides, yet They were in constant communion with God, and were able to establish this relation between God and man."

She spoke emphatically on the explicit injunction of Bahá'u'lláh Himself that Baha'ís must obey their government, take no part in any form of riot, or public
disorder, as anarchy, in the eyes of the Bahá'ís, is even worse than war.

In the township of Eersterus, the colored location near the capital city of Pretoria, Ruhiyyih Khánum met with a very devoted and lively community of believers. We had a most enjoyable evening with these friends who offered a delicious meal to all of us. The Bahá'í children entertained their beloved guest with songs and recitation of the Words of Bahá'u'lláh. A deep spirit of love and oneness pervaded this meeting which was sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of Johannesburg. This was the meeting with the nonresident Bahá'ís inside the city. The following night Ruhiyyih Khánum met with the Bahá'ís of Johannesburg in the national Hájíratu'l-Quds.

In South West Africa

On July 7, we flew to the capital city of Windhoek in South West Africa, spent a night there and the next day flew in a small chartered plane to Luderitz to visit for almost a week with the devoted family of Martin Aiff. Mr. and Mrs. Aiff came to the Holy Land as pilgrims in the days of the beloved Guardian before they pioneered to Africa. Amatu'l-Bahá was most anxious to see them again. They have been in Africa for over thirteen years. We were able to spend some time with both the American family living there as well as with some of the very devoted local friends, one of whom said to Ruhiyyih Khánum: "In my tribe there is a custom when a young man reaches the age of maturity and it is time for him to leave his father's home and build a home for himself, his father gives him a handful of grain with which to start his life. This is a cause of blessing throughout his life. Now your loving kindness to me has this same value in my spiritual life."

Again we flew by chartered plane over the desert to make our connection with the passenger service for Cape Town where Amatu'l-Bahá was met by some of the pioneers. During our five day stay we visited many friends in different places. In Maitland, a colored residential area, she met with a large group of devoted and lively believers.

The next day a gala spirit prevailed for it was the occasion for Ruhiyyih Khánum to lay the foundation stone for the erection of their Bahá'í Center. The ladies served delicious refreshments. The land was donated by a devoted believer who had suffered much opposition from his Muslim relations and neighbors, who, at the passing of his wife, went so far as to carry off her body and bury it themselves. Amatu'l-Bahá, with her exquisite taste and sensitive heart, had brought a beautiful piece of rose quartz especially for the cornerstone of this new Hájíratu'l-Quds which will fulfill one of the goals of the Nine Year Plan. The hearts of all were uplifted in prayer and thanksgiving for the unending bounties of Bahá'u'lláh which are continuously showered upon His chosen ones.

In Stellenbosch, another colored community, we met with a group of devoted believers in the home of one of the Bahá'í families. An outstanding aspect of this city was that entire families accepted the Cause as a unit, and as a result there are active men, women and youth Bahá'ís!

In the city of Bredasdorp we were able to meet in the home of a new but most devoted Bahá'í, who, with her daughters, form the hub of the community there. Again, this community is classified as "colored"; we found them everywhere a warm, intelligent and gifted group of people, receptive to the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and very staunch and loyal once they had accepted it. These believers are not only eager to know the laws of Bahá'u'lláh, but to obey them. One main concern is how to get rid of the "Toddy system" introduced generations...
ago in Africa. This system means that employees, whether on a farm or in the factory, are paid partly in a ration of cheap wine or spirits. As a result, from very early childhood, people become addicted to drinking and often before the age of maturity many are alcoholics.

In the small town of Hawston, 30 kilometers from the southernmost tip of Africa, we met with a small but devoted group of believers. Again, a woman and her daughter are the strong motive power for the activities there. The young daughter conducts a Bahá'í children's class weekly which attracts many non-Bahá'í children, and through them the parents are reached.

On a private estate owned by whites, the Bahá'í employees have received permission to hold their meetings; it was there they received Amatu'l-Bahá with much warmth and joy. The example of the personal character of this colored Bahá'í in whose home we met, has undoubtedly been the cause of not only winning the approval of his European employer but also of attracting many African friends. Before accepting the Faith he was nicknamed "Bottle Martin" as he drank continuously. When he became a Bahá'í he emptied his bottle in front of his house and has never touched it since! No wonder the Teachings exhort us: "Let deeds not words be your adornment."

In these meetings Amatu'l-Bahá talked particularly on the universality of the Faith, telling the friends about other Bahá'ís throughout the world, as one feels here a sense of isolation more than at other places. Rúhíyyih Khánum was asked to tell about the Bahá'ís in other parts of Africa and other parts of the world. In encouraging and heartwarming words she enabled these friends to feel that we are all members of one large, tightly knit and loving family of Bahá'u'lláh.

Just before we left Cape Town for Johannesburg we heard of a sad car accident involving a lovely Bahá'í girl, daughter of an English pioneer family, who was seriously hurt. The united, loving response of the entire community of the city, among all ethnic groups to this calamity was beautiful to behold. After a week of unconsciousness, a broken skull, a deep concussion of the brain, she made a seemingly miraculous recovery. Undoubtedly this was due to prayer—the prayers of The Universal House of Justice and of the community. Individually and collectively, the believers in their homes prayed round the clock until the danger was averted. What great and powerful force is the unity and prayers in this Cause of God! If only we hold onto these in every move in our lives we shall witness miracles upon miracles which will not only strengthen our faith but will undoubtedly draw that multitude of receptive souls who eagerly seek such manifestations of the power of God.

From July 19 to August 4, Amatu'l-Bahá visited the Bahá'ís of Lesotho. The two Counsellors, Shidan Fat'he-Aazam and Bahiyyih Ford accompanied her on most of this tour. A press conference was held which resulted in a good article about the Faith. Rúhíyyih Khánum and Mr. Fathe-Aazam were received by the Minister of State and this official interview was reported over the national radio.

Interviews with the King of Lesotho

On the afternoon of July 27, His Majesty King Motlholei Moshoeshoe II received Amatu'l-Bahá in an audience at which tea was served. His Majesty is a highly educated young man brought up mostly in England, much loved by the people of Lesotho. Rúhíyyih Khánum told His Majesty about our trip, touching briefly on the Faith. She spoke about her strong belief in the spiritual destiny of Africa and her hopes for the future services its people would render humanity. The King became
very interested and asked her if the Baha’i Faith was progressing in his country or whether we knew there were still many people here who believed in their ancestral religion. Ruhíyyih Khánum replied, “Yes, the Faith is spreading somewhat in Lesotho. Then she continued: “I was born and brought up in a Christian environment, although my parents were Baha’is and I have always been a Baha’i; but my background and environment were all Christian. Then after my marriage I lived in the Muslim environment of Palestine. Since the Jewish State of Israel was formed I have lived in close contact with the Jewish religion. I have come to the conclusion that the followers of these three great religions are among the most prejudiced and intolerant people in the world. Later on, coming in contact with the Buddhists I realized they are much more tolerant than the Christians, Jews or the Muslims. The Hindus are extremely tolerant. But of all the people of the world I have come to the conclusion that the so-called pagans are the most tolerant and lack any real religious prejudice and that is why I enjoy teaching them more than any others.”

She went on to say that after three years of traveling in Africa “I have become convinced that the African is fundamentally without prejudice; his only prejudice is tribal because that is his immediate historical background. He has no racial or religious prejudice. Often in Africa I have seen among the not too highly educated people, members of two quite different religions such as Catholics and Muslims married and living in harmony.”

His Majesty obviously found these ideas new and listened with wrapped interest. Amatu’l-Bahá had brought him a beautiful gift of a Persian hand painted dish and saucer, wrapped in the Persian manner in a beautiful silk scarf. The King, who had been a guest of the Shah of Persia at the Persepolis celebrations, opened this gift and for a moment held his breath in sheer pleasure at the sight. Shyly he asked “Do you think you could wrap this up again in the same way so that when my wife comes back from the country she may have the same pleasure I had in opening this beautiful gift?” So Ruhíyyih Khánum wrapped this gift in her exquisite way.

During their conversation she told him that she loved his country and praised the Lesotho huts, saying she was so impressed by the houses that she would like to come and live in Lesotho, build herself one or two typical Lesotho mud huts, buy a horse to ride and eat the delicious mutton and cornmeal of the country every day. The King was very surprised at this. It was evident that it had never occurred to him that the native houses were beautiful or desirable in any way! He assured her she would be most welcome. He made no move to end the interview and seemed to be enjoying the conversation very much. But after more than an hour, Amatu’l-Bahá made her excuses and we left, accompanied by His Majesty with great courtesy to the front door.

(To be continued)

Continued Report of an Indian Pioneer in Tanzania

Mr. A. K. Forudi, early in January 1973 continued his pioneering activities in Northern Tanzania. (See story in Baha’i News, March 1973, page 11.) Accompanied by Mr. Aroon Siosi, they started from Mwanza, on the southern shore of the wide Lake Victoria and crossed that large body of water by ferry, then by bus, continued westward until they reached Kigoma, a beautiful area on the edge of Lake Tanganyika, which borders on Zambia, Zaire and Burundi. At Kusuba village they met many Baha’is who were refugees. Forty of them rushed out to greet the two travelers. Baha’i songs rang out and echoed from the surrounding mountains. Here they stayed for two weeks, held deepening classes and attended committee meetings.

Then the two started to Zash by boat; a terrifying experience as the boat was planned to accommodate only forty persons while about a hundred came aboard, quarreling and jostling each other. The odor was nauseating, the water churning, and this continued for nine hours. Mr. Forudi was chanting “The Remover of Difficulties” and thought of a terrible sea voyage made by the Báb. When they finally landed at night, they had to walk three miles to reach the hut of a Baha’i friend for lodging.

In the morning the Baha’is of the village had gathered and were singing songs of welcome. After speaking with them for some time the two travelers started again for Zash, crossing a river and climbing a mountain. Com-
near to that village they heard shouting “Allāh-u-Abhá” from all sides. About a hundred Bahá'ís had gathered to meet them, and started embracing them and shaking hands, some singing, some dancing. It was such a joyous occasion that Mr. Forudi, recalling a visit to the “Village of 'Abdu'l-Bahá”, Kunjungan, in Burma, suggested that this be called “The village of the beloved Guardian”.

The next day when the time came to go farther, the villagers accompanied them for several miles, singing. This aroused the interest of surrounding villagers who came to see what was going on and learned of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

On reaching Kigoongu a large meeting was called, attended by more than a hundred persons who asked many interesting questions. Afterward a Muslim priest came with his followers to discuss the Faith. His intention, it became evident, was not to investigate the truth but to misguide his followers.

The next day, Mr. Siosi and Mr. Forudi returned to Kigoma in the same boat in which they came; but this time the water was calmer and the voyage was not so difficult. They planned a series of deepening classes and sent invitations to persons who could read and write. These were attended by thirty-two people and sessions consisted of lessons on the history of the Faith, especially the stories of the martyrs, proofs of the Faith, and Bahá'í administration. Among the refugee women Mr. Forudi noticed that before they began they would kiss the prayer book then chant most melodiously. But he noticed the prayer book was held upside down, showing the prayers were memorized. The singing at these sessions reminded them of the time when Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the Siyáh-Chál and the friends sang in such a manner as to melt the heart of the powerful King who asked where it was coming from and was informed by the prison guards that it was the recitation of the Bábis in jail.

They had been joined by Auxiliary Board member Mr. Festus who assisted in all the classes and continued the work outlined by the National Spiritual Assembly until Mr. Forudi had to leave because his permit to stay in Kigoma had expired.

On the return trip travel was first by boat then by train to Tahuru where he was to take a bus for Shinyangwu. But because the train was late, he missed the bus, and later learned it had a serious accident, from which providentially, he was spared. After waiting almost all night for another bus, Mr. Forudi was surprised to hear his name called—two Bahá'ís he did not know were anywhere near found him, Mr. Shapur Yananegi and Mr. John Mosher. They decided to spend several days together teaching nearby and were able to deepen more of the believers.

A Local Spiritual Assembly was formed at Mtibi and some proclamation work done in Taboru. They went to the Taboru refugee camp and were allowed to stay three days. On the second day while teaching, they were surprised by a man who announced himself as a Bahá', and was accompanied by eight other Bahá'ís, all from Burundi or Zaire. They did not know of Bahá'ís at the refugee camp, so the reunion was touching, as if the lost sheep had been found. The Assistant Commander was very helpful and the refugees were safe under the protection of this commander and the Government of Tanzania. They were able to form another Local Assembly before Mr. Forudi's departure.

“Blessed is the spot . . . and the cave . . . where mention of God hath been made and His praise glorified.” Alejandro Flores of Chuqui Chukui, Bolivia, standing in front of his cave home, has declared love for Bahá'u'lláh and entered the Faith.
IN BIAFRA, SERVING MANKIND

Two devoted Baha’is, Dr. and Mrs. Farzin Davachi, after twenty-two months of combined teaching the Baha’i Faith and serving mankind in Biafra, Nigeria, have now returned home and are located in New Providence, New Jersey.

When the Biafran conflict broke out and the urgent call came for assistance, the Davachis responded immediately. Dr. Davachi then was Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Pediatric Cardiology at the School of Medicine at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee. Nancy, his wife, formerly Nancy Ozias of Short Hills, was a medical social worker, also at Meharry.

On arrival, they, with the nineteen others on their team, were faced with staggering problems; the devastated hospital required reconstruction, new equipment and staffing; malnourished children were suffering from a variety of infections and nutritional problems. The pediatric ward was overcrowded, not only with patients but their mothers, brothers and sisters, who all expected to stay for the length of the stay of the patient! Dr. Davachi and his staff were on call at all hours, every day.

During a national cholera epidemic in 1971 the team rehabilitated a nearby building for treating infectious diseases. They also participated in training Nigerians (for replacing their jobs) and in establishing a school of nursing for the state.

Nancy Davachi helped to set up a library for the Government Secondary School and was Secretary of the National Teaching Committee of the Baha’is in Nigeria. Dr. Davachi was Chief Physician of the Kaiser Foundation International-United States Agency for International Development medical team.

Naturally in a country torn by war, life was not easy. Often there was no running water or electricity and an extremely limited diet. Their compensation was the enthusiasm with which the Teachings were received by those who had suffered, and observing the power of the Teachings to eliminate barriers of prejudice and antagonism between peoples. Both Davachis were impressed by the spiritual sensitivity and mental good health of the Nigerians, and the upbringing of children who are never left alone as infants.

Left to right: Dr. Farzin Davachi, the Vice-President of the Kaiser Foundation International, and the Governor of the Rivers State of Nigeria.

Dr. Davachi examining one of his patients in the pediatric ward.

Dr. Farzin Davachi and his wife Nancy with their oldest son who was a six week old pioneer to Nigeria, the youngest in the country. A second son was born five weeks after their return to the United States. The greatest desire of the Davachis now is to return to Africa as soon as they can find another assignment.
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Pioneers in Portugal

In Portugal, a group of pioneers from the United States who came to assist in fulfilling the Nine Year Plan goals for that country. In the group are John Bradley, H. Leland Cuellar, June Ritter, Carol Sherman and Mary Braga with Portuguese friends. They are preparing to break up into teaching teams and go on teaching trips.

Deepening Study Course in the community of Palca, Chiquisaca, Bolivia, being taught by four native teachers: Meleton Gallarde, Agustin Gareca, Facunde Cardoso and Franciscana Manuelani, devoted, experienced Indian teachers. They have said: "We start with prayers, we glorify God, then we study."

(Continued from page 13)

A party Sunday evening officially closed the Conference with much joy and laughter and fellowship among the friends.

During the days that followed, the Chadian friends, in consultation with the National Teaching Committee of Cameroon, arranged an extensive teaching trip on their route home. Accompanied by traveling teacher Jean Christophe Casu they hoped to visit the existing Bahá'í localities in the North Eastern part of Cameroon and open many more. Some of the Central African friends, accompanied by Samuel Akele, were also able to do some teaching in Eastern Cameroon as they started on their long journey home.

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Universal House of Justice Members

NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ALI NAKHJAVANI, HUSHMAND FATHEAZAM, AMOZ GIBSON, IAN SEMPLE, DAVID HOFMAN, CHARLES WOLCOTT, BORRAH KAVELIN, DAVID RUHE, HUGH CHANCE.

—UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa, Israel

3 May 1973
Rūhíyyih Khánum gives information on election procedures to delegates on the first morning of the International Convention. The chief tellers are standing on stage and seated at right are the secretaries of the Convention.

Delegate casts ballot during election for The Universal House of Justice.
Some of the more than 500 delegates who attended the Third International Convention.

Delegates in group discussion on progress of the Bahá'í Faith during the next decade.
To the Baha'is of the World

Dearly-loved Friends,

We announce with joyful and thankful hearts the completion in overwhelming victory of the world-encompassing Nine Year Plan. The Army of Light has won its second global campaign; it has surpassed the goals set for expansion and has achieved a truly impressive degree of universal participation, the twin objectives of the Plan. With gratitude and love we testify to the unceasing confirmations which Baha'u'llah has showered upon His servants, enabling each and every one of us to offer Him some part of the labor, the devotion, the sacrifice, the supplication which He has so bountifully bestowed.

At this Centenary of the Revelation of the Most Holy Book, the Community of the Most Great Name has paid its tribute of victory to His feet, acknowledging that it is He Who has bestowed it. To the beloved Guardian, the Most Holy Guardian of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, has been formulated and published a Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitab-i-Aqdas—completed the considerable progress made by the beloved Guardian in this task—is being published on the Centenary of the Revelation of the Most Holy Book, which, as already announced, is to be celebrated both in the Holy Land and throughout the Baha'i world during this Ridvan.

The Constitution of The Universal House of Justice, hailed by Shoghi Effendi as the Most Great Law of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, has been formulated and published. The gardens in Bahji and on Mount Carmel have been significantly extended and plans have been approved for the befitting development and beautification of the entire area of Baha'i property surrounding the Holy Shrines in Bahji and Haifa.

World-Wide Proclamation

The world-wide proclamation of the Faith, an intensive and long-to-be-sustained process initiated during the third phase of the Plan, opened in October 1967 with the commemoration of the Centenary of Baha'u'llah's Proclamation to the kings and rulers which had centered around His revelation of the Suriy-i-Muluk in Adrianople. This historic event was commemorated at six Intercontinental Conferences held simultaneously around the planet. A further nine Oceanic and Continental Conferences held during the Plan gave great impetus to this proclamation program. The fifteen Conferences were attended by nearly 17,000 believers and attracted great publicity by press and radio and were made the occasion of acquainting dignitaries and notabilities with the Divine Message. The presentation, on behalf of The Universal House of Justice, to 142 Heads of State, of a specially produced book containing the translation into English of the Tablets and passages of Scripture in which Baha'u'llah, some hundred years before, had issued His mighty Proclamation to mankind, initiated this campaign, which will continue long beyond the end of the Nine Year Plan.

The outstanding development in the relationship of the Baha'i International Community to the United Nations was the accreditation of that Community as a non-governmental organization with consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The Baha'i International Community now has a permanent representative at United Nations and maintains an office in New York.

The Institution of the Learned

The loved and revered Hands of the Cause have rendered sacrificial and distinguished service throughout the Nine Year Plan. 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 revolu-
tionalized 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. They have added distinguished works to the literature of the Faith.

The goal of the Plan to develop “The institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, in consultation with the body of the Hands of the Cause, with a view to the extension into the future of its appointed functions of protection and propagation”, was accomplished in stages, leading to the establishment of eleven Continental Boards of Counsellors, whose members were appointed by The Universal House of Justice and who assumed responsibility for the Auxiliary Boards for protection and propagation. The beloved Hands no longer remained individually identified with any particular continent—except insofar as their residence was concerned—but extended their sphere of action to the whole planet. The Continental Boards of Counsellors, advised and guided by the Hands of the Cause of God and working in close collaboration with them, have already, in their brief period of office, performed outstanding and distinguished services.

Three Potentious Developments

Three highly potentious developments have taken place during the Nine Year Plan, namely, the advance of youth to the forefront of the teaching work, a great increase in the financial resources of the Faith, and an astonishing proliferation of inter-National Assembly assistance projects.

The first, the heartwarming upsurge of Bahá’í youth, has changed the face of the teaching work: impenetrable barriers have been broken or overpassed by eager teams of young Bahá’ís, dedicated and prayerful, presenting the Divine Message in ways acceptable to their own generation from which it has spread and is spreading throughout the social structure. The entire Bahá’í world has been thrilled by this development. Having rejected the values and standards of the old world, Bahá’í youth are eager to learn and adapt themselves to the standards of Bahá’u’lláh and so to offer the Divine Program to fill the gap left by the abandonment of the old order.

The vast increase in the financial resources of the Faith called for under the Plan has evoked a heartwarming response from the entire Bahá’í community. Not only the Bahá’í International Fund but the local, national and continental Funds of the Bahá’í world have been sacrificially supported. This practical proof of the love which the friends bear for the Faith has enabled all the work to go forward—the support of pioneers and travelling teachers, the raising of Mashriqu’l-Adhkár and acquisition of Bahá’í properties, the purchase of Holy Places in the Cradle of the Faith and at the World Centre, the development of educational institutions and all the multifarious activities of a vigorous, onward-marching, constructive world community. It is of interest that sixty percent of the international funds of the Faith is used to assist the work of National Spiritual Assemblies, to promote the teaching work and to defend the Cause against attacks in many parts of the world.

Without such help from the Bahá’í world community many National Assemblies would be paralyzed in their efforts of expansion and deepening. The administration of Huqúqu’lláh has been strengthened in preparation for its extension to other parts of the world. An International Deputization Fund was established at the World Centre to assist pioneers and travelling teachers who were ready to serve but unable to provide their own expenses, and this Fund was later extended to the support of projects on national homefronts. Contribution to the Fund is a service which will never cease to be open to all believers; the growth of the Faith and the rise of its Administrative Order require an ever-increasing outpouring of our substance, commensurate in however small a measure with the bounty and liberality of the outpouring of our substance, commensurate in however small a measure with the bounty and liberality of the

When the Plan was launched 219 assistance projects were specified whereby national communities would render financial, pioneering or teaching aid to others, generally remote from them geographically. The intention was to strengthen the bonds of unity between distant parts of the Bahá’í world with different social, cultural and historical backgrounds. At the end of the Plan more than 650 such projects had been carried out. Intercommunity cooperation has been further developed in the field of publishing Bahá’í literature, notably in Spanish and French and the languages of Africa. A vast field of fruitful endeavor lies open in this respect.

In some countries due to lack of freedom, to actual repression in others, to legal and physical obstacles in yet others, certain particular goals—mainly those requiring incorporation or recognition—could not be won. Foreseeing this, The Universal House of Justice called upon national communities in lands where there is freedom to administer and promulge the Faith, to formulate their own goals and thus ensure that the overall goals would be won. It has proved still impossible to begin work on the erection of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in Tbríz, but contracts have been signed for the preparation of detailed drawings, geological surveys are being made, and everything made ready for immediate action whenever the situation in Persia becomes propitious.

Additional Events

During the period of the Nine Year Plan a number of important and interesting events, not directly associated with it, have taken place. First and foremost was the commemoration, in the precincts of the Qiblah of the Bahá’í world, of the centenary of the arrival at the prison-city of ‘Akka, as foretold in former Scriptures, of the Promised One of all ages.

The Mansion of Mazra‘ih, often referred to by the beloved Guardian as one of the “twin mansions” in which the Blessed Beauty resided after nine years within the walled prison-city of ‘Akka, and dear to the hearts of the believers by reason of its associations with their Lord, has at last been purchased together with 24,000 square metres of land extending into the plain on its eastward side.

The raising of the obelisk, marking the site of the future Mashriqu’l-Adhkár on Mount Carmel, completes a project initiated by the beloved Guardian.

The decision has been made and announced to the Bahá’í world, and the initial steps have been taken for the erection on Mount Carmel, at a site on the Arc as purposed by Shoghi Effendi, of the building which shall serve as the Seat of The Universal House of Justice.

The progress of the Cause of God gathers increasing momentum and we may with confidence look forward to the day when this Community, in God’s good time, shall have traversed the stages predicated for it by its Guardian, and shall have raised on this tormented planet the fair mansions of God’s Own Kingdom wherein humanity may find succour from its self-induced confusion and chaos and ruin, and the hatreds and violence of this time shall be transmuted into an abiding sense of world brotherhood and peace. All this shall be accomplished within the Covenant of the everlasting Father, the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh.

—The Universal House of Justice
J. E. Esslemont—Named a Hand of the Cause at His Passing

By O. Z. Whitehead

John Ebenezer Esslemont, the youngest son of his father who had the same name, was born on May 19, 1874, at Fairford Cults, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. After first attending Ferryhill public school and afterwards Robert Gordon College, he went to Aberdeen University. On his graduation from there with honors in April 1898, he received not only the degree of Bachelor of Medicine and of Surgery, but also a Philip Research Scholarship. During part of 1899, he did valuable research work at Bern and Strassburg.

In December of 1899, he became assistant to Professor Cash at Aberdeen University. A little more than a year later, he moved to Australia. While living in that country, on December 19, 1902, he married. At the end of two years, because of ill health, he returned to Aberdeenshire.

On finding that the climate there did not improve his health, he went to South Africa and stayed in that country for five years. In 1908, he again returned to Scotland and accepted the position of resident medical officer at the Home Sanatorium, Southbourne, Bournemouth.

In 1912, while practicing there he, along with some other doctors, became interested in State medical service. Two years later he wrote a paper on this subject and read it before the British Medical Association. The Advisory Committee on Public Health gave his paper careful attention and found it very useful.

Always a seeker after truth, Dr. Esslemont had not yet found a belief that he could accept.

One Sunday in December of 1914, he had dinner in London with another doctor, also interested in State medical service, and his wife. On this occasion he heard from this lady, for the first time in his life, the word "Baha'i." Because of his eager response she gave him the Bahá'í Message. She spoke too of her meeting with 'Abdu'l-Baha during His historic trip to London in 1911.

In answer to Dr. Esslemont's request for literature, she lent him some pamphlets.

This conversation with her and his reading of the pamphlets led him to make a thorough investigation of the Cause. Without delay he wrote to the Bahá'í Assembly of London for further information and bought all of the Bahá'í books in English that he could find. He studied these books so intensely that soon, in a series of letters to the lady who had given him the Message, he was making suggestions of books that he thought might interest her.

In February of 1916, about fourteen months after he had first heard of the Cause, he wrote a long letter to a believer in Manchester. A touching portion of this letter concludes:

Ah! may people all over the world soon turn to God, as revealed in Bahá'u'lláh, with humble and contrite hearts, begging for His forgiveness and blessing and imploring His mercy and bounty! Then shall His Kingdom come in men's hearts and the whole world become one home and all mankind one family.

Dr. Esslemont became the first Bahá'í in Bournemouth. His teaching in that town was largely responsible for the establishment of its first Spiritual Assembly. Elected its first Chairman, and also Vice-Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of England, he served in both offices until he left that country in 1924.

Deeply convinced of the necessity for the establishment of an international language that must play an important part in the achievement of the unity of mankind, he learned to read, speak and write in Esperanto. Anxious to study carefully all the Bahá'í books that he could find and not content just to read those available in English, he also took the pains to learn Persian.

Keenly aware of the scarcity of literature in English, and of his own difficulty in finding the knowledge that he wanted, he decided to try and write a book that might help others in their spiritual journey.

In a letter Shoghi Effendi wrote to Major W. Tudor-Pole in Cairo, Egypt, from Haifa, Palestine, on December 17, 1918, he included the translation that he had made the day before of the following Tablet by the Master:

To his honor, Dr. Esslemont—Upon him be greeting and praise! O thou lover of all mankind!

Verily, have I chanted thy verses of praise to God, inasmuch as He hath illumined thine eyes with the light of guidance, the light of the oneness of the world of humanity; so much so that thy heart overflowed with the love of God, and thy spirit was attracted by the fragrance of God, and I supplicate divine Providence that thou mayest become a torch to that gathering, so that the light of knowledge might shine out from thee, that thou mayest be confirmed to act in accordance with the significances of the Hidden Words and strengthened by God under all circumstances.

Concerning the book you are editing, send me a copy thereof. . . . Convey my greetings to the respected maid-servant of God, . . . . . . . .

I pray the Lord to support thee in the service of all humankind, irrespective of race or religion. Nay rather, thou shouldst deal with all according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, which are like unto life to this Glorious Age.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(Signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.

On January 9, 1919, Dr. Esslemont sent a copy of this precious Tablet to the editors of Star of the West. He gave them permission either to print it or to use it as they saw fit.

In the same letter he wrote: "We are delighted to
welcome your President (Woodrow Wilson) to Europe and hope that great good will result from his visit. There will be much unrest and fermentation in Europe for years yet, I expect, but unrest is better than the placid acquiescence with vile conditions with slums, drunkenness, prostitution, sweated labor, and profligate extravagance; and it seems to me that on the whole, things are moving towards a better state of affairs towards the Most Great Peace."

Following the Master's suggestion in His Tablet, Dr. Esslemont sent Him a rough draft of the first nine chapters of his book. After the Master had read them, He invited Dr. Esslemont to visit Him in Haifa and bring along the entire manuscript. Most happy to do this, during the winter of 1919-1920, he spent two months and a half there as the Master's guest.

Dr. Esslemont has written, "'Abdu'l-Bahá discussed the book with me on various occasions. He gave me several valuable suggestions for its improvement, and proposed that, when I had revised the manuscript, He would have the whole of it translated into Persian, so that He could read it through and amend or correct it when necessary." In an appealing description of the Master's daily life at that time when He was seventy-six, Dr. Esslemont has stated: "His unfailing patience, gentleness, kindliness and tact, made His presence like a benediction." Rúhíyyih Khánum has informed us that during his visit Dr. Esslemont not only got to know Shoghi Effendi, but also collaborated with him and some other believers in the translation of an important Tablet by the Master.

On his return home Dr. Esslemont completed the revision of his book and sent it to the Master. After its translation into Persian, He was able to correct three and a half chapters (I, II, V. and part of III) before His passing.

In the spring of 1920, Shoghi Effendi came from Haifa to England and entered Oxford. The friends knew well that his reason for doing this was to gain more knowledge of English so that he would be able to translate the Tablets of the Master and all the Holy Writings into this language with even more facility than before.

Dr. Esslemont was one of the dear friends who welcomed Shoghi Effendi to England "with genuine warmth and affection, . . . He visited Dr. Esslemont more than once at his private sanitorium in Bournemouth." A charming photograph shows them, seated together, relaxed and happy, on the front piazza.

Some years after the passing of Dr. Esslemont, Shoghi Effendi wrote to a friend, "I shall ever recall the happy and restful days I spent at Bournemouth in the company of our departed friend, John Esslemont, and I will not forget the pleasant hours we spent together while taking our meals in the sanatorium.

On November 29, 1921, at 9:30 in the morning the following cable reached the office of Major Tudor-Pole in London at 61, St. James Street, near to Piccadilly, and a short distance from Buckingham Palace.

CYCLOMETRY LONDON

HIS HOLINESS 'ABDUL-BAHA ASCENDED ABHA KINGDOM. INFORM FRIENDS.

—GREATEST HOLY LEAF."

Urgently asked by Major Tudor-Pole to come to his office, Shoghi Effendi arrived there at midday. After he had read the heartbreaking news in an open telegram he collapsed. Miss Grand, a believer from Toronto, Canada, living in London, took him to her home and put him to bed for several days. She, Lady Blomfield, his sister, Rouhangeze, and some other believers helped look after him.

Without delay Dr. Esslemont wrote him the following warm and understanding letter.

Dearest Shoghi,

It was indeed a "bolt from the blue" when I got Tudor-Pole's wire this morning. "Master passed on peacefully Haifa yesterday morning" . . . It must be very hard for you, away from your family and even away from even Baha'i friends. What will you do now? I suppose you will go back to Haifa as soon as possible. Meantime you are most welcome to come here for a few days . . . Just send me a wire . . . and I shall have a room ready for you . . . if I can be of any help to you in any way I shall be so glad. I can well imagine how heartbroken you must feel and how you must long to be at home and what a terrible blank you must feel in your life . . . Christ was closer to His loved ones after His ascension than before, and so I pray it may be with the Beloved and ourselves. We must do our part to shoulder the responsibility of the Cause and His Spirit and Power will be with us and in us.

Several days later, in a letter to a Bahá'í student, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "The friends have insisted on my spending a day or two of rest in this place with Dr. Esslemont after the shock I have sustained and tomorrow I shall start back to London and thence to the Holy Land." In February 1922, just a few months after the Master's passing, Shoghi Effendi cabled the Guardian, "Convolescing satisfactorily testament received your's devotedly."

Despite his constant struggle against ill health Dr. Esslemont not only continued to teach both in person and in letters, and to fulfill his Bahá'í administrative duties, but also to help the National Bahá'í Assembly of England to prepare his book, which he now called Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era for publication in 1923 by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

It is certainly no exaggeration to state that this now rightly famous book written at a time when there was still a dearth of authentic literature in English, or in any Western language, and published twenty-one years before Shoghi Effendi's immortal history of the first century of the Bahá'í Era, God Passes By was published, has already served thousands of grateful believers in many countries as a much needed introduction to the history and teachings of the Bahá'í Cause.

The Guardian has referred to Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era as "the text book of the Faith" and said that it "would inspire generations yet unborn."

Marie, Queen of Rumania, the first member of Royalty to recognize the Station of Bahá'u'lláh, read this book first and felt that others should do the same. She called it "a glorious book of love and goodness."

This absorbing and comprehensive book contains such a large number of inspiring passages that it is hard to choose only a few from which to quote. In Chapter I entitled "The Glad Tidings," Dr. Esslemont clearly explained: "Bahá'u'lláh asked no one to accept His statements and His tokens blindly. On the contrary, He put in the very forefront of His teachings emphatic warnings against blind acceptance of authority, and urged all to open their eyes and ears, and use their own judgment, independently and fearlessly, in order to ascertain the truth."

In Chapter III "Bahá'u'lláh: The Glory of God," first published as a separate pamphlet, he has movingly written "From His place of confinement in distant 'Akka, Bahá'u'lláh stirred His native land of Persia to its depths and not only Persia; He stirred and is stirring the world. The spirit that animated Him and His followers was unfailingly courteous and patient, yet it was a
One day when his illness prevented him from working she said to him, "If you do not do anything, you are still doing much work every day, for your book is spreading the Baha'i Message in every land." During the last few months of his life among other tasks he was trying to complete a translation of his book into German.

On November 22, 1925, just a year and a few days after his arrival in Haifa he died.

Martha, with her usual refreshing simplicity, has written, "Dr. Esslemont's sudden passing into the Eternal Realm brings home to us the importance of appreciating the value of life. Is the value of time being used to the utmost and happily? Is our work efficient? If it is, whether in this world or in the next, we are joy-bringing to our friends and to all humanity."22

On November 30, 1925, in a deeply moving letter to the beloved of the West, Shoghi Effendi has described Dr. Esslemont:

To me personally he was the warmest of friends, a trusted counselor, an indefatigable collaborator, a lovable companion.

With tearful eyes I supplicate at the Threshold of Baha'u'llah—and request you all to join—in my ardent prayers, for the fuller unfolding in the realms beyond of a soul that has already achieved so high a spiritual standing in this world, for by the beauty of his character, by his knowledge of the Cause, by the conspicuous achievements of his book, he has immortalized his name, and by sheer merit deserved to rank as one of the Hands of the Cause of God.23

Note: Baha'u'llah and the New Era by J. E. Esslemont by 1963 had been published in English and the following languages: German, Assamese, Gujarati, Hindi, Kanarese, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Nepalese, Oriya, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Sindhi, Tamili, Teleguz, Kurdish, Portuguese, Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Bulgarian, Burmese, Chin, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Esperanto, Finnish, French, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Marathi, Norwegian, Polish, Rumanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Vietnamese (Annamese), Xosa, and Zulu (one chapter). It was in manuscript form in: Amharic, Swahili, Tagalog, Tigrigna, and Sesotho. In addition the volume was available for the blind in English, Japanese, and Esperanto. This total of almost fifty languages in which the book is now available, with five more in manuscript and with three languages printed for the blind, shows that for the majority of literate humanity a basic source of information on the Faith is now available.

(Information from Baha'i World, Vol. XIII)

5. Ibid. Page 76.
8. Ibid. Page 34.
10. Ibid. Page 49.
11. Ibid. Page 41.
12. Ibid. Page 91.
17. Ibid. Page 63.
18. Ibid. Page 96.
22. Ibid. Page 719.
Goals Achieved in the United States

More than 800 Local Spiritual Assemblies have reported forming in the last Ridván election of the Nine Year Plan, surpassing the U.S. goal of 600 Local Spiritual Assemblies set by The Universal House of Justice at the start of the Plan by more than 200.

A final count will not be available until the National Spiritual Assembly meets to review the results sometime after the National Convention, May 17-20.

Pioneers

The last pioneering institute of the Nine Year Plan was held at the National Bahá’í Center in Wilmette, March 22-25. It was attended by forty adults and youth, and four children.

This group which was assigned to countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, filled the remaining United States pioneering goals of the Nine Year Plan.

The four-day Institute was the tenth conducted in Wilmette since December 1970. These Institutes have trained and dispersed more than 230 pioneers.

In the past nine years, 1064 pioneers have traveled to foreign countries from the United States to settle. At the present time, there are 640 pioneers of the Nine Year Plan serving at their posts.

The training for the prospective pioneers includes classes on the history of pioneering, basic medicine, and dynamics of culture shock, and the Tablets of the Divine Plan. Continental Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members, and National Spiritual Assembly members assist with instruction at the sessions.

Just ten days before the start of the March Institute a cablegram from The Universal House of Justice instructed the United States to send four additional pioneers to Finland before Ridván. In less than a week, four volunteers—two of whom spoke Finnish—were recruited by the International Goals Committee and invited to the institute to prepare for their journey.

One family is traveling to the island of St. Helena, located off the west coast of Africa, to occupy long unfilled pioneering posts. When they arrive, the first Spiritual Assembly of St. Helena will be formed. This Assembly will be under the jurisdiction of the National Assembly of South and West Africa.

The majority of the United States pioneering assignments were given by The Universal House of Justice in 1969. More than 300 posts were assigned to the American Bahá’ís to fill. An additional 89 assignments were added by The Universal House of Justice in 1970.

—From The American Bahá’í, May, 1973

PIONEER TRAINING INSTITUTE—MARCH 22-25, 1973

Pioneer Training Institute held in Wilmette, March 22-25, 1973. Front row, left to right: Richard Hicks, Janet Cockcroft, Lea Bradley, Mrs. Liana Volk, Mrs. Roxanne Gardner, Mr. Gerald Gardner, Mr. Travis Griffith. Second row, left to right: Mrs. Brenda Hicks, Mrs. Gladys Tranter (Canadian believer), Brian Averill, Kathleen Zeislar, Jeffrey Kiely, Mr. Thomas Volk, Mrs. Barbara Griffith, Michael Lemon. Third row, left to right: Richard Tranter (Canadian believer), Mrs. E. Ruth Johnson, Mrs. Vida Grassie, Clare Katz, Nora Schwartz, Philip Johnson, William Michael Day, Herman Freeman. Back row: Mrs. Edda Rasekhy, Lynn Hippler, Rebecca Gullion, Gary Scott, Larry Lindner, Michael Burns, Ralph Grunwaldt. Others attending Institute not pictured here: Mrs. Anna Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. Troy Copsy and Miss Diane Susan Millard, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Harmsen, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Jorgensen, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Unterschuetz, Mr. Clyde Johnson.
Part of the group which celebrated the official recognition of the Faith in Rwanda and the achievement of its goals.

RWANDA ACHIEVES GOALS

The National Spiritual Assembly of Rwanda was formed at Rúdýán, 129 B.E., through the guidance of The Universal House of Justice, although this was not part of the original plan.

On March 26, 1972, the following additional goals were given to Rwanda by The Universal House of Justice:

1. Raise the number of localities to at least 50.
2. Increase the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies to at least 25.
3. Promote the teaching work among the Pygmies.
4. Incorporate at least one Local Spiritual Assembly.
5. Convert the local center into the National Hazíratu’l-Quds.
6. Acquire a national endowment and local endowment.
7. Acquire a Temple site.
8. Establish a teaching institute.

The National Teaching Committee planned a series of institutes in order to achieve these goals, also for deepening, encouraging the friends, and to consolidate all the Assemblies and centers. This project was successful.

After some months of activity, the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies increased to 38 and with 140 localities where believers reside, these exceeded the goals. The National Hazíratu’l-Quds, national and local endowments and the Temple site were acquired. The Temple site is well located near Kigali, above the hill just beside the main road.

The most important and difficult task was official recognition of the Faith. Rúbiyyih Khánum’s visit to Rwanda in January 1973 gave a new impetus to the Cause. On February 27, 1973, Dr. Aziz Navidi arrived in the country and by his activities in connection with the National Spiritual Assembly, finally obtained recognition on March 24, 1973. This joyous day was celebrated at the Baha’i Center with profound gratitude. Dr. Navidi was on fire with the love of God. He encouraged the friends to consciously work to acquire the virtues that Bahá’u’lláh wants each one of us to have, to study the Writings of the Faith, and to teach. Rwanda goals have been achieved, and thanks and praises given to Bahá’u’lláh.

—Mrs. Zaherah Taaid, Reporter

Faith Represented at Reception in Westminster Abbey

Mr. John Long, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United Kingdom was invited, with other religious leaders, to a United Nations Association reception held in Westminster Abbey on January 30, 1973. Also attending were the Archbishop of Canterbury; Cardinal Heenan; the Chief Rabbi; and the Heads of the Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Faiths.

Notices of this meeting appeared in the Leicester Mercury and the Stamford Mercury, the two newspapers which circulate in Rutland (Mr. Long lives on Oakham, Rutland), as well as in a front-page article in the New World, the UNA Journal, under the large headline, “Historic UNA Event . . . Religious Leaders Meet at the Abbey.”

In his appeal to the religious leaders for support of the United Nations, Mr. Erick Price Holmes, Vice Chairman of the National Executive of UNA, reminded his listeners of the principles of the UN Charter—to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, and to promote social progress and better standards of life—and remarked that “we have to seek to counter the prejudice and bitterness of past generations and change the hearts and minds of all peoples.”

Since the Bahá’í world community has from its inception not only shared these basic ideals but has been working to make them a reality, Mr. Price’s appeal found a responsive Bahá’í ear. The Bahá’ís of the United Kingdom have always given wholehearted cooperation to the UN through national and local activities—for example, the National Spiritual Assembly is a member of the United Kingdom Standing Conference for the Second United Nations Development Decade—making better known UN goals and programs. They have also participated, since 1948, in the activities of the Bahá’í International Community at the United Nations.
Mass Teaching Conference in Honduras

It was truly a historic gathering for Baha'i youth in Honduras sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly the first week-end in February, 1973. Friday evening and early Saturday morning Bahá'ís poured in from all points of the Honduran map; from Choluteca, from Olancho with pioneers Dale and Jeannie Morrow, from Siguatepeque with pioneers Khalil and Jackie Cornell, from Taulabe, from San Pedro Sula with pioneers Richard and Virginia James and Chris Ruhe, from Santa Rosa de Copan with pioneer Jere McKinney, making a total of seventy.

Orientation sessions were conducted by Jorge Pavon and Alfonso Hernandez with emphasis on how to mass teach and teach in the streets, prayers were said for the success of the Conference and teaching effort. Meals were served in shifts at a nearby small restaurant.

At the National Bahá'í Center after prayers groups were organized each with a leader, and a specific area assigned to invite people to the program that evening. In an hour and a half, 1500 invitations were given out in all the huge barrio on the side of a hill which is dusty or muddy, depending on the season.

After supper, the groups assembled for the program which took place in one corner of a large auto-mechanic shop in the center of the barrio. Everything was in order with pamphlets and declaration cards ready, the projector, the stage, the screen set, guitars and banjos tuned for the special occasion of the weekend. As the music began, the people came, a number impossible to count in the surrounding darkness. The people were respectful and friendly, the children calm. Songs were sung, duets played, the welcoming talk given. When the slide show began the people were enraptured. After the show, the group continued with more explanatory talks, handing out pamphlets, more music, and invitations to those who wished to accept the Faith. The count of souls enrolled—eighty-nine! Where there had been two Bahá'ís in the barrio, now there were eighty-nine baby Bahá'ís who would require the closest attention so that they would become functioning, active Bahá'ís.

The band slept soundly that night, boys at the Center and girls at various Bahá'í homes.

The next morning another planning session was held with the emphasis on street teaching. The goal was to enroll more than 100 in the twenty-four hour period. So phase three of the operation began as the youth returned to Barrio Reparto for a follow-up. The people were very friendly and receptive as they went about their Sunday morning business. Very few Bahá'ís were rebuked or put off. New Bahá'ís were given special materials for their deepening. Twenty-seven more souls were enrolled under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh.

Back at the Center, testimonials were given by many of the youth. The final count of new Bahá'ís was tabulated to the joy of everyone—almost 120 new Bahá'ís! Prayers were read. Finally, the youth and adults joined hands in a great circle and sang of their joy for being allowed to share and contribute in this great undertaking. It was a moment of priceless unity after winning an important victory for the Cause.

Then there was a rush to say goodbye and to climb aboard the pick-up truck or van that would take them home.

This, in brief, is what happened in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on the first weekend of February, 1973. . . .

—Chris Ruhe, Correspondent

Pioneer Richard James with some of the youth who attended the Conference.
As directed by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Pakistan, a Unit Convention was held on March 23, 1973, at Thatta, Islampur, Village of Khatanmal. Mr. Asrar Hussain, Mr. Meherban Jamshed, and Mr. A. C. Joshi went to Thatta for a preliminary survey and to make arrangements. After a sub-committee from the Thatta Assembly consulted at the Karachi National Office, a program was planned and two were delegated to go out to the surrounding fifty-six miles in jeeps and a bus to make the convention call.

On March 22, 1973, Mr. Behrooz Rowhani and Mr. A. C. Joshi went to Thatta to supervise the election and begin the convention. They arrived at about 9:00 p.m. and were received with loud Baha’i greetings all along the main bazaar through which they passed. About 400 turbanned believers came from villages of Mithi, Matli, Chachro, Tando Md. Khan, M’pur, Bathoro, Nagar, and others. Some had walked twenty-five miles to attend the Baha’i Mela (a term given to treat the convention as a festival, too). At about 10:00 p.m. they all squatted in the compound on dhurries and Mr. Joshi addressed them, explaining the purpose of the convention and generally explaining the Teachings of Mahatma Baha’u’llah.

At about 11:30 p.m. the meeting was directed to another gathering where 150 new believers were singing devotional songs. Among the musicians were well-known singers Bhagat Soomro of Tando Md. Khan, Maharaj Bachandas of Mithi and Mahant Janoo Shah. Mr. Joshi added two original compositions, Baha’i songs, in the style of the singers, and played on the ancient musical instruments, the kartal, the majira and the jaanj pakhawaj. The devotional song session went on until after midnight.

The next day about 550 new believers gathered under the shamiana (canopies) with Mr. Khatanmal as Chairman. Six headmen of the Bhils from far villages also attended. Baha’i prayers in Sindhi were recited by the Bhil children. On behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly, Mr. A. C. Joshi representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Pakistan at the Unit Convention of Thatta

A section of the believers at the Unit Convention of Thatta

Assembly, Mr. A. C. Joshi acted as Chairman of the Convention and spoke on the necessity of steadfast adherence to Baha’i administration, in spirit and form. As he spoke in the Sindhicum-Thari language, the headmen of several villages learned much which would assist them in teaching in their villages to the more than 56,000 Bhils in their areas.

After twenty-five delegates were elected, several proposals were made. Seth Khatanmal said he would be ready to offer space if the National Spiritual Assembly would open up a school in Thatta. Mr. Annoo and Mr. Pyaro, trained school teachers, offered to serve in such a school if given a subsistence allowance. A great need was felt for having a jeep for travel in the desert area of Tharparkar District, as the only other means of transportation are by bullock carts or on camel back.

The President of Pakistan has announced that a second Religious Minorities Communities Conference will be held when he returns from Iran.

The Convention was memorable.

Shoshone Translation Goal Achieved

Three prayers were to be translated into Shoshone to fill a goal of the Nine Year Plan. This has now been accomplished, the work of Zem Leon at Fort Hall, Idaho. As Shoshone is not a written language, it was a challenge to write it phonetically.

Youth Conference in Sweden

Baha’is from many countries are invited to attend the Nordic Youth Conference which will be held in Jokkmokk, Sweden from June 27 to 30, 1973. Jokkmokk is the cultural center for the Same (Lapp) population. The town is situated in the interior of northern Sweden a short distance north of the Arctic circle. During and after the conference, group teaching activity will be organized to spread the Message of the Faith to the local population.
Teaching in Coatepec, Mexico

The people of Mexico, called "sons of the shaking earth," inhabit a land of which only seven percent is suitable for cultivation. The hearts of the people preserve their traditions which are an amalgamation of over 800 years of native beliefs with the conquistador importation. Teaching in Mexico requires painstaking perseverance.

Donna Victora, of Coatepec, reminds one of the jeweler. For more than twenty-five years she has taught the Cause of God in her native land. She was introduced to the Faith by Louise (Lisa) Baker, and was visited by Hand of the Cause of God Dorothy Baker. She has received letters from both the Guardian and Ruhiyyih Khánum.

There is now an Assembly in Donna Victora’s city, Coatepec, Veracruz, just south of the capital of Jalapa; the first in this Gulf Coast state. This Assembly was formed in July, 1972. How was this attained? “Dios sabe”

Early in 1971 a teaching team traveled the four-hour distance from Puebla to Coatepec. They presented a program which included “Lamp Unto My Feet” with a Spanish tape recorded by Continental Counsellor Carmen Burañato. More than fifteen souls embraced the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh at that time.

More than six months later, in August 1971, after some informal visits by teachers, a second teaching team, including four summer projecteers, all girls, visited that center of coffee plantations and ignited a spark that has become a flame. This team took the nephew of Donna Victora, Juan Mendez, to the shore village of Chachalacas, just north of the city of Veracruz, for a combination teaching and recreation weekend. Three souls from this village of fishermen entered the ranks of the Faith during a proclamation program. It was here that Juan stated: “This is the first time I’ve known that Bahá’ís could have fun.” Juan has now journeyed to various spots through Mexico to teach and attend Bahá’í conferences. He is a school teacher, he is studying the flute and cello, as well as painting; he plays the drums and has his own band called “Naw-Rúz.”

In October 1971, under the direction of the Regional Teaching Committee, two pioneers made monthly teaching trips from Puebla to Coatepec to deepen and encourage the friends and to prepare for their first Local Spiritual Assembly. These trips continued until April 1972 when they drove to the Panama Conference. Due to some difficulty over visas, they were unable to return for the formation of this Assembly, and another pioneer went in their place; however the Assembly for various reasons could not be formed until the following July, and under the direction of a fourth team.

In January 1973, the original two pioneers returned to Coatepec—this time to preserve the Assembly. Out of the fifteen who had enrolled earlier, only six could now be found. The firmness of Rosalia Garcia Santander and her family was a joy to the teachers for she secured Bahá’í books and taught the Faith to her children. It was through this family that Angán has now embraced the Faith. He is a school teacher, and had the experience of seeing an impetuous student grab his prayer book and mockingly begin reading it to the class, only to be struck with reverence for the Message. The class was awed by the transformation this made in her.

The outpouring continues. The teaching perseveres. In time, if God wills, the water of the spirit will well up and form an oasis.
Concluding United Nations Day and Human Rights Day Reports of 1972

United Nations Day is annually observed on October 24, Human Rights Day on December 10.

INDIA

Nearly 4,000 people in all attended United Nations Day and Human Rights Day public meetings in 21 large cities such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, New Delhi, and Bangalore. A letter from the National Spiritual Assembly of India revealed successful meetings, all of which featured Bahá'í speakers with, in some cases, prominent persons who were not Bahá'ís serving as chairmen. In addition to hearing the speakers’ messages on the need for unifying world action and for recognition of the human rights of all people, those attending the meetings received literature supplied by both the United Nations Information Center and the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly. Publicity brought the attention of the general public to the words “Bahá’í” and “United Nations.”

ALASKA

A bold headline stretching across three columns of the Anchorage Daily Times announced, “Area Bahá'ís To Celebrate United Nations Day Here.” Since the celebration was to be in the form of an international dinner with entertainment, two large pictures were placed beneath the headline. One was of three Bahá’í ladies wearing various native costumes, while the second was of a Bahá’í woman preparing one of the foreign dishes which would be served. Included in the story was the presentation of several of the recipes which contributed to the success of the evening. Three hundred people responded by attending the dinner which was held at the armed forces branch of the YMCA. During the evening they heard talks by Professor Peter Blewett of the Community College and Mr. Hugh Chapman, a Bahá’í, and they were entertained with songs of other lands and a native dance.

In Spenard, Human Rights Day was observed with a tea in a private Bahá’í home. A film was shown and a brief talk given. An immediate result of the publicity was a telephone call requesting the Bahá’í view on the oneness of mankind.

SAMOA

The first United Nations Day observance in American Samoa a number of years ago was wholly sponsored by the Bahá’í community, with an invitation to the government to join in the activities. The Bahá’í community continued to be the organizer of observances supporting U.N. Day until two years ago when the government asked to be the sponsoring agent. Since then Suhayl Ala’í, a Bahá’í, has been appointed annually to the planning committee and each year has served as the committee’s secretary. He served in this capacity for UN Day 1972.

In Western Samoa the Bahá’í community has held observances of UN Day in private homes. This year the first attempt was made to participate in a public event. The Secretary of the National Teaching Committee contacted the United Nations office there, offering Bahá’í cooperation in any event the office might be planning. Nothing was programmed for 1972 as the office was in the midst of moving, but the UN office expressed delight with the Bahá’í offer, noting that it was the first time anyone outside the UN Office had shown interest in such an undertaking and anticipating a cooperative effort in 1973.

BRAZIL

An excerpt from one of the number of newspaper stories covering the Human Rights Day observance in Porto Alegre reflects the dignity of the occasion. “. . . The ideals which nourish the United Nations regarding the rights of men continue to be today the hope for a better world in which eventually the desired goal will be attained: world peace and the harmonious cooperation for social and economic progress of all the peoples. . . . The Bahá’ís of Porto Alegre, representing a non-govern­mental entity with the United Nations, and the Satelite-Prontidao, will celebrate together this world date with a program planned by the Cultural Department of Satelite-Prontidao.”

The program consisted of a panel of distinguished speakers, followed by a dance. The speakers were: Professor Zilah Totta, Congressman Carlos Santos, Congressman Alceu Collares, Dr. Cláudio Dias, Dr. Gilberto Brasil, and Mr. Rangwald Taetz (Bahá’í).

THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA

By being the only organization in the city of Panama supporting a public program on United Nations Day, the Bahá’í community of Panama City drew the notice of their fellow citizens in newspaper publicity given to the occasion. The event was a public meeting, with about 100 people attending. The speaker was Mr. Fred Berest, a Bahá’í of the Canal Zone. A welcome to a distinguished newcomer to the Canal Zone was the basis for a successful Human Rights Day event in Balboa. The event was sponsored by several Bahá’í communities. It was held at the Jewish Welfare Building. The speaker was Judge Darryl Brown, the first Negro judge to serve here. The report from Panama states: “Judge Brown had just arrived in the Canal Zone when plans were being formed for our Human Rights Day program. We were eager to extend a welcome to Mr. Brown, and what better way than to sponsor him in his first public appearance in Panama? His talk was excellent . . . We look forward to further association with him.”

GERMANY

A press conference was called by the Bahá’í community of Trier for the planned United Nations Day observance of that community. Resulting press stories, reaching 100,000 homes, not only presented details of the meeting, with mention of the Bahá’ís cooperation with the United Nations, but also informed the readers about the copper relief wall-hanging which the Bahá’ís of Trier had presented to the Bahá’í International Community office at the United Nations. A photograph of the copper relief was shown in the papers. The relief depicts a map of Trier in 1675. It is outstanding not only as an art decoration but also as a promotional item for this historic and picturesque to­ wn. In addition to the publicity and to the meeting, itself, the Bahá’ís further promoted the United Nations with the distribution of more than 1,000 copies of the address of the UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to youth.

A cooperative effort in Leinfelden between the German Society for the United Nations and the Bahá’í community was the holding of a public meeting with two speakers and a panel. The speakers were, from the German Society, Mr. Bartels, and from the Bahá’í
BAHA'I NEWS

community, Mr. Dieter Herth. Panelists joining the speakers after their formal talks were: Dr. Eugene Schmidt, the moderator; Erma Schmidt; Angelika Bauer; and Gishert Schaai. The latter two participated in the panel discussion, which was then followed with music. Posters and newspaper publicity informed the public about the meeting. About fifty people attended.

In Wuppertal, the Baha’is celebrate United Nations Day with a public meeting, featuring Professor Naqua. A newspaper reporter was present, asking numerous questions.

Human Rights Day in Munich was celebrated as the result of the work of the Students Committee of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Munich. The events consisted of a talk on a radio youth program; posters and publicity; a public meeting; and an exhibition at the University of Munich of posters and booklets provided by both the German Society for the United Nations and the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Munich. The president of the Section of Bavaria of the German Society for the United Nations was officially invited to the public meeting. He attended along with three other members of the Society. The speaker was a Baha’i, Dr. Eugen Schmidt. The title of his talk was “United Nations—Unified Mankind.”

REPORTS FROM SPAIN, SINGAPORE, SWAZILAND AND TANZANIA

In Spain public meetings were held for Human Rights Day in two places. The Baha’i community of Barcelona sponsored a public meeting, with Don Luis Ortuno talking on “Human Rights and Religion.” In Tarasa the Baha’is cooperated with the Association of the Friends of the United Nations in sponsoring a public meeting. The speaker was Economist Don Santiago Serra Gasulla. His subject was “The History of the Philosophy of the Rights and Duties of Man.”

From Singapore came the report of a newspaper account of the Baha’i support of United Nations Day; along with the mention of a book display at the National Baha’i Center.

In Swaziland, where United Nations Day is a public holiday, the Baha’is attended the government-sponsored observance which took in the front of the Parliament Building with the King and the Prime Minister present.

United Nations Day was recognized by three Baha’i communities in Tanzania, with public meetings held in Dar-es-Salaam and Arusha and a village meeting in Kigoma Area. Mr. James King, Director of United Nations Information Service, spoke at the meeting held in Dar-es-Salaam and entertained the audience of 100 people with a UN film “The Grand Design”, while in Arusha a speaker representing the United Nations shared the program with Mr. Festus Mukalama of the Baha’i community at a gathering of 200 people.

A LETTER TO BAHAI COMMUNITIES

A letter sent to the Baha’i International Office from Mr. David Exley of the United Nations Office of Public Information carried praise for Baha’i activities in 1972 supporting the U.N. The letter said, in part: “Once again you have sent us an impressive report on the world-wide observances sponsored by Baha’i communities on United Nations Day... May I express our sincere gratitude to all those Baha’i communities whose dedicated efforts are contributing to a wider appreciation of United Nations aims and activities...”

This letter was sent before Mr. Exley received the Baha’i International Community office’s report on Human Rights Day activities, which were as impressive as those of U.N. Day.

Latin-American Club Baha’i, Puebla, Mexico

The Latin American collegiate outpost entered its second year of operations on The University of the Americas campus, Puebla, Mexico, on October 1972. Taking on the full and courageous goal of proclaiming His Holy Name to the entire student body, the Club planned and executed a proclamation week that included four nightly meetings, a week-long art show, and two noted Baha’is speaking before four classes and one other society.

Jorge Angulo, a nationally known anthropologist, spoke on subjects of his field to two classes and to their society. One evening he presented a slide-talk program on Progressive Revelation using anthropological materials.

Dr. Edris Rice-Wray, daughter of Mrs. Howard Colby Ives, spoke before two sociological classes, once on Mexican population growth, and once on the Baha’i Faith, using the film “The New Wind.” In the evening, she participated in a panel discussion on “Men and Women: the Wings of the Bird of Humanity”. The Dean of Students, an anthropology teacher; a woman’s club organizer; and a member of Club Baha’i also shared in the discussion.

Chappie Angulo, the artist wife of Jorge, displayed three of her paintings from her series on the twelve principles and spoke on “Art in the Modern World”. As a result of this, she now has a full exposition on campus which opened April 2, 1973.

Proclamation Week included a constantly manned pamphlet table in the Student Center. On the final night Paul Lucas, Auxiliary Board member, spoke on “Who is Baha’u’llah?”

Before and after this Proclamation Week, regular Monday night meetings were held as well as lawn gatherings to share the Glad Tidings.

The winter quarter ushered in a time of challenge and crisis for Club Baha’i. Through circumstances as yet still uncertain, a movement arose within the University Administration to curtail the Club’s activities or prevent the Club from functioning at all. This movement is directed toward the expression of any religious thoughts on campus by student groups.

Though the Monday night meetings have come to an end, the Faith of God received unprecedented and clear publicity including a one-time Baha’i column in the school press. Letters of explanation were circulated to administrators with copies of the Baha’i statement on loyalty to governments. The Club members themselves found a new source of unity as they arose to the challenge of continuation of the Club.
The annual summer school held in Panama from February 9 through 18, 1973, blossomed out into an international school this year with a large group of eager young Bahá'ís from Costa Rica and Peru. The whole emphasis was on deepening both spiritually and in our knowledge of the laws of Bahá'u'lláh.

The curriculum included a thorough course on The Seven Valleys, lead by Dr. H. Ahmadiyyah, Auxiliary Board member from British Honduras, whose classes the first three days drew large crowds from Panama City, as well as the group actually staying in Villa Virginia, our National School. He pointed out the parallels between The Seven Valleys and The Hidden Words; both are mystical books that teach us "the object of existence." The Seven Valleys is a chart that shows us our way in the Bahá'í life. Each valley is a further growth in our progress to God.

The presence of our Counsellors for Central America, Mr. Alfred Osborne of Panama, Mrs. Carmen Burafato of Mexico and Mr. Artemus Lamb of Costa Rica, gave the opening days of the school a tremendous beginning. Each of them spoke and held classes. All stressed the need, more than ever, to teach and to deepen not only individuals but the Local Assemblies in their duties, preparing them for the work ahead.

Also Miriam and Richard Mirkovitch of Costa Rica gave most practical classes and discussion periods on the marital laws of Bahá'u'lláh. The youth and adults alike were made more solidly aware of the obligations of a Bahá'í.

The evenings were filled with varied programs of movies, slides, song sessions, talks by the Counsellors and dramatic improvisations, that very aptly demonstrated the need for local and national Assemblies to prepare themselves for the coming era when they will have to face, as Houses of Justice, the challenge both of teaching and of administering the Faith. This dramatic technique has an uncanny way of showing how unready we are for the tasks that are not only a part of the future, but are already with us.

One evening was devoted to an illustrated talk and discussion on the influence of religion on art. The speaker pointed out that art grew out of religious expression and the great art periods have always followed closely on the coming of a Manifestation. The talk had to cover, very briefly, almost a million years of history and pre-history, and, as the speaker pointed out, could only be an introduction to promote further study.

This year also we attempted to have a children's school apart from the adults. Villa Virginia, with its little stony brook, is kiddy heaven and much time was allowed to these predominantly city children to race and play, running free in the meadow and making dams and sailing boats in the brook. With all this they had some part in the devotions, discussed figures in the Faith, wrote a little Bahá'í song and did some nature study. The arts and crafts included making belts and kites as well as the usual drawing, painting and clay, and flower making, in which they helped an adult project. Gamboa, one of our new groups, made flowers and gave them out as invitations to a Bahá'í meeting. The children very happily contributed to this work. Always in Panama there are singing sessions and the children sang old songs and learned some new ones.

Devotions were held out of doors in the mornings, under the trees, and the early morning peace was full of the glorious words of the prayers and the soft singing, accompanied by auto-harp and guitar.

On Sunday, the school went en masse to the Temple for the afternoon service. Some of the international
students had never seen it before and were thrilled and moved by its serene beauty.

Truly we felt that our summer school came of age this year. The visiting youth contributed much to its success with their warm and loving cooperation. We took home with us new concepts, new understanding and new devotion to work that lies ahead. When the storms come we hope to be able, as the song says, “To stand there and teach anyhow!”

—National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Panama

The Panama Temple Today

How can one describe the wonder, awe and joy of this “House” where daily the “mention of God is made and His praise glorified.”?

Surely the blessings emanating from this most Holy House of Worship of Latin America, must be stirring the hearts of “all righteous men.” Some are unaware, but many others are stirred by its beauty and attracted to make the rather difficult trip up the mountain, many times families with several children coming on foot. They absorb the gifts of peace and love which is the reward of their effort. They find the tranquility and spiritual magnetism so powerful that most stand for a moment at the entrance exclaiming “belleza, bellisima” (beautiful, beautiful). Many respond to this power and sit for a moment in prayer or reading the literature which is given to all the visitors.

How exciting to see five or six bus loads of children (one time 700) fill the parking lot and the children come tumbling out like a great flock of birds. Soon, however, they are brought to order by their teachers or chaperones and after an introduction and explanation of the purpose of the Temple, march inside to gaze in wonder. Their favorite spot is from the upper story where the view is unobstructed for 360 degrees.

From one point the city of Panama and the Pacific Ocean, from another archway the Transisthmian Highway which bisects Panama and connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. From yet another side virgin mountain vistas stretch as far as visibility permits “belleza, belleza”.

Who are these people who come to visit the Temple?

The largest number, of course, are Panamanians as many as 600 to 1000 some weeks but there are others who are travelers from foreign countries, businessmen, Bahá’í relatives and friends. The Temple is one of the two or three outstanding attractions in Panama. One is the Panama Canal to which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá referred in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, wherein the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans come together through the Panama Canal. It is a center of travel and passage from America to the other continents of the world, and “in the future it will gain most great importance.”

Visitors from most of the countries of Europe, Canada and South America have come here, also from Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, Japan and India. Of course many Americans come, those who reside in the Canal Zone and many of their relatives and guests from the United States.

One day recently, a group of eleven Yugoslavian engineers from a hydroelectric project which is being built in Panama, came to the Temple. Their interest was intense, especially the professor of language attached to the school at the project. After their tour of the Temple, we invited them to tea at the Temple lodge where we answered their many questions. Francis Czerniejewski, who speaks Spanish pretty well now, carried on an hour’s conversation on the Faith with them. The professor saw a framed colored photograph of the Temple and asked for copy which we inscribed and gave to him. They all seemed most receptive and responsive. One of the two young women in the group spoke English well, and asked to correspond with us. The professor very sincerely invited us to visit him in Yugoslavia!

Another incident stands out. One day as I was guiding, two men were coming up the stairs speaking in a foreign language. Suddenly I recognized it as Polish. When they came near, I greeted them in Polish. They stopped short in astonishment. When they recovered from their surprise, they bombarded me with questions: “What are you, a Pole, doing in Panama? How do you happen to be here?” A wonderful door-opener!

The fact that I could say a few sentences in Polish pleased them so much. It developed that one of the gentlemen is a resident of Panama and a commercial representative for Poland and the other was a manufacturer’s representative on a week’s business trip. They took several pictures of the Temple and some literature. The gentleman from Poland seemed much more interested and asked many questions. The next day he telephoned and gave us his address in Warsaw and extended an invitation to visit him and his wife. How hospitable people are!

These past two weeks have been days of great expectancy. Panama is host to the United Nations Security Council which is debating the question of the Canal, and we have been anticipating visits from the delegates and their party. The National Spiritual Assembly has extended a formal written invitation to all the representatives and their delegation to visit the House of Worship.

One day last week two aides and their wives from the Russian delegation came. They made a very brief tour of the Temple, and were given the regular pamphlets in English and departed. A little later a lovely family of ten spent an hour with us, talking about the Faith, sharing our lunch at the house.

We must look ahead to tomorrow and a new opportunity to serve at this Holy House of Worship, as it stands overlooking Panama, stark white against the blue sky by day, glowing with luminescence by night, radiating a promise of hope and love of a truly new tomorrow.

—Jane Czerniejewski
THE GREAT SAFARI
of Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum
By Violette Nakhjavani
Part Seventeen

At the public meeting in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, Amatu'l-Bahá gave a beautiful talk on "The Spiritual Destiny of Africa" which was followed by an animated and interesting discussion. At an evening meeting at the Lesotho High school in that same city, presided over by the Principal and Vice-Principal, and attended by over 200 students, one felt a certain resistance by those present to what may have been considered religious propaganda. This feeling was entirely dissipated by the universal theme of Rúhíyyih Khánum's talk on "The Role of Youth in Modern Society." She said, "Today our society is based on competition, the aim to beat others. Whatever we do, we seem to think of values in relation to the others around us, not in absolute terms. Our aim should be to do a job—or whatever we are concerned with, to the best of our ability; to do it well for its own sake and not just to out-do others." She pointed out that the Bahá'í Faith teaches that work done in the spirit of service is a form of prayer. She added: "The universal truth applied to hundreds of generations before us 'as you sow, so shall you reap' applies to us today. If you sow corn you reap corn; if you sow hate you reap hate, and if you sow love and goodwill, you are bound to reap love and goodwill—contrary to what many people imagine today, that if you sow anarchy, revolution, and bloodshed you reap 'hundreds of generations before us 'as you sow, so shall you reap' applies to us today.

Our ability; to do it well for its own sake and not just to out-do others." She pointed out that the Bahá'í Faith teaches that work done in the spirit of service is a form of prayer. She added: "The universal truth applied to hundreds of generations before us 'as you sow, so shall you reap' applies to us today. If you sow corn you reap corn; if you sow hate you reap hate, and if you sow love and goodwill, you are bound to reap love and goodwill—contrary to what many people imagine today, that if you sow anarchy, revolution, and bloodshed you reap 'hundreds of generations before us 'as you sow, so shall you reap' applies to us today.

An interesting feature of Lesotho society is its many chieftainesses. A wife of a chief, after the death of her husband, her son succeeding her only after her death. In many of our village meetings we met with chieftainesses, some of them outstanding, and a few of them Bahá'ís.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Lesotho assigned its Chairman, Secretary and some of its other members to escort Amatu'l-Bahá on her visits to various villages. In Mofelis, over a hundred people welcomed her. The weather was icy cold and we adopted the practical custom of wrapping up in two blankets, one from the waist to the ankle and the other over the shoulders. The scenic beauty of Lesotho is unique with its series of large and small mountains and beautiful rock formations resulting from erosion. Most of the villages were built on mountain tops. The mud huts were beautiful with their perfectly trimmed thatching and smooth mud floors. Sometimes the outside walls were decorated like a mosaic, incised with intricate designs or painted in a different natural color of clay.

Rúhíyyih Khánum spent two days in the town of Butha Buthe and was able to meet many Bahá'ís and their friends in nearby villages. At the village of Liphaleng, she was met a mile from the village by Bahá'ís on horseback, and Rúhíyyih Khánum asked if she could ride one of the horses back to the village. To her delight, and the delight of the mountain people, she mounted and rode into town.

The dignified old Chieftainess and many distinguished members of the village community attended the meeting for Amatu'l-Bahá in this village, and paid their respect to their honored guest. Looking down over the valley and toward the gigantic mountains on the horizon, the villagers told us proudly that this valley was the birthplace of the ancestors of the king, and therefore of the chief. The talk of Amatu'l-Bahá was about the nature of heaven and hell. She explained the nature of heaven and hell she gave a beautiful example. She said: "Last night this sun set and an icy chill gripped the earth. The sun was not here and we felt its absence keenly and yearned for it. Now that the sun is out again, we are all so happy, enjoying its warmth that enters our body and fills our being. God is like this sun; our souls yearn to be near Him and partake of His life-giving love. Hell is as if, when the sun has set and one is freezing cold, one is not even allowed to enter a hut and warm oneself by the fire; therefore hell is that condition of knowing of the heat, longing to bask in the sunlight of God's good pleasure and love, but because of one's own actions in this life, unable to get near it. Heaven is that blissful state of nearness to our Creator, our goal and our eternal beloved." She repeated: "The greatest force in creation is the force of love; love is the most precious gift of God to man and the greatest love of all is the love of God for His creation. To be deprived of this love is man's true hell."

The public meeting in Butha Buthe was attended by officials of the area and many of the religious dignitaries of the town. Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh and the purpose of religion for man. The wisdom and tolerance Amatu'l-Bahá shows when introducing the Faith is a lesson to all. She never uses words which offend people or insult other people's beliefs. She brings out points of similarity and encourages everyone. Tomás Rúhíyyih Khánum never heard a word of criticism of other religions or their leaders, or a word of argument or dispute. As a
result of this attitude, at the end of her meetings people are drawn to her and to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, no matter in what spirit they may have come. Often, with deep sincerity, she has praised in her speeches and on television and radio interviews the services of Christian missionaries in Africa, reminding people of the great deal of good they have done in the past and still continue to do.

The village of Belos was the scene of great festivity and rejoicing. The famous Chieftainess Mamazibuku, originally a Zulu, was our hostess. Over 250 people, including a number of skilled dancers, both men and women, who came from neighboring villages, entertained us. After Amatu'l-Bahá had been formally introduced, she spoke on the power of love and unity.

We then adjourned for a delicious lunch of meali meal and mutton. The Chieftainess, Mamazibuku, is eighty years old, has a delightful sense of humor and is a very perceptive person. She was instantly drawn to Rúhíyyih Khánum and ordered her son to bring her a jar of homemade jam. She then turned to Rúhíyyih Khánum and said: "You and I are married today, and this jam is our wedding sweet." This highly unusual announcement took Amatu'l-Bahá back and I could see she was surprised. But after a moment of hesitation, she said: "Well, that is very interesting, but if you and I are married are you the bridegroom?" To this Mamazibuku promptly answered "You are the bridegroom and I am the bride." Rúhíyyih Khánum smilingly said: "Why should I be the bridegroom? After all, this marriage is your idea, not mine!" This was with a great deal of laughter and joking, and Rúhíyyih Khánum could see that it was done to honor her in the highest degree, and as a sign of affection and esteem.

When Rúhíyyih Khánum returned to Maseru she received a letter on behalf of Mamazibuku, asking her to call on her sister (who turned out to be a cousin) in the hospital. When we went to the hospital to visit this elderly woman, she greeted Amatu'l-Bahá with much love and said: "I know who you are, you are my new brother-in-law!" They are a merry lot of very fine people, the Lesothos.

In meeting with the Bahá'ís of Maseru, Amatu'l-Bahá spoke of the life of the beloved Guardian, his sufferings, the divine inspiration that guided him, saying that he often sensed things without having been given any information about them. She recalled how once he entered the house and for some time spoke angrily about a Covenant Breaker without anything bringing the subject up. Rúhíyyih Khánum was astonished and later asked him how he knew this person had been in the house at that very moment. The Guardian was surprised and said he had no idea this person was in the house. "The Guardian was like a spiritual barometer" said Amatu'l-Bahá, "as he registered impressions which affected him deeply."

In the village of Seqonoka, at the home of the first believer of Lesotho, they proudly showed us the hut where the dear pioneers and Knights of Bahá'u'lláh had lived when they arrived in 1954 in what was then called "Basutoland." A meeting was held, attended by many non-Bahá'ís, so Rúhíyyih Khánum introduced the Faith. Someone asked why God sends different prophets, causing so much confusion in the world. An old man gave a beautiful answer. He said, "In our village, our chief sends many messages, each time he asks a different man to convey his message to the people. Now, is the importance in the message or the messenger who delivers it?"

In the village of Sepapos Neck a large number of devoted believers welcomed Amatu'l-Bahá. A very active Bahá'í children's class gladdened our hearts with the recital of many prayers they had memorized, and the singing of Bahá'í songs. This class was formed and is conducted by a devoted Bahá'í, mother of six, who felt deeply that the children, if well trained and brought up in the Faith, will provide the firm foundation of this...
community in the future. This fine woman, one of the few literate ladies of the village, seeing the need for education, without help or encouragement from anyone, has opened a school for the children and teaches them reading and writing and the prayers and Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the meeting Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke on the spiritual teachings of the Faith. At the question period she was asked if a devoted believer, at the end of her life, as a result of physical suffering and pain and possibly mental dullness loses her deep spiritual awareness—then what happens to her soul in the next world? Rúhíyyih Khánum replied, "In the Writings we are repeatedly assured of the Mercy of God and are told that 'His mercy exceedeth His justice'."

The Chairman of this meeting, a wonderful and devoted believer, with a voice trembling with emotion said: "If I were a dog my tail would be wagging with joy at this moment, for being near you. Alas! as a man I have no way of showing you how deeply grateful I am for your visit to our village!"

The village of Thbabosi, twenty-five miles from the capital, had a special uniqueness; the Local Spiritual Assembly was composed of nine women and the efficiency with which they conducted the meeting was exemplary. During the talk, Amatu'l-Bahá pointed out that this community is a living example of the role of women in society. "Where we have strong, devoted Bahá'í women, the strength and stability of the community is assured."

One of the highlights of the Lesotho visit was the trip to the Northern mountains of that country. On our way we stopped for a night with a newly arrived pioneer family from Canada. He is the only doctor in the area and is employed by the Catholic Mission. A Father from the Mission, a French Canadian, came over after dinner and he and Rúhíyyih Khánum talked theology for over two hours—it was on his initiative. They got along famously and their mutual tolerance made possible a most harmonious meeting of minds.

The next day we took the Land Rover high up into the snow covered mountains, ten thousand feet above sea level, through some most frightening passes. More than once it seemed as if even this car, built for just such rough terrain, would not make it.

We spent two nights in the village of Thaba-Li-Mpe, meaning "very bad mountains", a highly appropriate name, with the family of one of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly who had accompanied us on this trip. This village of only a few huts was six miles from the little town of Tlokoeng. The only road to it was a narrow horse track running straight up and down the side of the mountain. I have no doubt but that on that day, once again, the Supreme Concourse guided the arms of our able driver and saw us through some hazardous moments.

Over eighty believers attended a day-long conference, many of whom had traveled over the mountains for fifteen to twenty miles, many on horseback, the women on foot, some carrying babies. These wonderful mountain folk are among the most active and devoted believers of that country. There are several Local Spiritual Assemblies functioning in the area, despite the fact that they very rarely receive a traveling teacher, least of all one from outside the country. The reason is the extreme inaccessibility of the villages. Only a four-wheel drive vehicle has sufficient power and clearance to go on the non-existent, so-called "roads". Although small planes are used in this area, this is only a partial solution, and the main transportation is by horse or on foot.

All of us huddled up in our blankets as a slight protection against the bitter dust-filled wind, sitting gratefully in the warmth of the sunshine. Those eager and devoted souls drank in every word from Amatu'l-Bahá and asked many questions. Late in the afternoon we all enjoyed sharing the delicious mutton and mealie meal which was prepared for all the friends. We were told that we were the first white Bahá'í ever to reach their village, and the fact that their first guest was their beloved Amatu'l-Bahá was not lost on them.

A man who arrived almost frozen with the cold announced that just before he left home his wife had given birth to a son. He wanted to know if he should call the baby "Shoghi Effendi." Rúhíyyih Khánum lovingly advised him that it would be better if he called his son "Rabbani", which was also the name of the beloved Guardian given him by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Himself. She said she felt it was more respectful and better for the Bahá'ís.

Rúhíyyih Khánum with the Canadian pioneers Dr. Guy, his wife and two sons at their home in the St. Charles Catholic Mission in Lesotho. At the left is National Spiritual Assembly member Mapheko Mofolo (August 2, 1972).
to keep these four names of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi precious to our Faith and not use them for children. The man was exceedingly happy for this suggestion and took the name of “Rab­bani” for his son.

An elderly Bahá'í, who had been a delegate to the convention last year and was still proudly wearing her name tag, had walked fifteen miles on these treacherous mountain paths and arrived late at night, cold and tired. I took her in my arms and said, “You have come a long way and must be very tired.” With a charming smile she replied, “What is the distance I have come compared to the distance our precious guest has come? If her love for us brought her so far over such terrible roads, would not my love for her and for Bahá'u'lláh bring me this little way?” The joy of being with these devoted souls was great.

At one point a local politician slightly disturbed the meeting and tried to attract some attention to himself and his views. However, Amatu'l-Bahá's sincere love, wisdom and patience quieted him. Later, some of these devoted believers turned to a young lady, a National Spiritual Assembly member who had accompanied us to act as interpreter, and asked her why she did not request all the Bahá'ís to stand up and show that man how many we are and how much we love Bahá'u'lláh.

These mountains are bare of trees and shrubs so there is almost no fuel, only dung which produces a hot fire that smokes heavily, soon burns out and has a ghastly odor. The choice was between fifteen minutes of heat with eyes burning and watering, or shivering and chattering, bundled in blankets and clothes. When we finally reached our mud hut we were grateful to our hostess who sent us a wire bucket burning merrily with some of her precious fuel. We preferred crying to freezing.

Leaving Lesotho the next day and driving down to the Republic of South Africa was one of the most fantastic experiences of this entire Safari. When we left the village after two nights, we retraced the perilous path by which we had come. The day before Ruḥiyih Khánum had gone down on horseback to see if the car could get out of the river and then climb immediately up a steep bank. We made this hazard safely and eventually came to the main road. We traveled forty-five miles over treacher-
Teaching Project in Peru

A teaching project was held in the Department of Ancash, Peru, from March 4 to 14. Youth participating were Patricia Kemper, Kiko Sanchez, Fernando Leyza and Richard Tomarelli from Peru, with Raul Dexter from Ecuador.

They met in Chiclayo, at the home of Pablo Flores and Alberto Guerrero. These Bahá'ís had just made contact with a member of the Aguaruna Indians and were translating the noonday prayer into that language. Left to right: Alberto Guerrero, Rosaria Guerrero, Maria Flores, Jose Bungos, Yolanda Flores, Pablo Flores.

The next day there was a fiesta which featured a tree that was planted in the town square and had soft drinks, fruit, and candies in its branches. The people danced around the tree, throwing white powder on each other. Then each person took a turn at cutting down the tree with a machete. When the tree fell, everybody ran for the goodies.

From Ancash the combined groups went to Lima to attend a three-day deepening institute. Each day they had dawn prayers before breakfast. Lessons were especially devoted to living the Bahá'í life. Some of those who attended are, left to right: Isabel Sanchez, Monica Sanchez, Richard Tomarelli, Olga Peralta, Dr. Enrique Sanchez, Roxanna Cortez, Oscar Rojas, Auxiliary Board member Mercedes Sanchez, Patricia Sanchez, Raul Dexter, Rosa Peralta, and Nico Sanchez.

Peru is a large country with many believers, but only a few are deepened, which makes it difficult to consolidate many remote areas. The believers broke up into two groups, one to each area in which there would be a convention to elect delegates for the National Spiritual Assembly; one group went to Chavin de Huantar and the other to Tinco. These were only 60 kilometers apart, but travel time was eight hours by bus. In Chavin, during the day, classes were held, and in the evening the Regional Convention, which elected one delegate. Shown are, left to right: Victor Castillo, Andres Palacios, Richard Tomarelli, Aurelio Castillo, Senora Castillo, Mario Banes, Senora Castillo.
The other group went to Tinco where two delegates were elected. Left to right: Patricia Sanchez, Raul Dexter, Fernando Loyza, an unidentified woman, Richard Tomarelli, Saul Minaya, Mateo Minaya. Two men from Mancos became Bahá'ís.

**NEWS FROM INDIA**

**Kanpur:** A public fete was held on October 8, 1972, and the first stall was of Bahá'í books which was visited by more than 20,000 persons. About 350 Bahá'í pamphlets were distributed and numerous books sold. Many contacts were made and inquiries are still coming from the fete.

**Calcutta:** A week of proclamation resulted in nine colleges being opened to the Faith. Books were presented to the principals of the colleges and the libraries, and pamphlets were distributed. In each gathering, 200 to 500 students heard the Message. Ten thousand posters were distributed, in English and Bengali. Announcements were given to the three leading newspapers.

**Bangalore:** A six-day proclamation resulted in eight colleges being opened to the Faith. Declarations numbered 310, and 250 reply cards were received indicating a desire for more information, with some expressing their intention of making a declaration.

**Gwallor:** A Local Youth Committee has been appointed.

**Nagpur:** Believers in this location have opened Wardah to the Faith, which location now has nineteen new believers and one experienced believer from Nagpur has settled there as a teacher.

**Chandigarh:** Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Braun of the United States, (she was formerly Director of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Wilmette and now is an Auxiliary Board member) were in this city from October 16 through 24, 1972, when a successful and exciting proclamation was held. All colleges, hospitals and business offices were visited and books were presented. One evening a party was held for officials of the city, which consisted of shows and dancing, and Bahá'ís spoke to them about the Faith. Afterwards the people were so interested that many of the Bahá'ís were invited to different homes. Two public meetings were held, one was a luncheon for a large group. Six declarations of faith in Bahá'u'lláh were made.

—Information from *The Nineteen Day Star*, published by the New Era High School, Panchgani, District Satara, India.

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**Windflower in England**

Windflower is a musical group from Alaska. They arrived in London in two groups; the first had to handle the baggage—18 pieces of luggage, weighing about 4,000 pounds, carrying it three blocks to the subway during the rush hour. At the little hostel where they stayed, they met many young people from all parts of the world and held continuous firesides.

The next day they left for Shrewsbury for a Bahá'í oriented concert, and were warmly accepted. Next stop was Hanley on the Thames where they all stayed at a huge brick home, a youth center owned by a New York woman. They held a concert attended by fifteen to twenty non-Bahá'ís, and one made his declaration of faith.

Epsom was the next stop. It has an art college attended by five Bahá'ís who did some lovely posters. A fireside was held. Three reporters interviewed the group. The concert they gave at Oakham was interrupted by two gangs but by discreet handling trouble was averted and the gangs left. About eighty percent of the 180 who attended were non-Bahá'ís, so seeds were planted and the community felt uplifted and inspired.

At Nottingham they attended a Unit Convention, and spoke on some of their teaching techniques. At Aylsbury ninety to a hundred people attended, coming from as far as seventy miles. One adult declared, which saved the Assembly for this town. When the group arrived they said rounds of prayers and then went street-teaching in freezing weather. They felt there was a special, wonderful feeling at the concert. Afterward they discovered it was the date when the Persian Bahá'ís have a special celebration because according to the lunar calendar the birthday of both the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh fall at the same time on that night. Perhaps that is why their efforts were blessed and the spirit of love permeated the atmosphere!


The Windflower musical group with Bahá'ís in Shrewsbury, England.
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First Bahá'í Conference in the Falklands

Strengthened by the presence of six visiting American Bahá'í pioneers from Uruguay, Bolivia and Argentina, the Falkland Islands Bahá'ís held the first conference in the islands from February 26 to March 4, just four months after attaining Assembly status.

Primarily aimed at promotion of the Faith in the islands, the conference included nightly activities to which the public was invited, including a fireside presenting the six visitors; a panel discussion with three Bahá'í speakers; a public talk; and a musical evening. Afternoons were primarily devoted to two classes for Bahá'ís only—on the Kitáb-i-Áqán, and a history of the Administrative Order. A radio interview with the visitors enhanced the image of the Faith in the islands. Over the weekend two outings served to introduce the travelers to the scenic splendors and penguin residents in the vicinity of Stanley.

Considerable interest was shown by some of the young people. Several books were borrowed. In a community where the appearance of a single speaker is a rare treat, an event such as the conference constitutes a milestone in the development of the Faith.

CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í NEWS may be ordered by sending $4.00 for a one-year subscription (2nd Class) $6.00 airmail. Write to: Canadian Bahá'í News Committee: 7290 Leslie St., Thornhill, Ontario, Canada
International Teaching Centre
Established in Holy Land

ANNOUNCE ESTABLISHMENT HOLY LAND LONG ANTICIPATED INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTER DESTINED EVOLVE INTO ONE THOSE WORLD-SHAKING WORLD-EMBRACING WORLD-DIRECTING ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS ORDAINED BY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH ANTICIPATED BY 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ ELUCIDATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI. MEMBERSHIP THIS NASCENT INSTITUTION COMPRIZES ALL HANDS CAUSE GOD AND INITIALLY THREE COUNSELLORS WHO WITH HANDS PRESENT HOLY LAND WILL CONSTITUTE NUCLEUS ITS VITAL OPERATIONS. CALLING HOOPER DUNBAR FLORENCE MAYBERRY 'AZÍZ YAZDÍ PROCEED HOLY LAND ASSUME THIS HIGHLY MERITORIOUS SERVICE. OFFERING PRAYERS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE SACRED THRESHOLD THIS FURTHER EVIDENCE ORGANIC EVOLUTION ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa, Israel
June 5, 1973
The One-Hundredth Anniversary of the Revelation of the Kitáb-i-Áqiḍas

Delegates to the Third International Convention visit the House of 'Abbud where the Kitáb-i-Áqiḍas was written
The newly elected members of The Universal House of Justice were called forward as the results of the election were announced to the Convention. Standing, left to right: Hugh E. Chance, David S. Ruhe, H. Borrah Kavelin, Charles Wolcott, David Hofman, Ian Semple, Amoz Gibson, Hushmand Fatheazam and 'Ali Nakhjavani. The order in which members received the greatest number of votes is from right to left.

Universal House Announces Crowning Victory

To the Bahá'ís of the World
Dear Bahá'í Friends,

It is now possible to share with you all the news of an event which crowns the victories with which Bahá'u'lláh has blessed His followers during the Nine Year Plan, an event of which the true significance will be fully understood only in the course of centuries to come: a reigning monarch has accepted the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

Among those to whom The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh was presented in 1967 was His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, the Head of State of the independent nation of Western Samoa in the heart of the Pacific Ocean. His Highness, who had already heard of the Faith, showed immediately that the sacred Words had touched his heart, and The Universal House of Justice thereupon asked the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, who had presented the book to him, to return to Western Samoa for further audiences with His Highness. Following this visit the Malietoa conveyed his acceptance of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to The Universal House of Justice and became the first reigning sovereign to enter beneath the shade of this Cause.

His Highness decided, with the full agreement of The Universal House of Justice, that it was not propitious to make his declaration public at that time. He has been visited from time to time by Hands of the Cause and other believers, and continual touch with His Highness has been maintained by The House of Justice through Mr. Suhayl 'Alí', a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia. Gradually the Malietoa has let it be known to those around him that he has accepted Bahá'u'lláh. Now he has judged the time ripe to share this wondrous news with his fellow-believers in all parts of the world, by addressing to the International Bahá'í Convention the gracious and inspiring message of which a copy is enclosed with this letter.

The friends everywhere are asked to strictly avoid any publicity to non-Bahá'ís in connection with this historic event. If any publicity is to be given to this most joyous news, it will be given by National Spiritual Assemblies after they have received appropriate instructions from The Universal House of Justice.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

May 7, 1973
Bahá'í Centre
Haifa, Israel

Letter from His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II:

GOVERNMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF WESTERN SAMOA

Greatly esteemed members of The Universal House of Justice, much admired Hands of the Cause of God, respected Counsellors and honoured delegates attending the Third International Convention

My Spiritual Brethren:

It is a joy for me and for my fellow Bahá'ís of the Samoan Islands in the heart of the Pacific, to be with you in spirit and with the friends of God throughout the world, in celebrating this most significant first century of the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the Most Holy Book of Bahá'u'lláh.

We pray for the success of the historic convention now being held in the shadow of the Mountain of God in the Holy Land. Although we are unable to be with you in person on this memorable occasion, our hearts share with you these never to be forgotten days and the knowledge of the tremendous victories won for the Faith of God.

To the north, to the south, to the east and to the west, to the most populous and to the most remote places, we send our fond greetings and cherished love. May the spirit created by your gathering at the Holy Shrines pave the way for the rapid establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth and the unity of all the peoples of the world.

Alofa tele atu lava matou uma i Samoa nei.

Malietoa Tanumafili II
The friends at the Third International Bahá'í Convention gathered at the site of the building to be erected for the seat of The Universal House of Justice on Monday morning, April 30, 1973. Prayers were recited; Amat'u'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke about the significance of the project, and the Tablet of Carmel was read.
Sixteen Hands of the Cause of God, thirty-eight members of Continental Boards of Counsellors and 412 members of National Spiritual Assemblies from the far corners of the earth gathered in the Holy Land during the Ridván Festival to attend the Third International Bahá’í Convention. It was a thrilling sight to see the wide diversity of nations and races represented. Many were heard to comment that this was, perhaps, one of the most representative gatherings of believers ever held.

The three days immediately preceding the Ninth Day of Ridván were set aside to give the friends an opportunity to visit the Shrines, the other Holy Places and the International Archives. They were taken by bus in small groups to the Prison in ‘Akka and then to Bahji where they visited the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh and the Mansion. The Shrines of the Bab and the Master were kept open during the morning, afternoon and evening of each day so that delegates might have the opportunity to meditate and pray as much as they wished in preparation for the discharge of their most important duty: the casting of their ballots in the election of The Universal House of Justice.

During this same period The Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause of God held important meetings concerning the affairs of the Cause, including consideration of new institutions to deal with the anticipated rapid expansion of the Faith in the years immediately ahead.

The three-day Convention period was officially opened on the morning of the Ninth Day of Ridván when the delegates assembled at Beit Harofe in Haifa to cast their ballots in the election of The Universal House of Justice. Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum presided. Prayers were recited or chanted in several languages. Silently, deliberately and prayerfully the ballots were marked and sealed in their envelopes. When all had finished, the roll was called by name of National Spiritual Assembly—one hundred and thirteen of them.

Circumstances beyond their control prevented fourteen National Spiritual Assemblies from being represented in person, but there was at least one delegate from each of the remaining ninety-nine, and the entire membership of five National Spiritual Assemblies—Canada, Iceland, Ireland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom—was present. It required approximately one hour and thirty minutes for the chief tellers to call the names of the one thousand seventeen members of National Spiritual Assemblies—a process which was frequently punctuated with spontaneous applause in recognition of some special fact or circumstance attaching to a particular delegation. Ballots sent by mail were cast by the tellers during the roll call. Finally the last ballot was placed in the box and the nineteen tellers retired to the Master’s House to begin the long process of counting the votes—a task which lasted through the night into the early hours of the following morning.

The Feast in observance of the Ninth Day of Ridván was held in the precincts of the Shrine of the Bab. Seating was provided in the courtyard in front of the Pilgrim House, extending more than half-way up the long drive toward the entrance gate.

After the opening prayer, Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiyyih Khanum, on behalf of The Universal House of Justice, announced that the first ruling monarch ever to embrace the Faith, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, Head of State of Western Samoa, had declared himself a Bahá'í shortly after being presented with the special edition of The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery in 1967. She related the circumstances of his declaration and spoke of its historic significance, citing several passages from the Writings. She then read the beautiful letter written by the Malietoa to The Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause of God, the members of Continental Boards of Counsellors and the delegates attending the Third International Convention.

A committee was appointed by The Universal House of Justice to draft an official reply from the Convention to His Highness, and this was signed by the members of The Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause, Counsellors and delegates and given to members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Samoa for presentation to the Malietoa when they returned to their country which has been favored by this great bounty.

In the evening following the Feast the friends reassembled in the Convention hall to hear the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga read the Ridván Message of The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the World—a Message recounting the victories of the Nine Year Plan which had just been concluded. A slide program entitled "Entry by Troops" produced by the Audio-Visual Department for the Convention visually supplemented the written report on the Nine Year Plan. That same evening copies of A Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and of The Constitution of The Universal House of Justice were made available to those attending the Convention.
Counsellor William Maxwell of Nigeria speaks during one of the plenary sessions of the Third International Bahá’í Convention.

each other. She drew frequently from her experiences in travelling and teaching in Africa, speaking of her meetings with heads of state and other important people, and stating that during the latter part of her trip she had begun to speak much more directly to them about the spiritual aspects of the Cause but at the same time avoiding a direct confrontation in presenting the teachings.

At the conclusion of Ruḥíyyih Khánum’s talk, the chief tellers were called to the platform to announce the results of the election for the members of The Universal House of Justice. One by one, as their names were called, the newly elected members went forward and stood before the huge assembly: ‘Ali Nakhjavání, Hus­­mard Fatheazam, Amoz Gibson, Ian Semple, David Hofman, Charles Wolcott, Borrah Kavelin, David Ruhe, Hugh Chance.

During the afternoon and evening hours the delegates were divided into groups to discuss the theme of the Convention: “What are the major challenges to the Bahá’í world during the next decade and how are they to be met?” Reports were assembled, condensed and correlated so that all the friends could be provided with an overview of all the discussions, and during the last day of the Convention two plenary sessions were held, providing the delegates with a further opportunity to consult on the Convention theme.

Opening the final session the Hand of the Cause Ugo Glachery alluded to the great celebration of the Centenary of the Revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas which was to be held the following day. He introduced the Hand of the Cause William Sears who closed the Convention with an eloquent and inspiring address on the need for cooperative effort in the advancement of the Cause. He said that frequently he had travelled great distances just to meet with one Continental Board of Counsellors or a National Spiritual Assembly, but that most of them were represented here and he could address them all at once. He spoke of the great need for these two exalted institutions to combine their efforts.

To the strains of “Alláh-u-Abhá” the friends slowly dispersed from the hall, remembering what the Hand of the Cause John Robarts had said earlier, “None of us will ever be the same again. We must take all of the blessings to our own communities. If we do, the Faith will go ahead as never before.”

The Twelfth Day of ’Iraḍá was entirely given over to the celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh’s Most Holy Book—the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The friends visited the very room in the house of ‘Abbud where it was revealed, and in the afternoon assembled in the Haram-i-Aqdas at Bahjí for the Feast. The Hands of the Cause and the members of The Universal House of Justice were the last to visit the House of ‘Abbud and to offer prayers in that holy spot and then they joined the believers at Bahjí. The final act of the observance was the visitation to the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh.

—Bahá’í International News Service, May, 1973

Canadian Goals Filled

The Canadian National Pioneer Committee, in January, was assigned additional responsibilities for pioneer moves to homefront goals when it was realized that these goals were in jeopardy.

Canadian pioneers who filled overseas goals number 132. Of these, 64 filled goals assigned to Canada, 68 filled goals of other national communities. These include only the 132 in residence at ’Iraḍá, 1973. In addition there are a large number of Canadian pioneers who left during earlier plans.

Over 50 traveling teachers visited most large land masses as well as many lesser islands.

The second priority, after pioneering, is French teaching. Proclamation in Quebec is noteworthy; in a region which for six decades seemed hopeless to the Cause there are now eight or nine vital centers of activity. Another reason for teaching French-speaking Canadians was the great demand for pioneers in other parts of the world where French is spoken.

When an appeal came for teaching among French-speaking people in the Caribbean islands, a bilingual team of five responded and met with overwhelming success, attracting 1,000 new believers and establishing a number of Spiritual Assemblies in a brief two-month period. The Canadian believers supplied some additional manpower, funds and literature to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward and Virgin Islands for this important work.

The Canadian Bahá’í News is now bi-lingual.

A first major endeavor of the summer’s French teaching program (1972) was the Chalet project. Summer homes were rented in many locations and host couples and Bahá’ís came from all over Canada to carry out various proclamation and teaching projects. The Jalál musical group attracted many friends who joined them and visited the localities which had chalets, also the Montreal and Hull areas. Substantial TV and press coverage of the Faith was obtained.

Institutes were held in many localities across Canada, the busiest place being the Laurentian Bahá’í School which prepared members for participation with the teams in Quebec.

About 39 groups grew to Assembly status during the year. The goal of 57 Incorporated Assemblies was exceeded by 31! As a base of future endeavors, the Canadians now have achieved the victory of 200 local Assemblies! Individuals and committees became re-vitalized in an all-out effort to achieve these goals.

—Excerpts from Canadian Bahá’í News, April, 1973

National Teaching Institute of Ghana

Soon the last details will be completed on the building of the National Institute of Ghana which is located in Fakyenwetra, about six miles outside of Kumasi. Financial assistance for this was one of the goals of the United States.

National Teaching Institute of Ghana

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Devoted Handmaiden, Mrs. Agnes Parsons
By Doris McKay

In 1920 on her second pilgrimage, Mrs. Agnes Parsons of Washington D.C. had received challenging instructions from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He said, "I want you to arrange a Convention for the unity of the white and colored races".

Now, eight years later Mrs. Parsons had become a particularly brilliant star, important to the world as well as to our generation of young Bahá'ís whose privilege it had been to know her even for a short time. She was a lady of such inherent dignity that it was difficult not to be shy with her. Her relationship with us was never familiar, certainly never demonstrative, yet beyond externals, we knew that she maintained a humble safety." and the disciplined detachment of Mr. Gregory for all inviting intimacy.

In the capped affability. which he or she preferred. Mrs. Parsons was a lady of such inherent dignity that it was difficult not to be shy with her. Her relationship with us was fellowship with us.

On this evening in 1928 we sat with Mrs. Parsons and Mr. Louis Gregory around a table in a Geneva, New York, farmhouse, candlelight and an applewood fire inviting intimacy. One of us spoke of personal and universal love and asked Mr. Gregory and Mrs. Parsons which he or she preferred. Mrs. Parsons impulsively said "Personal", but Mr. Gregory said "Universal. It's safer". To us it seemed to show the seeking human heart of Mrs. Parsons, whom we had thought unapproachable, and the disciplined detachment of Mr. Gregory for all his genial affability.

The stories she had told us by the fire that afternoon had shown us how that love had been set aglow on her first visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1910. As she described it, her reasons for going had been a blend of curiosity and hope. I think she could not quite believe that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was real! Now, after waiting two years she had gone to find out for herself, to see Him and to judge the Faith by Him. She felt fortified by her own values. Certainly she was not yet a believer.

She was annoyed that 'Abdu'l-Bahá kept her waiting. When summoned at last she entered His presence in that mood. He looked at her and a ray of blinding light seemed to pass from His eyes into hers—and she fell prostrate on the floor at His feet. She thought she must have lost consciousness for the first thing she knew He was courteously raising her to her feet. No mention was made of this. What had happened?

A night's perspective and Mrs. Parsons visited the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh to ask for another "proof". She felt that there she had received two signs. Although it was a breezeless day, suddenly the flowers in front of the Tomb became agitated and swayed back and forth. At the same moment a little bird flew into the bosom of her dress and nestled there. And there were other stories... Some pilgrims find a strange world there at Bahji where a supernatural order seems to overlap this world. According to her accounts this was the way God spoke to Mrs. Parsons and transformed her. She returned to Washington a confirmed believer to identify herself.

Program of a Most Important Convention, May 19, 20, 21, 1921

Program

Thursday Evening, May 19th

Chairman, Mr. William H. Randell of Boston
Invocation — Rev. Dr. James Noble Pierce
Music — "Great Day of God"
Address — "The Relation of the Times to World-Wide Peace"
Ex-Senator Jonas B. Clark
Address — "The Radiant Century of the Passing of Prejudice"
Mr. Albert Vail of Chicago
Heart Songs of a People.
Dunbar Community Singers
Mr. W. Scott Mayo, Director
Song of the Songs — Mrs. Gabrielle Pelham
The Songs:
"Steel Away"
"See Fa' and Twenty Elites..."
"I Didn't Make Nobody Free"
"Go Down, Moses"
"Standing in the Need of Prayer"
"Deep River"
"Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?"
Solo — "Nobody Knows"; "Bye and Bye"
Requiem
Mrs. Henry Grant
Solo — "Mammy"
Offertory — "I'll Build a Staircase Up to the House of the Lord"
Master Linus Cook

Friday Morning, May 20th

Chairman, Mr. Albert Vail of Chicago
Address — "The New Cooperative" Honorable Thomas Francis
Address — "Racial Understanding"
Mr. C. Leo Cook, of Louisiana
Violin Solo — "The Great Song"
Mr. Colorado Taylor
Address — "The New Springtime"
Mr. Louis G. Gregory

"Requie in injury with kindness." — Lao-tse
gloriously with the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in 1912, had stayed and taught in Mrs. Parsons' Washington home He had pointedly concerned Himself with the large Negro population in the Capital. A number of years passed until 'Abdu'l-Bahá's appointed moment to make a bold forward step, the above mentioned Convention for the unity of white and colored races. Mrs. Parsons' friend, Mrs. Miriam Haney, writing of her in the Bahá'í World, was to say later, “She became a Bahá'í in middle life and stepped forth from a sheltered haven into fast moving seas”. How fast these seas were to move was suddenly revealed to her by this sure call. Her answer was immediate: “I will be able to do it. I must, for it is the will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá”.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's added phrase: “You must have people to help you” provided the first step. As Mrs. Parsons described it later, she did not consider herself an organizer, could not speak in public—but she could get together a working committee. And together they did launch a successful Inter-racial Convention in prejudice-ridden Washington, the pioneer effort of its kind. Mrs. Parsons cabled “Convention successful. Meeting crowded. Hearts comforted.

'Abdu'l-Bahá replied, “Never since the beginning of time has one more important been held. This Convention stands for the Oneness of humanity." He called it “the Mother Convention from which many would be born”. Soon similar conferences were held in all the large cities of America over a period of years, a widespread demonstration of our basic principles that became a turning point for the accelerated growth of our numbers. Now, as Chairman of the National Inter-racial Committee Mrs. Parsons led the way.

For this was only the beginning of her dedication to the Cause of Oneness. 'Abdu'l-Bahá now called her to go forth and "Teach" with Oneness her theme. When she said, “But I can't make talks,” He told her that in that case she must memorize the Bahá’í Writings on that subject and recite these from the platform. Thus was developed her effective, thrilling, approach as she recited in her beautiful, cultured voice the addresses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Words of Bahá'u'lláh.

Mrs. Parsons died at seventy-three as the result of an accident. Looking back over her life: the earlier experiences at the Shrines; the setting aside of her early patterns to be a Bahá'í; the acceptance of an overwhelming task; the dedication of her later years to detailed responsibilities, one grasps the meaning of 'Abdu'l Bahá's words—‘God has elected you and led you to the Kingdom of Abáh’.

The world of humanity is like a garden and the various races are the flowers which constitute its adornment and decoration ... In origin and intention of creation man-kind is one. Distinctions of race and color have arisen afterward ... Therefore strive earnestly and put forth your greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without well co-operating on the part of each; from one, expressions of gratitude and appreciation; from the other kindliness and recognition of equality ... Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and whites will be an assurance of the world's peace.

—Bahá’í World Faith, pp. 268-269
The Sixty-Fourth Annual Convention of the Baha'is of the United States

As delegates and visitors were arriving one could feel the exultant mood of this Convention joyous and triumphant over the global victories recorded at the completion of the Nine Year Plan. One was inclined to listen for a chorus of paans of praise from the Supreme Concourse, singing "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

Beginning on Friday morning, May 18, 1973, this Convention echoed with the spirit generated at the Third International Convention in Haifa, held between the Ninth and Twelfth Holy Days of Ridván. After the usual preliminaries, the first item on the agenda was a sharing with those attending, by means of vivid word-pictures, of the Haifa Convention by two National Spiritual Assembly members, Miss Charlotte Linfoot, Assistant Secretary and Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Secretary.

As all delegates were invited to arrive early in Haifa, they were able to make pilgrimages to the several Holy Places and there was an opportunity also to meet many of the National Spiritual Assembly members from other countries, some of whom had gone forth as pioneers from the United States long before the beginning of the Nine Year Plan. The roll-call was most exciting, especially as some new National Spiritual Assemblies were represented by their full membership, as, for example, Ireland and Iceland. "To us the Kingdom of God has begun" said Miss Linfoot. When people from all parts of the world, many dressed in their native costumes climbed the mountain to the site on which the buildings for The Universal House of Justice are to be erected, she felt that here was the literal fulfillment of the verses of Isaiah, Chapter II, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established... and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the Law "

Then the Convention viewed slides of the Holy places and groups of National Assembly members made on this momentous occasion. All present felt the outpouring of the spirit which would indeed bring about peace to a sorely tried world, and that we had achieved a momentous milestone on that path.

The first roll call of the National Convention was answered by 141 delegates. Dr. Daniel Jordan was elected Chairman of the Convention and Mr. Glenford Mitchell was elected Secretary. The Chairman appointed Mrs. Barbara West and a committee of reporters to provide summaries of each session for the delegates. A suggestion box was available which any delegate could use for recommendations and suggestions which could be included in session reports and could be introduced for consultation from the floor, if so voted by the delegates. The Ridván message from The Universal House of Justice thrilled the delegates with the victories for the Faith which it recounted. A committee was appointed to draft a reply to The Universal House of Justice. A prayer was said for the health of Hand of the Cause of God Hasan Balyuzi, and a motion was passed that a letter from the Convention be sent to him, thanking him for his brilliant, historic volumes on the Faith and in anticipation of the next planned on the life of Muhammad.

Further ties to the recent Haifa Convention came when a number of persons who had been present were introduced: Auxiliary Board members Miss Irene Bennett from Uganda and Mrs. Marge Jackson from Aus-
tralia; Dr. William Baker, National Spiritual Assembly member from Peru; John Mills, New Guinea; Mr. and Mrs. John Leonard, Falkland Islands; Mr. Leyton Rochester, Bermuda; Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Gruber from Botswana were also present, but not when the Chairman called them to be introduced.

The Hand of the Cause William Sears was welcomed and introduced at the Friday afternoon session. He, too, described the dedication of the site of the building for The Universal House of Justice and said: “Haifa will never be the same again.”

The Annual Report of the National Spiritual Assembly was read by Mr. Glenford Mitchell who announced that 1,099 pioneers left the United States under the Nine Year Plan and the 636 are still at their posts; financial aid was given in acquiring 19 properties, which include six Temple sites, eight Hazratu’l-Quds and five teaching institutes. In the United States the Assembly goal was exceeded by 200 with the goal of localities where Bahá’ís reside exceeded by 1,809. Every state has now recognized Bahá’í marriages and Bahá’í Holy Days. During this last year of the Plan, 143 young people were involved in international teaching projects in Europe and in Latin-America.

Much of the consultation revolved around consolidation of Assemblies, nurturing the institutions; how to promote unity in diversity; elimination of prejudice; deepening; education of children, producing children’s songs and children’s films.

Friday evening, the National Treasurer, Dr. Dorothy Nelson, in her report and budget presentation was well equipped with figures and assisted by staff members, gave lucid answers to all questions. There was a slide presentation to aid delegates to understand the main features of the National Bahá’í Fund. At the close of her presentation there was immediately a breathtaking motion to accept the budget of two and a half million proposed by the National Spiritual Assembly and no discussion was required to carry the vote unanimously.

Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, explained some of the significance of the Summary and Codifications of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, which, with The Constitution of The Universal House of Justice, is now available. “In the Aqdas,” he explained, “Bahá’u’lláh has given us the laws that are to govern us for 1,000 years, but they will be applied gradually. Whatever is written and given to us by The Universal House of Justice must be obeyed.” He said that the document should not be used for public proclamation, but should be treated with the greatest respect as it is the sacred charter of world civilization.

Saturday morning the delegates elected the members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Non-delegates attended a special meeting at a nearby school. This session was presided over by the Chairman of the National Teaching Committee, Mrs. Kathleen Javid, who introduced members of the Teaching Committee and staff and the International Goals Committee and its staff. The “Skokie Warblers” sang a number of beautiful songs with
National Convention of the Bahá’ís of the United States
Held in Wilmette, Illinois
on May 18, 19, 20, 1973
The Hand of the Cause William Sears reminded us that rank on rank of angels are waiting to rush to our aid in delivering the Message, and that if we do our part, even the climate could change. Mr. Sears told of the goals achieved in Persia, that there are now Assemblies in Tabriz, Mah-Kü, Chihriq, Zanjan, Bardafurush, and other Bahá’í historic sites; 416 new Assemblies were formed in the last three years in Persia, representing the equivalent of a new center each day in that period of time. He talked particularly on the significance of this time and urged us not to slacken the present tempo of teaching but rather to increase it.

During the Saturday afternoon plenary session the results of the election of members of the National Spiritual Assembly were announced in order of their votes, as follows: Dr. Dorothy Nelson, Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, Dr. Daniel C. Jordan, Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Miss Magdalene Carney, Mr. Franklin Kahn, Dr. Dwight Allen, Miss Charlotte Linfoot, Dr. Sara Martin Pereira. As part of the afternoon’s agenda, Dr. Victor de Araujo, representative of the Bahá’í International Community to the Non-Governmental Organizations of the United Nations, traced the influence of Bahá’í Teachings on the attitudes of persons at the U.N. “Next year will be World Population Year” he said, “and 1975 will be Woman’s Year.”

Several activities in connection with the Convention but out of session were noteworthy. Thursday evening there was an opening prayer service under the Temple dome and downstairs afterward an informal reception where friends could visit with members of the National Spiritual Assembly and each other. Each morning before Convention session, there was a devotional program in the Auditorium of the Bahá’í House of Worship. Outstanding was the Saturday morning service dedicated to the Hands of the Cause, the Knights of Bahá’u’lláh, the pioneers and, indeed, all believers who had passed into the Abhá kingdom during the Nine Year Plan.

Saturday evening a banquet of celebration was held at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston with Dr. Sarah Martin Pereira presiding. Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh gave a short talk about the victories of the Nine Year Plan, and Mary Louise Creekmore, soprano and a Bahá’í, with Dr. Daniel C. Jordan accompanying her at the piano, charmed her audience with a program of operatic arias and some familiar light-opera numbers which brought several standing ovations. To the five hundred attending, it was a mellow, heart-warming evening.

At the concluding session on Sunday morning, officers of the National Assembly were announced, as follows: Chairman, Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh; Vice-Chairman, Dr.

At one of the Convention sessions, delegate Pearl Schuyler is taking notes.

Dr. Dorothy Nelson presenting the budget. In the background are Steve Jackson, Assistant Treasurer, Lauretta Voelz and Tom Armistead of the office of the Treasurer.

Daniel C. Jordan; Secretary, Mr. Glenford Mitchell; Assistant Secretary, Miss Charlotte Linfoot; Treasurer, Dr. Dorothy Nelson.

Mr. Glenford Mitchell outlined some of the plans and changes adopted for next year. Most of them are aimed at meeting the individual needs of localities. A new National Education Committee will deal with education of children, the family, youth and local community, and eventually will direct the various Bahá’í summer and winter schools. The National Information Committee will be responsible for public information and three Bahá’í publications of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Regarding goals, every Assembly will be asked to systematically teach children, including non-Bahá’ís; to contribute to the Fund each Bahá’í month; to take an inventory of human resources and how to use them to the best advantage; to focus on universal participation and deepening. The National Spiritual Assembly will conduct a training institute for field representatives who will act as arms of the National Spiritual Assembly in dealing with certain types of problems in local communities.

Dr. Daniel C. Jordan presented the first five sections of the Comprehensive Deepening Course on which the National Spiritual Assembly has been working for more than two years (now available through the Bahá’í Publishing Trust) and described the other subjects of the Faith to be covered in the remaining sections. Part of the deepening materials is an amusing film strip in which various kinds of birds are pictured as representing types of individuals found on most Local Spiritual Assemblies and it shows how diverse mixtures of qualities can be used to the advantage of the community.

During the consultation period, Mrs. Alberta Landsdowne of South Carolina made a plea for couples to settle in her state where there are 11,000 registered believers and only a few deepened teachers.

Attention was turned to the American Indians by Mrs. Vivian Fellows, delegate from Wisconsin, who related an incident in which certain valuables were stolen from her and her empty purse was found and returned to her by a local Indian group, thus opening the way for several Bahá’í meetings among the Indians in the community. Mrs. Nancy Phillips reminded us that we should seek out the first Americans, seek their advice and listen to what they have to say before attempting an aggressive teaching program with them. Mrs. Pearl Schuyler, a Navajo living on the Navajo Reservation, cautioned about over-administration with Indians. A
ninety-year old Navajo Bahá'í chanted a prayer in his language for safe travel home.

During the last hour of this Sixty-Fourth Convention on the platform with The Hand of the Cause Sears were Counsellor Florence Mayberry; Auxiliary Board members Irene Bennett of Uganda and Margo Jackson of Australia; from the United States were Eunice Braun, Opal Conner and Dr. Peter Khan. Counsellor Mayberry, who had briefly addressed those assembled several times during the Convention, again brought all back to the unforgettable International Convention in Haifa. She said: "Being with The House of Justice gives the same feeling as being with the Guardian." She commented on the feeling of power and well-being, the great justice and never harshness of the Universal House." And, she asked, "What is justice but love for everybody?"

Mr. Sears, in his closing remarks, again reminded the friends of the promises of assistance from the Supreme Concourse if we will but draw upon it.

Following the closing prayer, with hearts refreshed and reinforced for their next endeavors for the Cause and with renewed dedication, delegates and visitors alike departed reluctantly for all points in the United States and many places abroad.

At the Victory banquet, Mary Louise Creekmore entertains the guests.
Messina, Sicily, was the location of a week-end school held from January 4 through 7, 1973, attended by forty people from all sections of Italy, including the Piedmont and Sardinia. The committee had a well prepared plan centered on three main points: cooperation with other communities on an international level, consolidation of existing Spiritual Assemblies, and the progress of the Faith in Italy.

During this brief period of time the Faith was proclaimed in all Messina. Printed leaflets were distributed. One reached the minister of an Adventist Church who made favorable comments to his Sunday morning congregation on the words of Bahá'u'lláh in the leaflet.

At the end of the school, five youth from Messina who had been present at most of the sessions expressed their desire to declare themselves, having felt the spirit of love and unity generated among the Bahá'ís. A non-Bahá'í friend thanked the Bahá'ís for having come to Messina and for the dynamic spirit that was evident at all the meetings.
Distinguished Visitors at Tororo Girls' School

Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga recently spoke to more than 600 students at the Tororo Girls School in Tororo, Uganda. The film "And His Name Shall Be One" preceded the talk. The next day many students crowded around him for a deepening session and prayers, while Mrs. Olinga commented on the role of young women and encouraged them to study the Teachings.

During the past year Tororo School was blessed with the presence of Hand of the Cause Dr. Muhajir and Counsellor Vasudevan.

The Bahá’í club is composed of students who represented many different tribes of Uganda. Each school day they gather to say prayers at mid-day and when there are visitors they bring much joy by singing Bahá’í songs.

During the Fast, twenty-five of the Bahá’í Club members met at the flat of Miss Zylpha Mapp very early, said prayers and had breakfast together before dawn. At noon they returned for more prayers and songs, and in the evening, attended a deepening class. When the Fast was over they had a wonderful Naw-Rúz celebration.

Forough Ehsani from Iran became the bride of George Olinga, son of Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga on Naw-Rúz, March 21, 1973. It was an unforgettable day at Kikaaya Hill, the Temple grounds in Kampala, Uganda, for it was on this day that the families and friends of George Olinga from Teso and Forough Ehsani came together—her parents, sister and brother-in-law and other Persian friends. Forough had been pioneering in Uganda since 1970.

There was a short service of praise and thanksgiving after the vows were taken, and then a reception. Vida Abassi had composed a song specially for the occasion. Guests enjoyed the dancing and drumming of a local group.

A second reception was held in Tilling, Teso, hosted by Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga and his wife. A throng of friends from Kampala journeyed to Teso to join in the festivities. The Persian visitors were introduced to their new relatives and friends in the Bahá’í school at Tilling after a short devotional service. There was music and traditional dancing, welcoming the bride, which continued late into the evening.

—Excerpts from the Trumpet (Bahá’í Youth Newsletter)
Our few days in Durban before going to Swaziland were very happily spent. In a holiday resort for the Africans, friends gathered for a morning and afternoon meeting. Baha'is from the city locations as well as towns and settlements farther away had been invited to come and meet with Amatu'l-Baha and hear her speak. Quite a number of believers were present and a very happy atmosphere prevailed. Ruhiyyih Khanum spoke about the progress of the Faith all over Africa and all over the world. She encouraged the friends to study the Teachings more so as to deepen their faith and teach their own people the Message of Bahá'u'lláh because they are now free to do so.

On behalf of the Bahá'ís, an old Zulu believer presented Amatu'l-Bahá with a three-legged iron pot typical of those used throughout all the countries of Southern Africa as a momento of her visit. No doubt the news had spread around that Ruhiyyih Khanum liked these pots as well as the traditional mealie meal cooked in them.

In Swaziland

The six week tour of Amatu'l-Bahá in Swaziland was packed with many thrilling occasions and great victories for the Faith. This was the twenty-eighth independent African country we had entered in the past three years. Once again we had the joy of having the companionship of Mrs. Bahiyyih Ford. A dear American pioneer in Manzini, with generosity and love for Ruhiyyih Khanum, moved out of her own apartment and offered it to us. This was greatly appreciated as it gave us the comfort of a home and the freedom to rest more and eat a little simple home cooking for a change. Swaziland is truly blessed by a relatively large number of distinguished pioneer families from both the West and the East, among them many new arrivals. The spirit of unity and harmony among all the believers of that country is truly exemplary and brought rejoicing to the heart of Amatu'l-Baha. The Knights of Bahá'u'lláh of that country are still living there, as active as ever and faithful to the plea of the Guardian that the pioneers should not abandon their posts. As there are very few believers holding this rank conferred by Shoghi Effendi (those who opened up new countries at the beginning of the World Crusade), it does one good to witness the faithfulness and steadfastness of these souls. Amatu'l-Baha's unique position and compelling personality were used by the National Spiritual Assembly, the pioneers and all the friends to proclaim the Faith in that land.

Received by the King

Ruhiyyih Khanum was received by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, through the help of Prince Masitsela, the distinguished royal prince who is also one of the Ministers in the Government of the King. He had met Amatu'l-Bahá in Haifa and was entertained by her, as well as his sister, Princess Gcinaphi, said to be the favorite daughter of the King. For the meeting with the King, Amatu'l-Bahá was accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. John Allen, the original pioneer couple to Swaziland who had known the royal family for years, and the writer.
The interview lasted for an hour and ten minutes. King Sobhuza II is one of the outstanding rulers of Africa today. He belongs to a dynasty unbroken for 300 years. His Majesty is a tall, handsome man in his seventies, every inch a King. He is fair-minded, powerful, tolerant of all religions and a follower of the ancestral religion. He is well informed of the Bahá’í Faith and respects its ideals and principles. This historic interview took place in the evening of August 25, 1972 in the home of La Ma Sukwadi and Princess Gcinaphi and Princess Gcinaphi and two other court officials were also present. The King was seated with his wife beside him on a chair and our party all on chairs, but the rest sat on the floor out of respect for the King.

The King Asks Questions
The King was entirely at ease, very genial, and asked many questions on the origin of the Faith, its aims and principles. He asked when Bahá'u'lláh passed away. When Rúhíyyih Khánum said “In 1892”, he was surprised and commented: “I was born in 1899 and only seven years before my birth the Founder of this religion passed away. It is so close to our time.” At one point he asked Rúhíyyih Khánum if the Bahá’ís had any trouble or disagreement with members of other religions. She replied “We Bahá’ís have no quarrel with anyone. If two men are tolerant and wise and broad-minded thinkers, then there is no quarrel. It is only through narrow-mindedness and prejudice that men disagree.” On his fingers the King enumerated some of the world’s religions and asked why there are so many of them. With much warmth and courtesy Rúhíyyih Khánum explained the principle of progressive revelation and ended by saying “We think that even the traditional religion of Africa was from God and a link in the chain of divine education.” He was very pleased and said, “When the Christians came here the missionaries condemned our religion as idolatry and evil. This was not true. We were never idolaters. We always believed in one God, the Creator. We believe in the intercession of our ancestors; through our father, grandfather and great grandfather, we reach out to the supreme power of God.”

He asked “What is the law of marriage in the Bahá’í Faith? Do you believe in polygamy or not?” (The king is known to have over 200 wives and several hundred children). He continued: “If we do not believe in polygamy, how do we deal with members of our religion who had more than one wife before accepting the Bahá’í Faith?”

Rúhíyyih Khánum explained that there was nothing wrong with polygamy; “In the past it was the rule in most societies of man. It had not then been forbidden. But in this age the law of Bahá’u’lláh is monogamy because the world is rapidly changing. In some societies now, and in all societies in the future, one wife at a time for a man will be enough. But if a man has many wives, like Chief Kabwere in Kenya who had seventy wives when he accepted the Bahá’í Faith, we do not ask him to divorce all his wives but one. That would be most unjust. After all, he did not do anything wrong according to the law by which he married them. However, now that he is a Bahá’í, he cannot marry another wife, for that would then break the Bahá’í law.” She also mentioned that many of Chief Kabwere’s wives had become Bahá’ís too. The King liked this answer very much and said it was fair.

Rúhíyyih Khánum presented the King with a beautiful clock she had especially bought for him a year ago in Switzerland which he graciously accepted.

The Reed Dance

The following day, at the invitation of Princess Gcinaphi, we attended the famous Reed Dance. This is the traditional dance of the maidens which has now been revived by the King since independence. All the young unmarried girls of the land are invited to participate. Thousands of beautiful girls, dressed only in colorful bead belts and necklaces, carrying a long reed upright in their hands, danced before the King and his ministers. The princesses of royal blood arranged red feathers fan like, in their hair, similar in effect to a large Spanish comb. These red feathers are exclusively used by those of royal blood; even the King, on occasions, wears them. For us, the most wonderful event of the day was the public favor the King showed to Amatu’l-Bahá, which was tantamount to showing it to the Faith.

The King and his Prime Minister were seated on chairs but his entire cabinet ministers, the royal Princess and the chieftains were seated on the ground near him. Through the Princess, his daughter, Ruhiyyih Khânüm, Mrs. Allen and the writer were invited to join him and were seated on chairs at his right, the only other person seated on a chair was a visiting Minister of Information from Nigeria.

At one point Princess Gcinaphi came to Ruhiyyih Khânüm and asked her to go with her and join the dancers. Amatu’l-Bahá, dressed in the Swazi traditional dress by the Princess herself, was unwilling to offend by a public refusal. She took off her sandals and joined with the Princess in the front row of dancers who reminded one of beautiful butterflies. The King was obviously pleased to see a white woman of her age and rank join so naturally in this national festival with an audience of four to five thousand people.

Princess Gcinaphi told us that after the first visit with the King he praised Ruhiyyih Khânüm, and in their own language, referred to her as ‘he’. Asked why, the King answered it was because she has the mind of a man.

The night of the festival, Prince Masitsela invited Amatu’l-Bahá to a dinner party given in honor of the visiting Nigerian Minister. After dinner and a speech by the Nigerian Minister, he mentioned the Faith warmly and introduced Ruhiyyih Khânüm. She then gave a short speech in reply, mentioning her thoughts on Africa’s great destiny. This obviously pleased the many
distinguished guests. After all these events, the Bahá'ís felt the Faith has received the proclamation and widespread recognition it deserved. Their cup was full.

A good radio interview served to further spread the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. As before it was almost impossible to get any mention of the Faith on the air, this was particularly important.

At a reception given by the National Spiritual Assembly of Swaziland and Mozambique in honor of Ruhiyyih Khánum, attended by many distinguished officials of the government and others, she gave a brief talk by which they were deeply impressed. We were also invited to attend the Prime Minister's garden party held in the beautiful gardens of his home in conjunction with this period of festivities and the occasion of the National Independence Day celebrations. The Prime Minister was very cordial to Ruhiyyih Khánum. She was invited to attend the official celebration of Independence Day on September 6, and we were seated in the royal box immediately behind His Majesty the King and his Prime Minister. In short, Swaziland accorded Amatu'l-Bahá a welcome befitting her high station.

One of the first Bahá'í activities Amatu'l-Bahá attended in Swaziland was a Youth Conference at the national Haziratu'l-Quds. One hundred and twenty-five young Bahá'ís from Swaziland, South Africa and Rhodesia were present. Swaziland had twenty-nine localities represented. Amatu'l-Bahá spoke about service to the Cause; encouraged them to organize themselves into teams and in a systematic way go out, teach and consolidate until all the goals were achieved. She mentioned her beloved mother and her deep love and devotion to the Faith. She said that once her mother was in great pain, and she said "Oh, mother, you must have suffered a great deal of pain in your life." Her mother replied, "Yes, that is true, but one drop of the love of God washes away a thousand years of pain!"

Amatu'l-Bahá met with the National Spiritual Assembly and two members of the Board of Counsellors and the visiting Counsellor from India, reviewing the remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan and consulting on ways and means of accomplishing them.

In Many Villages

In the village of Bhuna, Ruhiyyih Khánum spoke at a public meeting held in a school house. Her topic was "The Message of Bahá'u'lláh and Its Aim for the World."

In the village of Bhekenkosi, after introducing the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh someone asked if one can be both a Bahá'í and a member of his previous Church. She answered this with a beautiful example. She said: "Suppose a man is walking in a desert searching for water. He finds the water at last. Does he then drink a drop and then continue his search?" The audience got the point and laughed.

An old man with a sad face, who was obviously slightly intoxicated said: "I cannot understand religions; religion is like a woman, very beautiful but impossible to understand!.."

In the village of Musi and Dwaleni, a number of Bahá'ís and their friends attended the meetings and heard the wonderful explanations of Ruhiyyih Khánum, asked many questions and were deeply grateful for her answers. By the light of candles in a meeting in the town of Nhlangano, high in the mountains, over thirty-five eager enquirers heard the healing Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Though we were extremely cold the meeting continued until late at night. In the village of Mambanta, in the home of a devoted Bahá'í woman whose

Ruhiyyih Khánum at the meeting at Tshonene, Swaziland
whole family have embraced the Faith and are active teachers, Amatu'l-Bahá spoke to a large number of Baha'is and their friends. At the end of the meeting our hostess said “Now you have heard it for yourselves; you have seen our beloved guest and are all moved by her words. As soon as she goes, don't go back to your lazy ways, sitting under the trees in the sunshine with your legs outstretched, doing nothing!”

After a dinner reception at the home of one of the Baha'is in Manzinini, Amatu'l-Bahá spoke to a good number of believers and their friends on the Word of God, saying that it is life-giving and endowed with miraculous power. A dignified elderly pastor of a Christian church who was present was impressed by her talk and at the end of it said: “The Word of God is like a piece of soap God has given to us for our use. Now if you have a piece of soap but do not wash your garment with it your clothes cannot get clean.”

Ruhíyyih Khánúm said this is a beautiful example “I accept it from you as a gift and shall use it in my talks. In return I will give you a gift of a beautiful example given to us by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.” Then she told them of the heart being like a mirror which if turned to God and spiritual matters will reflect heavenly light; but if turned earthward will only reflect the darkness of this world of material things, our baser nature of animal desire. Then if a mirror is left exposed for some time the dust and dirt cover it and this dulls its capacity to reflect the light. Likewise the heart of man becomes dark by the dust of passion and greed, jealousy and desires, and so on. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá told us that we can clean the mirror of our heart through prayer.” The pastor was very happy with this example and he said he would use this in his sermons.

The largest village gathering we attended in Swaziland was at their Baha'i school. Over 200 believers came for an all-day meeting and a delicious lunch. The chief in this area is a devoted Baha'i. He ceremoniously presented Ruhíyyih Khánúm with the meat of half a sheep, which she accepted, according to their local custom, and took it back to the town where, a few nights later, we ate it in the home of one of the friends. Amatu'l-Bahá spoke on the subject of service to the Cause and the station of the first believers. She said “At the beginning it takes courage and force of character to accept the Faith and be different from the rest of society. When the Faith becomes known and accepted by many it no longer requires this kind of courage to embrace it. ‘Abdu'l-Bahá has said that in the future when many people acknowledge the Cause of Baha'u'llah there will no longer be any special distinction or honor in becoming a Baha'i. The honor is in recognizing it as the truth before it has become popular.” She urged the friends to champion the Faith even in the face of adverse public opinion and proclaim this wonderful Message of God for this day.

In the town of Tshanene the friends had arranged a public meeting for Ruhíyyih Khánúm and many of the distinguished members of that township attended and were deeply impressed by her talk. She spoke of the spiritual Teachings of Baha'u'llah and talked at length
about the power of prayer and intercession. The beloved Guardian, in his beautiful message after the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf clearly calls on her and asks her to go to her beloved Father and intercede for him. Ruhiyyih Khánum said that Shoghi Effendi explained that we can turn to and address our prayers to holy souls who have passed away, to members of our family and those we love, and of course to Bahá'u'lláh or to 'Abdu'l-Bahá—as long as we understand their stations and do not confuse one with another in our minds. She said, “I have often turned my heart in prayers to my father or to my mother, asking them to help me. After the passing of Shoghi Effendi, when I was trying to complete his work of finishing and decorating the International Archives, I often turned to my father for help, because he was a great artist and an architect, and I often felt he was helping me from the invisible world.” With the most exquisite smile on her face, Ruhiyyih Khánum said, “Sometimes on this trip, when I am driving on a particularly bad patch of so-called road, or there is trouble with the car, I call out to the Supreme Concourse and say ‘there must be someone there who knows something about cars or mechanics, come and help’ — and it has always worked.”

At the end of these very full and happy six weeks in Swaziland we passed a few days in visiting the famous Kruger Game Park on our way to see Lorenzo Marques, the capital of Mozambique. Although Amatu'l-Bahá was only able to spend one night there she met with a few of the Portuguese Bahá'ís for an informal social evening together in the lobby of our hotel. As there are restrictions on holding meetings, this was all that was possible at that time. As we made this trip with the two oldest pioneers to Swaziland, we drove with them back to Manzini to pick up the Land Rover and say farewell to the dear Bahá'ís there. In a last meeting in the national Ha'iratu'l-Quds, a large number of believers came to listen to their beloved guest and bid her goodbye. Amatu'l-Bahá spoke of the joy and blessing of teaching the Faith and serving it. She said, “At the inception of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh it was easy to sacrifice for Him. One could simply go forward and by saying he was a believer, could give his life, his belongings and his all. But today it is almost impossible to make any sacrifice for Him. Even at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade the believers were more fortunate in being able to make small sacrifices for Him, as the material conditions of many countries were such that many commodities we are accustomed to in the West were not available. But now one can hardly find a country where one cannot have electricity, refrigerator, automobiles, a variety of foods, etc.” She said, “The friends must realize that teaching and serving the Cause are great bounties, the greatest means of learning and developing. When I look back at these three years in Africa, I realize how much I myself have learned and developed in my understanding of the Teachings. We must go out eager and prepared to learn from the people we come in contact
with. "She recalled the warnings of Shoghi Effendi at the end of his life about the calamities ahead of mankind and said, "You people of Swaziland and other countries such as yours are very fortunate as you may be the ones who will escape whatever destruction lies ahead if there should be another war. You are too poor and insignificant in the eyes of the great nations on which to waste an atomic bomb! You may yet count it a blessing that you are still an underdeveloped country and not a fully developed one!"

Nairobi, February, 1973 (To be continued)

The End of a Safari

The Nairobi Airport on February 24, 1972 was crowded with hundreds of Bahá’ís who had come to say goodbye to Hand of the Cause of God Rúhíyyih Khánum as she was preparing to leave Africa after a three and a half year Safari throughout the continent. The crowd included members of the Continental Board of Counselors for Central and East Africa, Auxiliary Board members and pioneers. Many came hundreds of miles from neighboring countries to be once more in the presence of this precious Hand of the Cause.

With Violette Nakhjavání, companion on the safari, they were honored with several dinner parties before their departure, one at the home of Patrick Roberts. Some who were there were: Mamajahn Banani, wife of the late Hand of the Cause Musa Banani, and Mrs. Enoch Olinga. After a luncheon at the Yazdi’s, the writer and Mrs. Olinga were delighted to help with the packing—which included much African art and articles of interest.

It was with hearts overflowing with love that the two boarded the plane that was to take them back to Europe and finally to their home in Haifa, the Bahá’í World Centre.

—Zylpha Mapp.

Some of those who came to see Rúhíyyih Khánum as she was preparing to leave Africa. Standing, left to right: A. Yazdi, Zylpha Mapp, F. Ashraf. Seated: O Pawlowska, K. Oule, Rúhíyyih Khánum, O Peyeru, Isabel Sabri. Seated, front: F. Mukalama.

NEWS FROM MALAWI

A young lady who is travelling throughout Africa recently wrote of her experiences in Malawi: "The funniest and most exciting thing that happened was going to see the Chief of the area... He is translating The New Garden and The Pattern of Bahá’í Life but apparently is not a Bahá’í himself. So the National Spiritual Assembly asked me to go and see him. We had agreed to go on Sunday; it's a six-mile walk through the bush so we planned to start early.

But on Saturday night it rained and Sunday they said, 'You can't go because we have to cross the river and it's waist high.' Sure enough when we got to the river it looked like the Thames in full spate. And then one of the Bahá’ís picked a banana leaf and tied it around his waist, then proceeded to take off his trousers. He wasn't wearing anything else, but the banana leaf was extremely modest and made him look like a ballerina. He said, 'I will guide you across.' I was wearing a long skirt and a long petticoat so I took off my skirt and shoes and the petticoat was quite decent, and so garbed I approached the muddly incline. In fact the bottom of the river was sandy, not muddy, and the sweet Bahá’í took my hand and took me across the river, where we all shook the water off, put our clothes back on and marched on! But I did think, 'If mother could see me now!'

'And then we got to the Chief. He was quite charming and had worked as a British Broadcasting Corporation producer. We spent four long hours with him... I asked him why, after all this, he is not a Bahá’í. He said, 'But I am a Bahá’í,' and then went on to describe his belief in Bahá’u’lláh....

'Malawi was really quite good; they sent me up North where there is a fairly remote village community of about 100; it's Karonga... Beautiful attitude to the Writings and Teachings and administration; their questions were detailed and deep... they meet together every day for prayers and the problems which you find all over Africa seem to be faced here... These people were quite delightful. ...."
The National Haziratu'l-Quds of Zaire, a goal of the Nine Year Plan, was acquired on October 27, 1972. The National Spiritual Assembly searched for some years for a suitable location in Kinshasa City, where costs of buildings are exceedingly high. The friends thought the design of the bars on the window frames which are like a radiating sun, were symbolic of the Faith, and suitable for the Center. The Center is located in “Zone Kinshasa”, in the center of Kinshasa City, with over a million and a half inhabitants.

BAHA'I NEWS

Subscription is $6.00 a year (payable in advance) in the U.S. and Canada, and is for Bahá'ís only.

WORLD ORDER is a quarterly for Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís which is intended to stimulate, inspire, and serve thinking people in their search to find relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings and philosophy. Domestic subscription $4.50 ($3.50 for students); foreign subscription $5.00. Payable in advance.

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International Teaching Centre established

The Great Safari Life continues in Burma
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CORRECTIONS

In the July 1973 issue on page 14, Bob Dickson is at the extreme right instead of Tom Armstead as stated.

COVER PHOTO

A Daidanaw Government School where all the students are Bahá'ís.

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International Teaching Centre established in Holy Land

To the Bahá'ís of the World
Dear Bahá'í Friends,

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 coordinate, 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. 'Aziz 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, 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 present, submit their decision to The Universal House of Justice for approval.

The following changes to the zones of the Continental Boards of Counsellors are now made:

• The number of zones has been raised to twelve by the removal of India, Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Lad­cadive, Maldives, Andaman and Nicobar Islands from the zone of Western Asia to constitute the new zone of South Central Asia.
• The Philippines, Hong Kong and Macau are transferred from North-eastern Asia to South­eastern Asia.
• The Caroline Islands and all other Pacific islands lying north of the equator and between longitudes 140° east and 140° west, with the exception of the Gilbert Islands, will be transferred from the zone of Australasia to the zone of North-eastern Asia. Islands under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska remain in the zone of North America.

The number of Counsellors is now raised to fifty-seven by the appointment of Mr. Friday Ekpe and Mr. Dhikru'lláh Kázími in North-western Africa, Mr. Húshang 'Abdiyyih 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 Sorajjee in South Central Asia, Mr. Firaydún Mitháqíyá in South-eastern Asia, Mr. Richard Benson and Miss Elena Marsella in North-eastern Asia and Miss Violet Hoehnke in Australasia.

Dr. William Max-

continued next page
The establishment of the International Teaching Centre brings to fruition the work of the Hands residing in the Holy Land well 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. Mrs. Zena Sorabjee is appointed Trustee of the new Continental Fund of South Central Asia, while Mr. Hūshang 'Adhiyyih and Mr. Mas'ud Khamsi are appointed the new Trustees of the Continental Funds of Central and East Africa and South America respectively.

Beyond these significant developments at the World Centre of the Faith and on the continental level, it is becoming increasingly necessary in many parts of the world for the Auxiliary Boards to be reinforced. The nature of the work differs from zone to zone and The Universal House of Justice is now consulting the Boards of Counsellors on this matter before making an announcement.

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.

It is our fervent prayer that the Blessed Beauty will abundantly confirm this latest unfoldment of His divinely-purposed Administrative Order.

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE


(New appointments are indicated with an asterisk.)

North-western Africa
Husayn Ardikání (Trustee of Continental Fund)
* Friday Ekpe
* Džikru’l-láh Kážími
Muhammad Kebdani

Central and East Africa
* Hūshang ‘Adhiyyih (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Oloro Epyeru
Kolonario Oule
Isobel Sabri
Mihdí Samandari
* Peter Vuyiya

Southern Africa
SeeWoosumbur-Jeehoba Appa
Shidán Fath-i-‘A'ẓam (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Bahiyyih Winckler

North America
Lloyd Gardner
* Sarah Pereira
* Velma Sherrill
Edna True (Trustee of Continental Fund)

Central America
Carmen de Burafato
* Rowland Estall

Artemus Lamb
* Paul Lucas
Alfred Osborne (Trustee of Continental Fund)

South America
* Leonora Armstrong
Athos Costas
Mas'úd Khamsi (Trustee of Continental Fund)
* Peter McLaren
* Raúl Pavón
Donald Witzel

Western Asia
Iraj Aymán
Masíh Farhangi
Hádi Raḥmání (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Manúchíhr Salmanpur

South Central Asia
Shirin Boman
* Dipíchand Khianra
* Zena Sorabjee (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Sankaran-Nair Vasudevan

South-eastern Asia
* Firaydún Míthákílyán
Khudáraḥm Paymán (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Vicente Samaniego
Chellie Sundram
Yan Kee Leong

North-eastern Asia
* Richard Benson
John McHenry III
* Elena Marsella
Rúḫu’l-láh Mumtází (Trustee of Continental Fund)

Australasia
Suhayl ‘Alá’í
* Violet Hoehnke
Howard Harwood
Thelma Perks (Trustee of Continental Fund)

Europe
Erik Blumenthal
Anneliese Bopp
Dorothy Ferraby
Louis Hénuzet (Trustee of Continental Fund)
Betty Reed

ZONES OF THE CONTINENTAL BOARDS OF COUNSELLORS
AS REVISED BY THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE IN MAY 1973

1. North-western Africa
All the continent of Africa west of the eastern frontiers of Tunisia, Algeria, Niger and Nigeria plus the Cape Verde Islands.

2. Central and East Africa
All the continent of Africa east of the western frontiers of Libya, Chad and the United Cameroon Republic and north of the southern frontiers of Zaire and Tanzania plus the islands of Fernando Póo, Príncipe, São Tomé and Annobón in the Atlantic Ocean and Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia Islands in the Indian Ocean.
3. **Southern Africa**
All the continent of Africa south of the northern frontiers of Angola, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique plus the Island of Madagascar and all islands in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans between longitudes 20° west and 80° east and south of the equator with the exception of the Islands of Annobón, Zanzibar, Pemba, and Mafia which are assigned to the zone of Central and East Africa.

4. **North America**
All the continent of America north of the southern frontier of the United States plus all offshore islands in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans including the Aleutian chain and all islands under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska, also Greenland and all offshore islands politically belonging to Greenland, all islands in the Atlantic Ocean west of longitude 40° west and between latitude 60° north and the Tropic of Cancer plus those Bahama Islands lying south of the Tropic of Cancer.

5. **Central America**
All the continent of America south of the northern frontier of Mexico and north of the southern frontier of Panama plus the offshore islands in the Pacific Ocean belonging politically to countries of this zone plus Clipperton Island, all islands in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea south of the Tropic of Cancer except the Bahama Islands which are allocated to the zone of North America and islands belonging politically to Colombia and Venezuela, the islands of Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba, Trinidad and Tobago which are all allocated to the zone of South America.

6. **South America**
All the continent of South America, the Galapagos Islands, Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba, Trinidad and Tobago, all islands in the Caribbean and Atlantic Oceans south of the equator and between longitude 120° west and longitude 20° west.

7. **Western Asia**
All the continent of Asia west of the eastern boundaries of Pakistan, Sinkiang, the Mongolian Republic, the Oblasts of Chita and Irkutsk and the Kray of Krasnoyarsk and east of the western boundaries of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, plus those parts of Turkey and Kazakhstan which lie in Europe and including the Transcaucasian S.S.R.s of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as all islands in the Persian Gulf and islands in the Arabian Sea belonging politically to countries of this zone.

8. **South Central Asia**
India, Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Laccadive, Maldives, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

9. **South-Eastern Asia**
China south of the northern boundaries of Yun nan, Szechwan, Hupeh, Anhwei and Kiangsu, as well as Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Macau. Excluding Portuguese Timor.

continued page twenty-three
Baha'is in Rangoon and nearby villages in front of the National Baha'i Center.

Baha'is at Twante, Burma, at the local center.
Baha'is winnowing the rich harvest in the fields near the Baha'i village of Daidanaw, Burma (February 1973).

Baha'is in Daidanaw, Kungangood Township, Burma, called the "Village of 'Abdu'l-Baha." They are having tea with travel-teacher Greg Dahl in their meeting hall. The two gentlemen on the right are National Spiritual Assembly members.

Bahais crossing the bridge linking the village of Daidanaw with the fields (February 1973).

photos by greg dahl
Breakwell
the first Bahá’í
of England

O. Z. Whitehead

Thomas Breakwell was taught of the Faith of Baha’u’llah by May Bolles (later Mrs. William Sutherland Maxwell).

While a member of the first party of pilgrims from the West to visit ‘Abdu’l-Baha, May was asked by the Master to return to Paris and establish a Bahá’í Center in that city. This was accomplished in a few months.

An unforgettable event was experienced by May in the summer of 1901 and related in a letter to a friend, dated December 2, 1913. May lived with her mother in Paris, but at this time her mother did not understand the Bahá’í Cause and as a result she disapproved of May’s constant service to it particularly since her journey to ‘Akka. Early in the spring her mother wrote to the Master asking him to allow her to take May along with her brother to Brittany for the summer. The Master answered Mrs. Bolles that under no account was May to leave Paris. Learning that the Master’s refusal had made Mrs. Bolles most unhappy, the great teacher, Mirzá Abúl-Fadl, wrote Him to explain how she felt. He still did not give His permission.

When her mother and brother left the city, May moved to a small apartment in a charming house belonging to a friend, Mrs. Jackson. During the first month that May spent there she held wonderful meetings which led to the conversion of many precious souls.

Early in the summer, Mrs. Milner, whom May had known the previous winter, met a young Englishman on a ship sailing from the United States to France. Although Mrs. Milner had never shown any apparent interest in The Bahá’í Cause, she still felt moved to invite him to come with her to see, “a special friend,” in Paris. The day after Mrs. Milner and he arrived in that city, May found them standing at her door.

She has vividly described her first sight of him. “It was like looking at a veiled light. I saw at once his pure heart, his thirsty soul, and over all was cast the veil which is over every soul until it is rent asunder by the power of God in this day.” She added that he was “of medium height, slender, erect and graceful with intense eyes and an indescribable charm.” May soon learned that although he was English he held an important post in a cotton mill in a southern state of America, where he had been living for some time, and that he usually spent long summer vacations in Europe.

They discussed his work and the trip that he was planning. He spoke of his great interest in Theosophy and seemed to think that she shared the same. She did not mention the Bahá’í Cause. Even so, she felt that he was studying her carefully. As he was leaving he asked May if he might come to see her again and hear about some teachings that Mrs. Milner had referred to on the steamer without mentioning what they were. Since he only planned to stay in Paris for a few days, she asked him to return on the following morning. He arrived with “his eyes shining, his face illumined, his voice vibrating under the stress of great emotion.”

He looked at her very intently and then said, “I have come to you to help me. Yesterday after I left you, I walked alone down the boulevard and suddenly some great force nearly swept me off my feet. I stood still as though awaiting something, and a voice announced to me distinctly, ‘Christ has come!’” Then he said, “What do you think this means?”

In answer to his question, she immediately gave him the Bahá’í Message.

For the next three days, during many hours which they spent together, she spoke to him about the exalted Mission of His Holiness, the Báb, His early martyrdom, the early martyrdom of many more who believed in Him, and about Bahá’u’lláh, the Blessed Beauty Who shone upon the world as the Sun of eternity, Who had given to mankind the law of God for this age—the consummation of all past ages and cycles.

She gave him all the Bahá’í literature in her possession. She described to him her visit to the Prison of ‘Akka and the unforgettable days that she had spent in the presence of the Master. As she taught him, the veil that she had first seen over him disappeared. “He was like a blazing light.”

On the third day of their conversation he became entirely transformed. No former ambition remained. He now had only a single passionate longing: to meet the Master. On this same day Thomas Breakwell wrote this supplication to Him, “My Lord! I believe; forgive me, Thy servant, Thomas Breakwell.” Although deeply moved by the depth and simplicity of his words, May did not yet fully understand why he had so urgently asked the Master for forgiveness. Without delay she wrote a letter to Him asking His permission for her young friend...
to make the pilgrimage and enclosing his supposition.

That evening when May went to the concierge of her apartment to get her mail she found a little blue cablegram from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that had just arrived. It said, "You may leave Paris at any time."

The next day she most happily joined her mother and brother at the seaside. After May had told her mother all that had taken place and had read her the Master's cablegram, she burst into tears and exclaimed "You have, indeed, a wonderful Master."

In an informal talk that He gave in England on January 16, 1913, the Master said, "I have a lamp in my hand searching through the lands and seas to find souls who can become heralds of the Cause." To one of May's spiritual children, He wrote, "Her company uplifts and develops the soul.

Soon Breakwell received permission to make the pilgrimage and went to ‘Akká with Herbert Hopper, a young American Bahá’í whom May had also taught. Together with his friend, Breakwell was ushered into a large room in the Prison House, where he expected to meet the Master. At one end of this room he saw a group of men from the East. In no way impressed with any of them, he became deeply troubled and was afraid that he had failed to recognize His Lord. "Sorrow and despair filled his heart, when suddenly a door opened and, in that opening, he beheld what seemed to him the rising Sun. So brilliant was this orb, so intense the light, that he sprang to his feet and saw approaching him out of this dazzling splendor the form of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Breakwell's mood instantly changed from one of deep despair to indescribable joy.

In his conversation with the Master he described his position in the cotton mills of the South. Now clearly realizing that such a condition was wrong, he said "These mills are run on child labor." The Master looked at him gravely and sadly for a while and then said "Cable your resignation." With great relief Breakwell hastened to obey Him.

In his invaluable, scholarly biography, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Centre of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh, H. M. Balyuzi has quoted some inspiring passages concerning Breakwell's visit of two days in the prison city from Memories of Nine Years in ‘Akká by Dr. Yunis Khan Afrukhtih. He has written, "The fervor and the faith of this young man were so sublime in character that his blessed name shall ring throughout centuries and shall be remembered with deep affection in many chronicles." Because of restrictions reimposed by the authorities his visit was unfortunately short. The intense love and great enthusiasm that he showed touched the hearts of all those who met him. On the day that he left the Master asked him to stay in Paris. At the Master's request Yunis Khan went with this young man from ‘Akká back to Haifa and to the ship on which he was to sail.

While they were stopping at a believer's house on the way, Breakwell turned more than once towards ‘Akká and prayed so fervently that everyone in the room was deeply moved. He asked Yunis Khan to correspond with him. Breakwell wanted to share with his new friend the divine fragrances of the Holy Places.

On his return to Paris, Breakwell, wonderfully influenced by his precious meeting with the Master and by the overwhelming experience of his entire pilgrimage, taught the Faith with increased spiritual power. "In the meetings he spoke with a simplicity and an eloquence which won the hearts and quickened the souls..." Knowing that money was always urgently needed to assist in the progress of the Cause, he lived in an inexpensive apartment, far distant from where the other believers lived, and always walked to the meetings. Enormously sympathetic, he had a deep love for people and despite any inconvenience to himself he never failed to try and help them.

May has told this touching story about him: "Well I remember the day we were crossing a bridge over the

continued page twenty-three
The Great Safari

part nineteen

Amatu'l-Bahá presenting a gift of a football to the team in Limbe, Malawi.

by Violette Nakhjavani

Once again, because of the inaccessibility of Malawi by road, we put the Land Rover on a boat and sailed from Durban to Mombasa in Kenya. It was a strange coincidence to see the same Captain who took us on his cargo boat in 1970 from Duala to Matadi in the West Coast of Africa now in charge of our passenger liner of the same company. He was very surprised to find us still in Africa! In Mombasa we were met by Mr. 'Aziz Yazdi, member of the Board of Counsellors in Central and East Africa, who saw us safely back to Nairobi.

A week's stop-over in Nairobi was packed with activities which added greatly to the publicity of the Faith. Rúhíyyih Khánum had two separate press conferences which gave rise to excellent articles about the reason for this unique Safari of two women crossing Africa alone—twice. At a reception given by the National Spiritual Assembly for Rúhíyyih Khánum, in one of the popular hotels of the city, a good number of prominent people heard her give a brief introduction to the Faith.

While at a one-day Youth Conference in the National Hazíratu'l-Quds she spoke to over 200 young people about their responsibility in this sick society we see about us in the world today. She said one of the characteristics of youth has always been its tendency to want to be just like other youth; this is why whatever becomes the rage, all follow it. To be an exemplary Bahá'í is to be distinguished, not to be afraid to be different from the rest. This is not easy, but it is the greatest means of attracting the attention of not only other youth but everyone around you.

In addition to this, at an all-day meeting in the National Headquarters, over 150 friends gathered to meet Amatu'l-Bahá and hear her speak on the art of teaching the Faith. She said: "To teach the Faith is very much like selling your goods. If I go into a shop to buy a bar of soap, I want to get the soap first; if the salesman tries to sell me some bacon or salt I won't be interested. We must first feel the need of the inquirer, then offer him from the ocean of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings what he is looking for, not something else we would like to thrust on him at that point. There is an answer to every need in His Writings." In Africa, Rúhíyyih Khánum said "There is a great need for the spiritual teachings such as the purpose of creation, life after death, prayers and so on. It is very easy to go around and say we believe in the unity of mankind, universal peace, compulsory education, a universal language and so on because we as individuals cannot do very much to implement these things; indirectly yes, but directly, to produce an immediate change in society, we cannot do a thing. But to speak of the moral teachings, teachings which should have an immediate influence in one's daily life, we overlook; and I am afraid the reason often is because we do not try to live up to them in our own daily lives."

In Malawi

We flew to Malawi on October 11th and were met by the Counsellor Mr. Shidan Fatheázam and the representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly, as well as by...
Amatu’l-Bahá and members of the National Assembly of Malawi.

The highlight of the Malawi tour of Amatu’l-Bahá was her interview with the President of that country. On the morning of October 13th, according to an arrangement made before our arrival, Amatu’l-Bahá, accompanied by Mr. Fatheazam, the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly and myself, visited the Minister of State, the Hon. A. A. Muwalo Nqumayo, in his office. Mr. Muwalo became a good friend and admirer of the Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga during his visit last year, and because of this friendship formed a very high opinion of the Faith. He is a very distinguished and courteous person and the first thing he told us after the introductions were over was that the President was waiting to see us. He said a call had come from Zomba and we should go there at once. Zomba is fifty miles away from Blantyre and Mr. Muwalo told Amatu’l-Bahá he would escort her there personally; this was very fortunate as during this same drive we were able to discuss with him a great deal about the Faith and to stress the cardinal principle of obedience to government. Because of an earlier close association with a young man in Uganda, who later on became one of the leaders of the independence movement in Malawi and who had been a friend of Mr. Muwalo, we were able to impart much of the Teachings. This subject of obedience to government is vital throughout Africa, but in Malawi it is crucial because of the activities of a militant Christian denomination which actively incites its followers not to obey their government and had not only caused President Banda and his government a great deal of trouble but had been recently banned and its followers expelled from the country.

We were received by the life President, Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, in his presidential office in Zomba, where he conducts much of his official business. In the center of the room was a long board table surrounded by chairs. President Banda is a very dynamic man, in spite of his seventy years, and when he entered from a private office at the head of this room one immediately felt the force of his personality. After cordially greeting us all, he sat at the head of the table with Amatu’l-Bahá at his left.

He asked her whether she was a Canadian, and she said that her father was Canadian and her mother American but since her marriage in 1937 she has lived in the Holy Land, which is the World Center of the Bahá’í
Faith. The moment the name of the Bahá’í Faith was mentioned the President beamed and pointed to an imposing, large, hand-wrought copper plaque on the wall, saying “Yes, I know the Bahá’ís. They gave me this.” This plaque represents the head of a majestic lion and was presented to him by Mr. Olinga on behalf of the Bahá’ís of Malawi with a dedication on it quoting the words of Bahá’u’lláh “So powerful is the light of unity it can illumine the whole earth” and added that it is given to Dr. H. K. Banda in appreciation of his efforts to establish peace and unity in the world. He is so proud of this beautiful and symbolic gift that he has hung it in this prominent place and calls the attention of many of his visitors to it (so we were told by others).

He remembered Mr. Olinga very well and told us what he had told him, that his hopes are to make his country a haven of peace and unity where all races and religions are free to live and function, providing they do not interfere with the peace of the land. He said there are certain Christian sects who force themselves on people, knocking at their doors and frightening them with hell fire if they do not join their particular church, which he felt was entirely wrong. He asked Rúhíyyih Khánum if she did not agree with him. She said, “Yes,” and that in her public as well as informal talks she often told her listeners that she was not asking them to leave their religions and follow hers. She said “It is as if I am invited to dinner in someone’s home, the table is laid with all kinds of food, my host invites me to eat. If I am hungry I will, but if I am not no one can force me to eat. This is the spirit with which we offer the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh to other people. They are free to accept them or not as they wish.” The President liked this answer and example immensely. He said, “I always have believed that the government is the instrument of keeping law and order and religions are likewise upholders of law and order, therefore how can a religion set itself up to judge the doings and the laws of the government?”

When Rúhíyyih Khánum quoted the words of Christ “Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” he agreed wholeheartedly. Rúhíyyih Khánum once again stressed the cardinal Bahá’í principle of obedience to government and said this law is so important in the eyes of the Founder of our Faith that it even superseded the law not to kill: for instance although to kill another man is the most abhorrent act in the sight of God in our religion, if our government in time of war requires us to carry arms, we obey; if there is, however, a clause in the law of the country by which we can apply for non-combatant military service we do so, but we always obey our government. Amatu’l-Bahá went on to say that in the eyes of Bahá’u’lláh it seems there was one thing even worse than war and this was anarchy and revolution and civil strife. He listened attentively to this and was obviously very pleased and impressed.

Rúhíyyih Khánum told the President about our trip through Africa and said that the fact that two white women alone had travelled across the continent with no driver or man accompanying them was the greatest compliment one could pay the African people, not just
'Racial prejudice is like a flea, the best thing is to quickly get hold of it, kill it, and get rid of it'

words; we had done it because we knew the villagers would always receive us kindly and we were not afraid. She said, "I cannot say as much for my own part of the world, the Western World, and particularly America."
The President replied, "When the Europeans came to this country, because they did not see the Bible in the hands of the people, they denounced them as heathen, evil and therefore doomed. They were wrong, our people always had a very strong code of morals, ethics and law." He said, "All my efforts are now towards guarding my people against the evils of the Western World, its immorality, its lawlessness and irreligion." He continued, "I do not allow so-called hippies in my country. Women are required to dress in a decent way." (In fact, if a tourist arrives at the airport in a miniskirt, she is requested politely to conform to the law and cover herself. We were surprised—and pleased—to see that many white women, obviously residents, disembarked in most flattering long dresses.) "Films," the President said, "are strictly censored so that as much as possible this filth of the West does not come into this country." Rúhíyyih Khánum vehemently said she thanked God the President saw the dangers and had the courage to do something about them. He was most cordial and when he said good-bye took her hand in both of his and wished her a very sincere welcome to his country and a long and enjoyable stay. This interview lasted almost half an hour and undoubtedly further strengthened the status of the Cause in Malawi.

In Blantyre Amatu'l-Bahá had a radio interview, as well as a very well attended public meeting in the University of Malawi. On this occasion she spoke on one of her favorite themes, the role of youth in modern society, which never fails to interest her listeners. They announced the title of her talk as "The Problem of Youth in Modern Society" but her talk was one continuous outpouring of hope and encouragement and at the end, when the chairman thanked her, he said, "Although our speaker did not talk directly on the Bahá’í Faith, we are anxious to know more about this religion which glowed through her words and her mind and gave us an inclination that it is a religion of hope and not despair."

In the course of her talk Rúhíyyih Khánum suggested a very interesting method of combating racial prejudice; she said often, when we do not approve of or like something in a person who is not of our race, we instantly and wrongfully jump to the conclusion that because he is of such and such racial background therefore he is like that. She said the answer I have found to this is simple; it is like a card game in which you match your cards. When for instance in Africa I enter a house that is dirty and untidy, instead of allowing myself to say all Africans are dirty and untidy, I say to myself, "Do you remember some years ago in London in one of the better hotels, when you went down to retrieve something that had fallen under the bed, how dirty it was?" I match the same incident I had seen with my own race and people, then one finds that good and bad habits and characteristics can be found amongst all people.

She made everyone laugh when she said: "Racial prejudice is like a flea, if it gets into your clothes, it bothers you no end, the best thing is to quickly get hold of it, kill it, and get rid of it."

During the question period a young man, a student, said: "Prejudice seems to be a characteristic of man everywhere, why do you say then that the African is without prejudice, are we different from all other men?" Rúhíyyih Khánum replied, "I did not say you are without prejudice, I said you have no racial prejudice. Your prejudice is the tribal prejudice because that is the immediate historic background of Africa with all its tribal wars and strife, that is your problem. Prejudice is bad in whatever form it may appear. But there are different kinds of prejudice. It is like a man contracting chicken pox, he will have fever, he will be miserable, a rash will appear all over him and so forth; another man may contract smallpox, he will also suffer with fever and rash and discomfort, but can we say they both are in the same degree of danger? No, one is a real killer, the other is merely very uncomfortable. Racial prejudice is one of the most terrible diseases of humanity, it is a purely animal characteristic and we should all endeavor to purify the body of mankind from this cruel disease."

During her stay in Malawi Amatu'l-Bahá visited many villages and communities throughout the country. In the village of Kanachi she met with the community and encouraged them, and when the women complained that their men were lazy and would not do their share in building their Bahá’í Center, she spoke to them with such love and forbearance that I am sure soon the men built the center with the bricks that the women had made. In the village of Mposo, the community was quite new and very eager to know more. A number of older people were present and after Amatu'l-Bahá spoke on the different teachings of Baha'u'llah, they asked if her purpose was to tell them to leave their old churches and become members of this new church. Rúhíyyih Khánum patiently explained that the Bahá’í Faith is not a new church adding to the numerous churches of Christianity, it is the Message of God for this day, it is the fulfillment of all the prophecies and hopes of past religions. She spoke of the power of prayer and

continued page sixteen
**Taiwan proclamation**

In December 1972 The Bahá’ís of Taiwan, Republic of China, embarked on a program of proclamation. The campaign was planned to start at the top and to reach all levels of Government officials.

A specially designed kit was planned for presentation. Entirely in Chinese, it represented months of preparation. It is an adaptation of the United States kit designed for the news media. Within its attractive gold-lettered brown cover is a copy of the Charter of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Taiwan, a hard-bound edition of *The New Garden* (with Chinese adaptation), and other materials. Each book was properly inscribed with the recipient’s name and title, along with the date and the seal of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Taiwan.

Letters were written by the National Spiritual Assembly in advance, notifying each individual that representatives of the Bahá’í Faith would call within the next few days, to present them with a book and information about the Bahá’í Faith. In the case of the top officials, letters were exchanged and appointments made.

The first call was made February 24, 1973. One of the earliest presentations was made to the Vice-Premier of the Republic of China, Mr. Hsu Ching-Chung. Through him, the Bahá’í kit with an inscribed book was delivered to the Premier, Mr. Ching-Chung Kuo. Another early presentation was made to the Governor of the Province of Taiwan, Mr. Hsieh Tung-Ming.

Taiwan’s proclamation campaign is continuing, with the aim of teaching government officials at every level throughout the Province of Taiwan, including village mayors and local police officials.

**Hummingbird on Okinawa**

On May 9, 1973, Bahá’ís of Okinawa were jubilant for they had presented a three-hour radio program on the Faith. People phoned in questions which were answered by Caroline Lawrence, formerly a pioneer in Thailand, and Chuck Fuller. From many beautiful comments and expressions of appreciation, they were assured that interest in the Faith was growing on the island. The station manager selected as background music the song “Hummingbird,” the popular composition by Seals and Crofts.

**The Virgin Islands**

A view of the courtyard from the street, inside the gate, of the Hazíratu’ll-Quds at St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. It was difficult to find a suitable property, but finally this old and rather historic Danish building was secured, a corner edifice. Since this photo was made the building has been painted, extensive renovations made, and the courtyard landscaped. The building was dedicated late in May.

**Bernsberg Dawnbreakers**

Bensberg is a small town surrounded by a large forest, partly on the hillside and partly in the valley not far away from world-famed Cologne.

American youth proclaimed here with shining eyes and untiring efforts during the Summer Teaching Project, saying “Have you heard of Bahá’u’lláh?” They have been the “Dawnbreakers” for the Faith in Bensberg.

At the beginning there were two Bahá’ís in the town, and one of these, Mrs. Margret Rastegar said: “Through the unending efforts of the young American friends and with the help of their music groups ‘The New Garden’ and the Islandic group ‘Geysir’, the people have become attracted.” The Assembly is grateful and sent its deepest love to the American youth whose effort helped to bring their Assembly into being.

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The Nine Year Plan for Norway called for four additional Local Spiritual Assemblies and 130 locations where Baha'is reside. These were accomplished during the last year of the plan with these newly formed Assemblies: Bode, over the Arctic Circle; Baerum; Lillehammer and As. Each has two or more pioneers.

It was not possible to have a group in Spitzenbergen but a dedicated Baha'i is located there who has been actively holding firesides and meetings.

The Universal House of Justice sent the following cable to Norway:

April 23, 1973

LOVING CONGRATULATIONS ESTABLISHMENT ASSEMBLY AS COMPLETING GOAL ASSEMBLIES LOCALITIES. VICTORY ENDOWS NORWEGIAN BAH'A COMMUNITY ADDED STRENGTH ACHIEVEMENT GREAT ADVANCES CHALLENGING YEARS AHEAD. OFFERING PRAYERS GRATITUDE HOLY SHRINES.

On the weekend of May 5 and 6, 1973, Baha'i youth and friends from all over Switzerland converged on a small chalet near Sainte-Croix for a weekend of deepening, relaxation and celebration of the victorious conclusion of the Nine Year Plan.

Despite the weather—it rained the whole weekend and the road to the chalet was still snowbound, necessitating a half-hour’s walk up the mountain, eighty youth took part in this unifying experience. Activities included a report from the International Convention by Bijan and Agnes Ghaznavi, National Assembly members who had just returned from the Holy Land; study groups on "Prayer and Meditation", "Purity and Rectitude", and "Love and Unity"; as well as an evening of music and games and walks in the pure Swiss mountain air. The spirit moved three new friends to enroll themselves in the ever-growing army of Baha’u’llah.

The French-speaking and German-speaking youth, who, due to the urgent requirements of this last year of the Plan, had been working separately in their respective regions, were overjoyed and full of praise to God to find themselves together again, united in the victory of the Nine Year Plan.

Members of the first Spiritual Assembly of Lillehammer, Norway, a goal city of the Nine Year Plan formed on March 10, 1973. It is composed of four pioneers from the United States, three Persians and but one local Baha'i. Auxiliary Board member Modesta Hvide from Bergen moved to complete the nine. Now a mother and daughter from Lillehammer have become Baha'is. Seated, left to right: Berdyne Halse, Auxiliary Board member Modesta Hvide, Mehrangiz Navidi, Pamela Reveal. Standing: Tofighian Bahman, Jane O Kada, Abdellat Navidi, Torill Syversen and Michael Reveal.

In addition to the two National Spiritual Assembly members who were present, Heinz Goelthenboth, Auxiliary Board member for Switzerland was also present. When the question was asked how many there were serving on a Local Spiritual Assembly, eighty percent of the room stood up, which indicated the tremendous sacrifices in teaching and pioneering on the part of the Swiss youth this past year.

Though the sleeping and plumbing arrangements were not ideal, all appreciated the simple meals and facilities and all helped to cook, do dishes, serve and clean the chalet. All were especially grateful to Martine Rossier, a Baha'i youth from Geneva, and her parents who had not only rented the chalet, but prepared it for the weekend and helped to clean when the weekend was over. Martine's parents, on their part, were impressed by the spirit of love and unity among the Baha'is and expressed their gratitude for the songs the youth sang for them.

All expressed the hope that the experience would be repeated.

Bahá'ís in Rangoon and nearby village areas in front of the National Bahá'í Center in February 1973.
Dominicans consult on consolidation

The thirteenth Annual National Bahá’í Convention of the Bahá’ís of the Dominican Republic was held in Santo Domingo May 19-20, 1973. Félix Ramón Gómez, Auxiliary Board member representing the Continental Board of Counsellors, was present. Of the thirty-eight delegates, seventeen were present and four additional delegates voted by mail for the new National Spiritual Assembly.

The first day of the Convention was spent reading and consulting upon the convention Messages from The Universal House of Justice and the Continental Board of Counsellors. In the remaining time available that day, consultation was begun on the future year’s teaching plan as presented by the National Spiritual Assembly.

Because of the rapid increase in mass enrollments during the past year as a result of the “Dr. Muhájir Plan”, the biggest problems facing the Bahá’í community are those of consolidation. The basic teaching plan calls for frequent personal and written contact of the National Spiritual Assembly with Local Assemblies about such subjects as prayer, the Bahá’í fund, and the Nineteen Day Feast. A series of weekend institutes has also been planned throughout the country to coincide with the dates of Feasts at which “Bahá’í History” and “Living the Bahá’í Life” will be the central themes. Teaching will continue to be in the forefront, and a series of weekend teaching projects based on the mass enrollment plan of the previous year will be carried out during the year. Throughout the convention consultations, the increasing maturity of the Bahá’í community was made evident by the quality of suggestions and the evident devotion to the Cause of those present and participating.

The Saturday evening session began with the election of the National Spiritual Assembly in a prayerful, quiet atmosphere. Then, joined by the many visitors, a Unity Feast sponsored by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Santo Domingo was held. This was indeed one of the highlights of the Convention because of the great love and warmth it generated among all those present.

Great Safari continued
(from page thirteen)

said these words we use for a greeting, “Alláh-u-Ábha”, are in fact a prayer. She said if it was not for the power of this prayer which we repeated throughout our journey across Africa every time we were in trouble, we would not be here today. People were so thrilled by this that even many non-Bahá’ís asked us to write “Alláh-u-Ábha” on their Bahá’í pamphlets so that they could learn it by heart. They repeated it many times.

We spent a night in the village of Naminyuku in the home of one of the National Assembly members and had a very pleasant meeting in their Bahá’í Center. This is one of the earliest communities established many years ago. They had built themselves a Bahá’í Center, but their Local Spiritual Assembly decided recently that their Center was too small and was beginning to be destroyed by termites so they agreed to tear it down and build a new one. This new building was almost completed when we arrived. A large meeting took place in it, attended by the Chief, who is a good friend of the Bahá’ís. A man who was attending his first Bahá’í meeting asked: “Do the Bahá’ís believe in the teaching of the oneness of mankind or is it just beautiful words?” Rúhíyyih Khánum said: “What better example do you want than our group here who are the guests of your people, sleep in their homes and eat with them their food? In fact, we Bahá’ís are delighted when a member of one race marries in our country a member of another race, which is increasingly taking place.”
Meeting largest ever in America

More than 4000 jubilant Bahá'ís attended the Third National Bahá'í Youth Conference of the United States in Oklahoma City June 20-24. It was the largest gathering of Bahá'ís yet held in the Western Hemisphere.

Visitors and pioneers from at least nineteen countries and territories of the world attended, as did representatives from nineteen American Indian tribes.

Planning for the Youth Conference began nine months before Dr. Phil Christiansen, the permanent chairman of the event, opened the Conference at 8 pm, Wednesday, June 20.

The principal purpose of the Youth Conference, according to Mr. Glenford Mitchell, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, was to stimulate the regeneration of the inner life.

"It is the inner life we are concerned with," he said. "If we take care of the inner life we will win all of the external victories."

On behalf of the National Assembly he proclaimed the resounding victory of the Five Year Youth Program, launched in 1968 to involve American Bahá'í youth in the teaching work; and he said that its success contributed largely to the early achievement of the goals of the Nine Year Plan. When the youth program was launched in 1968 there were only 800 Bahá'í youth in the United States. In 1973, Mr. Mitchell noted, there are at least 10,000.

"With this victory in your palm, with your numbers greatly reinforced, wonderful challenges, golden opportunities are open to you, the youth of America," he said. "Therefore, do not rest for a moment on your accomplishments. There is really no time for relaxation. The multitude of your peers await the news that only you can give them."

Prominent visitors to the Youth Conference included The Hand of The Cause of God William Sears, who addressed the youth on five different occasions, newly-appointed Continental Counsellor Sarah Pereira and members of the Auxiliary Board. The National Spiritual Assembly met in Oklahoma City while the Conference was in progress, and members of that institution made several presentations to the assembled Bahá'í youth. Several of the featured speakers were themselves Bahá'í youth.

A special concert and fireside was given by Seals and Croft, the popular Bahá'í musicians, on Saturday evening, June 23. It lasted almost four hours, and was attended by more than 12,000 persons.

Each afternoon of the Conference a Trade Fair to dispense information on pioneering and career opportunities was conducted. In addition to Bahá'í professionals assembled to advise the youth on potential fields of employment, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a federal government agency, sent a team from its Dallas regional office to provide information on the occupational outlook in the United States through 1980.

"The youth particularly appreciated getting information on professions from Bahá'ís in different fields of work," a member of the Trade Fair staff explained. "They really got into it. This Trade Fair should become a regular feature of future gatherings where Bahá'í Youth will be present," he noted.

The impact of this Bahá'í gathering on some of the participants was profound. "I cry when I see so many Bahá'ís at such a big gathering," said Mr. Nematollah Gandomi, a 78 year-old Iranian believer on his first trip outside his homeland. "The heaven that is prophesied in our Books is what I see here," he continued. "I have always been looking for this; the unity of the whole world and the different souls gathering together. This is the most beautiful gift I could take back to Iran."
The last German domestic goal

It seemed unlikely, being a youth, that the bounty of participating in a specific Nine Year Plan goal would be bestowed upon me. However, to my extreme delight, it so happened that Germany had one domestic goal left to fill. This was to establish a group on the small island of Borkum, surrounded by the North Sea, just northwest of the German coast. In the peak of the tourist season, Borkum's population reaches around 40,000. During the rest of the year it slims down to a scant 6,000 people with their roots deeply embedded. Finding a real Borkumer was like panning for gold dust from the sand at the river's bottom.

There was only one Bahá'í on the island at the time of my arrival, a man who had survived seven years with his non-Bahá'í, Catholic wife. Isolated and busy with his hairdressing business and domestic responsibilities, he had not been able to penetrate the bedrock of old-world Borkum. I was sent as a second Bahá'í, as a safety valve to insure the establishment of a group; however, my German was meager. Mr. Schaal, the first Bahá'í there, was a gracious host and I stayed with him the first week.

We were preparing for the arrival of a teaching-singing group from Holland. They came and we walked the streets extending invitations and performed that night, but not a new Bahá'í was to be found. The Dutch group left the next day and we wondered what next to do.

On my last day with the Schaal, I obtained employment at a beach-front hotel. My position was that of a combination busboy, janitor, window-washer and anything that needed to be done. My pay included a tiny single room with a window in the ceiling and just enough space for all the positions in the Long Obligatory Prayer. Frequent rain and hail showers on this window to the sky made it next to impossible to get a full night's sleep, and this was aggravated by having contracted the island's strain of influenza. On my first day of the job I couldn't work.

Then a marvelous thing happened: Mrs. Mahvash Master Saffar arrived! She had come from her home in Australia after a dream in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá seemed to tell her to help the friends in Germany to finish the Nine Year Plan. Mahvash had lived in Germany for eleven years and speaks fluent German. This, with her soul-uplifting Persian charm, makes her a most effective Bahá'í teacher.

It became imperative to devote myself full-time to our teaching efforts, so I left my hole under the rafters.

For the first few days we had no German pamphlets or declaration cards, so we were forced to do most of our teaching by word of mouth. When the pamphlets and declaration cards came we really went to work. That afternoon we were guided by Providence to the street most frequented by the Borkum youth. That is where we met Ihno Oetjen. He invited us to the “milchbar” on the same street, but milk was not the only thing served there, as beer and wine flowed continuously. We wondered what we were getting into as it seemed rather an unlikely place, but we were aware that Bahá'ís are to be found in every strata of society. Eventually we had seven or eight people crowded around our table for four. Several Catholic girls wanted to declare but they were under fifteen, but by the end of this session we had four declarations! They were Ihno, his friend Derk and Derk's brother, and an adult.

The next few days were used for concentrated deepening with the new Bahá'ís in my apartment. In between, all of us sang. The new Bahá'ís were reading Bahá'í books and wearing the Bahá'í ring, and buttons. Ihno was certain he had heard the name of 'Abdu'l-Bahá before, but he couldn't remember where. Mahvash and I told him of our dreams of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and suggested this feeling of familiarity could have come from the world of the dream.

Ihno's father is a master tailor, and Mahvash just happened to have a pair of slacks which needed shortening, so we met Mr. and Mrs. Oetjen. Ihno's mother thanked Mahvash over and over for bringing him into the Faith. Derk reported that his mother asked “What has happened in the last three days? You have changed so much!” She was told that they were now Bahá'ís.

On our last night on the island the group went to the Schaal home. Mrs. Schaal declared that night, after being married to a Bahá'í for seven years! Directly before signing her card, she asked her husband to assist her in all the necessary formalities in Germany for leaving the Church. She made the ninth of the declarations during our efforts, and sang Bahá'í songs with us all evening. Mahvash's stay lasted a symbolic nine days, while mine lasted nineteen.

Philip Snyder and Mrs. Mahvash Master Saffar on the ferry

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—Philip C. Snyder
Responding to the request of The Universal House of Justice for Assemblies to hold month-long proclamation activities from April 21 through May 23 this year, many have reported their efforts in news letters. The summary given below is not exhaustive. Some efforts were quite extensive, others very simple and easy to carry out.

Public Meetings, Firesides, Picnics, etc.

Most communities planned a definite series of meetings or firesides and devised methods of inviting people. The New York Spiritual Assembly arranged a public meeting for each day of the proclamation month. In Vestal, New York, Baha’is planned a series of five meetings at the auditorium. During the day, Baha’is showed slides, served refreshments and gave out literature. In the evenings there were speakers, and one day was devoted to a film festival.

The Northampton, Maine, Assembly planned to reach the following groups: civic leaders, Spanish-speakers, the well-to-do, student and non-student youth. A children’s film festival was held at the public library, and a public meeting at the YMCA. All the women’s clubs and associations in town received invitations to a coffee and panel discussion on the topic of “The Role of Women in Today’s Society.” All the Puerto Rican families in town were invited to a potluck picnic where a wide variety of both Spanish and American dishes were served, accompanied by live music. Afterwards there were games, the New England Road Show “Dawning” and an informal fireside.

At Hamilton, Massachusetts, public meetings were held on three Friday evenings during May, with outstanding speakers scheduled. Each family in town received an invitation; good coverage in local newspapers was secured; many beautiful posters were displayed and radio announcements made. After each meeting, those who attended were personally invited to nearby Baha’i homes for refreshments where questions and answers freely flowed.

In Roy, Washington, the Pierce County Commissioners’ District #2 held a proclamation on April 28-29, sending invitations to bordering areas for a Baha’i film and talk on “Progressive Revelation.” Among those attending was a Congregational minister, who, during a question and answer period, extended an invitation to his church the next day. At this service a prayer of ‘Abdu’l-Baha was read and the congregation was invited to the showing of the Baha’i film that evening. In addition to this cordial reception, a Baha’i speaker was invited to the church for a later date.

In Fort Collins, Colorado, a reception was arranged for the clergy. A public meeting in Spokane, Washington, was held in a Japanese church, consisting of a slide show made by a pilgrim just-returned from the Holy Land.

The Baha’i Association at the University of Texas, at Austin, presented a panel discussion, a musical fireside featuring “The Children of the New Light”, and an outdoor musical featuring a Baha’i family team, “The Threadgills.” A mid-day chime concert from the main building tower played Baha’i music.

Mass teaching by the group in La Habra, California, was assisted by a young Baha’i from Brazil. In one of the homes they were invited to visit at any time, so that evening they showed a film and later brought Spanish literature. The group succeeded in renting a building in the shopping center one night a week for meetings, advertised in the local paper.

In Little Rock, Arkansas, during the proclamation month, on every Monday night community members met at the Center, divided into small groups and went out to visit other friends who had enrolled during extensive teaching, to assist in deepening and teaching other family members, also to announce coming meetings.

continued next page
Every Wednesday and Friday nights, public meetings were held, each beginning with a film and continuing with discussion. Publicity mail-outs to all news media included, along with the Nine Year Plan victories and The AMERICAN BABA’I May issue, the local tie-in of the establishment of the first Bahá’í Assembly in Little Rock.

Talks, in many cases, were arranged before non-Bahá’í audiences. In Denver, Colorado, Carolyn Wong spoke before the Optimist Club while Elaine West and Jim Stallings talked to the Northglen High School classes about the Faith. Elaine had spoken to several other high school classes in the past month, and was always received enthusiastically with many questions asked. Seymour Weinberg spoke at the Iliff School of Theology with good response and also gave a radio talk for fifteen minutes.

In the Greater Melbourne area, Florida, a presentation on the Faith was made to the World Religion class of Father Jack Mahoney at the Florida Institute of Technology. The Bruss family in New Mexico, just returned from a pioneering post, talked to a high school humanities class, which was extended from an hour to two and a half hours and because of high interest, they were asked to show their beautiful slides again to the afternoon class.

In some locations meetings were planned as “something to hang ads on, and news releases were printed mostly because of the ads.” This was the case in Broome County, New York, where a series of five meetings were held, advertised with large paid ads in four newspapers, and three published news releases. In addition there were radio and television announcements and posters.

As a result of cooperation of all Maine communities, Bangor, Maine, carried out a concentrated week-long teaching and publicity campaign which began with a three-fourths page newspaper ad (85,000 circulation) and in another paper, a full-page version. This was most attractive, featuring a sun in the right hand corner from which rays emanated, interspersed with quotations from Bahá’u’lláh announcing His Coming.

Fairs, Fiestas and Displays

As a last-minute teaching effort before the end of the Nine Year Plan, the Santa Monica, California, community manned an information table on the mall which attracted many people. Englewood and Denver, Colorado, cooperated in rotating hours for answering questions and offering information to seekers at the Cinderella City Shopping Center on May 20. A special treat for the children was a gift of balloons.

Boone and Tioga Counties, New York, held a most successful display at a flea market from a VW bus with a huge sign on top. Outside there was a table with pamphlets and inside, a book display. At a Farmington, New Mexico shopping center a booth was used each Saturday of the month to give out literature and show a film strip.

The Bahá’í Club at the New Mexico State University, San Juan campus took an active part in the Apple Blossom Festival with a booth display. The pre-Bahá’ís (two-thirds of the members) were very active in making plans and carrying them out. At Fort Collins, Colorado, the University Bahá’í Association was given an office at the Student Center (never before to a religious organization). Their display case contained plants and quotations about the spiritual springtime and attracted favorable attention. They also had a display table in a flea market for a week.

South DeKalb County, Georgia, Bahá’ís manned an
attractive booth in a modern shopping mall for two
week-ends where every type of people was reached and
about 400 pamphlets given out during conversations
with inquirers. The central feature was a revolving
model of the House of Worship, draped in green velvet.
Theme for the second display was “Bahá’í’s Around the
World.” Newspaper space totaled 60 inches. One front
page article featured a photo of the Public Information
Representative. One editor became so interested she
requested more information and then attended a devotional
meeting (after expressing her desire to do so).

To establish friendship with Indians was a main pur-
pose of the Mini Exposition held in Southern Nevada
the week-end of May 12. Zona Murdock traveled to several
reservations to collect Indian arts and crafts. Mary
Jane from Arizona gave a demonstration of Navajo rug
making. David Via Senor from California displayed his
sand paintings and later compared the Indian philoso-
pies to the Bahá’í Faith. Hospitality extended to Indian
guests will not be forgotten. The Bahá’í exhibits deep-
ened interest in the Faith, according to reports, espe-
cially from University of Nevada students.

In addition to their meetings, the Bahá’í Association
at the University of Texas, Austin, had two showcases;
one developed the theme of progressive revelation with
quotations and showed the Holy Book from which they
were taken; the second was for the Spanish Department
and consisted of pictures of Bahá’í Houses of Worship
and Bahá’í quotations in both Spanish and English.

Spokane, Washington, Bahá’ís arranged for a month-
long display in the city transit system busses. The La
Habre, California, group, in addition to placing nearly
100 posters in the town, personally distributed several
thousand postcards, both of which brought a warm re-
sponse. At Newhall, California, hundreds of people saw
the mobile information unit, out for ten days (five week-
ends) visiting thirteen localities.

Some of the La Habra, California, group. Elizabeth
Clark holds the drawing of the Temple. (She has been
active for the Faith since 1914). Seated, at right, Julie
Hathaway. Standing, left: Amydale Junior from Ana-
heim, Jim Clark, Chairman, and Gene Ingham. Shown is
a sample of the card distributed to thousands, in both
English and Spanish. On the reverse side is an invitation
to a meeting. The original drawing is from The Spirit
Way by Dolores Taken-Alive.

Booth used by Bahá’ís of South DeKalb, Georgia.

Representatives of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís
of Little Rock present the City Manager of Little Rock,
Jack Merriweather (second from right) with Bahá’í
book during month-long proclamation activities. The
representatives are, left to right, Art Hatley, Beulah
Magruder, Homer Holmes (member of first Bahá’í As-
sembly in Little Rock thirty years ago) and Albert
Porter, current Assembly Chairman.

Radio and Television

In Bangor, Maine, Sherry Milden of Portsmouth, New
Hampshire appeared on three television interviews and
two radio programs. She conducted two firesides which
resulted in declarations; one saw the newspaper pub-
licity and traveled over 100 miles to attend.

Speakers representing five Maine communities and
one from New Hampshire were presented on a half-hour
television program on the Maine Public Broadcasting
Network. This program was prepared by the Bahá’ís,
assisted by television personnel, and it was taped for
possible future use.

Spokane, Washington, coordinated a plan by which
forty-one Assemblies arranged a series of paid TV spot
announcements on a prominent station, heard in four
states and Canada. In Orlando, Florida, a fifteen minute
radio interview was presented from which five-minute
excerpts were used for the next week, two or three times
each day. Also, a Bahá’í was asked by a TV station to
continued next page
begin and end their programs with two-minute talks on the Faith from May 19 through May 25. In Aurora, Colorado, Cheryl Gates was called by radio station KDVR for a statement on the religious trend today, which was included with those of clergymen on a Sunday morning program. At Farmington, New Mexico, on a TV presentation some interesting questions were asked; for example: "What is this universal election coming up?" In Little Rock, Arkansas, on the one-hour radio interview on the CBS outlet, a series of questions were asked of the Assembly representative, beginning directly with the station of Bahá'u'lláh, which brought wide-spread response. An hour-long radio interview featured the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Assembly discussing all aspects of the Faith and answering questions from the audience.

In Western Washington, two television programs were shown; one on the black-oriented program "Contact." In Mobile, Alabama, a TV program appeared, also a radio interview where questions were phoned in and participants were kept on the air for one and a half hours. One interested caller was a relative of Paul Kingsley Deal, Bahá'í resident in the area during the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. As a result of publicity, a young serviceman of Pensacola, Florida, drove all the way to Mobile to attend meetings.

Toppenish and Wapato, Washington, now have a weekly, half-hour radio program which is to run for a year. In St. Petersburg, Florida, a regular half-hour radio program called "World Oneness" began on May 27 and is to run indefinitely. Bahá'ís were invited to produce such a show after a radio interview in January. It is produced by Bahá'ís with Linda Brown in charge. "Talented Singers" volunteered to record their songs and many Bahá'ís will appear in the series.

Presentations

Middlesboro, Kentucky, presented The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh to the Mayor and Prescription for Living to the local library. More than fifty copies of the special edition of The American Bahá'í were presented to the public and high school library, President of the University, teachers, pastos and editors.

In Binghamton, New York, the presentation of the proclamation but this time to the Mayor was just before the daily news conference which was turned over to the Bahá'ís. This led to a fifteen-minute radio interview immediately, then another interview was taped for later use during an evening news program. A third invitation came to make a series of five-minute TV interviews!

The group of Bahá'ís at La Habra, California, made extensive book presentations. Every city government official (twelve or so), all members of the school board of trustees, school administration officials and two high school principals were sent a copy of Gloria Faizi's book, a fact sheet and a personal covering letter. These were also sent to the pastor of each of the twenty-six churches of the city. One book only was returned. As the second phase to the pastors, the proclamation volume was personally presented to around twelve of them, who warmly received it, especially a Catholic priest.

Three law-enforcement kits were presented in the New Mexico communities. San Juan County Bahá'ís presented a kit to the state police, and one was received by the Chief of Police in Farmington, also in Aztec, where the Chief of Police was grateful and spoke to the Bahá'ís for over an hour on local programs. Reports of Bahá'í ideals and principles could be applied. Fort Collins, Colorado, reported taking Bahá'í books to firehouses for their libraries.

In Orlando, Florida, two Bahá'í youths presented the public library with a record album "Diamond Girl" by Seals and Crofts, popular Bahá'í musicians who often invite their audiences to a fireside afterward. The librarian was delighted with the gift. The community of Northampton, Maine, presented two cherry trees to the city which were planted in a park in the downtown area.

Essay Contests

Englewood, California, sponsored an essay contest for fourth, fifth and sixth grade students on the topic "The Oneness of Mankind" with awards to be presented on "Race Unity Day."

In Orlando, Florida, Bahá'ís offered a $25.00 U.S. bond to the writer of the best essay on Brotherhood in a senior class of a high school which is predominantly black. This was presented on May 24, their awards day.

Outstanding Observances

Denver, Colorado, probably planned the most unique observation of the special month, that of a "Unity Ring." The lake at Washington Park covers the area of two city blocks, and the plan was to attract 10,000 people to hold hands around the lake on a Sunday afternoon. A very long banner was made giving sayings from all religions about the unity of mankind and decorated with pictures of various peoples of the world, used on the occasion. At a preliminary press conference called by the Denver community, representatives of the mass media were enthusiastic. Four radio interviews resulted. Herb Laughlin flew over from Salt Lake City to assist. Publicity and posters were utilized to the fullest.

On the first day a downpour caused the event to be postponed, but it was held successfully on May 27. There was TV and newspaper coverage with a photo.

The area of Greater Atlanta, Georgia, presented possibly the most far-reaching effort for the month, with financial assistance from the Assemblies of Atlanta, Cobb, South Cobb, North DeKalb, Athens, Clarke County, Lawrenceville and Conyers. The committee had made plans on a TV interview, and the copywriter turned it over to the copywriters who had to put in the time. It resulted. Herb Laughlin flew over from Salt Lake City to assist. Publicity and posters were utilized to the fullest.

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The Mayor of Atlanta proclaimed May 16 as "Bahá'í Day". News items totaled 60 column inches. Books were presented to public libraries. There were radio programs and a public meeting with invitations to churches. A series of area firesides was announced. The effort was to reach as many people as possible at as reasonable a cost as possible. By June 16, replies to the ad totaled 47. It is estimated that a million, three hundred thousand people heard of the Faith for the first time!

The end
Breakwell of England
(from page five)

Seine on the top of a bus, when he spied an old woman laboriously pushing an apple-cart up an incline; excusing himself with a smile, he climbed down off the bus, joined the old woman, and in the most natural way put his hands on the bar and helped her over the bridge.18

Physically frail, he was soon stricken with an illness that developed into serious consumption. Although often in great pain, he in no way relaxed in his passionate efforts to serve the Cause throughout the dark city of Paris.

In his last letter Breakwell wrote, "Suffering is a heady wine; I am prepared to receive that bounty which is the greatest of all; torments of the flesh have enabled me to draw much nearer to my Lord. All agony notwithstanding, I wish life to endure longer, so that I may taste more pain. That which I desire is the good-pleasure of my Lord; mention me in His presence."21 A few days after Yunis Khan had received this letter Breakwell died. The Master seemed to know this without receiving a message known to anyone.

Deeply grieved, the Master wrote a prayer of visitation for him and asked Yunis Khan to "translate it well so that whoever reads it will weep."22

O Breakwell, my beloved! Where is thy beautiful countenance and where is thy eloquent tongue? Where is thy radiant brow and where is thy brilliant face?

O Breakwell, my beloved! Where is thy enkindlement with the fire of the love of God and where is thy attraction to the Fragrances of God? Where is thy utterance for the glorification of God and where is thy rising in the service of God?

O my dear, O Breakwell! Where are thy bright eyes and where are thy smiling lips? Where are thy gentle cheeks and where is thy graceful stature?

O my dear, O Breakwell! Verily thou hast abandoned this transitory world and soared upward to the Kingdom, hast attained to the grace of the Invisible Realm and sacrificed thyself to the Threshold of the Lord of Might!

O my adored one, O Breakwell! Verily thou hast left behind this physical lamp, this human glass, these earthly elements and this worldly enjoyment!

O my adored one, O Breakwell! Then thou hast ignited a light in the glass of the Supreme Concourse, hast entered the Paradise of Abhá, art protected under the shade of the Blessed Tree and hast attained to the meeting (of the True One) in the Abode of Paradise!

O my dearly beloved, O Breakwell! Thou hast been a divine bird and forsaking thy earthly nest, thou hast soared towards the holy rose-garden of the Divine Kingdom and obtained a luminous station there!

O my dearly beloved, O Breakwell! Verily thou art like unto the birds, chanting the verses of thy Lord, the Forgiving, for thou wert a thankful servant; therefore thou hast entered (into the realm beyond) with joy and happiness!

O my beloved, O Breakwell! Verily thy Lord hath chosen thee for His love, guided thee to the court of His Holiness, caused thee to enter into the Ridván of His Association and granted thee to behold His Beauty!

O my beloved, O Breakwell! Thou hast become a star in the most exalted horizon, a lamp among the angels of heaven, a living spirit in the Supreme World and art established upon the throne of immortality!

O my adored one, O Breakwell! I supplicate God to increase thy nearness and communication, to make thee enjoy thy prosperity and union (with Him), to add to thy light and beauty and to bestow upon thee glory and majesty!

O my adored one, O Breakwell! I mention thy name continually, I never forget thee, I pray for thee day and night and I see thee clearly and manifestly, O my adored one, O Breakwell!

With his unerring knowledge the Guardian called "Thomas Breakwell the first English believer"23 and "a luminary in the Cause of God."24

Board Counsellors expanded
(from page five)

10. North-eastern Asia
All the Soviet Union east of the western boundary of the Yakutsk A.S.S.R. and the Oblast of Amur, China east of Sinkiang and north of the southern boundaries of Tsinghai, Kansu, Shensi, Honan and Shantung; Korea, Japan, Taiwan and all islands belonging politically to those nations plus all islands in the Pacific Ocean north of the equator and between the longitudes of 140° east and 140° west with the exception of the Gilbert Islands and those islands under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska, but including those Caroline Islands lying west of longitude 140° east.

11. Australasia
Australia and New Zealand plus all islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans lying south of the equator and between the longitudes of 80° east and 120° west including Portuguese Timor and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands but excepting Indonesia.

12. Europe
The entire continent of Europe less those portions of Kazakhstan and Turkey which lie in Europe, plus Iceland and all islands in the Atlantic Ocean north of latitude 60° which belong politically to nations of the European continent plus all islands in the Atlantic Ocean east of longitude 40° west and between latitude 60° north and the Tropic of Cancer plus all islands of the Mediterranean Sea including Cyprus but excluding islands belonging politically to nations of the African and Asiatic continents.
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Ecuador Opens Radio Station

Elizabeth and Charles Greenleaf

Rebuilding an Island Tradition
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CORRECTIONS

In an item on an Indian art show in Southern Nevada on page 21 of the August 1973 edition, the name of painter Mr. David Villaseñor was improperly spelled. On page 22 of the same issue, the item title Northampton, Maine, should read Northampton, Massachusetts.

COVER PHOTO

Reed flutes and songfest at Vagabundo Convention in Ecuador, during March 1969.

Bahá’í News is published for circulation among Bahá’ís only by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, as a news organ reporting current activities of the Bahá’í world community.

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Change of address should be reported directly to Membership and Records, National Bahá’í Center, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A. 60091.
International Teaching Centre meets

The inaugural meeting of the International Teaching Centre took place on June 14, 1973, when the Hands of the Cause of God in the Holy Land, 'Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, 'Ali Akbar Furútan, Paul E. Haney, Abúl-Qásim Faízi, and the three Counsellor members, Hooper Dunbar, Florence Mayberry and 'Aziz Yazdí were invited by The Universal House of Justice to accompany all members to the Most Holy Shrine for prayers. Following this a meeting was held in the Pilgrim House adjacent to the Shrine, where the terms of reference and general duties of the International Teaching Centre were discussed. Other meetings of the International Teaching Centre took place during the week that followed. The Counsellor members are now transferring their residence to the Holy Land and will settle there as soon as possible.

National Assembly Formed in Equatorial Guinea

The following cablegram from The Universal House of Justice was received on July 17, 1973:

"DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE SUCCESSFUL ELECTION NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY EQUATORIAL GUINEA COUNTRY OPENED FAITH GUARDIAN'S TEN YEAR CRUSADE. NEW ASSEMBLY FORMED NOW RESPONSE REQUIREMENT GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION FAITH. PRAYERS OFFERED HOLY SHRINES THANKSGIVING AND GUIDANCE ASSISTANCE FRIENDS NEWLY INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY."

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
Small commercial use in radio broadcasting

Radio Turismo in Otavalo, Ecuador, is the first Bahá’í radio station in the world. It is a small, low-power, short-wave station that still can only broadcast a few score miles among the cliffs and quiet valleys of the Andean highlands of central Ecuador. Radio Turismo was leased six months ago by the National Spiritual Assembly of Ecuador, and presently manages a modest five hours of Bahá’í programming per day. Only three Bahá’ís work regularly with the station, but already, with what might be considered customary Bahá’í optimism, the believers of Ecuador are projecting their preliminary enterprise into the future, and into the world at large, where they envisage someday operating a powerful international production and broadcasting complex. This fledgling communications venture was predicated by the growing need to deepen a community of Bahá’ís that has multiplied itself enormously in a mere handful of years. It would probably not be an exaggeration to say that the achievements of this pioneering effort will be watched closely by many National Spiritual Assemblies to determine whether it is time for others also to turn another corner in the use of media for Bahá’í proclamation and deepening.

Ecuador is the second smallest republic in South America. Its 104,510 square miles of territory (Colorado size) is larger only than Guyana (34,740 square miles). The broad, immense spine of the Andes mountains cuts across the country on its crushing journey to the continent's southern extremity. The famed Mount Chimborazo, whose snow-capped peak halts its skyward climb at 20,574 feet, is the tallest in Ecuador. Thirty still-active volcanoes are strewn along the nation's mountain corridor. Most of the nation's Indian Bahá’ís live in the highlands of this formidable range, and are descended from Indian empires thousands of years old. East of the Andes region is the forested Oriente, which contains more than half of Ecuador's land mass. This vast, mineral-rich expanse of rain and tropical forest conceals the headwaters of the Amazon River. And to the west of the Andes corridor are the coastal lowlands, where many of the Bahá’ís of African descent reside. The people of this coastal region are employed in making Ecuador the world's principal producer and exporter of bananas.

More than 60 percent of the country's four-and-a-half million people are Indians. About 30 percent are of mixed Indian and Spanish ancestry, a handful are black, and not more than 15 percent are white. The nation's official language is Spanish. However, most of the Indian peoples use Quechua as well, and it is estimated that at least 20 percent of the population speaks Quechua exclusively. In the forest regions east of the
Andes the Jibaro language is spoken by the predominantly Indian population of the tropical forests.

The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ecuador was elected in 1961. The Hand of the Cause of God, Mr. Hasan Balyuzi, represented the Hands of the Cause at the first national convention. The delegates represented Bahá'ís in just four centers: Guayaquil, Cuenca, Otavalo, and Quito. Mr. Balyuzi spoke to the friends about the soul-searching prayer and consultation of the Hands of the Cause in making the great decisions leading to the completion of the Ten Year Crusade and the impending first election of The Universal House of Justice.

By 1969 the Indian teaching work in the highlands had accelerated to the point where the National Spiritual Assembly issued an urgent appeal to Spanish-speaking believers to assist with the formation of 57 all-Indian Local Assemblies during Ridván. These early accomplishments in mass teaching centered around Otavalo, a busy village of 20,000 inhabitants located 70 miles north of Quito, the nation's capital. The Otavaleños, a pre-Inca tribe, have a thousand-year heritage as farmers-artisans. A number of exploratory teaching ventures into nearby towns and villages by experienced Otavalo Indian teachers soon demonstrated that enrollments could be achieved throughout the Andean region, where more than three million Indians live in much the same manner as their ancestors before the advent of the Spanish conquerors. Teaching expeditions during 1969 opened three new provinces and introduced six new Indian tribes to the Bahá'í Cause. As a consequence of the teaching achievements in Ecuador through 1969 the National Spiritual Assembly established a goal of 9,000 new believers to be enrolled by August, 1970.

Events in Ecuador in 1971 demonstrated the potential widespread attraction of the Bahá'í Faith. On a visit to Otavalo, Mr. Jose Lucas, a resident of the coastal city of Esmeraldas, an important banana loading port, became attracted to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. When his sojourn in Otavalo ended he began to teach in Esmeraldas, among descendants of a 16th century storm-wrecked slavership, who inhabit the land around that seaport. Shortly, more than 2,000 believers of African descent were enlisted on the coast, and many hundred more who had migrated to towns in the Andean highlands.

The impressive advances in the teaching work soon required that more effective deepening instruments be developed to keep pace with the quickening tempo of enrollments. There were simply an insufficient number of deepened believers to travel from village to village and region to region training and inspiring the growing
Maria Perugachi (right), a traveling teacher, records a Bahá'í program in Quechua. Alfonso Tulcanazo (left) operates the tape recorders.

Indian Bahá'ís listening to the regular daily Bahá'í broadcasts.

Many of the Bahá'ís who have participated in the radio program are shown above. The photograph was taken at the Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum Bahá'í Institute in Otavalo. Continental Counsellor Raul Pavón is on the left, and Auxiliary Board member Rufino Gualavisi is third from the right.
Amanecer or The Dawning. The program announced Andes numerous friends in the cities as well as the coastal area around Esmeraldas is under consideration activities.

commercial and cultural programming in instrument, according to Mr. Pavon. The passing days, became a familiar tion.

historical notes from a Baha'i

future programs of indirect teaching, including children's classes and cultural presentations will be aired. adaptations of introductory pamphlets about the Baha'i

include 'adaptations of 'Baha'u'llah and the New Era', Baha'i programs was reportedly very favorable. They justice.

friends a view of their country and the world,

are broadcast in Quechua and 'Amatu'l-Baha Bahá'í Institute in Otavalo and to the sacrificial efforts of the traveling teachers. But there is certainly no lack of ambition in this undertaking. Mr. Pavon concluded his correspondence by saying: "The friends are convinced of the effectiveness of this method of teaching the Faith and believe that the ideal thing would be to have a Bahá'í radio station, located possibly in Otavalo, 20 miles from the equator, which would broadcast the message of Bahá'u'lláh to the four corners of Ecuador, America, and the World."

In another piece of correspondence, Ralph Dexter, a member of the National Assembly who has worked closely with the radio station, said the programs are helping prepare villagers to accept the Faith. teachers arrive in communities where people have listened to the programs they find a much more receptive audience than they would have otherwise. "The radio is the only means of communication in most rural areas and is listened to quite diligently by all and is therefore a very effective instrument for teaching."

According to the United Nations Statistical Yearbook for 1971, there are almost two million radios in Ecuador, or approximately one for every two people. On the other hand, there are only 150,000 television sets, and these are confined almost exclusively to major urban centers. There are twenty-five daily newspapers, but their combined circulation is only 250,000 copies. The abundance of radio receivers in Ecuador corresponds with a trend in developing nations noted by the United Nations since the advent of the Transistor. While distribution rates are still low in Africa, where Zaire has only four sets per thousand people and Egypt has 132, in Latin America the figures are much higher.

Argentina boasts 370 sets per thousand, and Ecuador almost 400 per thousand. According to the UN study, listening figures are always higher than ownership figures, since in many areas (such as Indian villages) group listening is still very common. "Few people in the world are still as isolated as they were," the study concludes.
The Greenleafs:
an eternal union

by Emeric Sala

Elizabeth and Charles Greenleaf were from the mid-west and were members of that group which began with Thornton Chase in the latter years of the 1890's in Chicago. The group was led by Dr. Ibrâhîm Khâyr‘ullâh, sent by the Master to America to teach and nurture those interested in the Faith. It was an explosive moment of great spiritual impact, gathering its forces from the first public mention of the Name of Bahá‘u’lláh in America at the time of the Chicago Exposition in 1893.

We must learn to live in the light, to bring all our plans to the source of light.

Elizabeth, speaking of those days, would tell of a dream experienced by a student of Oriental religions—it was a time of visions and dreams. The student dreamed that he was standing on the shore of Lake Michigan and saw far on the horizon a great sailing ship being swept by a swift wind towards the shore. As it grew near, a great new sail was unfurled from the mast with a strange symbol inscribed in huge markings on it. When the student awoke, he wrote down this inscription and asked his professor to translate it. This the professor could not do, but advised him to go to one, Dr. Khâyr‘ullâh, a seller of rugs, who had come to Chicago at the time of the Exposition. The inscription on the sail was the Greatest Name. The student never became a Bahá‘í, but his story attracted others.

Charles and Elizabeth attended Khâyr‘ullâh’s classes. He spoke to them of an as yet unknown “kernel of truth” he was preparing them to receive when the seekers were deserving of it. The Greenleafs at last reached the point of testing. They were given certain verses from the Bible to study, one of which was “... unto us a child is born . . . ”, and told to meditate upon them without a word of communication between them. Being conscientious, they did this and arrived independently at the realization that a new Messenger from God had come, the return of Christ. At the next class they reported their convictions. They had passed the test and were given the kernel, the knowledge of Bahá‘u’lláh and the Greatest Name.

Some time passed. Khâyr‘ullâh’s classes attracted more and more people. But Elizabeth intuitively sensed some link was missing. Then she dreamed she was in a room in the Orient (she recognized it over twenty-five years later). Divans ran along the four walls, covered with oriental rugs. On one side of the room sat a glorious majestic figure whose face was hidden by the blaze of light shining from it. People were passing before it then turning to bow low to someone on the other side. Elizabeth’s eyes followed to see another figure, equally majestic, seated on a similar divan. His person was glorious, but the face, though shining, could be discerned, full of loving dignity. On His forehead was written the word “Aga”.

When she told Khâyr‘ullâh of this dream and asked for an explanation, he said he had been preparing the friends for this further teaching: the establishment of a Center of the Covenant in the person of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá‘u’lláh’s son! Great was the joy at this announcement, and correspondence began between Haifa and America.

As letters from Haifa took six weeks or more to arrive in America, a delay causing anxiety to many eager hearts, Dr. Khâyr‘ullâh suggested what he considered a practical solution which he presented to the class. He who had been praised by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for his magnificent services, now took the first step towards becoming a Covenant-breaker. This was his suggestion: that he write a letter to the Master explaining the difficulties of communications and asking Him to retain His station of Infallibility for the believers in the East and to confer Infallibility on him (Dr. Khâyr‘ullâh) for the believers in the West. He asked the friends to think, to meditate.

Those who signed the letter disappeared from the history of the Faith.

and pray about this, then come to the next Sunday meeting to sign the letter. It would then be sent to the Master.

Grave misgivings entered Elizabeth’s heart but as Charles seemed to think it quite a sensible suggestion she tried to drown such thoughts. But they continued to trouble her until she had to tell Charles she could never sign such a letter. Charles felt impatient with such unfounded fears and the first coolness in all their married life grew between them. On the night before the meeting called to sign the letter, Elizabeth tried to ease
her troubled heart with prayer. In the early morning, she awoke with a voice calling out within her, "Tell Charles to beware of the white ram!"

After a silent, unhappy breakfast, Charles prepared to go along to meet the friends. As he went to open the front door, Elizabeth could not contain herself any longer and called out that—to her—meaningless phrase: "Charles, beware of the white ram!" Immediately he was stilled, and turning to her a face white with shock, asked, "What do you know of the white ram?" "Nothing," she replied, "nor do I wish to know unless you wish to tell me, except a voice told me to say these words to you."

Then Charles proceeded to tell her of a recurring dream telling of his danger, though the dream recurred in slightly different forms. The past night he had dreamed he was walking on a high plateau across a deep, rocky ravine. Connecting the plateau with this lovely meadow was a narrow, unguarded bridge. As Charles reached the middle of the bridge, a sleek, white-haired ram would step from the deep grass to meet him on the bridge. Charles stooped to touch the silky coat of the beautiful beast. The ram would put down his head to butt him off the bridge down into the rocky ravine. That morning the ram’s eyes became the lustrous eyes of Khayr’u’llah! The Greenleafs went to the meeting to give a warning to the friends, without fully relating their dreams. Those who signed the letter disappeared from the history of the Faith. The faithful few became the bedrock of the Faith.

What was she like, the precious Elizabeth, to whom the Guardian said and wrote, "every moment of your life is precious"? The first word people used to describe her was "light"—an inner radiance of early morning light. One friend writes, "For me, always, Elizabeth was bridelike. She was not young, nor did she have classic features; as the years went by she became a little bent but still she had a secret joy that expressed itself even in her jewelry and white ram’s woolly coat. One day I spoke admiringly of her dress and she said, "I dress for Bahá’u’lláh as I would for a lover." This then was her source of mysterious joy, her love for the Reality of Bahá’u’lláh was an undying flame within her heart. A personal reality—her response shining in all the wonderful world, the outer a reflection of the inner. She would show visitors the result of her cross-pollination of flowers and the pink potatoes she was one of the first to develop. She corresponded with a McGill University professor for several years as an equal on the results of her experiments. She related how she prayed for the inner knowledge of the sciences. She amusingly told of visiting some non-Baha’í relatives and of being seated beside Steinmetz (the electrical wizard) at the dinner table. She began to speak to him and to question him on his theories. After a few moments, he turned to look at her more fully and asked, "At which university did you study?" He was so impressed by her knowledge. Her niece writes of a precious moment spent with Elizabeth in her garden. They stood together to watch an eclipse of the sun and Elizabeth remarked that the corona was like the circle of light in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s eyes. Her sense of humor relieved many a troubled heart. A young Bahá’í visiting Green Acre in the late twenties was somewhat disturbed by a discussion of some of the older believers. They were not as yet completely freed from the concepts of reincarnation. There were little currents of irritation at the superior claims of some as to whether they were Mary Magdalene, or Martha, Peter or Thomas. Elizabeth had remained silent. Later, the young Bahá’í walked with her arm-in-arm from Fellowship House to the cottage. Elizabeth could sense the confusion in the mind and heart of her young companion, so, with a gentle squeeze of the arm and a burble of laughter in her voice, she whispered, "I’ll let you be the Báb, and I’ll be Bahá’u’lláh!" For a stunned moment, the young Bahá’í halted, then suddenly gales of laughter sent the cobwebs of cluttered thinking away.

"Every moment of your life is precious," the Guardian wrote her.
Rebuilding an island tradition

by Florence Conway

As I braced myself against the floorboards of the tiny boat being tossed and slammed by the seasonal violence of the Truk Lagoon the closing words of the Báb's address to the Letters of the Living came clearly to mind and calmed my soul: "Arise in His name, put your trust wholly in Him, and be assured of ultimate victory." Chief Kintoki Joseph, his finely-sculpted face dripping wet and his drenched clothes clinging to his slight frame, sat at the rear of the straining vessel expertly guiding it through mammoth swells, and carefully easing it through the occasional breaking waves that washed over us.

In the more stable moments my eyes were fixed on Kintoki's face. The serenity and composure that had so impressed me a few days before at our first meeting were still there, in spite of the turmoil of our present surroundings. They complimented an obvious strength of character which had enabled this highly-respected man in the Truk District to defy tradition and declare his faith in Bahá'u'lláh. Although he was now retired from his position as Chief of Udot Island, he was, nevertheless, constantly sought after by his people as a source of leadership and guidance because he demonstrated a wisdom and fairness rare in any society today.

We were on our way to Udot where I was to be the guest of the Chief's family for the next two weeks, teaching, as opportunities permitted, and helping the believers to deepen in the Faith. The plan also included assisting the Bahá'ís of Udot Island to elect their delegate to the National Convention of the Northwest Pacific Ocean. It was my first visit to Truk, one of the main island groups of the far-flung Carolines mentioned in "Tablets of the Divine Plan."

The tide was up so the boat was able to be brought all

Udot Island believer and children
Chief Kintoki Joseph and his wife Rieko

the way to the shore. A large gathering of people were there to greet us, and as I scanned the scene I was able, in seconds, to find the fair face of Noriko Tomioka, a young Japanese believer who had volunteered one year of her time to assist with the teaching work in Micronesia. She had arrived a couple of weeks earlier, entrusted by the National Teaching Committee to the care and protection of Chief Kintoki. This responsibility had been taken quite seriously by the Chief, and Noriko had been accepted into his home as a daughter, unfortunately with all the restrictions on her activities that would naturally accompany that position. Although communication between Noriko and me was extremely limited by my complete ignorance of Japanese and her scant knowledge of English, she later managed to convey to me that this honor, so tenderly conferred upon her, had somewhat hampered her teaching effort. And so it was with relief and joy that she greeted me, hoping that my presence might liberate her from the yoke of loving protection the Chief had so wisely laid upon her.

As I stepped from the boat, I was ushered into Kintoki's meeting house, a short distance away, where a great Feast had been prepared. All the village chiefs of Udot Island were present, as well as a few other dignitaries. As we all partook of the delectable repast, and shared our thoughts and feelings, I marvelled, as I have on other occasions in my Baha'i life, at the miracles of this age—the mere coming together of this group, where mention of Bahá'u'lláh was made, was significant and historic.

Although the Chief had provided me with an interpreter, I found the young man to be extremely shy, and fearful of using what little knowledge of English he seemed to have. As it turned out, our host was our best interpreter. He had a fair knowledge of Japanese, having learned it during the Japanese occupation of the area before World War II, and I found his knowledge of English to be better than I had expected. But more important, his language ability was magnified by his uncommon perception. He did not like to speak in English, since he felt inadequate, but, as time went on, communication between us eased and improved considerably.

Since Chief Kintoki spent his days working in Moen, a pattern soon developed of sitting around the table after the evening meal for daily conversation. We would eat in the meeting house, a fairly large, open shelter, with an adjoining part which served as the cook house. Often there would be a few other people present who would sit quietly at one of the two other tables, sometimes talking in soft, muffled tones, and barely visible in the dim light from the kerosene lamp. Occasionally the Chief would
The first believer of Truk, Mr. Stem Salle, with his wife and children.

Noriko and I spent our days in Udot walking from village to village, sometimes trying to locate declared Bahá’ís, and always sharing the Message with new people. We had a useful system worked out, although it was not the most satisfying to Noriko, since she usually ended up talking with the older people who were the only ones who might understand Japanese, and I would talk to the youth who usually had some knowledge of English. We would seek out a person who had a fair ability in one of our languages, and they, in turn, could translate into Trukese for the other people who happened to be present. The Chief had felt quite safe in turning Noriko over to me in his daily absence, since being fortyish seems to dissolve many of the inherent dangers threatening females in most societies. Thus, Noriko and I were as free as birds.

On my third day in Udot a tragic incident occurred. The chief of the neighboring village, who happened to live very close to where we were staying, committed suicide. It was following a quarrel with a defiant daughter, who rendered the old man helpless by her disregard for the tradition of respect for one’s elders. Sadly enough, her attitude was symptomatic of the penetration of Western customs that is eating away at the fabric of the Trukese way of life. The despondent and defeated man had hanged himself not far from his house.

The people of Udot immediately responded to a need that had arisen in their community. Everyone in the vicinity cooperated to assist the bereaved family, who would, for the next few days, have to feed the many people who would come to be with them through their time of trouble. There was no harmony lost from their lives, nor did the tempo of life change much; it was, rather, that all effort was at once directed toward a common goal. It seemed as if the whole community had been quietly transformed into a perfectly-synchronized mechanism to accomplish the task before them.

Noriko and I were not asked, nor were we expected, to help, and our needs were attended to just as before. In fact, I felt excluded and apart, and decided that this position was not acceptable for the Bahá’í visitors. So, as the people began to congregate the day following the tragedy, I approached Kintoki’s wife, Rieko, who spoke some English, and conveyed to her our wish to help in some way. When told that there was nothing we could do, I asked if it would be all right if we visited the family and went to pray where the man was lying in state. She assured me this would be good, if I was sure we wanted to go. I inquired further about the customs of the people regarding death, so we would not, in our ignorance, offend our hosts or the bereaved family.

The news that there were Bahá’í visitors on Udot had spread rapidly, and I knew our actions would be observed with great interest when we joined the gathering. We dressed in our best clothes, Noriko even replacing her much-loved jeans with a dress, and the two of us, finding that the others had already gone, left, by ourselves, to pay our respects. We approached the clearing near the man’s house and saw about a hundred people, sitting in small groups on the short-tufted Japanese
grass that covered the whole area, right to the water's edge. We found Rieko and quietly asked if she would take us to the bereaved family, since we did not know who they were. She led us to the house and we climbed the two steep steps, and entered. Directly before us, on the floor, was the open wooden box holding the corpse—hands crossed on the chest, and face completely vacant. Several women were sitting around the box constantly fanning the body, to retard deterioration. I sat on the floor next to the older woman Rieko indicated was the man's wife. We did not speak the same language, but I took her hand, and could feel her pain and share her anguish, and I tried to comfort her with love. I then turned and looked down on the lifeless form of her husband, and prayed that God would shower His mercy on this soul. After awhile, Noriko and I quietly left and joined the people outside. We sat on the grass for a long time, just relying on our being there to express our concern.

During the next two days more people arrived, some coming from other islands, and I realized that something remarkable was happening. Many people would stop and congregate at Chief Kintoki's house on their way, to and from, the home of the "dead man", and they seemed to be seeking us out...for hours on end, we were teaching the life-giving message of Bahá'u'lláh to different small groups who would gather around us on the grass. They were brimming with interest and questions, and they continued to come. Young people came with their guitars, and would sing for us the Trukese songs in their soft, mellow voices—often love songs, that would bring far-off dreams to their warm, dark eyes.

We marveled at this unmatched opportunity that had come to us as a result of the man's death. As I thanked God in prayer for this unexpected bounty, I prayed again for the departed soul of the chief. With each new group that gathered around to hear Bahá'u'lláh's Message, I repeated that prayer, and once more at the side of that rough-hewn box.

We attended the funeral a few days later. As the box was closed, the sound of the nails being pounded in broke the silence of Udot and brought forth the mournful wailing of the dead man's family in totally unbridled grief. The coffin was placed in the shallow grave, and handfuls of dirt were cast by friends and relatives. Several men, with shovels, quickly completed the task by carefully mounding the fresh earth and bordering the site with rocks.

That night, after the evening meal, we sat at Chief Kintoki's table for hours, talking about the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh concerning the nature of the soul, life after death, heaven and hell. The stream of questions seemed endless, and he would nod his approval frequently as we responded. On subsequent occasions, when the Chief spoke to different groups, he would often turn to me following his discourse, and with shining eyes explain that he had just told them about the Bahá'í teachings on one of these subjects.

On these memorable evenings at table he also shared with us the deep concern of the elders of the island for the future of the Trukese people. Working in the district center he could daily observe the erosion of their way of life, brought about by the unremitting encroachment of materialism with its allied evils of alcohol, sexual license and violence. Values, which had guaranteed peace, harmony and order for generations, were being swept away by its force, and the early signs of its ravage were now appearing in Udot. A kind of battle of Armageddon was being waged on these remote and neglected islands in the Pacific. There was no way the old way of life could be retained; the wise Chief knew this, but he also knew, that to submit to the new ways now threatening them, would be destructive to his people. The youth were the first to be affected. Instead of being engaged in gathering the food, pounding the breadfruit or carefully building the once critically-needed, outrigger canoes, as they had been in the past, they now wiled away an increasing part of their days in idleness, with a diminishing sense of being needed by a family, whose diet might now consist more of rice and canned meat. Inter-island transportation was now provided by motor boats, owned only by those people who had jobs in Moen.

The status of women in the Trukese society is very low, and it was apparent that Chief Kintoki was being challenged by having to confront a real example of the new principle of the equality of men and women. Just my being there, alone, in the capacity of a Bahá'í teacher and as a guest in his home, was providing him with a completely new set of circumstances with which to cope. I sensed that it was creating a dilemma for him and made every effort not to make it more difficult, but rather to give him time and opportunity to work it out for himself. It spoke of his maturity that the Chief was able, within a relatively short period of time, to accept this middle-aged woman, who unashamedly would work in the cook house with his wife, quietly serve the guests who often congregated in his home, and then, the next moment take her place at table opposite him and be-
Baha'is on Dublon, one of the three islands in the Truk Lagoon. The author, Mrs. Conway, is at the right.

come the source he was forced to tap to satisfy his obvious hunger for knowledge of Baha'u'llah's teachings. It was another evidence of the power of the Word of God to recreate us; in this case, to have Chief Kintoki overcome a deeply-entrenched tradition which was basic to the family and social structure of Trukese life. It was a victory for him, and I quietly rejoiced with him. No mention was ever made, but I believe he knew that I understood, and was grateful. Further evidence of the change appeared toward the end of my stay in Udot. We were discussing plans for a meeting at Kintoki's home, and arranging to have people notified. I mentioned that the women often did not attend the meetings, and that in this day the teachings of Baha'u'llah say it is important for the women to participate, too. The day of the meeting the women came, many of them. But even more exciting, they spoke up and participated fully in the discussions.

One Saturday morning Chief Kintoki, Noriko and I set out across the choppy channel to the neighboring island of Eot where we planned to meet with the Baha'is. Saka Manus is the Chief of Eot and he is also a Bahá'í, having declared his faith at the same time as Chief Kintoki. As we approached the little island a vision of unsurpassed loveliness filled our eyes. The morning sun cast its clean light on Eot—a lush, green, picturesque garden floating in the Truk Lagoon. There were cleared, grassy areas surrounding the simple dwellings, shaded here and there by sprawling mango and giant breadfruit trees. The shore was being guarded by friendly sentinels—the casual coconut palms, leaning expectantly over the water.

As we pulled up beside the rock jetty, a broadly-smiling, rotund figure approached to greet us. It was the proud chief of this tiny dot in the Northwest Pacific Ocean. We disembarked, exchanged greetings, and Noriko and I waited while the two friends talked together. Kintoki, at one point, turned and explained that most of the Baha'ís were fishing or gathering breadfruit, so we could not have a meeting that day. Somewhat disappointed I tried another tack, and suggested that Noriko and I could walk around the island to meet some of the people. With a trace of finality in his voice, Chief Kintoki replied that we would return the following day. I decided not to pursue the issue, openly, but since we were there I thought surely there must be something we could do. While Kintoki and Manus continued their talk, I silently prayed that somehow we would have the opportunity to teach that day on Eot.

Some time later, Kintoki turned in our direction, and suggested that the four of us walk around the island and look for the Baha'ís. I was almost brought to tears by this unexpected development. He asked that we take the scrapbooks, which we relied on so heavily in our teaching. I pulled them out of the back-pack, where they had been tucked away for protection against the spray of water that always drenched us when we traveled by boat in the lagoon. Kintoki insisted on carrying both of them. My spirit soared, and it seemed that even the earth beneath our feet took on a preciousness for what was happening. The Chief of Eot, the Chief of Udot, a courageous young Japanese girl and a fortyish American of New England stock—by most standards a rather unlikely little group—set out to tread the paths of Eot.
that day, bearing the Message of Bahá’u’lláh to the wondering but warm-hearted islanders.

At our first stop, we were waiting for a Bahá’í to return from fishing, when I discovered that a young man nearby spoke some English, so I asked Chief Kintoki for one of the scrapbooks and sat down with the youth explaining, with the help of visual aids, about the Faith. I happened to notice how carefully Kintoki was observing what I was doing. A few minutes later, I looked in his direction, and saw him, with several people gathered around, the other scrapbook open before him, sharing with people, whose needs he so well understood, the life-giving Message of Bahá’u’lláh. It was a thrilling occurrence to see this wise and respected man humbly engaged in this most important and most rewarding task—teaching the Cause of God. None of us could have evaluated the true significance of the occasion, but as I watched, I was able to partly sense the special nature of that small gathering on this far-off, but certainly not God-forsaken, island in the Pacific. It reminded me again of how we must constantly try to evaluate our goals, our actions, our accomplishments, by an entirely new standard—completely different from that accepted by the society in which we live. To the so-called sophisticated world outside, this place and its people were unknown and unimportant—the fringes of mankind who were uninvolved in directing the course of civilization, who were just being carried along by the forces of progress, like lifeless debris carried along by a roaring river, to be occasionally deposited on its banks, or wedged under rocks, maybe to be picked up again by new surges in the powerfully flowing water. How distorted man’s vision can become!

Although this day would go unnoticed, yet I knew a significant event was going on before my eyes as I watched the wise Chief Kintoki, gently opening the hearts of the people to God’s new Revelation. And Saka Manus carefully observed his friend because soon he, too, would take the initiative to experience this great gift of God, in teaching his own people. Around mid-afternoon we made our way to the house of Manus, where we removed our shoes and stepped into a simple, immaculate room. His smiling wife greeted us with great dignity, and led us to the low table carefully spread with a wide assortment of attractive island dishes. At each place was an opened coconut, almost brimful of milk. In the islands, in the heat of the day, there is always someone who will shimmy his way to the top of a coconut tree, drop a few coconuts, then on descending, skillfully lop the top of the fruit and hand it to you. This, all in a matter of minutes, provides a drink both cool and refreshing.

We took our places on the floor around the table, and were soon joined by a young public health worker, who spoke English. He became quite interested in the Faith as he was translating for me, and would forget, sometimes, to pass on the answers to questions being asked by the two chiefs. The questions were those most important to their people. They wanted to know what the Bahá’í teachings say about communion, and we had an opportunity to redefine it in terms of the Nineteen-day Feast. They asked about heaven, hell and baptism because the missionaries had put great stress on these subjects.

Our memorable day in Udot ended late that afternoon as we waved our farewell to Chief Manus, with a promise to return the following day. The trip home offered a panoramic view of the glorious aftermath of a sun, recently descended behind the large island of Toi. Salmon rose to the branches on the higher peaks of the island, but only briefly did the spectacle last. We came to the shore of Udot at that time of day when darkness begins to fall, when supreme quietness sets in, and the only sound heard was a chirping bird, running that last fleeting errand before turning in for the night.

During my last afternoon in Udot, I spent some time lying on the thick Japanese grass bordering the lagoon. In one direction, the sun was playing on the water, and had created a path of light that stretched as far as I could see. It looked like it was strewn with shimmering diamonds all the way to the sky; it was so bright it blocked out everything else from my vision, and naturally led to day-dreaming. What if the light of the Faith was that visible to all mankind, so it would blind our eyes to all that is unimportant—the materialistic goals and pursuits that cloud our vision? Suddenly a cloud did obstruct the light of the sun and the shimmering path faded into a dull gray ocean. How quickly it had changed, and I wondered how abrupt and drastic the change in us, when we allow a cloud of disobedience, negligence or forgetfulness to intervene between that Source of light and our own lives. And I recalled people’s appearances, and how it was easy to tell when they were receiving and accepting that glorious Light, and how drab their countenance, no matter what their physical attributes, when it was not there. The cloud passed, and again there was light upon light. As I reflected more, the scene was abruptly invaded by the round, crawling figure of a lovely baby, not far from where I lay. His brown skin glowed in the sun, and his eyes danced with delight at the coolness of the grass on his naked body. I submitted to the happy intrusion, and we played and laughed together.

The next day Noriko and I left Udot. Huddled together on the hard floor of the small boat, we raised our heads, and braved the wind and the water, to scan the islands of the Truk Lagoon. The morning was overcast, and the islands appeared a dark gray in the distance, like slumbering giants just waiting to be brought to life by the light of God’s new Revelation. How long would it take, and where were the valiant souls who would arise to achieve it?
The Great Safari
part twenty
The friends met her at a distance, and all the way to the meeting place they danced before her and sang.

The visit to the northern district of Malawi was a very happy and unforgettable occasion. In Karonga, where we spent two nights, we were able to meet with the Baha'is and their friends on several occasions. This is a relatively newly opened area through the efforts of one of the devoted members of the National Spiritual Assembly, and the Baha'is there are very devoted and eager to spread the Faith.

In the village of Bwiba, near Karonga, we met with about 30 of the friends under the shade of a huge mango tree. Ruhiyih Khnum spoke to them in detail about the teachings, prayers, and the spread of the Message of Baha'u'llah. After the meeting a non-Baha'i lady, who is an admirer of the Faith and runs a shop near this tree, invited us into her shop for a cup of tea and some buns. The friends begged us to come again on the same afternoon, which we did. However, when the meeting was about to start a message arrived from the senior chief of the district to the effect that he was very anxious to meet Amatu'l-Baha but could not leave a scheduled meeting of his own some distance away in another village. He is a very well-educated man, an admirer of the Faith, with a perfect knowledge of English, and is translating some Bahai pamphlets and books into his own language for publication. He had also given a piece of land to the Bahai's and was anxious for them to build a Centre on it as soon as possible. When Ruhiyih Khnum arrived at the meeting, she found about 200 people gathered, many of them subchiefs and other important villagers. She was immediately invited most courteously to a seat by Chief Mwaka Sungula, who introduced her befittingly and asked her to tell his people what the Baha'i Faith stands for. Her short and illuminating talk was much appreciated by all. The spirit of this wise and tolerant chief, who was most anxious to have the land he had donated have a suitable meeting place built upon it, combined with the great need of this newly opened area, prompted Ruhiyih Khnum to contribute from a sum which has been placed at her disposal by a class of Bahai students in Persia, the amount needed for this building.

The most northern town in Malawi we visited was the town of Chipita, where Amatu'l-Baha gave a talk at the Chipita Secondary School to over 120 students. This talk was very enthusiastically received, discussions continued after the question period even outside the hall. Counsellor Mr. Shidan Fatheazam was invited to go back that night and show some Bahai slides.

In the town of Mzuza, which is the provincial capital of the North, we spent one night meeting with the believers in the evening, and Amatu'l-Baha gave a public talk at the Townhall the next day to over 30 selected enquirers, many of them distinguished government officials. This was later followed by a reception given by the Local Spiritual Assembly of that town which had made all these excellent arrangements on their own initiative.

In the city of Lilongwe, a modern city under construction and planned to be the future capital of the country, we met with the Bahais in the home of the pioneers. Unfortunately at the last minute, because of an unforeseen complication, the public talk had to be cancelled, but at an informal gathering the Bahais and a few of their friends were very happy to meet with and listen to Ruhiyih Khnum.

In the village of Malaka Market over 120 people gathered under the shade of trees, at Amatu'l-Baha's meeting place they danced before her and sang. In the course of her talk she said those who accept and follow the teachings of Baha'u'llah are like a farmer who comes in contact with a new and superior type of maize grain and has the courage to take it and try it out. It is this first farmer to whom the honor goes, because after the others see the results with their own eyes many will follow him and plant the new grain, but the honor and the distinction will not be theirs; that belongs to the one who had the vision and dared to try the new grain. When the meeting finally came to an end—the villagers being most reluctant to let it end at all and continually plying their visitor with questions—the wife of the devoted traveling teacher, whose home was in that village, served us all most lovingly with a delicious lunch.

After this strenuous week of continuous activity, the National Assembly in its program had left a day of rest for Amatu'l-Baha and we spent it alone on Zomba Plateau, one of Malawi's famous scenic beauties, high up on a mountain overlooking a vast panorama of lush green valley, distant hills and the town of Zomba.

In the village of Ntonda the Bahai children, holding beautiful bunches of flowers, welcomed Amatu'l-Baha with songs in front of their newly erected Centre. In a number of these local village Bahai Centres we noticed that several copies of the same colored photograph of the Shrine of the Báb decorated the walls, and when we inquired how there happened to be so many of these, we were told that at an advanced deepening course held by the National Spiritual Assembly a copy of this photo-
graph had been given to each attendant as a memento of the occasion; and when they returned to their villages, they determined that they would continue to further beautify their local Centres and therefore had donated their photographs to the Centres. We noticed throughout Malawi that the believers took much pride in their village Centres; often they had surfaced the floor with bricks, planted flowers outside, and in general showed their love and pride in the building they themselves, often without any outside help, had erected in the name of Bahá’u’lláh.

At Mthumpwa, one of the most active communities, a large number of village Bahá’ís received and welcomed Amatu’l-Bahá in their beautiful Centre. The chairman of the meeting, in his words of welcome, made a singularly beautiful and touching remark; he said we have heard the name of Shoghi Effendi and have learned to love him very much for his work and his life and his station, but although he lived in our time we did not have the privilege of seeing him; how fortunate we are today to see his wings (meaning Rúhíyyih Khánum). In this village was a very old man, believed to be over a hundred, doubled up with age, but extremely sharp in his mind. He asked to meet Rúhíyyih Khánum and had his picture taken with her, because, he said, “I have seen everything that has happened in this land and this day is a very special day in my life.” We slept there that night and partook of a delicious meal prepared by the dear Baha’ís.

Malawi is a tea planting country and in the middle of beautiful estates are several Bahá’í communities; believers from four different areas gathered in Mankolo to receive and meet with Amatu’l-Bahá. This was one of the happiest meetings we had. The friends met her some distance from the home of one of the believers where the meeting was to be held, and all the way to the meeting place they danced before her and sang to her. She entered this house from under a green arch they had specially erected for her, and as the crowd was too many to get in the building, the meeting was held outside. One of the believers, a precious soul, had written a special poem of welcome for Amatu’l-Bahá, and as he sang it to her he was himself so deeply moved that several times he had to wipe away his tears. The refrain of this song was, “Amatu’l-Bahá means the one who carries the Faith of God all over the world, who comes from Haifa.” Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke of the great honor which belongs to the first believers everywhere; she said when we teach people we should not ever make them feel that we are forcing them to accept; this is the water of life which we offer to anyone who is thirsty; anyone who is not thirsty is free to leave it and go his own way. She said to dispute and argue with people is forbidden by Bahá’u’lláh and we should guard ourselves against such things. Ladies from each of the communities very ceremoniously presented Rúhíyyih Khánum with gifts they had brought for her, such as fruit and baskets and so on. A very beautiful incident was the farewell talk of the chairman, the same man who had written the song. He said for this meeting Bahá’ís from these four communities had contributed a sum of money to prepare food for all of us, and of this sum “about thirty cents remains and we would like to give it to our beloved guest.” Rúhíyyih Khánum was very touched and told them that for herself of course she could not accept, but she would take this money and give it in their name to the National Spiritual Assembly. This pleased everyone. Before we left they kindly served us a delicious meal they had prepared.

At the end of her tour in Malawi Amatu’l-Bahá lunched with the National Spiritual Assembly at the National Hazíratu’l-Quds and once again met with them and thanked them for all they had done, as well as for their gift of beautiful national costumes they had given each of us, which we wore all the time.

The town of Amalika has a beautiful National Bahá’í Teaching Institute where we met with a large number of believers. In addition to the very spacious main hall there are dormitories and many other rooms, as well as a beautiful garden. The purchase of this property fulfilled a national Nine Year Plan goal and it is gradually being put into regular service for its primary and vital purpose of deepening the believers. Amatu’l-Bahá, in her most inspiring talk, said the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh is like a vast living temple and each of us believers is like one of its bricks; though we are all so different we are part of the whole. She spoke of the life and sufferings of the Blessed Beauty and answered the many eager questions put to her. This was the last meeting Amatu’l-Bahá was able to attend in Malawi as unfortunately she caught a bad cold and was confined to bed. She was therefore unable to attend the meeting in the south and sent me in her place with other friends.

The Cause of Bahá’u’lláh is like a vast Temple, and each believer like one of its bricks.

Southern Malawi, unlike most of the country, is very hot. At Kalengo, a large number of believers and their friends were awaiting the arrival of Rúhíyyih Khánum and, needless to say, they were disappointed but understood the reason for her absence. We spent that night in the home of a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and deepy appreciated the hospitality we received from him and his beautiful wife. The next day on our way back to the city we stopped in the village of Blair and, under the shade of mango trees that were indeed live-saving in that heat, had a very enjoyable meeting. There were many non-Bahá’ís present, and the discussion went on and on in their eagerness to learn more about this Faith. A delicious lunch which we shared with them all crowned this happy occasion before we returned to Limbe.

This trip to Malawi was one of the happiest experiences we have had in Africa. We found a devoted and exemplary community with both distinguished African believers and dedicated workers, all harmoniously serving Bahá’u’lláh together. Honesty, trustworthiness, and friendliness seem to be marked characteristics of the Malawi people; indeed, as Amatu’l-Bahá assured the President when she met him, it was her hope and prayer that this nation may be blessed and grow from strength to strength, to become a shining example to the rest of this continent.
Illuminated Tablet presented to college

An illuminated copy of a letter from 'Abdu'l-Bahá bestowing blessings upon Mount Holyoke College for girls, in Massachusetts, was presented to the institution by the Bahá'í community of South Hadley on May 26, during the college's graduation weekend.

The original letter was mailed in 1919 to Dr. Frederick D'Evelyn, an early American believer, in honor of the appointment of his daughter, Charlotte, to the Mount Holyoke faculty. Dr. D'Evelyn traveled with 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His visit to America, and wrote many articles for Star of the West about their journey across America. Miss Charlotte D'Evelyn, who was too ill to attend the presentation ceremony, was on the faculty of the college's English department for almost 40 years, until her recent retirement.

The framed Tablet, and an accompanying photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was received for Mount Holyoke by Miss Mary Tuttle, Secretary of the college. They will hang in the campus' 1886 Room which is used for alumni receptions, and for Tuesday night firesides by the Bahá'í College Club.

Mrs. Penny Walker represented the Spiritual Assembly of South Hadley at the presentation. She gave a brief talk on the life and station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Miss Amy Seidel, a graduating senior and member of the Bahá'í Club, spoke about Dr. Frederick D'Evelyn and his association with 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

According to Miss Seidel the school was very interested in receiving the Tablet. Mount Holyoke College reportedly has a religious tradition and its graduates have rendered important services to many of the world's important religions. It was said that the college administrators were very pleased to learn that the school was mentioned by one of the central figures of a new world religion.

In recent years there has been a great deal of Bahá'í activity on the Mount Holyoke campus. Four years ago there was only one elderly Bahá'í in the town of South Hadley. Today there are more than 40 Bahá'ís in the community, and until graduation there were 13 Bahá'ís at Mount Holyoke.

At least five of the seventeen head residents of dormitories next term will be Bahá'ís, Miss Seidel said. A course on the Bahá'í Faith has been taught at the college for two consecutive years. The first year it was prepared by the staff of the religion department, the second year by the Bahá'í College Club.

The College Club has also supported extensive service projects. During the past two years, for example, a Bahá'í has visited the college infirmary every day to run errands for and serve the student patients under treatment there.

* * *

To his honor, Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn
San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

Upon him be Bahá’u’lláh El Abha.

HE IS GOD.

O thou servant of Bahá’u’lláh!
Thy letter was received. Its contents were conducive to joy and gladness. I pray that through the blessings of GOD thou mayest daily increase in faith, assurance and firmness in the Covenant and Testament; mayest be assisted and confirmed and be the cause of the exaltation of the Bahá’í Teachings.

Thou hast written about the school for women; I supplicate and entreat to the Kingdom of God and beg for that school limitless confirmations, so that it may be born anew, may become the manifestation of the bounties of the generous Lord, the lights of Supreme Guidance may shine upon it and may illumine it, and may become the center of merciful susceptibilities.

Convey on my behalf to thy respected wife the utmost kindness.

Upon thee be Bahá El Abha.

(Signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas

Translated by Shoghi Rabbani
Bahá'í, Acca, Palestine, July 24, 1919

(Note: The school mentioned is Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass., U.S.A.)
Guatemalan Bahá'ís attend study class in Palmira Vieja.

Guatemalan teaching

High up on the side of a green mountain, overlooking a valley Guatemala shares with Mexico, is a community of less than 100 thatched roof adobe houses with dirt floors and no windows, called Palmira Vieja. Its people (women and children included) work hard on large coffee plantations during the harvest, but still find themselves in perpetual debt. A man from this village was working on one of the larger plantations at sea level where most of the poor work part of the year and return home with malaria or hepatitis. There he met a Bahá’í. He expressed the desire to know more. The Bahá’í arranged for a pioneer to go to his home. He became on fire with the teachings and went to friends in Palmira Vieja to share the message. They were thrilled. They, in turn, went out as a group—entire families—to teach their neighbors who lived at the foot of the mountain in Mexico. They asked for nothing, carried their food, and walked barefoot up and down their steep mountain side.

In April of that year they formed their assembly in Palmira Vieja. Many times, the entire Assembly, with their children, went on foot to teach in other communities.

Since this place is inaccessible by car most of the year, it has been visited, perhaps not more than twice a year. They always elect their assembly, delegate and officials without help and send in their report which sometimes takes 3 weeks to arrive.

Much of the deepening in Palmira Vieja has been carried out by Auxiliary Board Member, Edith McLaren. No one who has made the trip can forget their horseback ride through the valley where clouds of colorful butterflies erupt as the horses pass.

One of the goals of the 9-Year Plan was to teach and form an assembly in the frontier towns of the state of Chiapas, Mexico.

Rhodesia elects NSA

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Rhodesia, from left to right: (standing) Mr. Joseph Mhandiw, Mrs. Helen Hope, Mr. Thomas Lisota, Mr. Tobias Minymum, (seated) Mrs. Iran Sohaili, Mr. Amos Zanyamakando, Mrs. Doreen Mpafu. The other members, Mr. Dale Allen and Mr. John Sargent, had not returned from the Third International Convention when this photograph was taken.

The National Convention of the Bahá’ís
The Third National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Chad was held in the small city of Sarh (formerly Fort Archambault) in the South of Chad. The Mayor of Sarh donated a municipal building for the event.

The proceedings were quickly translated into French, Massa, Arabic, Kenga, Sara and Sara N'Gombaye.

There are more than three hundred localities where Bahá'ís reside in Chad, and fifty Local Spiritual Assemblies.

The above photograph shows the delegates, visitors and pioneers attending the Third National Bahá'í Convention of Chad.

The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, was elected on the evening of April 10, 1973, in the home of Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, Eskil Ljungberg.

The first youth declarations in the Faroes were obtained by an international proclamation team which toured the islands after the North Atlantic Conference in Reykjavik in September 1971. During 1972 a second international teaching team visited the islands. The event was reported by the national press, and leaflets (the first in Faroese) were distributed to every one of the 3,000 homes in the capital city of Tórshavn.

The members of the Spiritual Assembly are, from left to right: (standing) Mr. Richard Bury, Miss Ilona Rodgers, Mr. Artin Dixon, Mr. Roy Philbrow, (seated) Mr. David Hines, Mrs. Margaret Hines, Mrs. Emma Reinert (first Faroese Bahá'í), Mrs. Sue Philbrow, and Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Mr. Eskil Ljungberg.
Rwanda National Convention

The National Convention of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands was held on Bahá’í headquarters land, in Tarawa, the capital, May 15-20.

Twenty-three delegates from nine islands gathered in the National Teaching Institute and the Bahá’í Naneaba for the Convention. The Institute and the Maneaba, a native meeting hall with no sides and a high thatched roof, are part of the national headquarters Pao Penox.

After the Convention a few of the delegates remained to join a teaching team preparing to visit several islands for mass teaching. Teaching teams, comprised of fifteen persons ranging in age from fifteen to sixty, are new to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, although they have already been successful in spreading the Bahá’í Faith.

Convention Chairman Mote Kiaman (left), of Betio; and Convention Secretary Masipei Takarawa (right), of Bikenibeu; quietly make their choice for the Bahá’í National Assembly. Photo by Dr. Marr.

Gilbert & Ellice Is.

The members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Rwanda, elected at the second National Convention in Kigali, May 26-27, 1973, are, from left to right: (seated) Mr. Aron Ndazivunnye, Mr. Aloys Nzaramba, Mr. Denis Hitimana, (standing) Mrs. Zahereh Taaid, Dr. A. Taaid, Mr. Etienne Thcigaga, Mr. Philippe Bwana, Mr. Ulphonse Semanyenzi, and Mr. Athanese Ntaganda.

At the National Convention in the city of Kigali thirty-eight delegates represented believers in 191 localities around the country. There are currently forty-seven local Spiritual Assemblies in Rwanda.
The Greenleafs: an eternal union

Continued from page 9

and they walked on happily together.

Of her meetings with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, she felt she could not adequately describe Him. From time to time she would describe His eyes, the movements of His hands and body, His gentleness, His strength. All adjectives were meaningless in relation to his state of being. However, she related this experience which linked itself to a private family joke. Whenever each of the Greenleafs thought the other was receiving undue adulation from others, the one or the other would murmur "Ham and eggs!" into the ear of the praised one as the most plebian expression possible to prick the ego balloon. One day Elizabeth was busy as usual with Lua Getsinger and other Baha'i ladies in preparing and serving refreshments for the throng of visitors who came to meet the Master. They were arranging food on a table in the anteroom outside the room where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was holding His private interviews. Lua, glancing at Elizabeth, asked, "Have you been with the Master yet?" When Elizabeth answered "No", Lua looked at her a little impatiently, opened a second door near them leading into the Master's room and practically thrust Elizabeth inside. A chair being beside the door, Elizabeth sank into it gratefully. The Master was speaking to, and His secretary was translating for, two ladies seated beside 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Elizabeth sat, absorbed in watching Him. She suddenly paused in His flow of words, glanced at her and exclaimed, "Ham and eggs!" Then throwing back His head, burst into laughter. She sat stunned. The Master continued his discourse with his visitors until kindly He escorted them to the door.

The marriage of Charles and Elizabeth Greenleaf was a "Marriage for eternity" as 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote them. Charles said before his death that he would not have wished to have changed one word or deed of Elizabeth's during their life together. Later, after Charles' death in 1920, the Master wrote Elizabeth, "You should not mourn nor grieve because this separation is but temporary. Thou wilt find Him in the Divine Kingdom in the utmost joy, happiness and rapture. This union is eternal. Do thou strive with heart and soul to be confirmed with such deeds as to become the cause of his joy and happiness in the other world."

The beloved Guardian showed every tenderness to Elizabeth on her pilgrimage to Haifa in 1926. It was then he told her, what he later wrote, "Every moment of your life is precious." He suggested that she teach with Mrs. Maxwell in Canada. It was after her pilgrimage that she came to Montreal to give the stimulus which began the Montreal Youth Group. This group later gained continent-wide and even international renown; its original members served on Local and National Spiritual Assemblies, as well as becoming pioneers to other lands.

At a time when Mrs. Schopflocker was on one of her extended worldwide teaching tours, Elizabeth acted as hostess-housekeeper in the Schopflocker home. She was active as always in teaching. One evening she received a very abusive telephone call warning her that her life was in danger if she continued her teaching activities. The next night she went off, unperturbed, to class. There was a long walk of three blocks of badly lit streets to reach the streetcar. On her return late at night, when Elizabeth stepped off the streetcar, there was Bruce, the Schopflocker's huge English bulldog waiting to escort her home. He had never done this before. He continued his guard for a month, then just as suddenly as he began, he stopped.

So many stories flood to mind. One afternoon as she sat praying in her hotel bedroom in a city of the deep south, she felt someone looking at her. The window was open to catch the breeze. There, on his high board sat a Negro window-washer looking so intently at her. When she greeted him, he said she looked so happy; he wanted so much to see a truly happy face. So, at the window, they chatted, Elizabeth giving him a copy of a Bahá’í prayer by which he could seek happiness for himself.

Whether it can be said she opened the city of Key West, Florida, to the Faith is not sure. She spent January 1939 there and was joined by a younger believer who spent several weeks there and was a witness to how her gentle influence touched so many hearts. We would walk each morning to the fruit shop to buy our lunch. It was owned by a delightful Chinese family. The old grandfather usually sat in the sun, dressed in the traditional long blue Chinese gown, a black satin skull cap on his head. When he saw Elizabeth, he would rise, his hands crossed and hidden in the long sleeves, bow and repeat in singing Cantonese a verse (his son told us some saying of Confucious). Elizabeth would bow in return and repeat some verse of Bahá’u’lláh’s or ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s—a very precious interlude.

In these days, two years before her death, her sight was failing, limbs were weak, her hands shaking. One night as she stumbled and almost fell, she clung to her companion’s arm and exclaimed, "Oh, here am I, blind and lame and halt, able to do so little, yet if that little can serve the Guardian, I am willing to live forever!"

Many of these incidents in the lives of the Greenleafs have been confirmed at one time or another by Charlotte Dakin, Elizabeth's beloved niece, by Dorothy Baker, Dorothy Pijay, Gertrude Blum, and Baha'i Randall Ford whose parents' home was a refuge, a source of joy and happiness weaving in and out of the lives of the Greenleafs.
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House of Worship repairs undertaken

Emogene Hoagg, an exemplary pioneer

A working holiday in the villages of France
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COVER PHOTO

Cleaning the steps of the House of Worship to match those newly repaired.
Architect chosen for Seat House of Justice

DELIGHTED ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT HUSAYN AMANAT BRILLIANT YOUNG BAHÁ’I ARCHITECT CRADLE FAITH AS ARCHITECT OF BUILDING FOR UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

SHARE ANNOUNCEMENT ALL FRIENDS PLEASE PUBLISH FOREGOING BAHÁ’I NEWS

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa
September 18, 1973

Mrs. Shows passes after brief illness

The United States Bahá’í community, and hundreds of Bahá’ís who have served as pioneers abroad since the beginning of the Second Seven Year Plan, particularly Europe, will be grieved to learn of the passing on July 21 of Mrs. Julia Shows following a very brief last illness. A future issue of Bahá’í News will carry an In Memoriam article concerning Mrs. Shows’ many years of devoted service on committees and to pioneers who remember her with great love and admiration. On the occasion of her passing The Universal House of Justice cabled July 24, 1973 as follows:

ASSURE PRAYERS PROGRESS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM LOYAL DEVOTED BELIEVER JULIA SHOWS GRATEFULLY RECALL HER CONSISTENT LOVING SERVICE GOALS CAUSE;

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Mrs. Struven visited Master in Holy Land

On August 2, 1973, Mrs. Hebe Struven of Fryeburg, Maine, ascended to the Abhá Kingdom. Mrs. Ruby Jean Struven, affectionately known as Hebe, was the youngest sister of Mrs. Lua Getsinger and had the great privilege of visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá while He was still in prison in ‘Akká, Palestine, in 1908. From that time her life was dedicated to the furtherance of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh and many are the believers who first heard the mention of the Faith from her.

Distinguished pioneer dies at Europe post

The following cablegram from The Universal House of Justice dated August 13, 1973, announces the passing of another valiant pioneer and very early American Bahá’í:

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING ANNA KUNZ STEADFAST DISTINGUISHED HANDMAID BAHA’ULLAH HER ASSOCIATIONS BELOVED PIONEERING SERVICES EUROPE OVER EXTENDED PERIOD UNFORGETTABLE ADVISING GERMAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING MASHRIQULADHKARS MEMORIAL ALL COMMUNITIES BAHAI WORLD.

REGRENT PASSING HAND CAUSE JOHN FERRABY RECALL LONG SERVICE FAITH BRITISH ISLES CROWNED ELEVATION RANK HAND CAUSE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION BAHAI LITERATURE THROUGH HIS BOOK ALL THINGS MADE NEW. REQUESTING BEFITTING GATHERING MASHRIQULADHKARS MEMORIAL ALL COMMUNITIES BAHAI WORLD.

With Loving Bahá’í greetings,
THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Hand Cause Ferraby dies unexpectedly

The Hand of the Cause John Ferraby passed away suddenly on September 5. The following cablegram was sent by The Universal House of Justice:

Bahá’í News
House of Worship repairs undertaken

Essential repair and maintenance work on the House of Worship in Wilmette, long delayed by the need to expend available funds in winning the teaching and consolidation goals of the Nine Year Plan, has been ordered by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.

Repair of a section of 18 steps on the Linden Avenue side of the Temple was completed in August. The remaining steps encircling the Temple were cleaned in early September to have them match the concrete and stone of the new ones.

Workmen recently completed cleaning and painting the steel frame of the Temple dome; and the metal handrails on the grounds of the House of Worship were also treated to a new coat of paint. A portion of the upper dome was caulked and sealed to make it watertight, and at least ten badly damaged glass panes have been replaced.

This preliminary work is part of a more extensive schedule of repairs that must be undertaken over the next several years to renovate the House of Worship.

Although recent architectural surveys indicate the Temple is structurally sound, some routine repairs which would normally have been undertaken from year to year, were postponed because of the degree to which the financial resources of the American Bahá'í community were committed to winning the world-wide goals of the Nine Year Plan.

Among those repairs that must now be undertaken are the restoration of the concrete apron that serves as a walkway around the perimeter of the Temple, which has settled and cracked in places because of the movement of the earth beneath it; the reupholstering or replacement of chairs in the House of Worship auditorium; the replacement of unstable canvas chairs in Foundation Hall; the rehanging of drapes in the clerestory of the House of Worship; and the painting of the upper-level and the water-damaged ceiling of the Temple auditorium.

October 1973
On April 16, 1973, The Universal House of Justice contributed $20,000 on behalf of the entire Bahá'í world to the projected Temple work. The National Spiritual Assemblies of Canada, Alaska and Hawaii soon followed this lead. Canada pledged $20,000 to the effort during the current year; Hawaii promised $25,000 over a five-year period; and Alaska offered between $1,000 and $2,000 per year, and more if possible.

Many of the needed improvements are the natural consequence of the great attraction the Temple has had for visitors since its dedication in 1953, and the use the facilities have received from the more than three million people who have traveled here. The reupholstering or replacement of chairs in the auditorium, purchased more than two decades ago for approximately $25 each, is one example of this type of repair. Another might be the necessity the large stream of people has created to carpet, and place a ceiling over, the Foundation Hall exhibit area, not only to improve its appearance, but to muffle the noise generated by large groups congregating to view the Bahá'í displays. In 1972 alone the number of visitors exceeded 200,000 people. Between August and September of this year more than 75,000 people made the journey to Wilmette to see the Temple and its surroundings.

Now that the Nine Year Plan has been accomplished the National Spiritual Assembly feels the stage has been reached in which the care of Bahá'í properties in the United States must be placed on a sound financial basis. To begin to undertake the necessary repairs, and to allow for money to be set aside to provide a general maintenance fund for systematic future use, a larger share of the 1973 US national budget has been allocated to the care and maintenance of Bahá'í properties, particularly those at the National Center. Of the total $2.5 million US budget, $576,000 has been set aside for Bahá'í properties. A substantial portion of this allocation has been earmarked for improvements on the Temple itself.

*Bahá'í News*
Emogene Hoagg, an exemplary pioneer

By Amine De Mille

Emogene Hoagg was a pioneer before the term was coined. She was a traveling teacher in days when travel was far more expensive and uncomfortable and difficult than now. She was fortunate to have wealth to finance those long sea voyages, and to allow her to give her full time to teaching; to make pilgrimage after pilgrimage to the Holy Land, when it was almost a necessity to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá for information, due to the lack of translations of the Tablets and Books of Bahá'u'lláh.

Emogene Martin, at twenty, married a well-to-do engineer, John Ketchie Hoagg, son of a New York Dutchman, who had made a fortune in flour mills. By the winter of 1944, when she came to spend nine months with us in Chevy Chase, Maryland, she had been traveling for 'Abdu'l-Bahá for forty-seven years. Now, a widow whose health was broken by repeated heart attacks and bouts with pneumonia, whose fortune was almost expended, she retained a mind and spirit so vibrant and alert that it was difficult to believe she was seventy-seven years old.

Her eyes fascinated me. They were of a gemlike blue, that flashed with brilliance. I came to believe that their brilliance was due to a half century's contemplation of the Holy Face of her beloved Master, whom she had visited so many times in both 'Akká and Haifa; and to her keen and creative intellect as it applied itself to her monumental compilation, "The Three Conditions of Existence: Servitude, Prophethood and Deity"—that fruit of her life, the labor of love upon which she labored for many years, sick or well, finishing it only a few days before her death. After her passing I offered to type this manuscript and it was mailed to me in a bulky leather satchel. It took me four years to type it, check the thousands of scriptural references with the texts, and correct all four copies.

During the time she was with us, Emogene was often ill. As she lay on her pillows, frail and white, her writing materials put away for a while, I would sit in her room and ask her about her life, and take notes.

By birth and temperament, Emogene Hoagg was endowed with the qualities that made her one of the great Bahá'í teachers. Her maternal ancestor, John Drew, migrated to the American Colonies from England on the Mayflower; her grandfather, George Zacharias Hodges and his wife, Eliza, left their comfortable Boston home to settle in the frontier state of Virginia, where he became a Colonel in the southern army. Her father, a medical doctor, left Nashville in 1848, during the gold rush, to make the long sea voyage around the Horn to California. He never returned East. He married Maria Frances Hodges, and settled in a little mining town called Copperopolis, where Emogene was born September 27, 1869.

She was religious from childhood, she told me, although her parents had no church affiliation, a most unusual independence in those days of orthodox conformity. There were two churches in town, the Catholic and the Congregationalist. She joined the latter, attended regularly, and played the piano for the services.

As she grew older, her faith underwent a change. Disturbing questions began presenting themselves to her mind as she sat through the long sermons on Sunday mornings. Why did the good God of all men love only Christians? This did not seem right or just since He had created all of the other people too. Although she continued to attend church as usual, her faith was shaken by these inner promptings, and she began thinking of herself as an agnostic.

At eighteen, she went away to school to San Francisco, where she entered the Irving Institute, a fashionable seminary for young ladies. She studied voice and languages, both of which she continued through private lessons after her marriage. She became quite a linguist during her later Bahá'í travels, speaking and writing Italian, French, German, Spanish and even Persian. She translated Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Hidden Words into Italian; helped with the translation of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá into German; and assisted with the French edition of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era.

After several years of childless marriage, Emogene
In a time when it was difficult to know the true Teachings in depth because of the absence of printed literature, the believers were dependent upon word-of-mouth instructions from the pilgrims.

persuaded her husband to allow her to accompany a family friend to Milan, and to continue her voice studies in Italy for a year. It was upon her return home in 1898, while on a visit to Mrs. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the wife of Senator George Hearst, in Pleasanton, California, that Emogene found the answers to all her early religious questionings, and the Cause that directed her every thought and activity for the rest of her life. Lua and Edward Gettsinger were also guests in the home, and it was through them that she learned of the coming of the new Messenger for this Day, and of His explanations of all the contradictions and perplexing spiritual problems that had beset her in her teens. She was one of the fortunate souls, she told me, who could recognize the truth instantly and, accepting it wholly, never again be troubled by doubts.

In a time when it was difficult to know the true Teachings in depth because of the absence of printed literature, the believers were dependent upon word-of-mouth instructions from the pilgrims. In the Holy Land. Many misconceptions and half-truths were circulated, sometimes unintentionally, causing great divisions and crises among the tiny American communities.

Before her first pilgrimage Emogene was caught in the middle of one of these tempests, prompted by the disobedience of the Syrian doctor Ibrahim Khayr‘ullāh, who came to Chicago in 1894 to lecture on the Faith. Khayr‘ullāh was a dynamic speaker, a magnetic personality, and he was able to attract many seekers. Emogene heard of his fascinating expositions on the return of Christ and went to Chicago to attend them.

In his lectures Dr. Khayr‘ullāh called ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the Reincarnation of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of reincarnation was very popular, particularly among the Theosophists who attended his classes. He hoped to make Bahá’ís of these people by incorporating their doctrines into his talks, although he was warned by the other Bahá’ís, as well as by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to stop teaching this erroneous theory. Instead of altering his approach, he wrote a book called Babu‘l-Din, further elaborating his doctrine. Finally, he determined to take his book to ‘Akka, hoping to persuade ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to endorse it. In 1898 he was invited by Mrs. Hearst to join her party on pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

When he returned to Chicago, his book rejected and under instructions to discontinue his teaching, he turned away from the Faith, taking others with him. It was a time of sifting. The faithful, who remained unshaken, became the nucleus of the true believers in America.

Emogene, whose faith was unshaken, rounded out the middle of the group and became a student of the most erudite of her generation.

The Guardian called her, “the most erudite of her generation.”

would instruct her in the Bible and the Bahá’í interpretation of this Holy Book. Upon arrival at Port Said she began her lessons with the teacher whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá loved and admired so dearly that He entrusted him with the instruction of many of the infant communities of the West. She met with him twice a day for a month. Her studies were carried on through interpreters.

“...It was not without difficulty that I got the explanation,” she later wrote. “Sometimes Nur‘ullāh Effendi would give me the meaning in Italian, and at other times Ahmad Yazdī Effendi would translate into French. Then I would put their words into English. After about two weeks Anton Effendi Haddād was sent to Port Said, and he translated directly into English.” (The Bahá’í World, Vol. X, p. 520.)

These lessons set the pattern for all her future service in the Faith. She became henceforth a student of the Holy Scriptures, not only of the Bahá’í and Judeo-Christian Dispensations, but also of the other world religions so little known in the West at that time. So faithful was she in her studies that the Guardian later called her “the most erudite of her generation.”

Returning to Europe from Port Said in February 1901, she stayed for a short while in Paris. She told us of one day spent with the friends in the apartment of Marie Hopper. It was decided to meet for a whole day of prayer and chanting the Greatest Name ninety-five times ninety-five. When she arrived, she found a curtain hung in the middle of the room, the women seated on one side and the men on the other. Just why the people of the New Day should want to perpetuate the old Eastern
Teaching during those first years was slow. It was generally felt that meetings should be made very sacred, so the Faith would not become one of the 'isms'.

custom of segregation of the sexes Emogene could not fathom, but being a newcomer she quietly took her seat and began to pray. When recounting this story Emogene laughed on remembering that the chanting was interrupted at noon for lunch.

But soon she was filled with the desire to see her family and share with the friends in America her great experiences in the Holy Land. What was her joy on the steamer homeward bound to find Lua Getsinger's name on the passenger list. They had a delightful trip together and many heard of the coming of the Messenger of the New Age.

When she landed in New York, she learned that Mirzá Abu’l-Fażl ‘Alí had been sent to America to teach and was at Green Acre, the estate near Eliot, Maine, which Miss Sarah Farmer had that year converted into a new kind of institution based on the Bahá’í Message. He had been sent to counteract the harm done by Dr. Khayr’u’lláh. With her friend, Helen Cole, she spent some time at Green Acre before crossing the continent.

Back in San Francisco she found a group of the friends living in the home of Mrs. Helen S. Goodall and her daughter, Ella Cooper, in Oakland. Under her tutelage, regular weekly classes were established. Later, when the Goodalls went on pilgrimage, Emogene conducted these in her own home, adding a second weekly meeting for deeper study.

Teaching during those first years was slow. It was generally felt that meetings should be made very sacred, so the Faith would not become one of the ‘isms’ flowering profusely in America at the turn of the century. The Message was spread guardedly by word of mouth. Publicity was considered worldly and even dangerous. The fanatical and prejudiced shunned the Bahá’ís, refusing to contemplate such revolutionary, even sacrilegious ideas, and associate with these socially unacceptable people. Although in the Western Hemisphere the believers were not physically harmed, nor was their property pillaged and confiscated as in the East, yet they endured, as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had predicted, a mental and emotional torture and a social ostracism. Emogene was fortunate that her mother, sister and brother-in-law joined the Faith, but there is no record that her husband ever became a Bahá’í.

In the absence of Mrs. Goodall in November of 1907, Emogene represented California at a consultation meeting in the home of Mrs. Corinne True in Chicago. Nine communities responded to the call for the purpose of initiating the Bahá’í Temple work. Mrs. True has recorded: “Emogene’s flaming spirit of devotion was one of the pioneer pillars to accomplish that great step in the progress of the Faith in this country.”

In 1912, during the great event of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s American tour Emogene was with Him as often and for as long a period of time as she could manage. She begged Him to include California in His itinerary and she felt that it was she who finally persuaded Him to make the trip long, tired and arduous. When he was there she served Him in every capacity within her power and called herself His “bell boy”. She was with Him for His three-week visit to the beautiful mountain summer resort in Dublin, New Hampshire, at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Parsons. From there she followed Him to Green Acre where He spent much of His time “countering the effects of the eccentric ideas being disseminated by various pseudo-mystics and cranks who were attracted to the free platform provided there.”

Upon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s return to the Middle East she wrote almost at once for permission to follow. When permission arrived she was ill and bedridden, but insisted on starting the next month. In June nonetheless. Her husband refused to allow her to travel alone, so she invited a friend to accompany her, and they set out for Alexandria, Egypt, where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His secretaries had rented a house for a period of rest before proceeding to the Holy Land. When Emogene arrived, she was still weak and ill. She asked the Master if He would be good enough to give her a remedy. He sent her two baked apples, with instructions to eat them at once. She did; seeds and all. Then she went to bed and slept soundly. The next morning she was quite well.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Himself weary and depleted from His two years in Europe and America, lingered in Egypt trying to build up His strength before facing the accumulated work awaiting Him at home. This was seemingly impossible, as pilgrims arrived constantly and had to be accommodated and entertained. He was never alone or free from demands. He could never refuse one who came to Him for whatever purpose. When He finally responded to the pleas of His own family in Haifa to return, He sent Emogene and two or three other pilgrims ahead to help prepare for His arrival ten days later. Of this event, Emogene has written: “In ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s house there is a very large central room, around which are the other rooms, and in it Persian rugs were spread and tables placed, upon which were fruits and sweets. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s voice was heard as He entered, the moment was intense; and as He passed through to His room, all heads were bowed. In a few moments, He returned to welcome all. He sat in a chair at one end of the room, and most of the believers sat on the floor. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was tired, so remained for a short time, and after a prayer chanted by His daughter Zia Khánum, went to His room.

“Then the ladies vacated so that the men might enter. To see the faces of those sturdy, earnest men—faces that spoke the fervor of their faith, the earnestness and resoluteness of their purposes—was something to remember. I am sure not an eye was dry; old and young, with happiness filling their hearts, could not refrain from expressing their emotions. He welcomed them, and seating Himself on the floor, spoke to them a short time, after which He retired.”

With the Master again in residence, Emogene told us, life commenced again, revolving around its Center who ruled with love. This time Emogene remained a member. I am sure not an eye was dry; old and young, with happiness filling their hearts, could not refrain from expressing their emotions. He welcomed them, and seating Himself on the floor, spoke to them a short time, after which He retired.”

With the Master again in residence, Emogene told us, life commenced again, revolving around its Center who ruled with love. This time Emogene remained a member of the household for nine months. In July 1914, she was sent in the company of a brother of Muniríth Khánum to London on a delicate mission. They were to explain to the English friends that Dr. Aminúlláh Faríd had been cut off from the Faith and was not to be allowed to hold further meetings. This man, who had been in the entourage all through the American tour as translator, had displayed “erratic and damaging behavior ... soliciting of money” against ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s commands, estranging seekers and believers alike from the Cause. Now, he had gone to London without permission to become a leader there.

Emogene was still in London when war broke out in early August. Unable to return to Europe, she joined the other Bahá’í women in Red Cross work until December
Marian Jack attracted people by setting up her easel in the street and drawing portraits.

whose proprietor was a devout Bible student. At Fairbanks and Dawson, they made a few contacts; but in Juneau the doors opened wide. It was during the Christmas holidays and they were invited everywhere; to parties, dinners, and a New Year’s Eve reception given by Governor and Mrs. Riggs. Everywhere they spoke of the Bahá’í Message. That same evening they were joined by Mrs. Georgia Grayson Ralston of San Francisco who stayed with them until they began their homeward journey, sailing February 24 from Vancouver. Recalling those eight months that took her six thousand miles, filled with effort and excitement, Emogene was satisfied that all Alaska had heard the word Bahá’í. There were newspaper stories in every town along the way. As follow-up they wrote to all their contacts, sending literature. In her Alaska travels, Emogene

During the Christmas holidays they were invited to a New Year’s party given by the Governor.

pains in his head, and of his not being able to sleep. To which the doctor replied,

“That is due to old age.”

Then the man grew very angry, and asked how it was possible that a doctor, who had studied for years to learn how to cure people of their ills, had nothing more to say to a patient than that his illness is due to old age.

“And the doctor replied,

‘Your anger, too, is due to old age.’

‘Aga!’ protested one of His daughters who was present, “Emogene doesn’t know anyone in Naples. She will be all alone!”

“God will be with her!” He replied calmly.

Upon her arrival in Naples Emogene found it was all too true. She knew no one. Lonely months passed before an opening presented itself to speak of the Faith. It came in the form of a letter from a member of the famous Borghese family of Rome, inviting her to come to that city and hold a meeting. This contact had been made by a mutual friend, and proved of great importance to the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh in Italy. Signora Borghese arranged for an evening in her own home, an ancestral palace, to which she invited about twenty guests during the dancing and intermissions. At Tenana, a Chinese restaurant owner became so enthusiastic that he began passing out pamphlets to all his customers, saying, “This is very good! You read! Do you lot of good!”

In Anchorage, Emogene spoke at the Women’s Club, the City Club, before the Pioneers, at the movie theater, and in the High School Auditorium. In Sitka she and Marian attended a masked ball, interesting a number of the guests during the dancing and intermissions. At Wrangell, their lecture hall was Atta’s Barber Shop, 

when Mrs. Thornberg Cropper advised her to cross the Channel and join Lady Blomfield in Paris, where she was working at the American Hospital. By Christmas, she was back in Milan helping in war work. But under the strain of poor food and overwork her health again broke and she decided to return to America. There, in her home in San Francisco, she settled down for three years. When her husband passed away in 1918, she sold her home and set out on the travels which ended only with her own death in 1945.

‘Aba’l-Baha’s Tablets of the Divine Plan were unveiled at the National Convention of 1919. In the preface to the printed Tablets Horace Holley wrote: “The most notable responses made to these Tablets were the unique services of Martha Root in Latin America, and by Mrs. H. Emogene Hoagg and Marian Jack in Alaska.”

With the Canadian artist from the Province of New Brunswick, Marian Elizabeth Jack, Emogene sailed for Alaska in July 1919. This was to be the first extensive trip by Bahá’ís to that vast country, that spacious territory, as it was described by ‘Aba’l-Baha (Tablets of the Divine Plan, p. 9) They arrived in Nome on June 26 and began to plant seeds. A long leisurely trip up the Yukon aboard the “Julia B” followed. Sometimes, the little steamer made only one mile an hour, but everywhere they pulled up, even for a few minutes, the two women would hop ashore and leave pamphlets with as many people as they could speak to. If the stop were long enough, they would go into the shops, visit the hotels and lodge halls, the movie theaters and restaurants. At Tenana, a Chinese restaurant owner became so enthusiastic that he began passing out pamphlets to all his customers, saying, “This is very good! You read! Do you lot of good!”

Marian Jack attracted people by setting up her easel in the street and drawing portraits.
Arriving there she found a room full of men only. The Count's mother came in to greet her, but did not remain. This group was made up primarily of socialists, who displayed marked interest. From this lecture a follow-up materialized when Emogene was given the address in Naples of General Piola Caselli, who extended another invitation for a meeting in his sister's home. Signora Orlando invited twenty-five or thirty of her friends to hear about the new religion. So, in a short while, the Message had been delivered to three widely different strata of Italian society: the old Catholic aristocracy, the new army of intellectuals with army connections, and the social-idealists.

Soon, a call came to speak at a center for University students in Naples from which she formed a weekly study class at her hotel. Other openings came in Milan and Torino and a few people accepted the Bahá’í Faith. In Milan, Torino, on November 28, 1921, that she received the cable from the Greatest Holy Leaf, "The Master has passed away."

Broken-hearted, she cabled for permission to go to Haifa. It was granted. As the funeral took place immediately she was not there in time, but arrived before Shoghi Effendi, accompanied by his sister and Lady Blomfield, arrived from England.

In Haifa grief and confusion overwhelmed the household. "It was terrible to go to Haifa and not see 'Abdu'l-Bahá there," Emogene later told us. "He had been the law that pervaded every decision, every act of family and friends. His daily habits were the pattern around which their lives were woven. It was everyone's love for Him that made this possible, and kept the routine on its orbit."

In the words of Shoghi Effendi and Lady Blomfield:

"The eyes that had always looked out with loving-kindness upon humanity, whether friends or foes, were now closed. The hands that had ever been stretched forth to give alms to the poor and the needy, the halt and the maimed, the blind, the orphan and the widow, had now finished their labor. The feet that, with untiring zeal, had gone upon the ceaseless errands of the Lord of Compassion were now at rest. The hands that had ever been stretched for anything; but since then, have been very busy helping in the translation of some important Tablets ... Lady Blomfield is here, and is now compiling an account of the few days prior to the Beloved's departure, of the cortege up the mountain to the Tomb of 'Abdu'l-Bahá."

In a letter describing this time, Emogene wrote:

"For the first week after getting here, I had no head to use for anything; but since then, have been very busy in the translation of some important Tablets. Lady Blomfield is here, and is now compiling an accurate account of the few days prior to the Beloved's departure, of the cortege up the mountain to the Tomb of the Báb, and the fifth, ninth and fortieth days after the ascension."

Shoghi Effendi was there by this time and, though weak and ill with grief, restored order and purpose to their lives. I find in my notes:

"For the public reading of the Will and Testament, which took place on the fortieth day after the passing, notice was sent to the surrounding countries; people came from Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, America, England, Germany, and Persia. At least a hundred men of the Cause arrived. The house was got ready. Rugs were put on the floor, flowers decorated the rooms and halls, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's picture was hung."

On the day appointed, January 7, 1922, the Bahá'ís assembled in the home of the Master. Among them, seated in the central hall, were five or six American and English women, Emogene among them. The oriental women sat in a side room out of sight, but near enough to hear.

"As 'Abdu'l-Bahá's secretary read the Will, sounds of sobbing were heard. The impact was tremendous. Emphasis had been placed on the suffering that had been endured because of breakers of the Covenant."

"All present accepted the terms of the Will appointing Shoghi Effendi Guardian. There seemed to be no dissenting voice. The family and the old believers alike accepted this young man of twenty-four as their leader and the Head of the Universal House of Justice, because it was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's wish: 'The one who opposes him verily, he opposes God.'"

The reading of the Will over, the visitors and pilgrims returned to their homes, leaving the young Guardian alone to administer the world-wide affairs of the infant Faith of God.

Shortly, the Guardian asked Emogene and other seasoned teachers and servants of the Cause to come to Haifa to confer with him. Among them were Montford Mills and Roy Wilhelm from America, Laura and Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney from France, Consul and Alice Schwarz from Germany, and Major Tudor Pole, Lady Blomfield and Ethel J. Rosenberg from England. Emogene stayed on as long as she felt she was needed. When she left for Europe, one of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's daughters, Munavver Khanum, went with her. Their first stop was Switzerland in the Black Forest of Germany, where they rested and took the baths. Later, they visited Frankfurt, Berlin and Stuttgart.

Back in Italy, where she knew 'Abdu'l-Bahá wanted her to concentrate her teaching, Emogene established herself in Rome and began holding meetings for students. The next year, 1923, she moved to Florence, remaining in that ancient city of art and beauty for three years. Here, she lived in a pension high on one of the lovely hills overlooking the Arno, and it was in the garden of this house that she entertained her guests and gave them the Teachings. Unlike most of the Florentines whose ears were deaf to the call of the New Day one became a devoted believer and co-worker, Signora Campiani, who helped translate Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era and Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá into Italian. Another guest of note was the sister of Archdeacon Townshend of Ireland, and another was the Marquesa Maccarani, an English woman married to an Italian. "It was not the Italians, but the Americans who were the race most ready for the Teachings," she told us, "as it is a hybrid race, with no strong ties to the past as in older nations."

In 1928 she obtained Shoghi Effendi's permission to join Miss Julia Culver in Geneva, Switzerland, where an International Bahá'í Bureau had been established. This office was the center and distributing agency for the entire European community, linking it with Haifa and each other. Messages from Shoghi Effendi reached
At the age of seventy-three she accepted an assignment to Cuba... She learned Spanish and taught there with much effect.

Geneva first and then were dispatched to all European centers. Books and pamphlets published in America reached their destination through the Geneva office. Two paid secretaries were kept busy full time. Miss Culver financed it and Emogene managed it.

The Bureau was housed in an attractive large room on a main city street. A good library was kept well stocked, not only with Bahá'í publications, but with books on philosophy and science, on international affairs and social movements. It was designed to interest the many visitors attached to the more than sixty international organizations with offices in Geneva. The Bahá'ís cultivated this diverse and stimulating international community, exchanging lectures, teas, and receptions throughout the years. A monthly bulletin was published by the Bureau between 1927 and 1935.

In 1931 Emogene was summoned to Haifa by Shoghi Effendi to assist him with typing and preparing the manuscript of The Dawn-breakers, which he had translated into English from the original Persian, and was preparing for publication. Upon completing that arduous and important task she returned to Geneva and remained there until 1935.

A reduction in the budget of the Bahá'í Bureau made it necessary to move the office to smaller quarters and reduce activities. Emogene felt the time had come for her to make a change and find new fields of service. In retrospect she recalled those years in Geneva as most exciting and productive in making the Faith known to people of capacity and influence.

Shoghi Effendi encouraged her to return to America, where he told her she was needed to deepen the believers. He particularly wanted her to teach new believers about the Administrative Order. Under the direction of the National Teaching Committee she traveled through the Middle West and the South. She also visited Montreal where I had the privilege of attending her classes in the late 1930s. She taught at Louheien School, Green Acre, Washington, D.C., and Greenville, South Carolina.

At the age of seventy-three, she accepted an assignment to Cuba under the Inter-American Committee. She learned to speak Spanish and taught in Havana with much effect.

Following the Cuban mission Emogene suffered a heart attack while visiting in California. She was never well again. She stayed in California until 1943, convalescing. But when she heard that one more person was needed to form an Assembly in Greenville, South Carolina, she came South.

In May 1944 she was able to attend the Annual Convention and the Bahá'í Centenary celebration commemorating the birth of the Bahá'í Era. In September she moved to Washington, D.C. and became the guest of Miss Leone Barnitz, from whose home she came to us later that fall.

The entire nine months she was with us she was confined to bed. She got up occasionally for small deepening classes arranged for her. We hoped these classes would help improve her health, as she told us she never felt well except when teaching. Often she was seriously ill with bronchial pneumonia. She would cough her life away for days. We would cable the Guardian for prayers asking for her writing material and books. Propped up on pillows, surrounded by a mountain of books, she would write on her manuscript until the next attack seized her. She must have known her time was short. She let nothing keep her from completing her gift to the literature of the Faith. Nothing else meant anything to her. It was almost impossible to get her to eat. The only dish that interested her was a concoction she had us make up for her breakfast. It started with a piece of whole wheat toast, over which was poured honey, cream and a cup of hot coffee. On top of this mixture went a sliced banana! We had trouble finding bananas in wartime Washington. The friends were asked to search for them in their neighborhood markets. When they found some they would bring them to Emogene as a special treat.

Her power to draw on her inner spiritual strength when necessary was illustrated when one day the little silky cocker spaniel, Sandy, which slept on the foot of her bed and gave her her warming devotion, slipped out the front door and ran away. Emogene upstairs in bed heard the screen slam. She knew she was alone in the house and there was no one to bring him back. So she did the only thing there was to do—got out of bed, put on her clothes, and started off down Kirk Street after him. On my way home from the grocery store I was astonished to meet our bedridden Emogene striding along in perfect control of her muscles, leading Sandy firmly on a leash. We arrived home together. I watched this incredible woman undress, get back into bed, and take up her pen and begin to write. When it became necessary to give her up to the care of others, I was sad. Adeline and Carl Lohse came and bundled her and her few clothes and heavy boxes of books into their car. Five months later, in Charleston, South Carolina, she died. The friend who cared for her during those last months with great love and devotion—Miss Josey Pinson—wrote a touching account of her passing:

"About eight days before she passed, she had a very bad heart attack, and she said then that she knew the end was near. She asked for a pencil and pad and wrote out the following message to be cabled to the Guardian immediately after her passing: 'Last loving greetings, Emogene.'

"After that, she spoke very little of going, but grew weaker each day.

"The joy with which she announced her departure cannot be described in words. I only wish all the friends could have seen her.

"'Come, Josie, quick! I'm going!' She wore an expression of supreme happiness, which she kept until the end. There was a light in her eyes which seemed to envelop her entire face, and all the marks of age seemed to disappear. She lived on for more than an hour after that, and breathed normally.

"Then she called to me in a joyous mood, extended her hand and took mine, 'Goodbye, I'm gone!'

"She passed away in heavenly ecstasy at 9:30 o'clock on the evening of December 15, 1945. I was standing by her when she breathed her last, and it was without a struggle. Her glorious departure overshadows all other sentiments."

The Guardian cabled:

"Deeply grieved passing staunch exemplary pioneer Faith, Emogene Hoagg. Record national, international services unforgettable. Reward Abha Kingdom assured, abundant."
The Great Safari in the Seychelles

By Violette Nakhjavani

Because of the rainy season it suddenly became possible to fit in a visit to the Seychelles islands. During her tour of the Indian Ocean in 1967, when we visited Mauritius, Reunion and Madagascar, this had not been possible, and Amatu'l-Bahá was delighted that we would now make a visit to the believers there. We arrived in this beautiful tropical paradise on November 9 and were received in the V.I.P. lounge by the members of the National Spiritual Assembly and many of the Bahá'ís, who had come on a special bus from all over the island, as well as by one of the dear Auxiliary Board members who had been paying a visit to the Seychelles to assist the friends in winning their goals.

On that same day Amatu'l-Bahá met with the National Spiritual Assembly and approved the program they had planned for her. Before her departure she had another meeting with them, reporting her views on the special interviews she had had, as well as the work in general in the Seychelles.

As one of the Nine Year Plan goals was to secure the incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly, the talks Rúhíyyih Khánum was able to have with high-ranking government officials were undoubtedly of assistance. The remoteness of the Seychelles and the small population of the islands means that everybody of any importance knows everything. Thus the Governor-General Sir Bruce Great-Batch was familiar with both the Faith and the Bahá'ís. He received us in his office in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and particularly asked about drinking and moral conduct. He expressed the wish that the Bahá'í Teachings would spread rapidly throughout the islands and take root in the lives of the people. As the Deputy Governor and Attorney-General are both more concerned with the execution of government decisions, Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke to them in detail about the incorporation, receiving valuable advice about how to go about securing this objective. The Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly was with us at these interviews and thus was able to put these valuable suggestions into action immediately. At the official reception given by the National Assembly for Rúhíyyih Khánum, some of the government officials were present among the eighty or so guests and this again strengthened the favorable impressions for the Faith her official calls had already produced.

As a result of an informal interview with the editor and the reporter of the only news media on the islands, a weekly bulletin, a short but informative article was published. On the occasion of the Birthday of Baha'u'llah, Amatu'l-Bahá had a very good English radio interview. The Bahá'ís have been accorded the right to broadcast on each of the nine Holy Days. The Seychelles, like the island of Mauritius, are bilingual. The native language is a form of Creole French, so generally the people understand French better than English. Later during our stay Amatu'l-Bahá also had a short radio interview in French. All her public talks, and her talks to the believers, were made in French.

The celebration of the Birthday of Baha'u'llah took place in the National Haziratu'l-Quds, where Bahá'ís from many different localities assembled and had the privilege of hearing Rúhíyyih Khánum speak on the life of the Blessed Beauty. She said the purpose of His life and His teachings and His suffering was to establish unity and harmony in this world. This teaching is the core of all His other teachings; we Bahá'ís must be able to mirror forth the realization of this teaching in our lives and particularly in our communities, because if we do not, how can we prove that such an achievement is possible? If we do not hold out this hope to humanity, where else can man find any hope at all? A delicious dinner was then served to all, and the distinguished, active youth who have a singing group called the "Smiling Souls" entertained us with Bahá'í songs they composed, including a song of welcome especially composed for Amatu'l-Bahá. On this happy occasion a review of the goals of the Seychelles islands was given. With great joy the friends learned they had surpassed their locality goals, after the several weeks of intensive teaching and consolidation which took place before we arrived. Everyone's cup was overflowing when the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly shared with the friends an official letter he had just received from the government, giving permission for Bahá'í children throughout the islands to be absent from school on their nine Holy Days. This indeed was a great victory and cause for deep happiness and gratitude to Bahá'u'llah.

Amongst her other public activities Rúhíyyih Khánum addressed the students and staff of the Government Teachers Training College in Mahe on "The Role of Youth in Modern Society". A very interesting
interview was recorded between her and a woman who is a roving reporter for the B.B.C. She had heard about Amatu'l-Bahá and asked to come to her hotel for this interview; she spent a very pleasant hour with us.

The schedule for this visit of Amatu'l-Bahá was quite full. Almost daily she visited different communities, some of which grouped together for joint meetings. In Anse Boileau, in the home of one of the National Assembly members, an old believer who had accepted the Faith many years ago in Tanzania, Rúhíyyih Khánum, in her talk to the friends, spoke on the greatness of the station of the first believers in each country, city or village. She said their spiritual reward is assured if they remain firm in the Cause and serve it with all their hearts.

In Anse Aux Pins, where the only Bahá'í Centre other than the National Hazíratu'l-Quds is located, a small but very devoted group of Bahá'ís received Amatu'l-Bahá and drank from the ocean of wisdom and love. The land for this little Centre was donated by a dedicated local believer who has, like all the other people in these islands, a large family, all of whom are now Bahá'ís. The National Spiritual Assembly built this Centre and behind it is a shop which belongs to this same man. Because of the extreme shortage of land on this small island many offers to rent his shop had come to him, but he steadfastly refused to rent until he had a written agreement with the tenant that liquor would not be sold or served there. He felt this might make it impossible to hold Bahá'í meetings in the Centre. His determination will mean a great deal of financial sacrifice to his family; less food, less education for his children, and less of the little amenities of life. Drinking is a national curse in these islands. To see such devotion to the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's laws, and firmness of conviction and spirituality, is like a bright ray of sunshine in the darkness and corruption of this world. In the course of her talk, Rúhíyyih Khánum pointed out that towards the end of his life our beloved Guardian spoke very often to the pilgrims about the inevitability of the calamities and sufferings foretold in all the Holy Scriptures. He told us that these events were approaching and urged the believers to pioneer and scatter around the world and spread the Message of God for this day to all the people, especially those who inhabit the far islands and countries. She said you must be aware of this and bring up your children in such a way that if such calamities strike humanity in small islands such as the Seychelles we will have strong, devoted and informed Bahá'ís to carry on the work of the Faith. A time may come when Bahá'ís such as these will carry the teachings they have preserved and studied and treasured back to the Western World and the centers of modern civilization which have been ravaged and destroyed.

The Seychelles are an archipelago in the Indian Ocean, between the fourth and tenth parallels. The largest island is Mahé, upon which is situated the capital

*Rúhíyyih Khánum, Violette Nakhjavani and Shanta Murday, Board member for the Indian Ocean area, with members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Seychelles.*
city Victoria. Our three nights' stay on the small island of Praslin was a most enjoyable part of our trip, however, for in addition to meetings with the very devoted and active Baha'i community there, we visited the famous "Valee de Mai" where the unique coco de mer palm grows. This is the only place in the world where this ancient and unusual tree grows, except for a very few isolated specimens on neighboring islands. A forest of almost 4000 palms was able to flourish because the islands were uninhabited until 200 years ago. The two-lobed fruit of the coco de mer, suggesting a double coconut, is among the largest known, and takes almost ten years to ripen. This palm forest is very strictly guarded by the government as once destroyed it can never be replaced; it is one of the botanical wonders of the world. The senior ranger of this valley was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly so we were privileged to receive a very enjoyable guided tour of this "Garden of Eden". On arrival at the tiny air field Amatu'l-Baha was met by the believers from three different communities where the Faith was established and we all proceeded to our little hotel where Amatu'l-Baha spoke briefly to the friends and was cordially and lovingly welcomed. The following day the Bahais from all over the island gathered in Baie Sainte Anne and though it rained heavily, a good number of non-Bahais attended the meeting. Amatu'l-Baha gave a beautiful introductory presentation of the Faith which was followed by a slide show. Later that night, in the home of our dear forest ranger friend, over 30 Bahais dined together on exotic dishes such as heart of palm salad and delicacies of the sea prepared by a number of the ladies from different communities.

In a heavy downpour the next day we crossed the ocean in a little boat to the tiny island of La Digue where an intensive teaching campaign recently brought in a number of new believers. A group of about 20 Bahais, mostly youth, had come the previous day from Mahé to make arrangements for the public meeting to be held there; an entire building was rented to accommodate them. The day before the meeting they started an around-the-clock devotional session for the success of the teaching work the following day. Amatu'l-Baha spoke on the life of Bahá'u'lláh, His sufferings, His teachings and the effect they have on the lives of people; she told stories of the martyrs as shining examples for us all; she pointed out that the Seychelles islands are the best example of the oneness of mankind because the people are truly a mixture of many races and backgrounds, and live together in unity and harmony, not concerned with each other's race or background.

The last event in Mahé was a very enjoyable dinner party given in Amatu'l-Bahá's honor in a Chinese restaurant, followed by a farewell party at the National Hazíratu'l-Quds where a large number of believers had gathered to bid their beloved Hand of the Cause goodbye. After Ruhiyyih Khánum's words of love and encouragement the "Smiling Souls" once again entertained us, singing their beautiful song of farewell composed for Amatu'l-Baha's departure. The visit to the Seychelles passed far too quickly; we enjoyed every moment in those beautiful islands with the active, devoted and highly promising Baha'i community there.
The 90th anniversary of the first mention of the Bahá’í Faith in America was marked by a special devotional program and lecture at the House of Worship in Wilmette, September 23.

Almost 200 people were present for the commemorative program. A presentation on the significance of the occasion was made by Mrs. Ruth Moffett. This observance concluded a week of special activities sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of Chicago.

Public events in Chicago included:
- a World Peace Day Tea, September 16, at the Chicago Bahá’í Center, 116 South Michigan Avenue,
- an Indian Art Exhibit, September 18, at the Chicago Bahá’í Center,
- an Iranian Night, September 20, at the Bahá’í Center, and
- the presentation of a one-act musical drama, “Journey of the Soul” by a group of Bahá’ís, September 21, at the Fine Arts Building, 410 South Michigan.

The first reference in America to Bahá’u’lláh was made in a speech written by the Reverend Henry H. Jessup, Director of Presbyterian Missionary Operations in Syria, and presented at the September 23, 1893 session of the 17-day Congress of Religions. This Congress, an adjunct of the grand Columbian Exposition, was called to “explore the grounds of fraternal union”, in language, literature, science, art and religion.

More than 4,000 people attended the Congress of Religions, one of the first interfaith gatherings on record. Among the participants, according to a contemporary account, “were men of many tongues, of many lands, of many races, disciples of Christ, of Mohammad, of Buddha, of Brahma, of Confucius, in the name of the common God, for the glorification of the Father.”

“The sight was most remarkable,” that early account continued. “There were strange robes, turbans and tunics, crosses and crescents, flowing hair and tonsured heads . . . the representatives marched down the center aisle, and . . . took their seats in triple rows upon the platform, beneath the waving flags of many nations.”

The speeches on the thirteenth day of the Congress, September 23, dwelt upon the prospect for establishing a brotherhood of man upon the earth. Within this framework, Dr. Jessup, writing on the “Religious Mission of the English Speaking Nations”, quoted the following words of Bahá’u’lláh:

“That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of man should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the ‘Most Great Peace’ shall come.”

“Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.”

The first follower of Bahá’u’lláh in the United States was Mr. Thornton Chase, an insurance broker for the Union Mutual Insurance Company, now located at 175 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago. The first Bahá’í center in the Western world was established in Chicago in 1894.

Chicago has remained an important center for the Bahá’í Faith ever since. A local spiritual assembly was formed in Chicago before 1900. There are now more than 800 local assemblies in the United States, and more than 17,000 in the world.

Bahá’í School

Winter school in the Central Highlands of Peru. The July 1973 school session was attended by Continental Counsellor Ma’r’uf Khamat. This photograph was taken in front of the Bahá’í Center in the village of Chupaco, Huanuco State.
The weekend of May 19 and 20 saw the 13th Annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Colombia in Valledupar, Cesar, located in the northern part of Colombia. Valledupar was chosen as the convention site because of the tremendous receptivity of the people and ease of obtaining permission from city officials. The Faith received publicity on the local radio station both during and after the Convention. An interview was held with Auxiliary Board Member, Habib Rezvani and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly which was broadcast throughout the department (state) of Cesar.

The friends were fortunate to have the presence and guidance of Continental Counsellor for South America, Donald Witzel. Also in attendance were Auxiliary Board members Cecilia Iguaran for the Guajiran Indian zone, Peter McLaren from Venezuela, Maxine Roth and Habib Rezvani both from Colombia. The Convention was held in the home of one of the believers. It was a very humble house with a dirt floor. The family turned it over to the visiting Bahá'ís. They gave up their beds for the delegates who didn't have hammocks and for those who did they offered every rafter in the house.

The many delegates who attended had also made many sacrifices. Some traveled as many as 70 hours over dangerous, high-mountain roads to reach the convention. The sessions had a new spirit which had been missing in past conventions. In part it was the humility and service of our new Bahá'ís friends in Valledupar, also the feelings of gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh for the successful accomplishment of the goals of the Nine Year Plan both in Colombia and throughout the world, and the feelings of admiration and loss for our devoted National Secretary, Luis Montenegro, who died of a heart attack while trying to reach our Bahá'í brothers among the Motilón Indians in the Sierra del Perija mountains to help with the election of the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Early Sunday morning the delegates and others attending the convention went by chartered bus to Codassi to visit the grave and offer prayers for the progress of the soul of our dear friend and brother. It was a very moving experience for everyone.

Upon returning, the consultation began. There were many suggestions from all the delegates and friends to be submitted to our new NSA. Among them were to have the teaching projects with Venezuela and with Ecuador; that small committees be appointed with small jobs to do especially in areas where the LSA is not able to meet regularly (the teaching can go ahead through the committees); many suggestions were made to go teach the remaining Indian Tribes who haven't heard of the Faith, many volunteered to make the often difficult trips to reach these waiting souls.

It seemed the convention ended too soon. Although each went to his own area, we will be united in our plan to reach all of Colombia with the message of Bahá'u'lláh.
A delegation representing the National Spiritual Assembly of Tanzania met with President William Tolbert of Liberia in Dar es Salaam, on July 9. President Tolbert was in the Tanzanian capital to attend a meeting with other African leaders.

Despite her busy schedule the Bahá’í delegation was received by the President. The Bahá’í representatives read a message to the President on behalf of the National Assembly.

At the end of the presentation the President remarked that the message of love is what the world needs today to make it a better place for humanity. He assured the Bahá’ís that the coreligionists in Liberia enjoyed the same rights and privileges as followers of other religions. He said the Bahá’ís in his country were being very successful in spreading their religion. He gave permission for the delegation to inform the Bahá’ís in Liberia of their meeting with the President.

A white ivory carving was presented to President Tolbert on behalf of the National Assembly, as well as a copy of Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era.

The message to the President said in part: “We wish to recall many occasions where the National Bahá’í Community of Liberia has had the privilege of dealing with your government. The favorable response of various authorities in your administration has been a source of gratitude to the rest of the Bahá’í world. The Bahá’í International Community has had the privilege of association with the late Dr. William Tubman, when he visited the Bahá’í Holy places several years ago, in the Holy Land, and secondly during the historic Bahá’í Conference held in your beautiful city of Monrovia in January, 1971.”

A white ivory carving was presented to President Tolbert on behalf of the National Assembly as well as a copy of Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era.

German Convention

The more than 200 Bahá’ís gathered for the German National Convention, at Langenhain, May 19-20, were also celebrating the successful completion of the Nine Year Plan in Germany. The German goals were won in the last days of the Plan.

This Convention marked the fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the National Assembly in Germany.

A special guest of the Convention was Dr. Rai, a member of the National Assembly of Nepal. Dr. Rai traveled to Germany after the International Convention in Haifa to help deepen new believers.

Three-day institute

A three-day Bahá’í Teaching Institute was held July 20-22, in the Tainan Bahá’í Center, sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of Tainan, and co-ordinated by Mrs. Roxanne Gardner, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Taiwan. It was attended by Bahá’ís from different parts of the island, including Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, Kaohsiung, Hualien and Cha-yi.

The Institute was blessed by the timely arrival of beloved Hand of the Cause Mr. Collis Featherstone and Mrs. Featherstone, Miss Elena Marsella, the newly appointed Counsellor for Northeastern Asia, and Mr. Edgar Olson from Guam. Auxiliary Board member Miss Toni Mantel also participated.

The highlight of the occasion was a talk given on the first night by Mr. Featherstone, on the significance of the establishment of the International Teaching Centre at the World Centre. He also shared heartlifting news of the Third International Convention held in Haifa last Ridván.

On the evening of July 21, all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Taiwan gathered in another room of the Tainan Center and consulted with the Hand of the Cause and the Counsellor on the progress of the Faith in Taiwan; and simultaneously, in the main room of the Center, Mrs. Featherstone was relating the remarkable story of the spiritual conquest of the continent of Australia by the devoted pioneers Clara and Hyde Dunn.
Ethiopia

CONTINENTAL COUNSELLOR Mr. Hushang 'Ahdyyith (in white sweater) with friends at conference in Asmara, Ethiopia.

DEEPENING INSTITUTE in Gumato Village, near Awasa, Ethiopia, conducted by Mr. Shayani, a travel-teacher from Madagascar.

Ghana

North East Africa

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Africa in May 1973. From left to right: Mr. Techeste Ahderom, Mr. Gila Michael Bahta, Mr. Jon Butah, Miss Zeude Amanies, Mr. Eshetu Mangesh, Dr. Leo Niederreiter, Mr. Aresayehn Tessema, Mr. Yemany Tekel, and Mr. Mehtzun Tedla.

Thailand

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THAILAND. From left to right standing: Mr. N. Yogachandra (treasurer), Mr. Nasser Jaffri (vice-chairman), Mr. Swai Thongsut, Mr. Boonrod Boonsalee, Mr. Jai Gopal Jand (chairman), Mr. Machakaile Chandran. From left to right seated: Mr. Prasan Phukhaathong, Mr. Son C-hin-kham, Continental Counsellor, Mr. Yan Kee Leong, Auxiliary Board member Mr. Farredoun Missagian, and Mrs. Savita Jand (secretary).

DELEGATES to the tenth annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Thailand, held in Bangkok, May 26-27, 1973. The Convention was attended by a Continental Counsellor and an Auxiliary Board member.
**Student teaching**

The following report is based upon a letter received from a young believer in North Karamoja, Uganda, and appeared in the Uganda National Bahá'í Newsletter.

"The Faith was very neglected at the beginning of the school holidays by the people of this district," the young man said. Before I could say anything to them they had already known that I was a Bahá'í. They left me apart saying, 'You are a devil, be apart from us, we do not need to hear what you are saying...' Some people laughed and some were sorry for me... I said prayers and strengthened my faith...

"On April 20 two boys came to visit me in my fine little hut," he continued. "I was reading. I gave the book to one of them. He read it until he found the word 'Bahá'í.' I just can't describe how the boy threw the book... and he went away without a word... I became filled with a feeling of uselessness and said some prayers from the prayer book. Next morning a boy came and I gave him a book to read. I told him about Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and he became the first Bahá'í on April 23, 1973...

"After that it became easy to spread the Faith," he said. "Now here in Katabok we have 7 new Bahá'ís, and we hope to get more... loving Bahá'ís soon."

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**Interview broadcast**

Radio Bangui, in the Central African Republic, broadcast a thirty-minute interview, June 10, with three members of the National Spiritual Assembly recently returned from the Third International Convention in Haifa.

The interviewer asked questions about the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Holy Land, the system of Bahá'í elections, and the principle of the unity of religions. He was particularly interested in the responses of Mr. Toleque, an Assembly member and citizen of the Central African Republic.

"All the answers were very clear and the program surely must have attracted the attention of many people of different backgrounds," a report by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central and East Africa said.

"It was clearly announced that Bahá'u'lláh is the unifier of all mankind and religions, that He is the Prophet for today, that He is the Father..."

The interview was in addition to a regular Bahá'í broadcast over the official Ugandan station on Sunday mornings.
Travel teaching in Africa

The following report on travel-teaching in Africa is based on material received from the Bahá'í International News Service, Haifa, Israel.

Village Teaching

"In Nairobi there are many young Bahá'ís, both pioneers and Kenyans, and I was happy to take a trip with them to Kikuyu and Gatimu, two villages near Nairobi where teaching work is progressing. This work requires patience as the people are hard to find and often shy, but by the same token they are receptive and many are both literate and serious students of the Faith . . .

"One day was spent in Mombaza, on the coast, with two young Iranian pioneers who are in school there . . . Their spirit of persistence and faith is remarkable . . . Surely the heroism of young Bahá'ís such as these is a great example for Bahá'ís everywhere . . .

Kenyan NSA elected

"During my stay the first National Spiritual Assembly meeting of the new year was held with several newly elected members attending . . . I was asked to conduct a study class on the spirit and functions of the National Spiritual Assembly, using for source material an outline prepared by the Counsellors for that region . . . I was especially impressed with the new African members of the Assembly who, although not experienced with Bahá'í administration, evinced a desire to learn quickly and participate fully . . . The spirit of dignity and courtesy that seems to be a natural quality with these people is obviously a tremendous asset on such a diverse Assembly . . .

Meeting with students

"Three trips were made during my stay to Molepolole, where there is a Bahá'í group in a government high school. Stops were also made in a number of villages over a wide area to the south . . .

"A meeting was held one evening at the high school in Molepolole . . . many of the students listened attentively . . . the Bahá'í chairman had to plead with the students to retire to their dormitories so that school would begin on time the next morning.

Baha'i News
A working holiday in the villages of France

The following report is an early account of the U.S. Summer Youth Project in France. Mrs. Bellows, from Pompano Beach, Florida, has worked with the project there for two consecutive years, this time accompanying six youth on their seven-week teaching adventure. The French project began for the American youth with a training session at Green Acre in late June. They arrived in France, July 4, and with the French youth assigned to the project split into three teams to cover different regions of the republic. One team was moved to Corsica, the site of one of last year’s successful teaching projects.

The only other European country conducting a Summer Youth Project this year was Germany. Two U.S. youth worked there at the request of the German National Spiritual Assembly. By press time there was still no report on that project.

Eight youth also dispatched to Mexico in early July to assist with Baha’i work in that country. Their training session was held in Mexico City. The four girls on the team of eight were taken to Yucatan to assist in deepening the many Mayan women who have enrolled in the Faith over the years. Other participants were stationed in rural village areas in other parts of the country.

U.S. Summer Youth Projects have been conducted for five years. The first teams were sent to Europe in 1971. In 1972 more than 200 American youth were in Europe and Latin America teaching the Baha’i Faith.

By Jene Bellows

Alors! Je commence! The summer campaign for reaching the villagers of France is well under way—with very much success for Baha’u’llah! The three teams, one located in Sens (one hour from Paris—a medieval village with up-dated suburbs, a cathedral dating back many centuries, and each street a candidate for a tourist’s camera), one team in the region near Clermont-Ferrand, and another on the Island of Corsica.

To avoid prolonging suspense—as of the 10th of Au-
and made their plans to come to the summer school which will take place near Marseille after the campaign is finished.

And now Clermont-Ferrand! Actually the team lived in a little village called "Romagnat" near the city of Clermont-Ferrand, in the central region of France—farm country in the Massif Central mountain range. One must drive down narrow streets, no wider than an automobile, twist and turn, and in first gear climb, hoping no one will fill the narrow space to the other direction. After many requests for directions one finds the home of the Bahá'ís in Romagnat, perched high above the valley with a view of Romagnat and Clermont-Ferrand reaching as far as the mountains on the horizon.

The resident Bahá'ís in Romagnat, Mr. and Mme. Azziz Mesbah, have given their home to the team for the summer, insisting that they are the guests there until the campaign is over. Each night their salle (living room) is carpeted wall-to-wall with new believers and "sympathisants." Quite often the team planned a special presentation of the Faith with "Ce n'est que le commencement" in the Mairie of neighboring villages and Clermont-Ferrand. Each day they proclaimed the Faith in the streets, inviting the people to the evening meeting.

On my last day with the team they planned their meetings for that night: a "light deepening" for the new believers, a "deep deepening" for the new-old believers, and a "deep fireside" for everyone. After the film strip depicting the life of the Bab, accompanied by songs and a short explanation of Progressive Revelation and the purposes of the campaign, the team went to their separate meetings, and later, all came together for further discussion. The team has had several unity Feasts, and plans a weekend-long institute soon, with games and role playing as part of the planned learning process.

For the first time in France, the television (regional) gave a report on the Bahá'í Faith. For an entire day the reporters and camera men accompanied the team, asking many questions. It resulted in an accurate report on the "local" news, which covers the region extending to Switzerland. The teams teaching on the street were shown, and a full meeting in the home of the Mesbahs when two Bahá'ís gave a straightforward account of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. The reporters also interviewed a local farmer and his wife, both Catholics and very sympathetic to the Faith. They reported (against the background music of the crowing of roosters) that the Bahá'í Faith brought no contradiction to their beliefs, and that the Bahá'ís were beautiful people filled with love for mankind, working for the much needed unity of all mankind.

The local priest of Romagnat warned his parishioners from his pulpit that the Bahá'ís were fools and should be avoided. But a priest from Clermont-Ferrand fell in love with the youth and brought many "sympathisants" to the meeting nearly every night. He asked questions, agreed with everything and stated that he, too, was a Bahá'í but was unable to leave the Church for many reasons.

And so all goes well in France! The majority of the new believers are youth, with some young families. Many of them declare their belief instantaneously, while others wait, read, ask questions and then declare. They are much the same as youth anywhere, I would guess; concerned for the future, their future, and unable to resist the contagious joy offered by Bahá'u'lláh through His followers. The teams are beautifully organized and united, often wading through tests with their eyes firmly fixed on the world-embracing vision of the future offered to mankind by the Blessed Beauty. Cultural differences amongst the team members have been quickly overcome and all have learned from one another. The uniting force is our love for, and commitment to Bahá'u'lláh. Where else could one find a group such as these American, French, Iranian, and African youth living together in complete harmony, under less than comfortable circumstances; working together 17-18 hours a day, oftentimes fatigued beyond description, yet always united? I've watched their faces as they offer the Message, or describe the bounty of prayer, radiating their joy. Is there any wonder that people are attracted to them?

And so I close this report, sent to you from the little village of Vescovato, high in the mountains of Corsica. My boat docked at 6 AM from Nice. It's Sunday, and the village is filled with people at leisure. The church bells ring intermittently but all the people seem to be sitting here near me, at the little red tables in the shade of the high trees that fill the village square.

Corsica, this year, is the most difficult place for teaching. The Corsicans are tradition bound and isolated in their thoughts as is found very often with island people. They are very friendly. While waiting for the team to come to their little center near the village square, I've talked with many people. After all, I stand out in this village, a stranger—far from the tourist's usual route. In answer to their questions I tell them, "Je suis Bahá'í, aussi. Connaissez-vous les jeunes Bahá'ís françaises et américains?" Always their faces break into smiles and they reply, "Oui, oui" and add "The Bahá'ís are wonderful people, kind and happy." We can't really ask for more. Here on Corsica perhaps we are planting the seeds for a later harvest. With two weeks left in the campaign many Corsicans are close to the Faith—and so this report is far from finished. Who knows what joys await us.

Enoch Olinga Institute

Bahá'í teachers and students in front of the Enoch Olinga Bahá'í Institute in Livingston, Guatemala, northeast of Guatemala City near the Atlantic coast. The Institute is constructed of materials gathered in the jungle, and serves as the regular meeting place for the Bahá'ís of the region.

Baha'i News

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Auxiliary Boards amplified

Being different in Caldera

You have been chosen

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COVER PHOTO

Queen Marie of Roumania (second from left) and her royal family with U. S. Secretary of State Frank Kellog (with cane) and other government officials during the Queen's visit to America in 1926.

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS


DRAWINGS: 4, 14, 15, 21 Dr. David Ruhe; 13 Bill Smith.

CORRECTIONS

On page 15 of the October 1973 issue of Bahá'í News it was incorrectly reported that the 90th anniversary of the first mention of the Bahá'í Faith in the U. S. was celebrated on September 23. It was, in fact, the 80th anniversary that was celebrated.

Bahá'í News is published for circulation among Bahá'ís only by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, as a news organ reporting current activities of the Bahá'í world community. Bahá'í News is edited by an annually appointed Editorial Committee. Material must be received by the twenty-fifth of the second month preceding date of issue. Address: Bahá'í News Editorial Office, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091, U. S. A. Change of address should be reported directly to Membership and Records, National Bahá'í Center, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois. U. S. A. 60091.
Auxiliary Boards’ services amplified

To The Bahá’í Friends,

In order to meet the growing needs of the ever-expanding Bahá’í World Community we have taken two decisions designed to reinforce and extend the services of the Auxiliary Boards.

First, 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.

Secondly, we have decided to take a further step in the development of the institution by giving to each Continental Board of Counsellors the discretion to authorize individual Auxiliary Board members to appoint assistants. Such authorization does not have to be given to all the Auxiliary Board members in a zone nor does the number assigned have to be the same for all Board members; indeed certain Boards of Counsellors may decide that the present circumstances in their zones do not require them to take advantage of this possibility. Such matters are left entirely to the discretion of each Continental Board of Counsellors.

The exact nature of the duties and the duration of the appointment of the assistants is also left to each Continental Board to decide for itself. Their aims should be to activate and encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies, to call the attention of Local Spiritual Assembly members to the importance of holding regular meetings, to encourage local communities to meet for the 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. Appointments may be made for a limited period, such as a year or two, with the possibility of re-appointment. Believers can serve at the same time both as assistants to Auxiliary Board members and on administrative institutions.

It is our prayer at the Sacred Threshold that this new development in the institution of the Auxiliary Boards will lead to an unprecedented strengthening of the Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world.

The Universal House of Justice

7 October, 1973

NUMBERS OF AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS BY ZONES
OCTOBER 1973

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November 1973 / BAHÁ’Í NEWS 1
Nearby to the once opulent, now declined city of Copiapó, capital of the desert province of Atacama, is the coastal mining and fishing town of Caldera. It was between these two cities that the first railway in the hemisphere was built in 1851, during the days when silver mining made this area the heart and soul of Chile. Now the main activity here is the loading of minerals dug from the great and angry desert, one of the most absolute and barren on the earth. During the year Caldera’s population is a meager 3,000 people. But during the summer season as many as 15,000 people take up residence in this forlorn white and ochre bit of landscape, intruding upon the vast precipitous, Pacific coastline. From July 25 until August 2 Chilean Baha’is from the South sojourned here to conduct a teaching and deepening institute.

With the financial support of the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile and the cooperative efforts of the Area Teaching Committee of Atacama and the National Teaching Committee, twenty-seven Baha’is mostly youth, from as far as 1,200 miles away, participated in the nine-day deepening/teaching “toreo”, called “Dare to be Different”. Ten of the youth were sponsored by the National Teaching Committee, as a means of assuring representation from different parts of the country. Two of the ten were Mapuche youth from the southern province of Cautín.

Planning was done months in advance and travel arrangements were made with as much anticipation as possible. The shortage of transportation is one of the many problems facing Chile at this time, especially during the two-week period when schools close for winter vacations.

The first afternoon we broadcast a series of programs over a city-wide loud-speaker system, proclaiming the Faith through word and song. Being a very small town, Caldera has no radio station of its own. Instead, it has a well-planned network of strategically located loudspeakers, which cover all news and other programs broadcast at different times of the day. The two programs that day were meant to invite the public to the outdoor Municipal Stadium that night to hear more about

*The port of Caldera, Chile.*
the Bahá'í Faith. About 150 came to the Stadium and much literature was taken.

After the public proclamation at the stadium the Bahá'ís gathered at the institute grounds for a three-day deepening institute.

This deepening program was developed with two main goals in mind: 1. to launch a fullscale teaching program in the north of Chile, and 2. to give the participants an example of Bahá'í fellowship.

More teaching followed the Deepening Institute. Teams of Bahá'ís set out to cover different parts of town. Some had musical instruments and teaching "carpetas", folders or notebooks which tell about the Faith through pictures, simple designs and some writing, everyone had pamphlets, declaration cards, and abundant zeal. Again, we used the loudspeaker system, and for the first time the Message of the Blessed Beauty was given in the Mapuche language. A public meeting was held at night and, as a consequence, twelve persons were enrolled.

The next day was equally successful. Six people accepted the Bahá'í Faith. The showing of slides of the 1968 Inter-Oceanic Conference in Palermo, Sicily, gave new believers a glimpse of the international character of the Faith.

The third day of teaching took us to Copiapo to test the receptivity there to God's Message. Most of the teaching here took place in the beautiful Central Plaza, and the nearby streets. The four National Spiritual Assembly members present set up an interview with the Alcalde, the mayor, of Copiapo. They received a kind reception. The mayor was presented a copy of Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era. The mayor explained his belief that social change should be accompanied by individual transformation. A similar presentation was made to the Mayor of Caldera the following day.

A few minutes after the meeting with Copiapo's mayor, the Bahá'í concepts of social change and justice upset a group of boys surrounding two Bahá'í youth teaching in the plaza. These youth expressed their views on the existence of social injustice very energetically. They could not agree with the non-political nature of the Bahá'í Faith. They spoke heatedly to the Bahá'í teachers, but soon left to join other comrades.

The rest of the day was pleasant. Twelve more souls accepted the Faith, including two passengers on the bus ride from Copiapo back to Caldera. One passenger could not read or write. This woman and her two young children lived in great poverty in the deserted lands between the two cities. One Bahá'í youth taught her the short obligatory prayer; another gave her a photograph of the young 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a precious gift, as photographs are not abundant in Chile.

That night, during the last public meeting, five more people joined the Bahá'í Faith. One was a youth whose entire family had been Bahá'ís, but who had himself thus far withheld his allegiance. He had been extremely active throughout the project and participated in the street teaching work.

The day was not over. After arriving back in Copiapo, ready to catch our bus to Santiago, the capital, we heard a half-hour program about the Bahá'í Faith broadcast on radio. The personnel at the station had asked if they could tape one of the songs, "Bring Us Together in Unity", to play during other programs. In return they promised us another program anytime we came again to the city!

With only minutes to catch our bus we dashed into the newspaper office. We found the editor extremely busy. He motioned to a typewriter and said, "Go ahead and write the article," then left the room.
From Nairobi to Kabimba

The Great Safari part twenty-two

By Violette Nakhjavani

The last part of this long African Safari started on December 12th when once again Amatu'l-Bahá and I left Nairobi in the now quite famous "Rabbaní African Safari" Land Rover. She invited a young Canadian student who was going to travel and teach in Zaire during his vacation to drive there with us. We arrived in Rwanda—our thirty-first African country—where we stopped two days in the capital, Kigali, so that Amatu'I-Baha could consult with the National Spiritual Assembly about the program for her official visit, which would follow after a month in Zaire.

During this short stop in Kigali Amatu'I-Bahá met with the believers at their Centre. She was shown two buildings that were possible choices for the National Hażratu’l-Quds, one of which had to be quickly purchased to fulfill one of the important remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan. She gave the National Assembly her views; the building she favored was later purchased.

Mr. Oloro Epyeru, one of the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central and East Africa, who had been visiting the friends in Zaire, came to Kigali specially to welcome Amatu'I-Bahá and accompany her on her tour of Kivu Province, in the eastern part of Zaire. Mr. Epyeru, who is a very old and dear friend of ours, and the adopted brother of Amatu'I-Bahá, traveled with us in January 1970 when we started across the continent from Kampala, Uganda, to Fort Lamy in Tchad, so to have him with us once again in Zaire was a great joy.

Zaire, one of the largest countries of Africa, is also one of the dearest to our hearts. During her tour of Africa Amatu'I-Bahá visited Zaire four times in all; first in January 1970, when we crossed the northern part, motoring almost 1,500 miles over some of the roughest roads in the entire continent. The second visit was in January 1972. We entered from the east coast and visited the capital, Kinshasa, and motored almost 3,000 miles through central and southern Zaire, traveling by river boat and over unspeakable roads. On our third visit we motored to the province of Kivu, one of the most beautiful regions of the country, where the loyalty of the people to this Faith is very great. The largest concentration of believers—about 30,000—are scattered throughout this region.

I would like to think that the seed for this abundant harvest was planted during the first year of the Ten Year Crusade; the direct consequence of the
She stressed the importance of preserving the African identity and culture.

On the road to Kabimba in the famous "Rabbani African Safari" vehicle.

devoted labors of Rex and Mary Collison and their much-loved interpreter and co-worker Dunduzu Chizia. All three were Knights of Bahá'u'lláh for the former Belgian colony of Ruanda-Urundi. Heroically, in the face of many handicaps and adversities, they taught the Faith to a handful of Congolese, who later carried the Message to their native villages across the border, spreading it far and wide with depth and understanding. Despite many years of cruel civil war, tribal bloodshed and opposition from Christian missionaries, these devoted and exemplary believers not only remained firm, but spread the Faith deeper into the heart of their country.

In this region alone there are now more than 600 Local Spiritual Assemblies and thousands of centers. The deepening and teaching task is gigantic and there is a constant need for more teachers and pioneers. We have not been able to fathom why the people of Zaire are so spiritually outstanding. It is not a tribal characteristic, because their superior spiritual receptivity to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is evident throughout the entire country, among different tribes, and this innate receptivity has evidently drawn to them the repeated mercy and blessings of Bahá'u'lláh. Although the country did experience the bounty of having Shoghi Effendi travel through the land in 1940, and of having Amatu'l-Bahá visit there on four different occasions.

On December 19, 1972 we arrived in the beautiful city of Bukavu, the capital of Kivu Province, located at the south end of Lake Kivu, and surrounded by mountains. Bukavu has a cool and lovely climate, which makes it an ideal resort town. One very dear friend, Mrs. Ola Pawlowska, a Board member who traveled with us last year through the central and southern parts of Zaire, lives in Bukavu. She recently moved into a nice one-room apartment, which she most lovingly and thoughtfully vacated so that Amatu'l-Bahá could have more rest and quiet during her stay. She herself moved back into the overcrowded Bahá'í Centre.

The love and harmony among the pioneers, the three Persian traveling teachers living and conducting study courses in the Bahá'í Centre, and the African believers, created an atmosphere of such joy in the whole area that our hearts were uplifted, and we wondered why the friends so often deny themselves, through backbiting, criticism, inharmony and bickering, the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh. The sensitive African feels these spiritual deficiencies even more acutely than other people, and when he sees this true and sincere love and unity, he is drawn into, and becomes a natural part of the Faith. After consultation between Amatu'l-Bahá and Mr. Epyeru, Mrs. Pawlowska, and the Teaching Committee, a tour was planned which took her to the southern area as far as Fizi, and to the north as far as Goma. Unfortunately, because of heavy rains, the only bridge to the south of the Fizi region was down, and to our great disappointment, we were not able to visit the majority of the Bahá'ís who lived in that area and whom we had hoped for so long to meet.

In Bukavu, at the time Amatu'l-Bahá had her radio interview, a very fruitful press conference was also held, at which there was a long and open discussion on the Faith; this was broadcast later that evening, and a beautiful article appeared in the regional newspaper, JUA. In this interview, Rúhíyyih Khánum stressed two points very strongly, which captured the attention of many people. A week later we heard through a friend that President Mobutu had commented to him on it and said he wished to meet Amatu'l-Bahá, as he felt the same way she did. One point was the importance of preserving the African identity and culture, fostering it and being proud of it; the second, the cardinal teaching of Bahá'u'lláh on obedience to government. She pointed out that although the Message of Bahá'u'lláh is the message of love and peace and we abhor war, there is one thing we hate even more than war and that is anarchy and civil war.

On the 21st of December Rúhíyyih Khánum was received by the Mayor of Bukavu, a most handsome, cultivated, well-dressed and charming young man. During the last days of her stay she was received by the governor of the region, N'Debo A Kanda Di Ne Nkeza; he knew of the Faith from Kinshasa, where he had met one of the pioneers, and he spoke very warmly about it. Because it was the Christmas season, most of our tour was delayed until these festivities were over. In Zaire, as in most parts of the world, these celebra-
tions are characterized by an excess of drinking and brawling.

The day before Christmas we were able to visit the Baha'is and their friends in the town of Kabare. The Faith had been recently introduced there, and the believers were all very new. About 70 people gathered in the town's social center to welcome Amatu'l-Bahá.

In her talk she said, "Yesterday I watched a very small bird sitting on the water. As it started moving, even though it was an extremely small bird, it left in its wake a deep impression and for a long time I could see this wide mark it had left on the water. The Word of God is very much like that. We who carry it are like that small and insignificant bird, but the Word uttered by us has such power that it will leave a deep and everlasting impression in the hearts of our hearers." A new Baha'i asked, "How can I protect myself from sinning? I love this Faith, I have just accepted it, but I want to know how I can live without sin?" Amatu'l-Bahá replied, "The nature of man is such that we always commit sin, different degrees of sin, but always we are sinners. Only the Manifestations of God in this world are free from sin. However, the purpose of the appearance of these Divine Beings is to teach us how to improve ourselves and under Their guidance we learn to polish our characters and our hearts and thus to sin less."

In the afternoon the dear Baha'is in Walungu were very disappointed and unhappy because we had to cancel our meeting. It was to be held in a room next to the public and the people were already too inebriated to keep quiet. There was nowhere else we could meet. However, a few days later these dear friends came to the Baha'i Centre in Bukavu, about 30 kilometers away, to hear and meet Amatu'l-Bahá. Although one meeting with the Baha'is of Bukavu had already been held on our arrival, a second official welcome was held at the Baha'i Centre after the holidays were over, which over 50 believers attended. The formal letter of welcome, read aloud by the Chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly, who was also a member of the National Spiritual Assembly and one of the oldest believers in Bukavu, is so touching that I would like to quote it in full: Very dear Mother Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Hand of the Cause. In the name of the Local Spiritual Assembly and the groups about Bukavu I express our intense joy at welcoming you. You are now in the Kivu area which has embraced with no reservations the Baha'í Faith as a result of the organization so firmly laid down by our deeply regretted and much loved Guardian Shoghi Effendi who called upon pioneers to voluntarily leave their own countries and go sow the seeds of the teachings of this Holy Cause in the hearts of the human race. The community once more thanks the pioneers for responding to this appeal. They left their families, their possessions, their jobs in order to propagate the Faith, and the House of Justice is following the same road laid down by our Guardian. Amatu'l-Bahá then spoke on the love of God, quoting the Words of Baha'u'llah: "I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life." She spoke of the answer of our beloved Guardian to a Baha'i who was unhappy in his local community and did not particularly like his fellow Baha'is. Shoghi Effendi said that in families often the children were very different and two brothers might not love each other at all. But if they loved their father, for his sake, they would make an effort to love each other, because they would know that it was his wish. Our love for Baha'u'llah should help us to love our fellow Baha'is, because it is His wish. She said capacity attracts; it is the spiritual capacity of the people of this country which has attracted the grace and the mercy of God and the blessing of the visit of Shoghi Effendi.

A young man asked, "As we live in age when material needs make such demands on us, how can we combine the spiritual values with these material demands?" Amatu'l-Bahá said that in the Teachings of Baha'u'llah we read that God has created all things for man and permitted us to partake of all the joy and pleasures of life; the only thing which God has reserved for Himself are the hearts of men. As long as we preserve our hearts for God and do not lose them to this world and its needs, we are safe and protected and can enjoy every benefit and comfort that this world gives us, she said. But we must be watchful and alert so that the love of this

The nature of man is such that we always commit sin.
It takes courage to be among the first to accept the Baha’i Faith.

Amatu’l-Baha' being greeted by the residents of the village of Sanga, Kivu Province, Zaire.

world and its comforts does not surpass our love of God. If we are able to keep a balance, then we are safe and protected.

On the 28th of December we left Bukavu and went to south of Kivu for four days. The first meeting was in the village of Luvungi. On the main road, where the village road began, several arches were erected, decorated with leaves and flowers. A man stood holding a long stick decorated with flowers, on the end of which a beautiful copy of the Greatest Name was mounted.

With singing and dancing, Amatu’l-Baha' was accompanied through the village to the largest building, the village court and community center, which had been reserved for the meeting. As this was the cotton harvesting season, one side of this hall was piled high with cotton balls which made very comfortable seats. Some non-Baha'is, and more than 550 Baha'is attended this meeting. We were told the people of this area were among the singers in Zaire, a country full of good singers.

Amatu’l-Baha' quoted the words of Saint Paul, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." She said this applies to mankind today. Baha'u'llah tells us that man has entered the stage of maturity. Modern inventions and science have changed our lives. The world we live in today is different from the world of our grandfathers. We must now learn to live like mature men and put away childish ideas.

On the afternoon of the same day, in another village called Sanga, more than 500 Baha'is received and welcomed Amatu’l-Baha'. She spoke on the importance of living a Baha'i life, and showing in our deeds and characters that we are truly the spiritual descendants of the early heroes and martyrs of our Faith. To be amongst the first ones to recognize and accept the Faith of God is a great bounty and privilege because it requires courage, she said. It was dark by the time we left this village and drove to the little township of Kavimvira, where we spent the night.

The following day in Kavimvira, more than 800 believers from many villages gathered to welcome Amatu’l-Baha'. Nineteen believers had walked long distances from the mountain villages to present at this meeting. The friends had decorated the area under huge mango trees with flowers tied to strings and stretched from branch to branch. Unfortunately, very strong winds began to blow in from Lake Tanganyika and we were obliged to move the meeting to a small unfinished building nearby. To our surprise we saw that the dear friends had foreseen such an emergency and had also decorated this building and its entrance to make sure that their beloved guest would sit under flowers wherever the meeting might be held.

The courtesy and sincere love of these believers moved Amatu’l-Baha very deeply. She spoke of the life of Baha'u'llah. She said, "When I look at your shining, smiling faces gazing at me with so much love, I cannot help but remember the Words of Baha'u'llah, uttered with such joy when He was in Baghdad, when He announced to the believers that the Cause of God had now reached Karkuk. Karkuk was about 30 kilometres from Baghdad, yet the fact that the Message of God had reached there rejoiced His heart. How happy then He must be now to see all of you in this meeting."

The believers in this area, and in Fizi to the south, have suffered a great deal since 1965, when a civil war began. Many entirely innocent people suffered in the tribal wars, despite their lack of involvement in the contested issues. For years, many of them were hidden in the forest. Even now they suffer from time to time at the hands of rebels who attack villages in search of food and kill whoever gets in their way. A dear Baha'i had just lost his eight year old son. The boy was shot dead when a band of rebels attacked the village during the father's absence. In addition, both the man's wife and his old mother were injured.

Amatu’l-Baha's interpreter during this whole period in Kivu was a young man, consecrated to the service of the Faith; a deep, well-informed Baha'i, and the secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee. When a man asked why Baha'u'llah had appeared in the world, and had He come to supplant Jesus Christ, Amatu’l-Baha' told this young man, her interpreter, to answer the question himself, in his own language, as he knew the answer just as well as she did. His reply was short, logical, and absolutely convincing.

He said, "Do you have a brother?"

"Yes," the man said.
"Is he younger or older than you?" "Younger." "When your brother was born did he make you any less than you are; did he take your place in life; did he reduce you in any way?" "No," the man said. "It is the same way with Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh," our young Bábí said. "They came to this world at different times, each has His own place and position, neither takes anything away from the other."

Because our little hotel was very noisy we spent the next three nights in a Catholic mission school in the town of Uvira, where the nuns very kindly took us in. It was one of the most interesting places we slept in during our years of traveling in Africa. As it was the Christmas holidays, the girls were all away and we were given a huge dormitory with 68 beds all to ourselves. It was very eerie at night with bats flying in and out. What was interesting to us was the fact that on New Year's Eve 1972, we dined with the Catholic Bishop in Mweka, in Kasai, central Zaire. On New Year's Eve 1973 we dined with the Italian Catholic Sisters in Uvira, in the eastern province of Zaire. In many parts of the country, the missions, particularly the Catholic missions, are the only place one can spend the night. There are no hotels and usually the homes of the believers are too small and overcrowded to enable them to take in guests. We were surprised to find so many of these Catholic missionaries friendly towards the Faith and very tolerant as a whole.

In the village of Kabimba, where the friends had recently built a fine new Centre and had decorated it with beautiful arches of flowers to welcome Amatu'l-Bahá, more than 400 believers listened to her word of encouragement. She praised their building and told them a mud building is a practical, cool and economic building; it is not a sign of poverty or ignorance, as you sometimes think it is. Nor are these buildings confined to Africa; in the shole of Asia and South America, she said, almost all buildings are entirely built with mud. Mud is an ancient, convenient and universal building material. Many Persian Bahá'í villagers live in mud houses too, she said. She told them that mud is an excellent material for hot climates because it is always cool; and the thatched roofs are the best ones, because they do not make any noise during the torrential rains, the way tin roofs do. As she spoke these words the beautiful faces of her listeners broke into smiles of self-esteem and confidence.

Rúhíyyih Khánum said that if we look at our lives we see that our health, our children, the food we eat, the air we breathe, are all bounties of Almighty God. Without His bounty, His mercy and His grace we would not exist even for a moment. With all His continuous bounties, what do we do for God? Whatever we do in service to Him and love for Him is like a small grain brought to the feet of the King by a lowly ant, she said. Yet He not only accepts our humble offering, but abundantly blesses us. The beautiful building built in the name of Bahá'u'lláh was part of their lives spent in His service. If we look at our daily lives, we realize how little of such hours we give Him. She said hours, days, weeks, months and years of our lives are spent in eating and sleeping and attending to the trivial things of life. She said they must be happy that they had given this service to Bahá'u'lláh, should continuously use this Centre to attract more souls to His Cause and serve Him in teaching His Faith.

The spirit of service is a God-given gift, she said. You can see this in a family. One child may be endowed with this gift; without being asked he searches for ways to serve his parents, his sisters and brothers. He is always ready to give a hand to others. We must be like that; vie with one another in the service of the Cause of God. This Bahá'í Centre, Rúhíyyih Khánum said, can become the focal point of your activities. If you come here daily for prayers you can attract the help and guidance of Bahá'u'lláh. Through these prayers you can connect your souls to the source of power and energy, which is there to help us, if only we know how to reach it. By accepting Bahá'u'lláh we have made the fundamental connection. Through prayer we shall witness great miracles.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the balance, this is the balance, this is the balance."

One of their most recent songs has words such as these: "Oh Bahá'u'lláh, we were blind, You opened our eyes; we were deaf, You gave us hearing; hold our hands to the end of our lives." When they sing these exquisite songs their faces become radiant; without being asked they break into smiles of self-esteem and confidence.

For a moment. With all His continuous bounties, what do we do for God? Whatever we do in service to Him and love for Him is like a small grain brought to the feet of the King by a lowly ant, she said. Yet He not only accepts our humble offering, but abundantly blesses us. The beautiful building built in the name of Bahá'u'lláh was part of their lives spent in His service. If we look at our daily lives, we realize how little of such hours we give Him. She said hours, days, weeks, months and years of our lives are spent in eating and sleeping and attending to the trivial things of life. She said they must be happy that they had given this service to Bahá'u'lláh, should continuously use this Centre to attract more souls to His Cause and serve Him in teaching His Faith.

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One of their most recent songs has words such as these: "Oh Bahá'u'lláh, we were blind, You opened our eyes; we were deaf, You gave us hearing; hold our hands to the end of our lives."

When they sing these exquisite songs their faces become radiant; without being asked they break into smiles of self-esteem and confidence.

"When your brother was born did he make you any less than you are; did he take your place in life; did he reduce you in any way?" "No," the man said. "It is the same way with Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh," our young Bábí said. "They came to this world at different times, each has His own place and position, neither takes anything away from the other."

Because our little hotel was very noisy we spent the next three nights in a Catholic mission school in the town of Uvira, where the nuns very kindly took us in. It was one of the most interesting places we slept in during our years of traveling in Africa. As it was the Christmas holidays, the girls were all away and we were given a huge dormitory with 68 beds all to ourselves. It was very eerie at night with bats flying in and out. What was interesting to us was the fact that on New Year's Eve 1972, we dined with the Catholic Bishop in Mweka, in Kasai, central Zaire. On New Year's Eve 1973 we dined with the Italian Catholic Sisters in Uvira, in the eastern province of Zaire. In many parts of the country, the missions, particularly the Catholic missions, are the only place one can spend the night. There are no hotels and usually the homes of the believers are too small and overcrowded to enable them to take in guests. We were surprised to find so many of these Catholic missionaries friendly towards the Faith and very tolerant as a whole.

In the village of Kabimba, where the friends had recently built a fine new Centre and had decorated it with beautiful arches of flowers to welcome Amatu'l-Bahá, more than 400 believers listened to her word of encouragement. She praised their building and told them a mud building is a practical, cool and economic building; it is not a sign of poverty or ignorance, as you sometimes think it is. Nor are these buildings confined to Africa; in the shole of Asia and South America, she said, almost all buildings are entirely built with mud. Mud is an ancient, convenient and universal building material. Many Persian Bahá'í villagers live in mud houses too, she said. She told them that mud is an excellent material for hot climates because it is always cool; and the thatched roofs are the best ones, because they do not make any noise during the torrential rains, the way tin roofs do. As she spoke these words the beautiful faces of her listeners broke into smiles of self-esteem and confidence.

Rúhíyyih Khánum said that if we look at our lives we see that our health, our children, the food we eat, the air we breathe, are all bounties of Almighty God. Without His bounty, His mercy and His grace we would not exist even for a moment. With all His continuous bounties, what do we do for God? Whatever we do in service to Him and love for Him is like a small grain brought to the feet of the King by a lowly ant, she said. Yet He not only accepts our humble offering, but abundantly blesses us. The beautiful building built in the name of Bahá'u'lláh was part of their lives spent in His service. If we look at our daily lives, we realize how little of such hours we give Him. She said hours, days, weeks, months and years of our lives are spent in eating and sleeping and attending to the trivial things of life. She said they must be happy that they had given this service to Bahá'u'lláh, should continuously use this Centre to attract more souls to His Cause and serve Him in teaching His Faith.

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You Have Been Chosen

The story of Carrie and Edward Kinney

by O.Z. Whitehead
On the morning of December 16th, of 1950, during the final trip I made to New York City from Los Angeles after I joined the Bahá’í community, I telephoned Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kinney. The clerk at the Hotel Woodward promptly put me through to their apartment. Mrs. Kinney spoke to me calmly and with gentleness.

"May I see you?" I asked.
"Yes, but not today," she said.
"Ned died yesterday."
"I did not know. Please forgive me for telephoning you."

"Oh no, I am glad that you did. Maybe you can come to the service for him on Sunday evening at the Bahá’í Center."

"I will certainly be there."

The clerk interrupted us to say that other people were waiting to speak with Mrs. Kinney.

At that time the Bahá’í Center consisted of two rooms in a dreary building of offices on West Fifty-seventh Street, east of Seventh Avenue. One small room was for the Spiritual Assembly and committee meetings and a larger one for Feasts, celebrations and other public meetings.

As I entered the small room, a thickly set, fine looking young man was standing in front of me. We shook hands.

"I am Donald Kinney," he said.

A young girl with an unhappy expression walked up to him.

"I feel just terribly about your father," she said.

"Why should you or any of us?" said Donald brightly.

"Have you read what Shoghi Effendi wrote in his cable about him?" Donald took a copy of it out of his pocket and showed it to us both. The message said: "Grieve passing dearly loved, highly admired, trusted, staunch, indefatigable, self-sacrificing teacher, pillar of Faith, Saffa Kinney. His leonine spirit, exemplary steadfastness, notable record of closing period Heroic Age (and) opening phase Formative Age (of) Bahá’í Dispensation. Bountiful reward assured (in) Abhá Kingdom beneath shadow (of) Master he loved so dearly, served so nobly, defended so heroically until last breath. Shoghi. Cablegram dated December 16, 1950 (1). Mrs. Kinney sat among about two hundred believers gathered in the large room for the service. Her warm appealing face showed deep self-controlled feeling. She looked like a lady in the real sense of this often loosely used word. Despite the occasion, when she stood up to speak to someone, she became entirely erect. She showed no sign of defeat.

The simple moving service began with records playing some of the music that Edward Kinney wrote for the Bahá’í Holy Writings. Afterwards, older believers who had known the Kinneys for more than fifty years, read with fine feeling and becoming restrained selections from "Prayers and Meditations" by Bahá’u’lláh.

Sometime before the service was over, a few believers who lived a long distance away walked near to Mrs. Kinney.

"We have to leave now," they said.

With love for them in her tone, she said quietly, "I understand."

On the following Sunday evening I went to Mrs. Kinney’s fireside at her apartment in an annex of the Hotel Woodward, on the corner of Broadway and Fifty-seventh Street.

The door of her apartment was not locked. She apparently had no fear of a dangerous intruder. I walked through a narrow hall until I entered a large living room. About forty people were sitting there. Mrs. Kinney was in an adjoining bedroom looking after a sick child.

An almost life-sized color photograph of the Master hung in the middle of a side wall. Interesting photographs of early believers, and Persian tapestries, hung from all the walls. At one side of the room stood a grand piano with a small photograph of Mr. Kinney on top. He had a warm, kind, and fatherly face. Worn Victorian furniture added to the charm and character of the room.

I sat down on a comfortable sofa placed against the wall. With much dignity Mrs. Kinney walked into the room, welcomed her guests to the fireside, and introduced the speaker, Mr. Edward Slessinger.

He gave a sincere, direct, and persuasive talk. When he finished Mrs. Kinney stood up beside him.

"Are there any questions?" she asked.

No one answered.

"We will have tea then," she said.

"You get better every time," she added softly to Mr. Slessinger.


After most of the guests left she sat down beside me. She spoke to me about her husband as if I had always known him both.

"He lay sick in this apartment for many months. Sometimes I was up most of the night taking care of him. I often prayed to the Master asking Him to keep Ned with me for a little while longer."

I felt close to the Kinneys. I wanted to know more about them.

Edward Beadle Kinney was born on March 9, 1863, in New York City. While still a child he showed talent for music and began to study both organ and composition. At the age of fourteen he secured his first professional job as organist at St. Luke’s Church in New York City. A year before that he became a protege of the distinguished Polish conductor Dr. Leopold Damrosch, and studied composition with him for eight years. Mr. Kinney attended Richmond College, Richmond, Virginia. At the same time he served as choirmaster and organist in The Monumental Episcopal Church there. On his return to New York he studied composition under Edward MacDowell an American composer and professor of music at Columbia University. In a competition sponsored by the American National Conservatory of Music in which several thousand people took part he and three others won scholarships to study composition with the great Czech composer Anton Dvorak.

Mr. Kinney held many positions as organist and choirmaster in churches
"If perchance you are overtaken by poverty, let it not make you sad. At best you will then become companions of Christ."

that maintained high musical standards. He wrote fine religious music. He developed his own method of voice production and became a remarkable teacher of singing.

Helen Morrette, the future Mrs. Carrie Kinney, was born in New York City in 1878. She wanted to become a doctor, but her socially prominent family would not permit her. She had opportunities to marry several men of worldly importance. They did not interest her. In 1893 she met Edward Kinney. Two years later against the wishes of her parents she married him.

At her fireside late one evening I asked Mrs. Kinney who first spoke to her about the Baha’is Faith?

Others present besides myself listened with great interest to her answer:

One morning during the winter of 1895 Howard MacNutt, an old friend of Ned’s, sent word that he wanted us to come to his house in the Bronx that evening to hear some glorious news. A prophet like Jesus had been on this earth.

I said to Ned, “Your friend must be crazy to write you this. Why don’t you go without me?”

He said, “No. I am sure that Howard wants to meet you.”

“My family never knew anyone from the Bronx,” I said. “I have never been there in my life.”

“I am taking you there tonight,” he said firmly.

We drove a long distance to the MacNutt’s house in a horsecab. It took us an hour and a half to get there. Their house was attractive and fairly large. A few others came to the meeting besides ourselves.

Howard read us a few prayers by Baha’u’llah and then some Tablets that the Master had written to the Baha’is. I became very frightened to hear that Baha’u’llah claimed to be the Spirit of Truth Whose coming Jesus had promised.

On the way home in the carriage I said to Ned, “The MacNuts are very nice, but I don’t want to go back there to see them again.”

Ned said, “I believe that what we heard tonight is true.”

I was very much disturbed at what he had said. After the long drive home I went immediately to bed.

Ned stayed up very late. He wrote the Master a letter asking for confirmation of His Father’s station. I did not think that Ned would ever hear from the person he now called the Master. More than once every day Ned read aloud prayers by Baha’u’llah that Howard had copied on sheets of paper. In a month’s time Ned received a tablet from the Master written in red ink. It included the words, “You have been chosen.”

The first time the Baha’is came to the house they looked very strange to me. I tried to be polite, but I couldn’t. They frightened me. Instead, I ran upstairs to the bedroom and locked the door. They came back every week on Sunday nights. Gradually I was moved to come downstairs and meet them. Soon I started to listen. One night after everyone had left Ned and I sat down in the living room and talked together. He explained to me all over again who Baha’u’llah was. He had come to fulfill all that Jesus had brought. Suddenly I realized that I believed what Ned was saying.

From that moment forward she shared with her husband a passionate desire to serve the Cause of God. They were anxious to visit the Holy Land and meet the Master, and in 1907 they received an invitation from Him to come with their young sons, Sanford and Howard. They arrived at the end of that year, shortly before the Master’s release from prison.

Donald, the Kinneys’ youngest son, not born at the time of their pilgrimage, has described in a letter some experiences his parents had in the Holy Land. While in Haifa Mrs. Kinney became very ill. The doctor told her husband she was going to die. He went to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for advice. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told him that his wife would wake up shortly before midnight to ask for a bowl of soup. Mr. Kinney followed the Master’s recipe in preparing this special soup. Mrs. Kinney woke up at just the hour that the Master said that she would and asked for soup. Mr. Kinney gave it to her, and shortly afterwards she began to recover.

The Kinneys planned to go to India after their visit to Haifa, but ‘Abdu’l-Bahá warned them that if they went there Mrs. Kinney would die. They did not go to India. Instead, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked Mrs. Kinney and Dr. Zia Bagdadi to establish the first tuberculosis hospital in Alexandria, Egypt. “At that time male doctors in that country were not allowed to examine female patients,” Donald has written. “They were left in a room and given food until they finally died. Dr. Bagdadi told mother what symptoms to look for. She went into their rooms, examined the patients, and called out the symptoms to Dr. Bagdadi, who called back the diagnosis.”

After they had spent a year in the East, the Kinneys returned to New York City. He worked hard as a musician. She worked without salary in hospitals. Possessing considerable wealth, they lived in a large house at 780 West End Avenue. Their home increasingly became a meeting place for the Baha’is. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arranged to have His Tablets to the American believers sent to their home. Mrs. Kinney had them translated into English and distributed them.

In the summer of 1909, the Kinney family, accompanied by Juliet Thompson and Alice Beede, again visited the Holy Land. According to Juliet, the Master described to Edward the hardship that Baha’u’llah experienced after He had lost His wealth. He ended with the words: “May God give you the treasures of the Kingdom, the breath of the Holy Spirit. If, perchance you are overtaken by poverty, let it not make you sad. At best you will then become companions of Christ.”

On the morning of April 11, 1912, the Master arrived in New York City on the S.S. Cedric to begin His eagerly anticipated journey of eight months throughout the United States. Although a large group of Baha’is gathered at the dock to meet Him, the Master sent word from the ship that He wanted them to leave and join Him that
afternoon at the home of the Kinneys. In her precious diary of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in America Juliet Thompson has movingly described this occasion:

When I arrived ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was sitting in the center of the dining room near the flower strewn table—At his knees stood Sanford and Howard Kinney and His arms were around them—No words could describe the ineffable peace of Him. The people stood around Him in rows and circles—several hundred in the rooms; many were sitting in the dining room. We made a dark background for His effulgence.(4)

In the talk that He gave that afternoon, His first in the United States of America, the Master said that He had longed to meet the friends and that the spiritual happiness that he felt at doing so had made Him forget His weariness from travel. Greatly pleased with New York as a city, and its material progress, He said:

“...I hope that it may also advance spiritually in the Kingdom and Covenant of God so that the friends here may become the cause of the illumination of America, that this city may become a city of love and that the fragrances of God may be spread from this place to all parts of the world.”(5)

The Master spent many weeks in New York City. He would leave from there to visit other cities, and then return after His visits elsewhere.

On June 19, before a gathering of Baha’is in New York City, following the public reading of the recently translated Tablet of the Branch, revealed by Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá forcefully explained the meaning of the Covenant, and of His own Station as “Center of the Covenant”. Since that day New York has been called “The City of the Covenant.”

During one of His visits to New York, the Master stayed with the Kinneys. Inviting them to be His guests, He paid all expenses of the household, including the wages of the servants. Upon His recommendation Mrs. Kinney arranged to have a photograph taken of her family with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The believers gathered there night and day to see the Master when He was in New York.

Many years later Mírzá Val’í’ulláh Varqá, who served as one of the Master’s secretaries during His sojourn in America, said to Donald Kinney, “While ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed in your family’s home, He would go up to His room around three or four in the afternoon to rest. During this time of rest He would dictate to His secretaries, ten or twelve of them, simultaneously.”(6)

In his fascinating richly informative spiritual autobiography, “Portals to Freedom”, Howard Colby Ives has described in moving terms the Kinneys and their home, where he had his second meeting with the Master.

“It was in the beautiful home of Mr. and Mrs. Kinney, a family of the friends who seemed to feel that the gift of all which they possessed was too little to express their adoring love. Entering their home the roar of the city, the elegance and luxury of Riverside Drive, the poverty and wealth of our modern civilization all seemed to

“This time you will not deny your Lord,” the Master told Edward, whom He had renamed Saffa, or Peter.
merge into a unity of nothingness and
one entered an atmosphere of Reality.
Those heavenly souls who thus demon-
strated beyond any words their self-
dedication had a direct influence upon
my hesitating feet of which they could
have had no suspicion. My heart
throughout all worlds shall be filled
with thankfulness to them.

The Master gave Edward Kinney the
name Saffa, which means Peter, and
assured him that "this time you will not
deny your Lord." (8). He named Carrie
Kinney, Vaffa, which means certitude
and fidelity. Sanford was renamed for
one of the Martyrs, 'Abdu'l-'Ali; and
Howard, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, after the Mas-
donald, the youngest son was not
yet born.

"One day, in the autumn, He took
Saffa for a long walk in the strip of park
along Riverside Drive, New York
City," Juliet Thompson has written.
"Suddenly He stood still on the path
and looking deep into Saffa's eyes
asked in heart-piercing tones: 'Do you
love me? Do you love me?' words very
much like those that Jesus spoke to
Peter." (9)

On December 2nd, in one of the last
recorded talks He gave at the Kinneys,
the Master again stressed His appoint-
ment by Baha'u'llah as Center of the
Covenant, to ensure unity and agree-
ment among all the peoples of the
world, and to protect the cause from the
conflicting interpretations of individu-
als.

A few years after the Master left
America, the Kinneys, who until that
time had lived in relative comfort, free
from financial worries, began to lose
their wealth. "At one time Ned and I
had a great deal of money," Mrs. Kin-
ney explained to me, "all invested in
New York property. It went steadily
down in value. We could not sell the
property because it was entailed." For-
ced by their circumstances to prac-
tice strict economy, they first moved
from their large house in New York
City to a small cabin in Eliot, Maine,
near Green Acre, the Baha'i Summer
School.

In 1919, while they were living in a
modest house in Wallaston, a suburb of
Boston, their son, Sanford, became
seriously ill. Although everything pos-
sible was done for him, his condition
became steadily worse. Realizing that
he was critically ill, the sick boy wished
only that the Will of God be accom-
plished.

The third day after Sanford's passing
the Kinneys held a service for him in
their home, which many Baha'ís at-
tended. Nineteen years before, a bit of
candle brought by a believer from the
most Holy Tomb of Baha'u'llah burned
in the room where Sanford was born.
His parents lit the candle again, when
he died. "At the close of the prayers,
when the burial ring had been placed
upon the boy's finger, the candle
burned up high, then flickered and went
out," an eye-witness later wrote.(10)

On November 23, 1919, 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed a Tablet for
Sanford, which Mrs. William H. Ran-
dall brought to the Kinneys from Haifa.

"Sanford was a child of the King-
dom," 'Abdu'l-Baha wrote, "and, like
unto a tender shrub, is in the utmost
freshness and grace in the Abha
paradise. He has ascended to the world
of the Kingdom, that in the everlasting
rose-garden he may grow and thrive on
the banks of the river of Everlasting Life
and may blossom and attain fruition.

"O Thou divine Providence! Rear
him by the outpouring of the cloud of
mercy and nourish him through the
heat of the sun of pardon and of for-
giveness. Stir him by the breeze of
bounty and bestow patience and for-
bearance upon his kind father and
mother, that they may not deplore his
separation, and may rest assured in
meeting their son in the everlasting
Kingdom. Thou art the Forgiver and
the Compassionate!" (11)

After the Kinneys had lived for sev-
eral years in Wallaston, they moved
back to New York City and settled in
the apartment at the Woodward Hotel
that I have mentioned. Saffa continued
to work hard at his profession. In this
most difficult, uncertain field, he suc-
cessfully supported his family.

Although the passing of the Master
on November 28, 1921, naturally
caused Saffa and Vaffa intense grief,
they did not relax in their constant ef-
forts to serve the Faith. In one of His
many letters of encouragement to them,
'Abdu'l-Bahá designated Saffa and
Vaffa, "Pillars of the Faith in the City
of the Covenant."

In 1938 their son, Howard, died at
the age of thirty-three. Only their
youngest son, Donald, whom
'Abdu'l-Bahá had named Vahid, after

one of the martyrs, was left to them.

On Christmas eve, nine days after
her husband's passing, I went to a
fireside at Mrs. Kinney's. Only a small
group, all of them Baha'ís, was there.

Someone asked, "May we sing
Christmas carols?" Mrs. Kinney re-
plied, "Of course. Baha'ís recognize
the Station of Jesus. We may certainly
sing carols in honor of Him."

Everyone in the room sang them with
the joyful realization that the Spirit of
Jesus had returned in the Station of the
Father.

At Mrs. Kinney's apartment I met
Maude Goodreau. Trained by Mr. Kin-
ney, she became a prima donna of The
Chicago Opera Company. In retire-
ment from the stage, since the begin-
ing of Mr. Kinney's illness, she had
been teaching his pupils. The money
from these lessons had provided the
main support for the Kinney family,
and now, it was doing the same for the
two ladies.

Brought up in a constrained social
circle, Vaffa Kinney had nonetheless
learned to mingle with people of all
classes, religions and nationalities. No
matter what motives brought people to her apartment, she tried to help them. She became like a mother to a great many people who turned to her in their hour of need. One evening at her fireside, referring to a heavy man seated in the back row, she said to me, "He is a communist. We must try to teach him the Faith.'"

On another occasion, after Edward Slessinger had spoken eloquently about the Revelation of Baha'u'llah, a Jewish gentleman said, "When I was in the Holy Land, I too had a revelation." Rather then speak to him impatiently, Mrs. Kinney said, "Before you decide that is true, why don't you listen a little more to what Baha'u'llah has revealed?" With apparent sincerity the man later said, "I will come here again."

Once she was teaching two young sisters the Cause. The girls soon admitted their motives for attending firesides. "What we are really trying to do is to find husbands," they said. With a smile of understanding, Mrs. Kinney replied, "We must pray that you will find them." The sisters asked, "Why should we study the Bahai Faith?" She firmly replied, "So that you will recognize your Lord."

At the end of April 1953, once the Guardian inaugurated the World Crusade, Mrs. Kinney wrote him, "I will go anywhere that you ask me to go." He answered, "Stay in the City of the Covenant."

At the Feast of Unity, in West Englewood, on June 29, 1953, she stood on the same spot where the Master stood during the first Feast of Unity in 1912, and she read the beautiful talk the Master gave on that moving, historic occasion; a talk recorded in "The Promulgation of Universal Peace". When she finished reading it, she spoke to those of us still gathered around her. "When Ned and I first came into the Faith there were only a few believers in "The City of the Covenant" and in the surrounding towns and villages, but look now at the wonderful change that has taken place," she said.

During the first year of the Crusade, in obedience to the Guardian, Vaffa stayed in New York City. Sincere young Bahai's in difficulties boarded with her. If they became discouraged she tried to convince them that their situation was not hopeless. She advised them to deepen in the Faith. Surely, they knew that if they turned their hearts wholly to Baha'u'llah that He would help them.

After the Feast of Ridvan, 1954, Vaffa and her household asked for and received the Guardian's permission to pioneer to River Edge, a small town in New Jersey, not far from New York City. A few months later, although by this time not physically strong, she moved with her household to a small house in River Edge. In her new home she taught the Cause as before, and with the firm assistance of her dear friend Maude Goodreau, held regular weekly firesides.

During my pilgrimage in January 1955, I was privileged to speak of her to Shoghi Effendi. He said with much enthusiasm, "She is climaxing a long and distinguished Bahai career by pioneering from the City of the Covenant to a neighboring town."

In 1956 she had a serious operation from which she never fully recovered. Because of illness she left River Edge and moved to her son Donald's home in West Englewood, New Jersey. News of the Guardian's passing on November 4, 1957, was a great shock to her. She never expected to outlive him.

Donald has written that although his mother was ill during much of the last three years of her life, she taught the Cause as forcefully as ever. "A few days before her death she went into a coma. At times she would appear to be having detailed conversations with the old believers who had already passed on. It seemed as if she was making the transition from this Kingdom to the next."

On the morning of August 16, 1959, Donald came into her room to see how she was and found that her passing had quietly taken place. Her warm, gentle, loving, and distinguished personality remains with me, as I feel sure it remains with countless others. She spoke the language of the heart.

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(4) "Abdu'l-Baha in America", Page 5.
(7) "Portals to Freedom" by Howard Colby Ives. George Ronald, 1969, Page 36.
(10) "Star of the West", Volume 10, Number 19, Page 350.

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Leaving Fairbanks bound for Nenana. Rūḥíyyih Khánum with Sharon Faverty, an Athabascan Indian believer, her daughter Lua, and Fletcher Bennet.

Rūḥíyyih Khánum with editor of the Nome newspaper.

Amatu’l-Bahá with the Hand of the Cause Jalá’í Kházeh at the summer school in Juneau on the night of her adoption into the Eagle Tribe of the Tlingit Indians. Pictured with her are members of the tribe.

Rūḥíyyih Khánum visits Alaska

After only a very brief respite following her almost four-year journey through Africa, the Hand of the Cause Amatu’l-Bahá Rūḥíyyih Khánum left Haifa on July 25th, accompanied by Miss Nell Golden, for a one-month trip of 18,800 air miles to the vast State of Alaska. The magnet that had attracted her half-way round the world was the love of the friends in Alaska, evidenced by the many loving invitations from the National Spiritual Assembly, a letter signed by hundreds of the friends in Alaska in different towns asking her to come, and many individual letters with the same request.

Added to this was her own long-standing wish to visit Alaska, and her admiration and love for this community which had achieved its goals early in the Ten Year Crusade and had an exemplary record of service during the Nine Year Plan as well.

The itinerary of Amatu’l-Bahá included trips to 15 different localities. The city of Anchorage had the good fortune of 6 visits during the 30-day period. At the Summer School in Juneau on August 17th and 18th, in three lengthy sessions Rūḥíyyih Khánum spoke to the approximately 215 eager, enthusiastic and attentive friends, many of them youth and young adults, on a variety of subjects, tirelessly answering their questions after each session. She spoke often and strongly on the importance of the Eskimos and Indians retaining their roots and not forgetting their past, and urged them to remember and preserve their great heritage, of which they should be so justly proud. A highlight of the Summer School was the almost miraculous achievement of the goal to raise $20,000 for the National Fund, thereby liquidating the indebtedness incurred by the National Spiritual Assembly to cover the recent teaching efforts of the “Army of Light” for its “massive encounter” program.

(Based on a report by Miss Nell Golden)
Four Hands of the Cause of God, seven Continental Counsellors, fourteen Auxiliary Board members, and National Spiritual Assembly members from thirteen countries, attended an Inter-Assembly conference held in Teheran, Iran, June 21-23, 1973. 1. Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members from South Central Asia and Western Asia. 2. Counsellors in Western Asia, left to right: Dr. Iraj Ayman, Dr. Masih Farhangi, Mr. Hadi Rahmati, Dr. Manuchehr Salmanpur. 3. Hands of the Cause, Counsellors, Auxiliary Board members and National Spiritual Assembly representatives.

Scandinavian Conference held in Norway

The Inter-Scandinavian Conference held at Lillehammer, Norway Sept. 21-23, with 70 participants from Norway, Sweden, Denmark and U.S.A. Short talks were given by three Auxiliary Board members on deepening in the Faith. Further conferences, arranged by the Norwegian Youth Committee, are planned for Bergen, Jan. 25-27, 1974; Tromso, Feb. 22-24 and Bodo, March 29-31. A Winter School will be held during the Christmas holidays.
Deepening course for teachers

A deepening course for traveling teachers was held in Rosario, Argentina, one of the country’s larger cities, on the weekend of September 1-2. The program was coordinated by Continental Counsellor Mr. Athos Costas.

Rosario has always been considered a difficult town in which to proclaim the Baha’i Faith. However, the teaching that accompanied the weekend course was found to be very fruitful.

A long article was published in the city’s largest daily, La Capital. The editor of the paper’s cultural section promised to write follow-up articles in the future.

A delegation led by Mr. Costas presented a book to the Governor of the Province of Santa Fe, of which Rosario is part. A similar presentation was made to the city’s mayor, and to the resident Bolivian consul, who attended a public meeting.

Miss Lelis Gimenez, a well-known television interviewer, dedicated her weekly program to a round-table discussion on religion with several Baha’is, including Mr. Costas.

Winter School

A highly successful International Winter School was held in Tartagal, Argentina, near the Bolivian border, from July 26-29. Seventy friends from Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, and pioneers from the United States, Iran, and Germany attended. Baha’is from the Mataco and Tuba Indian tribes also attended.

Tartagal is a new, thriving Baha’i community, whose Local Spiritual Assembly was formed this Ridvan due to the devoted efforts of the resident American pioneers, Deane and Barbara Genge.

The prevailing spirit of love and unity was greatly stimulated by the presence of Counsellor Hooper Dunbar, Auxiliary Board members Maralynn Dunbar and Dolores de Caballero of Argentina; Ramon Moreira of Uruguay; Eloy Anello of Bolivia, and Natalia de Caballero of Paraguay.

An attractive exposition was held in the city plaza, including songs by a talented Uruguayan Baha’i group. A cordial meeting was held with the Mayor of Tartagal, to whom a book was given. He showed such interest that he, his secretary, and his wife, came to one of the meetings. Ten souls enrolled in the Faith during the Winter School.
A social conscience came with time

"Marie of Romania." The Intimate Life of a Twentieth Century Queen, by Terence Elsberry, St. Martin's Press, New York. $12.95.

A gifted writer, Queen Marie of Romania wrote an autobiography in 1927 entitled "The Story of My Life". In considerable detail it describes her experiences from early childhood until her personal triumph following the defeat of Germany in the First World War, almost eight years before her spontaneous acceptance of the Baha'i Teachings.

Although long and sometimes repetitious, her book gives a clear impression of her character, and contains many moving chapters. The Queen has endowed her book with a noble spirit that is hard to analyze.

Fascinated by Queen Marie's book ever since he read it in high school, Terence Elsberry has written a biography that covers her entire life.

Although most of the Queen's correspondence, and diaries that she kept from the time of Romania's entry into World War I until shortly before her death in 1938, are now in the hands of the communist government there, Elsberry has found enough authentic source material with which to write his book. The author has relied primarily on the recollections and personal papers of the Queen's youngest daughter, Princess Ileana, and those of George I Duca, son of a former Prime Minister of Romania. He has also included material from "The Story of My Life".

Mr. Elsberry has written an honest, absorbing biography that brings the Queen, the strong personalities around her, and the tragic events in which they played a major part, to fascinating life. While not hesitating to describe her human faults, he has convincingly demonstrated how her rare generosity, radiant intelligence, unusual compassion, and deep love for others, helped her rise to great heights of selfless service to her country and to all humanity.

In the first paragraph of Chapter One the author explains that "Marie Alexandra Victoria, Princess of Great Britain and Ireland, was born on October 29, 1875 at her parents' country house, Eastwell Park, in Kent. Her father was Queen Victoria's second son Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, her mother, the former Grand Duchess, Maria Alexandrovna, was the only daughter of Russian Tzar-Liberator Alexander II."

In vivid passages about her childhood, the author has quoted Marie's amusing account of her visit, at the age of seven, to Queen Victoria, who turned out to be not in the least as frightening as expected; and has described the tragic moment when Marie heard the horrifying news from her mother, of Alexander II's assassination by a nihilist's bomb, while the Tzar was trying to help a wounded man.

Not approving of marriages between first cousins, the Duchess did not allow her daughter, Marie, to marry the future George V. Instead the Duchess encouraged Prince Ferdinand to propose to Marie. As a result of her acceptance, at the age of eighteen, this English princess, who had always been sheltered from the harsh realities of life, became the wife of the heir to the throne of Romania.

Mr. Elsberry has well described the widespread graft, the immorality of the aristocracy and the corrupt political life in that country. He has written with understanding of Marie's loneliness and deep unhappiness during the early years of her marriage; of the birth of her first son, Carol, followed by the birth of four other children; and of her unceasing efforts to live as she thought right, though often in conflict with the wishes of her husband, Ferdinand, his uncle King Carol, and the Queen, Elizabeth.

Completely frank and without guile, she sometimes trusted people who did not deserve her confidence. She had several close friendships with brilliant, interesting men. Enemies of the Queen and unfair people often attacked her for these friendships. No sincere person who knew her well could ever question her high standard of morality.

An expert rider, she loved to be out-of-doors. As the author has written, "For Marie, a social conscience would come with time. On the sweet mornings of 1897 she preferred searching out the..."
first flowers to charity work.'

In 1913 King Carol took her with him to inspect the Red Cross hospitals along the Danube. She was appalled by the suffering that she saw in many of the hospitals where large numbers of men were dying of cholera. Marie immediately began an effort to set up an emergency camp to treat cholera. From that time onward, whenever she had the opportunity, no personal inconvenience or danger to herself kept Marie from giving selfless service to her country.

Her close friend, Barbu Stirbey, an economist of genius, helped Marie to realize her great potential. On the morning of October 10, 1914, although shocked to hear of King Carol's death, she felt ready to be Queen.

The author has clearly explained that from the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, Marie was keenly opposed to the aggressive policies of the German government, and despite sharp criticism from many prominent people in Romania, she made her views absolutely clear. Owing largely to her influence, King Ferdinand on August 27, 1916, a most critical moment, signed a declaration of war against Austria, which soon led to war with Germany as well.

Mr. Elsberry has written a moving description of the death of the Queen's youngest son, Mircea, not yet four years old, on November 2, 1916, and the effect this had of tying Queen Marie more closely to Romania. Sincerely grateful when King George V offered safe residence in England for the duration of the War to herself, King Ferdinand, and their children, she did accept, because she was determined to remain in her homeland.

Despite conditions in Romania, which grew steadily more desperate as the war continued, Queen Marie, as head of the Red Cross, leader of the Refugee Workers, president of the War Invalids Society, and voluntary inspector of all hospitals and camps, fought battles against disease, death and starvation, as well as against political antagonists. In 1919 King Ferdinand, and Prime Minister Ion Bratianu, who was representing Romania at Versailles, believing that the Queen's energy and feminine intuition might do more than all the politicians put together to improve the country's bargaining position, sent her to Paris and London to plead for fair treatment of Romania. The evening after her interview with French Premier Georges Clemenceau, the Romanian Ambassador told her that Clemenceau had said, "We can only receive a queen like yours with full military honors, Marshal Foch in tow." She not only greatly changed Clemenceau's attitudes toward Romania, she also helped to instill in Lloyd George a more amenable opinion than before. She failed, however, to get along well with President Woodrow Wilson.

On her return to Romania Queen Marie and her American helpers traveled throughout the rural sections of the country, battling poverty, hunger, and disease. "The name of the American Red Cross will forever be blessed in my country," King Ferdinand wrote the Red Cross headquarters in Washington.

After twenty-nine years the marriage of Queen Marie and King Ferdinand had become a success. They now worked well together for the good of their country. "Nando, you are like good wine," she told him. "You sweeten with age."

The unstable, irresponsible conduct of their son, Prince Carol, became a source of great anxiety to the king and queen. Carol abandoned his wife, Princess Helen, in Romania, to live with his mistress, Magda Lupescu, first in Paris, then in Milan. On December 28, 1925, he wrote a letter to Queen Marie in which he renounced all rights to the throne. His parents agreed that they must accept Carol's decision. Not aware of his previous indiscretions, or of the details of his obvious defection, many people criticized Queen Marie for not fighting for her son.

Here is perhaps the place to remark that four weeks after she heard of Carol's defection, on the afternoon of January 30, 1926, during the first moments of her historic meeting with Martha Root at Concrrenti Palace near Bucharest, Queen Marie spontaneously accepted the Bahá'í teachings. It is deeply disappointing that the author failed to mention this most important event, which undoubtedly gave her renewed strength to face an agonizing future. Elsberry, however, does quote from a letter that she wrote to four loyal friends in February of that year, concerning her double tragedy of losing both Carol, and her people's confidence almost simultaneously. The letter ends: "It is the spirit that counts, not the word. There may be more hate in the world than love. But love is strongest, and one day, even if I am not to live to see it, it must conquer."

Although the author has referred in passing to a column that the Queen began to write in May 1926, she has not informed the reader that in this syndicated series, entitled "Queen's Counsel", published in newspapers throughout the United States and Canada, appeared her first public testimonies in support of the Bahá'í Revelation.

In September she accepted an invitation from thousands of Americans to visit the United States. "Americans play a part in my life," she wrote. "Their trusting simplicity fits in with my guilelessness." This trip turned out to be a mixture of triumph and misfortune. It caused people both to admire and ridicule Marie. News that Ferdinand was dying of cancer brought her trip, which lasted seven weeks and two days, to an abrupt end.

Almost eight months after her return, on July 18, 1927, King Ferdinand died. Mr. Elsberry has written, "Ferdinand died as unassumingly as he had lived."

Wrote Marie, "I am sure that he must have been glad to strip off his suffering body. 'I am so tired,' were his last words, and when he lay so quiet in my arms about an hour later, I knew that I must thank God for him at least. This was rest indeed." Closer to her husband during his last months than at any time in their thirty-four years together, Marie was unprepared for the overwhelming loss she felt upon his death.

Only fifty-two, and at the height of her powers, the Queen now found herself ignored and cast aside. Barbu Stirbey still remained her friend. She became close to her youngest daughter, Princess Ileana. She worked every day on her fairy tales. Before the end of 1927 she began to write "The Story of My Life".

Mr. Elsberry does not mention any of the memorable meetings that Martha Root had with the Queen and Princess Ileana, their unsuccessful efforts to visit Shoghi Effendi in the Holy Land or the beautiful statements that Marie wrote about the Bahá'í Faith.

On June 6, 1930, Prince Carol returned to Romania. The next day Parliament proclaimed him King. At first
Marie "saw new hope for Romania led by a full-blooded king, a monarch who, though tainted, must justify the confidence that twenty million people had placed in him." She also felt that he would allow her to help him. Her optimism was entirely unfounded. Although he worked hard at his job, he became an irresponsible, unjust king. Extremely jealous of his mother's popularity, he used every means to humiliate her. He also tried to destroy his former wife, Princess Helen. He arranged for Elena Lupescu to come to Romania, and took up residence with her again.

Deeply grieved at the tyrannical, destructive manner in which her son ruled his country, and helpless to change his course, Marie sought refuge in her writing. She also made several happy visits to the home of her daughter, the Queen of Yugoslavia in Belgrade, and to the home of the former Princess Ileana, now Arch-Duchess Anton of Austria at Modling, near Vienna. The serious political problems prevailing in the adoptive countries of her daughters caused Queen Marie great concern. The assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia, while on an official visit to France, brought her "annihilating sorrow". But the actions of King Carol, her son, remained "her source of greatest anguish", according to her own testimony.

In his book the author has movingly described the long, painful illness which began in March 1937, and ended with her death on July 18, 1938, 16 months later. Although "he had broken the heart of his mother whom he had once loved so deeply", King Carol, strangely enough, gave her a magnificent funeral. Neither he nor any other malicious person could destroy the love that the people of Romania, and her sincere friends and admirers all over the world, felt for this great and noble queen.

Terence Elsberry certainly deserves much praise for writing this excellent, informative book. Bahá'ís can only regret that he did not record what are by far the most important events of the Queen's remarkable life: her spontaneous acceptance of the Bahá'í Teachings and her public support of the Bahá'í Revelation in widely read testimonies. Without a doubt this worthwhile book will encourage gifted Bahá'í historians of the future to write fine biographies of the Queen which will include the thrilling events missing from Elsberry's book. Certainly this most distinguished Queen, who, in the words of the Beloved Guardian, "apart from the imperishable renown, achieved by her in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh, had earned in this earthly life, the esteem and love of many a soul living beyond the confines of her own country," deserves the kind of biography we must wait for time and the liberating growth of the Bahá'í community to produce.

-O.Z. Whitehead
The Kings who said no

A set of eight portraits of kings and rulers to whom Bahá'u'lláh addressed Tablets is now available through the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre.

The pictures are available in black and white prints, black and white glossies, and black and white 35mm slides.

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If these materials are not available in your area, please write the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, New York 14564, for additional information.

International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre
Birth and development of the World Centre

By Ugo Giachery
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COVER PHOTO

A pen and ink drawing of Bahji by Dr. David S. Ruhe.

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CORRECTIONS

The photograph at the bottom of Page 15, August 1973 Babá’í News, is improperly captioned “Bahá’ís in Rangoon and nearby village areas in front of the National Center, in February 1973.” The caption should read: “The annual Convention of the Babá’ís of India, held in New Delhi, in May 1973.”

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Gardens at Bahjí extended

REJOICE ANNOUNCE FRIENDS BEAUTIFICATION DURING CONFLICT AGITATING MIDDLE EAST FOURTH QUADRANT AREA SURROUNDING MOST HOLY SHRINE EMBRACING OLIVE GROVE SOUTHWEST PILGRIM HOUSE BAHJI. BLESSED SHRINE AND MANSION NOW COMPLETELY ENCIRCLED BEAUTIFUL GARDENS INSPIRED BY PATTERN HARAM-I-AQDAS CREATED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN. PRAYING SHRINES SUPPORTERS MOST GREAT NAME EVERY LAND MAY REDouble EFFORTS PROMOTE INTERESTS PRECIOUS FAITH IN ANTICIPATION FIVE YEAR GLOBAL PLAN SOON TO BE LAUNCHED.

4 December 1973

Next plan to last five years

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

Five months separate us from Ridván 1974 when the next global plan will be launched. For a period of five years the attention, resources and energies of the Bahá’í World Community will be directed to achieving the aims of this plan.

By Naw-Rúz 1974 you will have been notified of the overall goals of the plan and the specific tasks assigned to each of your national communities. Each one of you is therefore urged to arrange for a meeting, at Naw-Rúz or soon after, to which you will invite the Board of Counsellors in your zone to be represented and at which the plan can be considered and thorough consultation held on the manner in which each one of your communities will launch it.

You are asked to give careful consideration as soon as possible to the advisability of holding one or more conferences in conjunction with your Convention or soon after. You may wish to consult the Counsellors on this matter. We believe that such conferences would greatly assist in acquainting the friends with the nature and aims of the plan and in enlisting their enthusiasm and resolution to achieve it. All details as to the number of such conferences, their timing, their agendas are left entirely to your discretion, but we recommend that in planning them you attach great importance to the participation of youth so that they may feel wholly identified with the tasks assigned and give their immediate and maximum support to their accomplishment.

Now is the time to begin directing the thoughts and plans of the friends to the next great demand which will be made upon them and we assure you of our prayers at the Sacred Threshold that you may be guided and strengthened to take such decisions and make such plans as will enable your communities to anticipate with eagerness and receive with joy the new tasks to be offered them, tasks whose wholehearted and united accomplishment will raise the Community of the Most Great Name to a position where it may have far greater effect upon men’s minds and prepare it for further thrilling and awe-inspiring achievements in the pursuit of its ultimate goal of the redemption of mankind.

With Loving Bahá’í greetings,

THE Universal House of Justice

November 21, 1973

A portion of the gardens around the Mansion of Bahjí. The Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh is shown at the upper right hand corner of the photograph.
Almost one year before the end of the First World War, the Balfour Declaration, made in the name of the British government, favoured a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Since the conquest of that land by the Caliph Umar—twelve years after the Hijra (A.D. 622, the first year of the Muslim era)—a succession of Islamic dynasties had ruled over the entire Middle East, until the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922, an Empire that had extended from Turkey and the Balkans to Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean. Thus it had been impossible for the Jewish population, dispersed throughout the Old World, to return to their promised land. The Balfour Declaration brought a ray of hope that their 'diaspora' might end, although the Mandate, which was given to the British government by the League of Nations at the end of the First World War and which lasted until May 1948, could not favour or encourage the return of the Jews to Palestine. It had to maintain the status quo, because of the prevailing Muslim population in the whole territory.

When Bahá'u'lláh, His family and followers were exiled to 'Akka in 1868, Palestine was a stronghold of Sunni Islam. To understand how terrifying were the forces of opposition against any Faith, other than Sunni Islam, it suffices to recall the intermittent sufferings and persecutions inflicted upon Bahá'u'lláh and those exiled with Him, from 1867 until 1908. It was the revolution of the Young Turks that finally brought an end to the era of tyranny and oppression. Nevertheless, the Omnipotent had already decreed such far-reaching changes that their realization has been a true source of wonder. The construction under the most adverse conditions of the Báb's Sepulchre, on the site blessed and chosen by Bahá'u'lláh on Mt. Carmel, established the Spiritual Centre of the Bahá'í Faith on that holy mountain in the most dramatic and unassailable manner. Moreover, two decades earlier, Sultan

Birth and Development of the World Centre, is a chapter in a new book by the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery entitled, Shoghi Effendi—Recollections, Copyright © 1973 under the Berne Convention, reprinted here by permission of the publisher, George Ronald, London.

The book's jacket.

'Abdu'l-Hamid, in person, by assenting to the request to inter the sacred remains of Bahá'u'lláh within the precincts of the Mansion of Bahá, had suddenly and miraculously sanctioned the way to implant in the soil of the Holy Land a new, eternal Qiblih, a point of adoration for countless generations of followers of a regenerating, dynamic and universal Faith. Thus the 'twin cities' of 'Akka and Haifa potentially became the solid spiritual foundations of the evolving World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

Much has happened since those days, and the splendour and beauty now surrounding the two Holy Places are the fruits of the vision and skill of Shoghi Effendi.

I could then fully share with him the vision of the New Jerusalem, the new City of God, the Abode of Peace, and understand his labours around that Sacred Spot, urged on by the impelling necessity of preparing the haven in which the Ark of Salvation would sail. To it the world would turn for spiritual guidance, as the source of inspiration, of sincerity, of divine justice and illumination.

In retrospect we can see how much was accomplished in that brief period of years and why Shoghi Effendi seemed to be ever aware of the shortness of time in which so much had to be made ready. Of all the great qualities that adorned his character, zeal and eagerness were outstanding. These two virtues acted as spearheads for all his manifold and burdensome activities, keeping him abreast of events and material limitations, inspiring all who understood his plight and dedicated themselves, mind and body, to lighten his burden and help him bring into reality his long-range plans. So great was his appreciation that many times, grateful for the modest assistance I could render him, he would look at me with loving eyes and, smiling, would say, 'I wish there were one more believer like you.'

As the Faith expanded and its institutions multiplied under his far-sighted guidance, it was imperative that the Shrine and its environs—the fountainhead of inspiration—should evolve with great power, prestige and dynamic impulse. This is the reason that Shoghi Effendi could not spare any effort, or hesitate, or brook any delay. For him it was like racing through space toward a luminous star, when speed and skill were of supreme importance, with no turning back or change of heart. The Faith of God was in the balance, and the propelling power was coming from the Almighty Creator.

The golden threads, spreading and weaving through all continents, oceans and islands of the world—sustained and strengthened by that celestial power that he, the Guardian of the Cause of God, knew how to tap—were slowly but surely enmeshing the earth, each strand carrying with it the vibrations of understanding, compassion and love, issuing forth from the mystic heart of the Guardianship.

There is no doubt that he must have been seriously concerned about the

December, 1973 / BAHÁ'Í NEWS 3
Birth and development of the World Centre

by Ugo Giachery

A view from the portico on the second level of the Mansion of Bahji.
Almost one year before the end of the First World War, the Balfour Declaration, made in the name of the British government, favoured a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Since the conquest of that land by the Caliph 'Umar—twelve years after the Hijra (A.D. 622, the first year of the Muslim era)—a succession of Islamic dynasties had ruled over the entire Middle East, until the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1922, an Empire that had extended from Turkey and the Balkans to Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean. Thus it had been impossible for the Jewish population, dispersed throughout the Old World, to return to their promised land. The Balfour Declaration brought a ray of hope that their 'diaspora' might end, although the Mandate, which was given to the British government by the League of Nations at the end of the First World War and which lasted until May 1948, could not favour or encourage the return of the Jews to Palestine. It had to maintain the _status quo_, because of the prevailing Muslim population in the whole territory.

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There is no doubt that he must have been seriously concerned about the
The World Centre, in the Guardian’s vision, was the New Jerusalem, the Sacred Spot from which the Ark of Salvation would sail.

The Shrine of the Báb.

political future of Palestine. In some of his messages mentioning the possibility of another world conflict, he expresses anxiety for events which might involve the World Centre of the Faith. I well remember that one evening, at table, Shoghi Effendi related the information imparted by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá concerning the erection of a befitting sepulchre for the Báb that would be worthy of a Prophet of God. Shoghi Effendi therefore felt that it fell upon him, the Guardian of the Cause of God, to carry out these instructions when conditions would permit and the political situation would warrant undertaking such a permanent and costly project.

When the devouring flames of the Second World War enveloped the whole earth, the situation in the Middle East became fraught with danger, threatening the very core of the Spiritual Centre of Bahá’u’lláh’s Faith. But again, God’s plan operated to protect men and possessions, bringing a solution which even today, at thirty years’ distance, can only be considered the result of an intervention of Divine Providence. Palestine and all the Middle East were spared the scourge and destruction of war, thus permitting the planning of new developments at the World Centre of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.

In the forefront of Shoghi Effendi’s greatest goals and accomplishments in the Faith must be considered the enhancement and beautification of the Holy Places connected with the lives of the Central Figures of the Bahá’í Faith. The setting is Mt. Carmel. No doubt those followers of past religions who came to this holy mountain were fascinated by its great beauty, made interesting by rugged rocks spread over its face like flocks of reposing sheep; by the myriads of wild flowers of incomparable grace and variety, and by its crystal clear skies and the blue Mediterranean Sea. This holy mountain, in a land that for millennia has influenced man’s evolution and thinking, was destined to become anew the centre of miraculous developments leading to the regeneration of all mankind.

Bahá’u’lláh was brought to Palestine in 1868 as a prisoner of the rulers of the Persian and Turkish governments. During the long years of His sufferings and bondage it was not timely to provide an appropriate and dignified resting-place for the remains of the martyred Herald of His Revelation, the Báb, nor even to prepare an adequate place for this purpose in the Holy Land. During the last years of His life, however, He visited Haifa and pitched His tent on the slopes of Mt. Carmel. On one such occasion He expressed to His eldest son, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the wish that a worthy memorial and resting-place be erected on the spot designated by Him, near a cluster of cypress trees. These trees are still standing today, in great beauty and dignity, on the upper level of the ground south of the Shrine of the Báb, now part of the enchanting gardens surrounding that Holy Edifice.

The eagerness of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to comply with Bahá’u’lláh’s instructions brought to Him, in His turn, additional and untold suffering, which He summarized in the following remark: “Every stone of that building, every stone of the road leading to it, I have with infinite tears and at tremendous cost, raised and placed in position.” In God Passes By, Shoghi Effendi enumerates some of the problems that beset ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His efforts to erect the Báb’s Sepulchre, a strong building of Palestinian stone, of simple architecture, necessarily reinforced by buttresses—this prompted His enemies to accuse Him of building a fortress and a store for ammunition—and provided with heavy, majestic iron doors and multiple windows.

To describe the situation existing in Palestine during the last decades of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth centuries is beyond the purpose of these recollections, but I wish to mention briefly what I learned from Shoghi Effendi himself. In his childhood and youth he witnessed the end of an era in a
land overrun by tyranny, plagued by corrupt government, epidemics and poverty.

"There were no opportunities available in those years," he once stated, "because the collapse of the military, cultural and political structure of the Ottoman Empire was at hand, and the signs of the imminent disintegration of the last vestige of an ancient glory were evident even to my young eyes."

These were the trying conditions under which the beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, had to fulfill His mission, single-handed, opposed by a relentless foe, and with all His fortitude and strength undermined by forty years of privation and discomfort.

The Báb's remains arrived in 'Akká at the beginning of the year 1899, after almost fifty years of removal from hiding-place to hiding-place. The ascension of Bahá'u'lláh had taken place seven years earlier; during His lifetime He had arranged for several transfers of the remains to ensure their safety. But it was left to 'Abdu'l-Bahá personally to gather the precious dust of the Martyr-Prophet, and place it with His own hands in the Mausoleum He had erected for that purpose on the slope of Mt. Carmel, at the spot designated by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Interment of the Báb's remains took place on the evening of the Feast of Naw-Rúz, 1909, one year after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's release from imprisonment and bondage.

Shoghi Effendi, as a youth of thirteen, had been an eye-witness of this historical and moving event. He related to me the whole episode of the placing of the Báb's luminous remains in the alabaster sarcophagus that had been donated and sent by the Bahá'ís of Rangoon, Burma. They were placed in the crypt in the now central room of the Mausoleum, which today consists of nine rooms, but at that time had only six rooms in two parallel rows, the crypt being then in the centre room of the row facing south. The heart-rending events that took place that night in that hallowed shelter, dimly illumined by candle light, were unfolded in precise and dramatic words which gave me a true vision of that long-awaited ceremony, the first stage in the unfoldment of many events to come, leading to the establishment of the World Centre of the Faith around that Sacred Spot.

Transported by Shoghi Effendi's eloquent narrative I well understood the eagerness and urgency with which he had undertaken the construction of the outer Shrine of the Báb, which now graces the holy mountain. The hand of destiny made me his co-worker in securing the carved marble for that Holy Sepulchre in my native Italy, a privilege and honour that has blessed my mature years. That particular night, although I had already started on the work of obtaining and shipping the carved marble to Haifa, I realized more than ever how Shoghi Effendi had the ability to surmount any obstacle that came his way, shedding his inspiration and loving guidance in all directions. During the nine years (1948-57) that I assisted him in securing the material for the Báb's Shrine and the International Archives, I became more and more aware of the power emanating from his spiritual dynamism, which assisted me in over-
The Second World War, which enveloped the whole earth, threatened the very core of the Spiritual Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Faith. Coming serious difficulties threatening, at the time, the continuance and completion of the work.

That same evening Shoghi Effendi related how, on 25 December 1939, thirty years after the interment of the Báb's remains and following a well-conceived plan, he had entrusted to the sacred soil of Mt. Carmel, not far from the Báb's Shrine, the bodies of the Purest Branch and the mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Their burial-places are also near those of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sister and His wife, thus establishing the focal point of the Bahá'í administrative institutions of the World Centre of the Faith. While Shoghi Effendi was relating these vital episodes in the historical development of the Faith in the Holy Land, I could strongly feel his anticipation of great things to come.

His enthusiasm, always an element of his eloquence, lent a deep tone of certainty to the exposition of his plans for the expansion of the Faith he so much loved, my soul was filled with awe and gratitude, for he was indeed the master-builder of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

As my recollections return on the wings of memory, I feel again that sense of joyfulness and elation which was with me whenever I was near him, a mysterious, unbreakable bond that influenced and guided me in all the manifold activities he called upon me to perform. It was not personal magnetism, but the influence of the spiritual force that constantly emanated from him, a power made up of inspiration, insight, understanding, acquiescence, faith, vision and, above all, of full reliance upon the divine assistance of the Omnipotent.

The task of erecting the outer building surrounding the Shrine of the Báb was not a simple one, under the conditions prevailing at the conclusion of the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948. Shoghi Effendi was fully aware of the almost insurmountable obstacles he had to face in order to carry out the diligently prepared architectural project in which time had to play the most important role.

Very little has been written concerning Shoghi Effendi's plans, inaugurated well before the erection of the outer Shrine of the Báb, except for his mention in God Passes By (p. 411): "The dome, the final unit which, as anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is to crown the Sepulchre of the Báb, is as yet unreared." It is quite evident, however, from the vast and extremely beautiful grounds now gracing the environs of the Shrine, that the development of the gardens and of other buildings in its immediate vicinity was a continuous process in his mind, dating from the early days of his Guardianship when, in messages addressed to the Bahá'ís in the Western Hemisphere, he stressed the importance of donations of funds to enable him to purchase additional land around the Shrine. The manner in which he developed the gardens, leaving spacious areas on which other buildings could be erected, is definite proof that he was carrying out a well-envisioned plan for development and establishment of the spiritual and administrative seats of
the World Centre of the Faith.

It is a saga of joy and dismay, of victories and delays, of hope, persistence and vision which if fully narrated would soften and conquer every heart. In the centuries to come, it will be seen that this enterprise, as embodied in this glorious and almost impossible task, was accomplished only by the will and determination of Shoghi Effendi. His boundless foresight and his indefatigable labours were the Pole star of his existence, by which he surmounted the difficulties and obstacles that very often opposed and threatened his plans during all the years of his stewardship.

In the months I spent in the Holy Land during the spring and early summer of 1952, when construction of the outer building surrounding the original Shrine was progressing with considerable difficulty—entailed by the illness and subsequent death of its architect, William Sutherland Maxwell, and by the serious illness of the building's contractor who was never able to return to the work—I learned from Shoghi Effendi's own lips the magnitude of his vision and determination to create on Mt. Carmel the Spiritual Capital of the very first universal Faith. He often cited passages from the Tablet of Carmel, and I became aware that each word of the text of this Tablet was ever present in his mind, as the inspiration guiding him in the vast and magnificent development of that area which, alas, was not to be completed by himself. A glimpse of the glory to come is given in his message dated 27 November 1954.

His oft-repeated, rather critical references to the present neglected condition of the spiritual centres of both Christianity and Islam revealed his determination to enhance, in contrast, the ultimate beauty and future prestige of the World Centre of the Faith, which he so earnestly and lovingly had evolved in his mind and was eagerly trying to bring into reality on Mt. Carmel.

If the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, had met with infinite difficulties in the erection of the inner building of the Báb's Shrine, it is certain that Shoghi Effendi had to face and carry on under an equal if not greater share of obstacles, anxiety, material and financial problems. Only his patience, courage and unfailing faith enabled him to overcome them. With a grieved heart he refers to some of these "recurrent crises" in that historic message to the believers in the United States and Canada dated 25 December 1938, when racial animosity, strife and terrorism were interfering with the project initiated to preserve and extend the area surrounding the Sacred Spots on Mt. Carmel and with the flow of pilgrims, whom he considered the "life-blood" of the heart and nerve centre of the world-embracing Faith of Báb’sú’lláh.

For every difficulty he conquered, his compensation in the joy of achievement was boundless. Day by day, with regular visits, he observed the erection of the superstructure. As the carved marble and granite were placed in position, piece by piece, block by block, his vision took form. The project became a living reality in all its beauty—beyond all expectation. His happiness could not be contained.

How well I remember the light of elation that radiated from his handsome...
face when we gathered at his table for the evening meal, during those days and months after the quadrangular colonnade had been completed in all its majesty and work had begun on the octagon with its slender minarets, like immense white fingers reaching into space as if supplicating the infinity of God's love. It was an unforgettable period of Shoghi Effendi's life: appointment of the Hands of the Cause of God; creation of the International Council, the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice; the projected birth of the twelfth National Spiritual Assembly (Italy-Switzerland); preparation for launching the Ten Year Global Crusade and the very first International Conferences in four continents of the world; acquisition of land at Bahji around the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and beautification of that land; anticipation of completing the Báb's Shrine to coincide with the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's first intimation of His Prophethood revealed to Him in the "Black Pit" (or prison) of Tihrân; drafting by his own hand the cleverly devised map showing all the goals of the Crusade—these were like golden threads which he adroitly manipulated to weave a world-wide pattern of enterprises involving the ingenuity, interest and efforts of every follower of Bahá'u'lláh. All these activities were for him the source of an intense happiness and intimate satisfaction that spurred him forward in the practical execution of God's plan for mankind.

I beg the reader to pause for a moment and consider how the erection of the outer structure of the Báb's Shrine was an integral part of Shoghi Effendi's universal conception of the expansion of the Faith and of the consolidation of its institutions at its World Centre, so that the mighty "Ark" of God would sail on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and bring thereon the "people of Bahá."

On that particular evening to which I have referred, when Shoghi Effendi spoke to me alone, he expressed his deep sorrow that even the immediate members of his family had never understood his persistent efforts to beautify the grounds around the Shrine of the Báb, in anticipation of the day when the Great Shrine, desired by Bahá'u'lláh, would come into existence in all its regal splendour and beauty and be surrounded by gardens of loveliness and perfection, gardens already being laid out during the long years of patient waiting. "Never," he said, "in the religious history of mankind has a Prophet of God been so highly honoured within a century of His Mission, by almost His own generation, and with so much love and world-wide concurrence." Again, the flame of eager enthusiasm was lighting his face as he spoke.
A magnet for tradition

A Bahá'í youth team on Corsica

by Jene Bellows
dered from the Center to the café and back again, while some sat at the little outdoor tables and just watched. Mothers soon learned that their children were safe when they were singing with the Bahá'ís, and now and then a shawl-wrapped woman would step into check on her youngster. For the most part, though, the women stayed indoors at night. Summer nights were for the men and the young.

Daytimes we would walk through the village, talking with the women who stood or sat gossiping in their doorways. They would tell us of their soon-coming harvest work, cutting the grape vines in the fields, and laughingly dare us to join them. They would ask us to tell them of the United States. We would tell of Bahá'u'lláh and His Message, and show them pictures of Bahá'ís in the United States and other parts of the world. They would promise to come to the meetings, but they would never come.

One night, we decided to have an evening of prayers and music. Aileen Woo played her guitar, and Mary LaGasse, who joined the team after completing her flute studies in a conservatory in Nice, gave us a recital. This was to be a different psychological and spiritual approach. We began the meeting with a large group of children and one of the mothers who had come for her child. She stayed to listen, and then asked questions. The next day we found the women of the village had placed the stamp of approval on the Bahá'ís. The word had gotten around that the Bahá'ís had good teachings, and were serious people. Everywhere we went we would hear “Bahá'í or Bahá'u'lláh” following us as we walked. The lady who made Corsican cakes (a form of doughnut) in her little cave-like house in the center of the village, offered us samples to taste, saying “Bahá'ís are good people... eat, eat!”

And so it went. Our team resources were few as compared to the other teams. In order to reach Corsica, one must take a ten hour boat trip from Marseille, or a six hour trip from Nice. The boat schedule is erratic and space is difficult to book in the summer months. Because of this, the team was small. At the beginning there were only three American, Erin Barry, Aileen Woo and Kamal Zein, as fulltime members of the...
Below is part two of an account of the activities of the U.S. Summer Youth Project in France. Mrs. Bellows, the author, was the coordinator of the French Project. The first installment of this two-part series appeared in the October 1973 Baha’i News.

“There were just two weeks remaining in the summer campaign in France that Sunday in August when I returned to the island of Corsica. The teaching teams in Sens and Clermont-Ferrand had had wonderful success, with a total of forty-five declarations between them, but there were no declarations in Vescovato.

The Corsican people, though outwardly friendly, are skeptical, tradition bound and insular. New faces are not accepted readily, but by the time I arrived, the teaching team was considered part of the summer scene in Vescovato.

Our meetings in the small store-front center next to the most popular village cafe were well attended. Many of the same people came nightly to sing the Baha’i songs, to ask questions, and to look at our displays of posters and books. As they came to know us they seemed to want us to have success in teaching the Faith, but with others, not with themselves. They would bring new friends each night saying, “Make him a Baha’i! He’s a Baha’i!” Their approach to religion seemed to be completely without spirit. Some were interested only in politics, and for others the Catholic Church as used as a yardstick to measure everything that they learned about the Faith. Many times we heard the angry remark, “Comme l’église, comme l’église!” (like the church). One young man made a practice of stalking out of the meetings with these words, vowing he would never come back, only to return an hour later to listen some more.

Vescovato was swarming with summer visitors. Ex-villagers and young people who worked and studied on the continent were visiting their families during the holiday month of August. Without question everyone of them came to the Baha’i Center. They came to talk, to argue, to joke, to sing, to listen, but not to declare. Juke box music blared in competition from the café next door, and the people wan-
team. The weeks in July were spent in choosing a goal village, finding housing and transportation with help from the Bahá'ís in Bastia, a large port city of Corsica. At the beginning of August Suzie Jacobs of Bastia was free to become a full time member of the team, and Bashir Ziani, who had come from Marseille, taught with us on weekends. Farhan Yazdani, an intern in the sanatorium in Tattone, eighty kilometers from Bastia, gave us his car for the summer. He joined us whenever he had free time, traveling by the two-car “toonerville trolley” train, or by “stop” (French for hitch-hike). After our nightly meetings, and when the village would go to sleep, the only lights were the stars and the moon, and one swath of bright light that came from the wide open door of the “Boulangerie” (bakery) half-way up the hill overlooking the square. Each night the young men would sit lined up on the wall opposite the bakery door, and call to us to join them as we closed the Center. There, eating warm chocolate brioche, breathing in the good smell of bread baking for tomorrow’s breakfast mixed with scent of cool mountain air, we continued the discussions late into the night. The people admittedly had no patience for reading, but all the time in the world to talk and talk. This was the pattern of our days.

Some nights we planned tightly scheduled programs with slides and talks, and some nights we planned nothing but songs and free discussions. One Sunday we invited our friends to a Unity Picnic by the river. Some of the “sympathisants” and the friends from Bastia joined us that day. Perhaps that was why the villagers stayed away, all except for two young men who hid behind the trees and watched us. It was difficult and frustrating.

Time was running out, and soon we would have to close the Center and leave the island. Feast night, we decided, would be for us. We were tired. We hiked up to the highest point in the village and sat on the edge of a cliff that fell away to the valley below. The night was still and dark. There, with flashlights, we prayed and prayed, and sang, and chanted prayers. And we prayed some more, pouring our hearts out to Bahá'u'lláh. When we scrambled off the cliff edge to solid ground, we found our exit was blocked by villagers! Men, women, children, and youth! All had been sitting silently and observing.

The next night we had five declarations... young men who wanted to go to the cliff and pray. That night we told Andrée Orsoni of the declarations. She said, “Of course! I am a Bahá'í too! I believe in Bahá'u'lláh! Surely He is God.” Andrée works in the café next door to the Center, serving people all day, seven days a week, year around. Her days start at seven a.m. and in the summer months, end at one a.m. A young married woman with a gentle smile and always helpful, she is the information center for Vescovato. Andrée had not had time to come to our meetings. But Valentine Antomarchi, her ten year old niece had come every night. She had learned the Bahá’í songs, and memorized some prayers. And she taught the Faith to her aunt. Andrée is now the strongest Bahá’í in Vescovato.

The next day we started deepening the new believers, another test of patience. There was no way to conduct classes of any kind. People came and went, constantly interrupting. When we found a different location in which to hold the deepening classes, our nightly followers found us, and broke up the meeting. But during the next day, Joseph Gavi, an old man who had searched for a new religion all his life, became a Bahá’í. And Pierrot Giancilli, a man often ridiculed by the villagers because he wasn’t as smart as they thought he should be, declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh. He had waited a long time, watching us. He came to every meeting. His first act of service to the Faith was to find us a larger light bulb for the Center.

Others declared, totalling eleven... eight Vescovatans, and three visitors from the mainland. All this happened the last few days of the campaign.

We left the island with mixed emotions. We knew the necessity of deepening the new believers. We knew the people were difficult to get to know, and that strange consolidation teachers would not be able to make contact with...
them. Hadn't they all hidden themselves the night the Bastia Bahá'ís came to visit? Who was to deepen them?

It's been difficult writing this story of Vescovato. It doesn't build to a grand climax. Instead of reporting that all eleven new Bahá'ís are now deepened and bringing in their friends and families, on my return trip to the village we found that out of the eight that lived there, three declarations were valid. The villagers were genuinely happy to see me back, and surprised and pleased that I wanted to spend my vacation days with them before returning to United States. The vacation atmosphere was gone, the village blacked out completely each night at 8 PM, and daytimes all were hard at work. After five days, I had the feeling that I should either get a job there or leave. It was time to go.

Bashir Ziani and Machid Sabet were with me, and during the course of this last visit we made new friends for the Faith, on a deeper level. Some of the more serious members of the village came to talk with us, people who used to hover around the outside of our meetings, listening and watching. They were genuinely pleased that Bashir had decided to pioneer in Vescovato, and there would be more opportunities to continue to learn about the Bahá'í teachings.

There were a total of sixty declarations in France last summer, far less than during last year's teaching campaign. However, Mr. Vovard, a new believer in Sens, has written me that the new community there has formed a group, and I quote, "is now flying on its own wings". Mayme (Marylee) Clark has stayed behind in Clermont-Ferrand to pioneer, and the reports from that region show that consolidation efforts are moving forward. There are four Bahá'ís, five with Bashir, in the little mountain village of Vescovato, for as I was packing my things to leave the village for the last time, Mamoun came to declare his belief in the Faith. He told me he wants to help bring a Local Spiritual Assembly into existence in Vescovato by Ridván.

Accustomed to stories of thousands of people becoming Bahá'ís in a few days, this may not seem dramatic. But for those of us who taught the Faith in France this summer, great victories were won. Sixty souls have accepted Bahá'u'lláh, and thousands have heard His name for the first time. Television news covered the teaching efforts on two separate occasions, and the ground has been broken for future gains.

For all those who participated in the Summer Campaign in France, the members of the teaching teams and those who provided support with food, lodging, funds and prayers, I would like to close with these words of our Beloved Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

"The souls of the well-favored among the concourse on high, the sacred dwellers of the most exalted Paradise, are in this day filled with burning desire to return unto this world, that they may render such service as lieth in their power to the threshold of the Abhá Beauty"

"How thankful must we be for having been made in this Day the recipients of so overwhelming a favor! Would that we had ten thousand lives that we might lay them down in thanksgiving for so rare a privilege, so high an attainment, so priceless a bounty!"
Lusaka Agricultural Show

A month before the Lusaka Agricultural Show, in Zambia, the Lusaka Local Spiritual Assembly decided that they would apply for a booth. To their surprise and delight one was available—a corner booth near two entrances to Jubilee Hall, right below a restaurant.

They had all the experts they needed to prepare their booth; an architect, an artist, several engineers, an electrician, a seamstress, a carpenter. All the same, it was a hectic time. But by the opening day, surprisingly all was ready.

There were two counters for pamphlet and book displays. On one side a large sign said, "BAHA'I FAITH—1 World 1 Family." Next to this was a screen, upon which was projected the film of the dedication of the Panama Temple. The film attracted large crowds and the people in the restaurant would lean over the railing to watch too.

More than 57,000 people visited the Show. 3,500 pieces of Bahá'í literature were given out. 350 requests for further information were recorded.

More than 20 visitors to the Show are now Bahá'ís, and follow-up teaching meetings are still being held.

Bahá'í classes

About 50 Bahá'í children attend the children's classes which are held every day at Magamba-Kwalonge village, in Tanzania. The two teachers have taught the children songs and prayers.
The 1973 National Youth Conference for New Zealand was held during the weekend of 24-27 August, at Otaki, near Wellington, New Zealand.

The Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia was represented by Auxiliary Board member Dr. John Davidson. Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Gina Garcia was also present at the conference.

Messages were read from the New Zealand National Assembly and the Australian National Assembly, and the following telegram was received from Baha'i youth of Brisbane, "Radiant Baha'i souls in the land of the long white cloud loving prayers for a fruitful and joyous gathering of the children of Baha".

The following cable to the Universal House of Justice was sent during the Conference, "Allah'u'Abha—Two hundred enthusiastic overwhelmed dedicated youthful members Cause Bahá'u'lláh with Board Members Gina Garcia, John Davidson also friends Australia, Tonga, Samoa assembled consulting their privileged part in plans spreading beloved Cause in Australasia—Aroha Nui".

Auxiliary Board member John Davidson spoke during the first evening on "The Administrative Institutions—Channels for the Life Giving Spirit", and with the aid of well constructed flip charts, emphasized the importance of the Bahá'í art of consultation. Auxiliary Board member Gina Garcia led a vital discussion on community life and the feast during the final session on Sunday afternoon. Much interesting consultation centered on the importance of children attending and participating in the 19-Day Feast.

Other interesting sessions were held on the Local Spiritual Assembly, the Covenant and the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, being a Bahá'í youth, and teaching—with specific reference to New Zealand's goals during the interim year.

On Saturday evening, films were shown, including one on the dedication of the House of Worship in Panama, and a newly released "Summer Breeze", featuring Seal and Crofts.

A United Nations Day celebration was conducted by the Bahá'ís of Musuam, a town in the province of Bukidnon, on North Mindanao, in the Philippines, from October 24-26, 1973. Bukidnon is a mountainous and plateau region, with a population of roughly 400,000 people, who engage primarily in corn, coffee, hemp, rice and pineapple farming, and some grazing.

The highlight of their celebration, at Musuam's Fulbright Gardens, was a display of Bahá'í books, magazines, pamphlets, and, of course, UN materials. The Bahá'í exhibition was opened by a Catholic priest and a Protestant woman pastor.

Approximately 400 people came to see the exhibition. On the first day a college student declared his belief in Bahá'u'lláh. Eighty persons attended a slide show fireside given on one evening. Next day the same fireside was attended by sixty people.
Bahá'í's meet President Kerekou

A delegation of Bahá'ís was granted an interview with the newly elected President of the Republic on 21 June. His Excellency, Mathieu Kerekou, spent forty-five minutes with the Bahá'í delegation.

Following a series of questions about the aims and ideals of the Faith, he promised the friends that he would give them support in their endeavors to gain recognition for the Faith and assured them of his permission to utilize the national radio network with the same degree of frequency granted to other religions, if they made application to do so.

The interview with the President was announced on the radio with comments about the nature of the Bahá'í Faith.

Continental Counsellors meet

Photographs taken during the Continental Board of Counsellors Conference in Valparaiso, Chile, November 24-25. The group shot is of the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile, with Counsellor Mahsu'd Khamisi (extreme left). The second photograph shows Auxiliary Board member for Chile, Dr. Eduardo Roe (left), Mr. Khamisi, and Mr. Reed Chandler (right), a member of the National Assembly.
The end of the Great Safari

by Violette Nakhjavani

The day we spent in two villages with the Bahá'ís in Fizi was one of the happiest days of our stay in Zaire. The village of Ngovi, which was the nearest village to the damaged bridge that separated us from hundreds of villages and tens of thousands of believers, was chosen to receive beloved Rúhíyyih Khánum. Almost 2,000 people, mostly believers representing more than forty communities, were gathered. A group of them had walked more than 100 kilometers over the mountains to get to the meeting. These mountain villages are practically cut off from the rest of the region, because even during the dry season only a part of the area is accessible by a car with four-wheel drive. The rest of the area must be reached on foot.

Somehow, news of Amatu'l-Bahá's arrival in their region reached the mountain villages. A delegation came down to the nearest village to find out more about this news. When they arrived, they found the believers streaming in from all over that district to cross the river to attend the meeting in Ngovi; they promptly joined the friends and came to this meeting.

It took the two Auxiliary Board members and the National Spiritual Assembly and Teaching Committee representatives quite some time to calm down these mountain friends and answer their vehement protestations at having been neglected and not properly advised of Amatu'l-Bahá's arrival. With proper notice a much larger group of the believers might have come to welcome her and hear her talk. It should be noted that the omission was not deliberate. Communications in Africa are an ever-present obstacle to organized activity of any kind.

A number of Pygmy Bahá'ís from nearby villages also attended this meeting. The decorations and arches erected in this village were very beautiful. There were five rows of nine poles, set about five meters apart; forty-five poles altogether. These structures were roofed with branches.

The branches were not leafy enough, and the hot morning sun penetrated easily. The ladies present would get up from time to time, remove one of their outer skirts or their cloth headgear, and spread them over the branches to increase the shade. I counted twenty-five pieces of brightly colored material spread gaily over our heads.

The exemplary conduct of the Bahá'ís of Fizi has been for many years a source of pride not only to the Bahá'ís of this region, but also to their National
The Guardian himself visited Africa to introduce this new world Faith.

Amatu'l-Bahá meeting with Rwanda believers near the town of Butare.

Assembly. There are numerous local centers throughout this district, erected wholly by the local believers, without any assistance from outside. The holding of Nineteen Day Feasts and Local Spiritual Assembly meetings is a common thing here. The regular donations of the Fizi believers to the different Funds has been exemplary. Many believers in this district have suffered imprisonment and have been beaten because they were Bahá'ís. Some have been falsely accused or suspected in periods of civil distress and strife. The believers here have sacrificed a great deal because of their love for the Faith. Their greatest blessing and protection has been their strict adherence to the Laws of Bahá'u'lláh, such as abstinence from alcoholic beverages, the practice of monogamy, and non-interference in politics. Disobedience of the law by any individual believer, we were told, is promptly reported to the Local Spiritual Assembly concerned, which makes a detailed report to the National Spiritual Assembly concerned, and recommends a just punishment.

The thirst and eagerness of the Bahá'ís to learn more, to drink in every word uttered by Amatu'l-Bahá, was evidenced on this beautiful, alert and rugged terrain. The unusual and tangible spirit of these believers conveyed itself to the heart of beloved Amatu'l-Bahá, eliciting from her such thoughts and words as to make this meeting one of the rarest I had witnessed.

She said the foundation of all creation is love. It was the love of our Creator that caused us to come into being, and it is our love for Him that will cause us to establish our eternal connection with Him. In The Hidden Words, Bahá'u'lláh says, “Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee.” This is the essence of life. Ruhiyih Khanum then offered the following example: If a thirsty man reaches a spring of water but has no hands or receptacle with which to drink, he knows the life-giving water is there, he knows that he should drink of it in order to live, but he is not equipped to partake of it. The love and the mercy of God are there, abundant and always available for us to reach, but we must make the effort to get to them.

She said the body of man is exactly like that of the animal, because physically man is an animal, with all the characteristics of animals. What distinguishes man from the animals is his soul, the spiritual side of man which survives death and lives eternally. It is this side of man that is created in the image of God, and during our earthly life, must be developed.

On January 14 we left Goma and entered Rwanda, accompanied still by Mrs. Pawlowska. On our way to the capital we stopped to visit several communities. In the village of Nhongo, more than 140 adults and children received Amatu'l-Bahá on a hillside looking out to beautiful, rugged terrain. She spoke of life after death and mentioned several ways we can help our loved ones in the other world, like offering prayers for them or giving money to the Fund in their names, or undertaking some special service to the Cause on their behalf.

In the home of one of the believers, near the town of Butare, where the Cause was first taught by the dear Collisons in 1953, Amatu'l-Bahá met with the Bahá'ís and their friends and spoke to them of the progress of the Faith all over the world, and particularly its progress in Africa.

On our return trip to Kigali, she met with the believers and their friends and held deep discussions on the proofs of the truth of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the village of Taba more than 150 people, mostly non-Bahá'ís, attended Ruhiyih Khanum's talk. She encouraged the believers to make an effort to travel away from their village and to carry this wonderful message of love and brotherhood to others; she spoke of the life of the Master, and recounted how, at the end of His life, when His body was old and His health broken by a lifetime of suffering, exile and imprisonment, He made long and exhausting journeys to carry the Message of His beloved Father to the people of the West; and how, before His passing, He had appealed to the believers to travel and teach.

Amatu'l-Bahá said, “I am a widow, sixty-two years old; I have no children, no sisters, no brothers, no parents. The only reason I have come to Africa, at this age, is in response to the beautiful words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and because the only time the beloved Guardian gave any indication of what I might do after him, was one day, when suddenly, he looked at me and said, 'What will become of you after I die?' This distressed me very much and I pleaded with him not to say such a terrible thing, that I would never live after he was dead; but he continued and said, 'I suppose you will go and visit the friends in different countries and encourage them.' If I can do this at my age,” she said, “of course
you can do it too."

The last village meeting was in Kagina, in Rwanda, where more than 250 people gathered to receive Amatu’l-Bahá. Our meetings were often held on a hillside, outside the crowded village. Here they had erected a special shelter of branches and leaves to protect us from the blazing sun. Ruhiyyih Khánum spoke to them about the purpose of creation and the journey of the soul of man through the different worlds of God. The life of man in this world, she said, is only a period of preparation for the eternal world of God; if, in this life, we make no spiritual preparation for that eternal life, we will be unhappy and undeveloped when we die and pass on to the next world.

In Kigali Amatu’l-Bahá was interviewed on radio about the Bahá’í Faith. This was particularly important because it was the first time news of the Faith was broadcast in the country. The highlight of her visit to Kigali, however, was her audience with President Grégoire Kayibanda, the President of the Republic of Rwanda. This meeting took place on January 17, at the President’s residence. It lasted forty-five minutes, during which time Ruhiyyih Khánum was able to speak on many different topics that deeply interested the President. He was a teacher by profession before entering politics, and is a very thoughtful man, deeply interested in spiritual subjects. Amatu’l-Bahá several times mentioned the name of Bahá’u’lláh and some of His Teachings, particularly the principle of obedience to government. She presented the President with a copy of her own book, Prescription for Living, which interested him very much, and a copy of the pamphlet on obedience to government. I am sure this interview and the personality of Amatu’l-Bahá impressed him deeply and influenced his subsequent decision to grant official recognition to the Faith.

One of the topics Ruhiyyih Khánum touched upon in her talk with Mr. Kayibanda was her love for the people of Africa and the glorious destiny that lies ahead for them. The President was pleased by her statement.

He replied, "I have studied the philosophy of the people of the West, which is very different from the African understanding and belief. You take birth, puberty, maturity and death as one process. When you reach death it is all cut off and stops, that is the end. Then there is something called eternal life, but that is vague and separate from all the different phases of this life.

"We Africans believe in birth, puberty, marriage, maturity, death and the continuation of life into an after life, all as one unbroken line," he said. "We do not see them as separate parts."

Amatu’l-Bahá told him this was exactly the Bahá’í belief and doctrine. His Excellency was very kind and permitted me to take his photograph with Amatu’l-Bahá, which necessitated stepping out into the garden where there was more light.

The purpose of the appearance of all the Manifestations of God is to teach man how to develop his soul and control and harness his animal side. These Divine Teachers give us the shortest directions to reaching our goal; but, man, unfortunately, through ignorance and stubbornness, always chooses the longest way, which is thorny and full of suffering. The physical life is finite and of short duration compared with the eternal and everlasting life of our souls. The soul of man is like a mirror; if this mirror is turned down to the dark earth, it reflects only the mud, but if it is turned upwards to the light of God and to spiritual matters, then it reflects the divine light and glory.

For more than two hours Amatu’l-Bahá spoke on these subjects and answered many questions. It was with great reluctance on everyone’s part that the meeting finally ended. That afternoon we had to go to a second meeting, in the village of Katota.

The Bahá’í Center of Katota was built on the top of a small, steep hill, up high for all to see; the steep path to the Center was decorated with green, flower-covered arches, a beautiful and delicate symbol of love and unity. More than 500 people, mostly Bahá’ís, came to welcome Ruhiyyih Khánum. She praised their building, especially the site they had chosen for it. She said the beloved Guardian always advised and encouraged the believers to buy, if possible, Temple lands on hillsides; this Center is seen by all the villagers and passers-by, and is itself a silent teacher proclaiming the oneness of God, the oneness of religions and the oneness of mankind. This was a long and exhausting day, but that night, when we went to sleep in our dormitory with 68 beds, tired but bliss-

Even presidents and kings were visibly affected by an encouraging word, she said.

At the Kagina the whole hillside was thick with people.

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Amatu’l-Bahá visited thirty-four countries in three years. "If I can do this at my age, you can too," she said.

Tea party at a friend’s home in Burundi.

ful, our souls were uplifted by the memory of our visit with such lovely believers.

The last stage of Amatu’l-Bahá’s tour of Zaire was along the western shore of Lake Kivu. This area has been newly opened to the Faith. In the village of Tshibangodja more than sixty greeted her. They had borrowed a house still under construction for this meeting and had decorated the exterior and interior with flowers.

Because there were non-Bahá’ís present, Rúhíyyih Khánum spoke on the Message of Bahá’u’lláh and its significance in the world today. The children, who have a regular Bahá’í class, recited prayers and sang Bahá’í songs for us. On January 10 we left for Goma; we bade farewell to the friends in Bukavu, and to the believers gathered at the center for an intensive deepening course for several months. Bahá’ís from Fizi and elsewhere had been meeting at the Bukavu Center for an extended teaching institute to deepen a larger number of believers, who would, in turn, conduct similar courses in villages throughout their region.

Goma is the town on the opposite end of Lake Kivu from Bukavu, on the Rwanda frontier. Accompanied by Mrs. Pawlowska and the secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee, who was an excellent translator, we drove over a ghastly dirt road through the hills, to meet in some villages along our way. An Auxiliary Board member, Mr. Shabani Salatiel, one of the oldest believers in Kivu, went ahead to prepare the friends for Amatu’l-Bahá’s arrival. In the village of Kiniezeri, where only three or four months earlier the Message of Bahá’u’lláh had been introduced, the believers had already built a very presentable local center, now beautifully decorated to honor their distinguished guest. More than 120 people anxiously listened to the words of encouragement and love from Amatu’l-Bahá, who spoke on the power and potency of the Word of God. She said it is through this power that hearts are changed, characters are transformed, and the lives of men become mirrors of the Will of God; love must nourish our souls with the transmuting power of the Word of God, and thus allow the Will of God to shine through our lives. 'Abdu’l-Bahá used to tell the believers that He wished for them to be distinguished. In this way people would see in us something different and good and wonder what it was that made us different. They would soon ask us to share it with them.

We said goodbye to the Board member, Mrs. Pawlowska, who had accompanied us on so many trips, and to the dear Kigali believers, and drove off to Burundi, the thirty-third African country on our tour (if one includes the visit to the Seychelles, our thirtieth country). Although we had little hope of being able to see anyone but the dear Egyptian pioneer family who have steadfastly served the Faith there for many years, Rúhíyyih Khánum felt impelled to make this extra journey for their sake. We arrived in Bujumbura after an all-day drive. During our two nights and one day visit, we were able to meet with the Egyptian family and a few of the old and dear believers in the city. Because of the state of emergency which had existed, and the necessary restrictions imposed upon all persons by the government, it was not possible to visit the believers or hold any meetings. In fact, it was little short of a miracle that we got our visa to go there at all, as we were told that no tourists were being permitted entry for the time being.

However, five of the African believers were privileged to meet Rúhíyyih Khánum and share a cup of tea with our group. These dear friends, because of the disturbances in their country, have been deprived of any form of public Bahá’í life. Consequently, their joy at meeting Amatu’l-Bahá was very touching. In her conversation she told them about the dedication of the Panama Bahá’í Temple and about the rapid spread of the Cause of God throughout the world. She encouraged them to be patient and to read and study the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. In her deep love and sympathy for these friends, Rúhíyyih Khánum spontaneously took out a vial of attar of rose from her handbag and anointed the entire company. She had never done a thing like this before, except the Temple dedications, as the believers prepared to view the blessed portraits of Bahá’u’lláh and the Bab. It brought to our minds the words of the Prophet Muhammad, "... and their end shall be perfumed."

On our way back through Tanzania we stopped for a couple of days in the
beautiful town of Arusha. The friends there arranged for a reception in Amatu'l-Bahá's honor, to which a number of distinguished guests were invited. They listened with interest to Amatu'l-Bahá's short talk on "The Spiritual Destiny of Africa." A day-long get-together in the home of one of the devoted pioneer families there enabled many of the believers from the town, as well as nearby villages, to be near Rúhíyyih Khánum, listen to her, ask questions and participate in discussions. During the afternoon the announcement of the engagement of two of the young pioneers, one from Iran and one from India, turned the meeting into a most joyous occasion for all present.

During the three weeks we were in Nairobi to prepare for our final departure from Africa, Rúhíyyih Khánum and I made a five-day, 1,000-mile journey to the northeastern part of Kenya, one of the wilder and more untouched portions of that beautiful country, to visit some of its famous tribal people. We drove to Maralal, Lake Rudolf, across the desert to Marsabit, and then back to Nairobi. By the time we finished driving in Africa, the Land Rover's speedometer registered 36,000 miles. In itself this distance is not great. But considering the type of roads these miles were driven on, one realizes what a tremendous achievement this was. The last engagement of Rúhíyyih Khánum was a very happy day spent with a large number of Bahá'ís in the National House of Worship. She made many observations about Africa, and voiced her conviction that what is needed most in the world today is a sincere demonstration of unity and harmony among the believers, words of encouragement for our distressed fellow men, a positive outlook, seeing the good in people and mentioning it, and ignoring the bad. Even heads of state, presidents, and kings were visibly affected by an encouraging word, she said; how much more the ordinary men, who have so often received nothing from the white man but criticism and ridicule.

Looking back on this period of three years, eight months and eleven days, during which Amatu'l-Bahá was absent from Haifa, almost three years of which were spent on the continent of Africa, I cannot help but feel gratitude at being a witness to one of the greatest acts of devotion and servitude in the history of this period of our Faith. The seeds of the Message of God, spread abundantly throughout this continent by our most beloved Guardian a little over 20 years ago, had, during these last few years, been continuously watered and nurtured by the presence of Amatu'l-Bahá, the last link between humanity and the blessed source of our religion, the four Central Figures of our Faith. Amatu'l-Bahá crossed the continent of Africa twice and with her deep love breathed a new life and a new hope into all its inhabitants. I firmly believe that future generations will study her life, her services and her travels in those lands honored by her visits, and pattern their conduct on her example, inspired to follow in her footsteps. To my fanciful imagination, her visit to the resting-place of her most beloved Shoghi Effendi in London was symbolic. It was in July 1969, from that blessed spot, that she took her leave and started on her long African Safari; and now, in February of 1973, she came back, laying her services and her victories at his feet.
The Kings who said no

A set of eight portraits of kings and rulers to whom Bahá'u'lláh addressed Tablets is now available through the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre.

The pictures are available in black and white prints, black and white glossies, and black and white 35mm slides.

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Dorothy Beecher Baker
By Ugo and Angeline Giachery

Toward the unity of East and West
by A.Q. Faizí

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The Hand of the Cause of God Dorothy Baker.

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Toward the unity of East and West

The meeting between Lua Getsinger and Mużaffari’ɗ-Dîn Shâh

by A. Q. Faizí
Lua remembered the promise given to her by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that one day he would send her to the Sháh of Persia.

Lasting ties of fellowship, mighty bridges of understanding and indissoluble alliances of affection are now being established between the East and the West, once thought hopelessly divided. How infinitely precious is the luster imparted to the resplendent history of the Cause of God by these imperishable bonds of harmony so joyously forged by the loving and devoted servants of Bahá'u'lláh. The darkness of a world of hypocrisy, intrigue, hatred and dishonesty is dispelled by the penetrating force of the divine light of these miracles of love, shedding their radiance and warmth upon all mankind.

An instance of this love and understanding resulted from the meeting between Muzaffar Sháh, King of Persia, during the early part of this century, and the courageous Lua Getsinger. Mrs. Getsinger's services and sacrifices, according to the beloved Shoghi Effendi, conferred luster upon the American Bahá'í community and the influence upon the King resulting from that meeting may have changed the course of Bahá'í history.

The loving hearts of all the scattered friends in the West were melting when they heard reports of the barbaric atrocities being inflicted upon the Bahá'ís in the homeland of Bahá'u'lláh. The Western friends passionately desired to do something to end these interminable persecutions. It happened in 1902, that, when Lua Getsinger was in Paris with her husband, the Sháh had come to Europe to learn firsthand of the material and political progress of the West, about which he had heard fabulous stories and descriptions. Hedged in by his staff, his servants, and his guards, he was inaccessible to any but those who interested him. His life in Paris was a busy one of extensive visits throughout the city; into shops, public places, theaters, gardens and government institutions. Naturally, the French press avidly reported the activities of this Middle Eastern Potentate who was surprisingly enlightened, tender-hearted, and a generous member of an historically rapacious dynasty.

Reading, praying, and meditating on what she might do on behalf of the Faith, Lua Getsinger spontaneously decided to seek an audience with the Sháh to make him aware that the Bahá'í Faith had followers in the West and that they longed to see their brothers and sisters in Persia also enjoying liberty of conscience and freedom of worship, relieved from being continuous targets of inhuman treatment and undeserved cruelties.

Dramatic Appeal

It was difficult to obtain an audience with the King, but Lua's determination would not allow her to concede. First she sought an audience through the Persian representative in Paris. Then she met with the Sháh's Chief Minister, Atábak Aazam. During her attempt to see the Sháh, which seemed an impossible task, Lua constantly remembered the promise given to her by 'Abdu'l-Bahá who assured her that one day he would send her to the Sháh of Persia. Lua was a gentlewoman of the West with great beauty and excellent manners and breeding. Eventually she was confirmed in securing an appointment to offer "dramatic and tragic appeal" to His Majesty, the Sháhansháh.

Muzaffar Sháh was surely intrigued by this handsome woman in an elegant black dress tailored specially for this historic occasion. Lua was given full scope to express her feelings and describe how pitilessly the Bahá'ís were being treated in Persia. She said: "Our souls tremble, our minds are agitated, and our hearts break." Her "irresistible charm and remarkable gifts, with the great and added charm of the spirit" so impressed the King, so won his respect for her courage that he gave his promise, seconded by his Chief Minister, that he would ameliorate the suffering of the Bahá'ís. "Be at ease!" was the Sháh's promise as he dismissed her, "Be at ease... everything will be taken care of."
The King returned to Persia to later become the monarch to sign the first Constitution of his land, earning for him the designation "The Just", and bringing hope to all his subjects that they too might soon have those broad freedoms so hard won throughout the world.

Fire of Persecution

The fire of persecution could be ignited in the capital and provinces of Iran by the slightest spark of the most insignificant event. Mužaffar Sháh's promise to Mrs. Getsinger was fulfilled.

It happened (circa 1905) that a very well-known and learned man from the Jewish community of Hamadán, Háji Mihdí Arjumand, embraced the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Inspired by the Word of God, he was articulate and full of his convictions, and began to propagate the Cause amongst both Jews and Muslims. This proved to be a terrible blow to the prestige of the ecclesiastical leaders of both religions. This new convert was well versed in the Qur'an as well as the Old and New Testaments, and this seemed incredible to the Muslims. "A Jew proving to us the advent of our own Promised One!" was the lamentable cry of every adherent of the Islamic religion in that region. So, the Jewish and Muslim 'ulamas lodged a grave complaint against the new intruder.

The governor, venal and corrupt, saw in the vindictiveness of the Jews and Muslims an opportunity to extort large sums of money from the defenseless Bahá'ís. He used the charges as a basis for their arrest. The governor's agents immediately seized Háji Mihdí Arjumand and several other outstanding believers and carried them to the seat of the governor where they were cast into prison, chained, and detained without recourse to the courts. He then demanded large sums of money for their release.

The Bahá'ís in Hamadán, encouraged by the reports of the King's willingness to intervene in such cases and by his reputation for justice, cabled the Sháh to protest the falsity of the charges and the extortion by the governor. To their great joy and satisfaction the King immediately ordered the governor to free the prisoners and to see to their well-being. Alarmed at this royal intervention, the governor hastened to re-
The ignorant mob accepted the commands of the mulláš as words coming from heaven.

Baha’í is of this particular quarter called Sar-Qabr’aqa, were renowned for their numbers, successful teaching activities and their audacity. When one of the Baha’is died and was buried in the public cemetery, the local mullás seized upon this to incite the mule-drivers, who immediately hung the dead bodies of dogs around the grave and marched in the streets and lanes, attracting a following, shouting and cursing the hapless Baha’is. No human focus for their anger materialized and the mob dispersed without a victim.

A Second Death

By happenstance another Baha’i died soon thereafter; and his body was also interred in the same cemetery. The second burial ignited the full fury of the Muslims, who declared the burial of the Baha’i infidels to be an act of presumptuous desecration of the precincts of holy tombs. Taking advantage of the excitability of the idle holiday throngs, the mullás whipped up the expectant people with their tirades. One by one the mullás stood atop a mound and shouted at the top of their voices: “Attack the Babi houses and shops! Confiscate and plunder! Do not purchase anything from them! Prevent their filling their jars with water from the public reservoirs . . .!” Since the commands came from the priests, the ignorant mob accepted these words as coming from heaven through the mouths of the mullás. Besides, it pleased their appetite for violence and plunder to hear the assurance given to them by their religious leaders that their ignominious deeds would be pleasing to God.

What could the defenseless Baha’is do except to protect themselves by keeping aloof, and in the silence of the hours of suffering pray to God!

Baha’i shops were closed. The Baha’i men and their families sequestered themselves in their homes, knowing that to emerge meant to be set upon and murdered. The humble stores of provisions kept in their homes were quickly consumed. Night after night a local reign of terror against the Baha’is continued. The Muslim terrorists prowled about with guns, swords and knives, seeking their quarry. The fate of the Baha’is wavered on the sword edge of chance. Ultimately, hunger and need would flush them from their retreats.

A few women living in one house, anticipating the inevitable violence and possible death of all the Baha’is, met together and after prayerful consultation decided to appeal directly to the Shâh. They agreed upon a day for concerted action and, by going from roof to roof, asked all the Baha’i women of Sar-Qabr’aqa to leave their houses at the specific hour. They decided to go first to the mansion of the Gran Vazir, the Chief Minister, Atâbak, then on to the court of the Shâh himself.

On the morning set for the appeal, the Baha’i women came forth from their houses dressed in their customary black garb. Fearful but determined, they walked down the lanes and streets of the quarter, first to the gate by which the King usually left the capital city on his hunting expeditions. When they learned that the Shâh would not go hunting that day they turned to the house of the Grand Vazir. They walked slowly through the narrow streets. News of their coming and mission spread throughout the quarter. The volatile Tehranis came running to the spot. Stones flew. The women were greeted with every insult and epithet. Some fell and were maltreated. A few were beaten to death. But the urgency of their mission drove them onward through the sea of opponents, the executions, and the missiles. Like a black spot, they meandered through the narrow streets of Tehran until at last they reached the great house of Atâbak. They were quickly admitted to the large outside courtyard, the bîrûni, extensive enough to swallow the entire procession of women and boys, but small enough to exclude the throng of tormentors.

Informed of their coming, the Minister sent for the court photographer to record their presence and number. After reading their written appeal for protection and justice, he advised the women to proceed immediately to the Shâh’s Court, there to plead directly with the monarch for intervention. Further incited by the rumors of their favorable audience with Atâbak, the mob redoubled its harassment of the women as they proceeded to the gates of the King’s palace.

Two-edged Appeal

It must be remembered that such appeals were dangerously two-edged.
The absolute power of the Sháh was exercised unpredictably. A man could lose his life as easily as he could gain justice.

When kind-hearted Muẓaffar Sháh learned about their complaints and their supplication for relief from harassment and peril, from damage to property and the threats of injury and death, he immediately sent fifty armed cavalry-men and ten farráshes from his private guard to disperse the mob. Further, they were ordered to protect the Bahá'ís and to remain in Sar-Qabráqá district until peace and quiet had been completely re-established. And so it was done. The hand of the King was extended over the hapless Bahá'ís, shielding them from mulláš and muleteers alike.

When the Master received news of the great courage of these Bahá'í women in that glorious episode of the Faith, he promptly dispatched a very eloquent Tablet to them. In it He said they "quaffed the brimful cup... May it be all to their health!" Furthermore, He assured them that the sufferings, insults and iniquities sustained in the path of the Lord were the signs of God's special mercies and bounties, and indicated the coming of the day wherein all would be changed into praise and grace. He said they were candles burning in the gatherings of women and stars shining from the horizon of eternity.

Could it be that the King, when confronted with those incidents, remembered the graceful, black-clad Western woman in Paris, and recalled his promise, "Be at ease... everything will be taken care of"?

The hand of the King was extended over the hapless Bahá'ís, shielding them from the mulláš and muleteers alike.
Bahá’ís and the United Nations
Bahá’í participation in three events of late summer 1973 provided outstanding opportunities to proclaim the Bahá’í solution to world problems before distinguished audiences. The Bahá’í International Community was invited to send representatives to the United Nations seminar on “The Family in a Changing Society,” London; the “World Congress on World Peace Through Law,” Abidjan, Ivory Coast; and the United Nations seminar on “Youth and Human Rights,” San Remo, Italy.

The Bahá’í International Community Representatives were able not only to address delegates of UN member nations, UN non-governmental organizations, and internationally-known jurists, but, in addition, were able to circulate statements on Bahá’í perspectives on current issues to all participants and the press. The Bahá’í representatives and alternates made many valuable personal contacts, as well as discussing the Faith and answering questions.

Inaugural session of the conference.

Dr. Aziz Navidi

Law

An event that attracted considerable international press attention recently was the Sixth World Conference on World Peace Through Law, in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. More than 2,000 lawyers, jurists, and government ministers, from over 100 nations met between August 26-31, to discuss the strengthening of international law and the promotion of world legal institutions at a time when the evidences of chaos and disorder were reaching painful and epidemic proportions throughout the world. The press coverage reflected an interest in seeing whether luminaries of the legal world, in the relative isolation of a scholarly conference, in an untroubled corner of the world, could devise some common outlooks on the more prickly legal issues of the day. On the agenda were such volatile items as hijacking, human rights, multi-national business, the regulation of ocean resources, the treatment of refugees, and population control.

The conference, a biennial event, was sponsored by the World Peace Through Law Center, a worldwide
The Bahá’í representative spoke immediately following the message of the President of the Ivory Coast.

organization of lawyers, judges, and legal scholars, determined to educate the nations about the potential for world order with justice, under the rule of law. The Center, like the Bahá’í International Community, is a Non-Governmental Organization affiliated with the United Nations. In addition to attempting to unravel the monumental legal snarls of this period, the delegates attended an August 25th ceremony to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Human Rights. On the second conference day, work sessions on harmonizing African national needs with the requirements of international law were conducted, as were sessions on the values fostered by African tribal law.

The international observance of World Law Day, on August 26, culminated with a program in Abidjan. World Law Day is an annual event sponsored by the World Peace Through Law Center. For 1973 the Center made an effort to demonstrate to the more than two billion followers of the world’s religions the purposes and goals shared by religion and law in building peace. A handbook entitled “Religion and Law” was published for the occasion. It outlined the Center’s thesis on the complimentary nature of religious and secular law. In the words of the Center’s President, Charles S. Rhyne: “as transnational contacts among individuals grow in importance with the technological miniaturization of the world, we believe it well to spotlight the moral basis of law and its expanding coverage of individuals. This focusing of attention on the similarities between law systems and religions, and the impact which these great human forces can have by common efforts on the creation of the peaceful world order with justice for all, is a most worthwhile endeavor,” he said. Neither the volume on “Religion and Law”, nor the conference program itself, initially afforded an opportunity for the presentation of a Bahá’í view on world peace. In fact, the Center’s booklet attributed many of the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith to Islam. Nonetheless, a Bahá’í delegate sent to Abidjan by the Bahá’í International Community to attend the conference managed, upon his arrival, to partially rectify the oversight.

Dr. ‘Aziż Navid’í, himself an international lawyer, and a resident of Mauritius, serving as representative of the Bahá’í International Community for Africa, arrived in the Ivory Coast four days before the start of the conference. He promptly met with Judge William S. Thompson, Secretary-General of the sponsoring center, to request the allotment of time for a Bahá’í presentation on world peace. Judge Thompson indicated that permission could be granted by the permanent chairman of the conference, Chief Justice Alphonse Boni, of the Ivory Coast Supreme Court. Dr. Navid’í presented his request to Justice Boni, who although never having heard of the Bahá’í Faith, was sufficiently impressed with his petitioner to grant him his wish. He promised Dr. Navid’í an opportunity to speak during the official reception by the Ivory Coast Government to inaugurate the conference, immediately after the message from the Head of State, President Felix Houphouet-Boigny. Dr. Navid’í later characterized his amazing good fortune as “a miracle from Bahá’u’lláh”.

On the evening of the 26th, exactly as promised, Chief Justice Boni, upon reading the presidential message, introduced Dr. Navid’í to the more than 2,000 people assembled at the University of Abidjan.

Dr. Navid’í said that man’s collective life had passed through many stages: infancy, adolescence, and now had entered its stage of maturity. Everything that in earlier times had served the needs of humanity was no longer sufficient. In abandoning its adolescence it acquired new virtues, attained a new moral level, achieved new capacities, and began to develop a new kind of civilization, infinitely richer and more noble than any which preceded. But at the same time it developed characteristics and behavior that endangered its very survival.

Since the turn of the century man has pursued the elusive goal of peace, he said. But the goal has been unattainable. “We are the victims of war, of animosity and strife among nations, races, religions, classes, sects, and colors,” he observed. Among the af-
afflictions to humanity he enumerated: neo-colonialism, the exploitation of man by man, the spiraling arms race, political and economic rivalries, intolerance, ignorance, egotism, suspicion, the increasing severity of terrorism, inequality, madness, crime, etc. Alone and collectively, these maladies have limited man's ability to establish peace. "The malaise and suffering which has afflicted humanity since the last World War is the result, for the most part, of the world's pervasive lack of spirituality," Dr. Navid'i concluded.

While afflictions become more aggravated the various peoples of the world depend increasingly on one another. "It is no longer possible for anyone to isolate himself with the expectation of self-sufficiency," Dr. Navid'i said. In addition to the political ties, there are inextricable commercial, agricultural, educational, and a myriad other ties that are reinforced each day. "It therefore appears that universal peace and the unification of humanity can be realized in this epoch," he said. This peace, however, "is not supported and cannot be safeguarded, unless it is in accord with the Divine Ordinances, applied by a Divinely inspired Physician." It is from these ordinances that man must fashion his laws. "A new world order, for the establishment of universal peace, has become legally possible, socially imperative, and divinely ordained," he said. Peace, should come, he estimated, as the result of the spiritualization of the world and the fusion of its peoples and beliefs. "The Bahá'í Peace Program which Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, revealed more than a century ago, contemplated from the beginning the establishment of a peaceful order," Dr. Navid'i said. "Our epoch has unalterably demonstrated the interdependence of the earth's peoples. It is upon this reality that the Bahá'í Peace Program rests."

Before it was even clear that he would be a conference speaker Dr. Navid'i visited the editor of the single daily newspaper in the country, Fraternité, requesting publicity on the Bahá'í Faith. The editor remembered meeting Rúhíyyih Khánum on her visit to the Ivory Coast, and confided to Dr. Navid'i that at that time he tried to familiarize his countrymen with the Faith through his thoughtful and sympathetic articles. He offered to publish a statement on the Faith if Dr. Navid'i was allowed to speak; but he was skeptical of this transpiring because the program was planned and confirmed well in advance. He may have been surprised by Dr. Navid'i's successful encounter with Justice Boni, but true to his word, the day after Dr. Navid'i's presentation, he published the text of his remarks, with a photograph.

On August 28, Mr. Albert Lincoln, Dr. Navid'i's alternate, from the Central African Republic, was invited to address a study session on the revision of the United Nations Charter and about the necessity to establish a world commonwealth of nations. He explained at that session that Bahá'ís support the concept of the United Nations, as well as many of its programs around the
The London seminar on family life was the first ever held under the auspices of the United Nations on that subject.

At opening of conference Mr. Charles Rhyne (center), with Ivory Coast President Felix Houphouet-Boigny (left), and Mr. William S. Thompson (right).

world. He spoke at length about those characteristics of the Bahá’í Faith which encourage the development of a sense of world community, and suggested that it would be upon this foundation that a world peace would be built. On the same day Dr. Navid’í addressed a work session considering ways of strengthening the International Court of Justice.

Throughout the conference both men were able to meet informally with many of the attending dignitaries, jurists, scholars, and lawyers. A copy of Dr. Navid’í’s remarks were presented to people attending the conference as well as copies of the pamphlet, “Pattern for Future Society”.

Women

The two other international events attended by representatives of the Bahá’í International Community were not as well publicized, or possibly even as dramatic, but the problems confronted were also at the very core of our modern existence, and Bahá’ís were able to make important contributions to the consultation.

Madame Lea Nys, an Auxiliary Board member for Belgium, and her alternate, Mrs. Shomais Afnan, represented the Bahá’ís at the United Nations Inter-Regional Seminar on “The Family a Changing Society” in London, July 18-31. Mrs. Nys and Mrs. Afnan, one from the West the other from the East, were soon referred to affectionately by their co-conference as the “Bahá’í twins.” The Bahá’í representative to the seminar on “Youth and Human Rights,” in San Remo, Italy, August 28 to September 10, was Mr. Foad Katirai, a student of International Trade at Oxford University.

The seminar on family life was organized by the United Nations at the instance of the United Kingdom, as part of a UN policy of providing advisory services to member states in the field of human rights. This London seminar was the first ever held on the subject of the family under United Nations auspices.

The role of women in the family has been a major concern of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in recent years. A number of studies, particularly concerned with the status of women in family law, have been completed or set in motion, for the Commission’s deliberation. Several of these studies came up for discussion at the London seminar, such as reports on the status of unmarried mothers, and the legal capacity of married women. Other studies are being readied for submission to the 25th session of the Commission in 1974.

Participants from 28 countries attended the London seminar, as did representatives of 30 Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, including the Bahá’í International Community. The United Nations Children’s Fund was represented, as well as UNESCO and the World Health Organization. Several intergovernmental organizations were represented; the League of Arab States, and the Organization of American States, among them.

Some of the topics discussed at the fourteen-day conference were the family in a changing society, problems and responsibilities of its members; allocation of rights and responsibilities within the home; the welfare of children; the responsibility of society toward children; the special problems of working parents; and the national and international measures required to promote the principle of the equality of men and women in the family.

In her brief address to the conference Madame Nys said the importance of the family should be understood within the context of great forces of change propelling mankind toward a single world society.

“Marriage is the foundation of a good family,” she said; “good families in turn are the foundation of a stable civilization.” Love, needed in marriage more than in other relationships, is essentially a divine force that creates spiritual and physical union, she said.

“The most important person in the family is the mother,” she noted.
"Equality of rights, status and opportunities for women and men is recognized in the Bahá'í Faith as a divine law, but the education of girls as future mothers, and therefore first educators of mankind, is even more important.

"Their obligation as parents constitutes the first and foremost duty for husband and wife, equally binding on both. Parents must promote the oneness of mankind through example and develop in their children the growing consciousness that 'The world is but one country and mankind its citizens'."

Among the rights of children, in addition to those normally recognized, such as academic instruction, she listed as most important instruction in human and spiritual virtues, stressing the latent divine nature of man. This so that "free from all prejudice they may grow up in turn to form their own families in the service of each other and of mankind," she explained.

The essential, long-term solution to the ills of the planet, according to Mrs. Nys, lies in the transformation of human values. "We believe that nothing short of the kind of change that is beginning to take place in Bahá'í communities throughout the world, where the basic transformation in purpose and character occurring in each individual is reflected in his social and family life, will be able to provide the highest quality of human life on this planet. A new consciousness must emerge, based on understanding of the spiritual nature of man and belief in the organic oneness of humanity," she told the assembly.

Both Madame Nys and Mrs. Afnan were invited to receptions, dinners, and lunches where they spoke further about the Faith to participants from a variety of countries many were given Bahá'í literature.

There were many interesting conclusions agreed upon by the participating national and international organizations. Perhaps of most significance was the agreement that the family, whatever its form or pattern, fulfill many basic biological, sociological and psychological needs of the individual, essential to the stability of nations. "It should therefore be preserved and receive the full support that society could give in fulfilling these fundamental functions," the participants concluded in their post-conference report.

The participants also noted a growing acceptance of the principle of the equality between men and women. This was considered a major influence on family life, and upon the perceived roles of men and women within the family. It was observed that the traditional picture of the father as the sole provider and head of the family, was no longer consonant with the reality of many present-day family situations, where women find it necessary or challenging to work. "The tradition which designated the mother responsible for the entire care of the children and all the household tasks made it difficult for couples to adjust to the changing requirements of the family," the participants' report stated. A trend was said to be developing, whereby functions such as child-rearing and maintenance, as well as employment outside the family, are no longer strictly identified as the sole responsibility of one or another of the marriage partners. These functions are increasingly being shared by mothers and fathers, the report maintained.

Despite the increasing tendency to share household responsibilities several participating groups insisted that great care should be taken "to preserve the positive aspects of the woman's role as mother and homemaker, and her confidence and dignity in the face of the trend towards greater involvement of women in the economy, and in community affairs."

Although participants noticed an accelerating trend toward equal partnership in decision-making between spouses, it was felt, nonetheless, that in still too many instances, the husband was, in law, the head of the family, enjoying a dominant status to that of the wife. "More often than not," the report stressed, "the wife would not enjoy the legal capacity to contract, or bring suit or defend in court without the consent of her husband." Too often, the report

Conferees agreed that the family, whatever its form or pattern, fulfills many needs of the individual and is essential to the stability of nations.

Participants at youth seminar. Mr. Katirai, the Bahá'í representative, is seated at extreme right.

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said, decision-making rests with the husband. As the father, he is the sole guardian of his children, and is entitled to administer the property of his wife, without her consent or participation. Several participants consequently referred to the need for protective legislation for women in such circumstances.

In all, there were almost 100 recommendations made by the participants at the London seminar.

Youth

The two-week seminar on “Youth and Human Rights,” in San Remo, explored ways by which young persons can participate more effectively in the implementation of the principles established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in national and international programs serving the cause of human rights. Much attention was devoted to the problem of creating educational conditions that would enable young people to fully develop their potentialities, and to strengthen their respect for human rights. Observers from 28 countries attended the UN seminar.

At the end of the seminar many recommendations were unanimously adopted and published in the seminar report. Among them: that governments ratify the existing international covenants on human rights; that governments establish educational means to promote in young people the respect for human rights; that the member states of the United Nations include more young people in their delegations to the General Assembly.

In the Baha’i view, Mr. Katirai said to the seminar, human rights are God-given rights, and youth have perhaps a greater responsibility than other segments of the population, in insuring that the human rights of all people are respected.

“The first step in this direction is the arousal of the consciousness of youth to the oneness of mankind,” he said. “Before unity and agreement are firmly established among the peoples of the world, we are convinced, nothing can be... thoroughly effected.” Youth must, through a process of self-enlightenment, instill in itself a global perspective, and adopt a new set of values, permeated by such characteristics as truthfulness, kindness, sincerity, and justice. The expression of these values, he said, will be the respect and promotion of human rights.

Both Mr. Katirai, and his alternate, Mr. Sohrab Youssefian, were able to speak about the Faith to the press, a representative of the Vatican, and participants from many nations.
Dorothy Beecher Baker

Reflections on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of her passing

by Ugo and Angeline Giachery
‘Abdu’l-Bahá sensed the virtues and capacities of young Dorothy, who was to become an outstanding Baha’i teacher and administrator.

Mrs. Baker, (second from left), during her last public appearance in Pakistan, in 1954.

“This is a Matchless Day. Matchless, must, likewise, be the tongue that celebrateth the praise of the Desire of all nations, and matchless the deed that aspireth to be acceptable in His sight.”

Gleanings, p. 39

This passage from the writings of Baha’u’llah was a favorite of Hand of the Cause, Dorothy Baker, and she quoted it frequently. An eloquent teacher and brilliant administrator, Mrs. Baker rendered outstanding service to the Faith, and characterized herself by distinguished words and deeds. On the twentieth anniversary of her passing Dr. and Mrs. Giachery recall Mrs. Baker’s life and her special role in the development of the Baha’i community.

Dorothy Beecher Baker, a granddaughter of the famous author of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe, was born in Newark, New Jersey, on the 21st of December, 1898. Her grandmother, Betty Beecher (known to the Baha’is as Mother Beecher), embraced the Baha’i Faith early in this century; later her parents also accepted the Cause of Baha’u’llah.

In 1912, when she was a young girl, Dorothy’s grandmother took her to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master called Mrs. Beecher on the following day and said, “I called you to say that your granddaughter is my own daughter. You must train her for Me.” Indeed, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sensed the virtues and capacities in Dorothy, who was to become one of the outstanding teachers and Baha’i administrators of the Western Hemisphere. Following graduation from college Dorothy spent a few years teaching school in Newark. She was offered a position to teach at the Ethical Culture School in New York but did not accept it. She then married Frank Albert Baker. They had two children, William and Louise. The family settled first in Buffalo, New York and then in Lima, Ohio. In Lima their address became well known to almost every believer in America and Canada. Dorothy’s life was completely devoted to the Faith. She was gifted with a warm, convincing, and brilliant eloquence and was able to teach with great impetus and enthusiasm. Her first public talk was given at a Ridván celebration at Foundation Hall at the House of Worship in about 1929. After that talk Mrs. Baker was frequently asked to speak at public meetings. She was elected a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of North America and served for 16 years. She was chairman of the Assembly for many of those years and resigned in 1954, intending to pioneer. Hand of the Cause Horace Holley served with Mrs. Baker on the NSA for much of that time. He characterized her role in this way: “Dorothy Beecher Baker’s public and administrative Baha’i activities came to fruition during the period when the forces of the American Baha’i community were being summoned to undertake great teaching missions. She was carried to the heights of intercontinental Baha’i achievement by the impetus of the Master’s Divine Plan released through the Guardian, and she poured forth with superb energy and brilliance her unique contribution to the Seven Year Plan and World Crusade.” Mrs. Baker had a special ability to speak to young people and lectured in hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the world on the Message of Baha’u’llah. She journeyed six times to Latin America, where she assisted in teaching, addressed various groups on the subjects of peace and international relations, and helped establish many local communities, as well as the Central American National Spiritual Assembly. “Wherever she went, she was almost inevitably cast in the role of problem-solver. She not only led people to Baha’u’llah, but also helped them to meet and solve their problems in His way.”

Mrs. Baker was an observer at the Chapultepec Inter-American Conference of 1945, and was a representative of the Baha’is of North America at the San Francisco Conference later that year, where the Charter of the United Nations was drawn up. She was deeply interested in harmonious interracial relations, and for some years was Chairman of the Race Unity Committee of North American Baha’i community. She represented the Baha’is in countless gatherings of Negro, Indian, Jewish and white people. At the very beginning of the Seven Year Plan (1946-1953) Mrs. Baker visited Ireland, England, France, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and
Luxembourg, Switzerland, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. During this trip she encouraged the pioneers, and lectured to the general public in the capitals of all those countries. We well remember her visit to Rome, her charm, smiling countenance, and oratory, with which she conquered many a heart. The believers in that city who had the privilege of meeting her, still remember the glow of her kindness and love. Even in recent years we have met many believers who, with a tone of pride, have said, “I first heard of the Faith from Mrs. Baker,” or, “it was Mrs. Baker who brought me into the Faith.” On 24 December 1951, Mrs. Baker was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi, among the first contingent of the Hands. Her devotion, enthusiasm, profound knowledge of the teachings, and eagerness to serve, all of which had made of her a true champion of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, had thus been rewarded.

As a Hand of the Cause Mrs. Baker participated in the four Intercontinental Conferences held in late 1953. We well remember her in Stockholm and New Delhi, where her grace and eloquence were at their zenith. She visited the then Prime Minister of India, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, and during the New Delhi Conference sat by that statesman, radiating purity and distinction, and conversing with him with poise and conviction for well over a half hour. At the request of Shoghi Effendi she remained in India for two months, traveling far and wide, lecturing at some fifty colleges and universities. The seeds she planted in the hearts of so many youth have now blossomed, and in the last few years India has been afire with the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

It was upon her return flight from India, on 10 January 1954, that the plane on which she was traveling, exploded over the Island of Elba, Italy, and sank into the sea. She was on her way to rejoin her husband to pioneer on the West Indies island of Grenada, north of Trinidad.

No survivors of the crash were found. On Monday, January 18, on an Italian naval corvette, we went with the Baker family to the site of the disaster. Floral wreaths were thrown into the sea from the ship and from a Naval plane flying overhead while the bugles sounded taps and flags were lowered to half staff. We read Bahá'í prayers on deck, throwing handfuls of carnations upon the water. The service lasted about 15 minutes.

Returning to the Island, we had an opportunity to speak of the Faith to the ship’s commander. Other people in Porto Azzuro became interested in the Faith, and in Italian newspapers, the accounts of the disaster referred to Mrs. Baker’s association with the Bahá’í Faith. It was discovered that the day after the accident, a pamphlet written by May Boles Maxwell entitled “An Early Pilgrimage,” was found at sea and given to a British newspaperman, who, after perusing it for a few minutes, threw it back into the water, having attached no importance to it. In his cablegram to the Bahá’ís on the occasion of Mrs.

Wherever she went she was almost inevitably cast in the role of problem-solver.

Mrs. Baker, (left), in India; with the Maharani of Scindia, (center), and Mrs. Shirim Boman, (right), a resident Bahá’í teacher.
To tread the eternal path with dignity and joy is the birthright of every man.

The Hands of the Cause attending the first Intercontinental Bahá'í Teaching Conference, in Kampala, Uganda, February 1953. Dorothy Baker is second from right.

Baker’s passing, the Guardian spoke of her special role in Bahá’í history:

“HEARTS GRIEVED LAMENTABLE, UNTIMELY PASSING DOROTHY BAKER, DISTINGUISHED HAND CAUSE, ELOQUENT EXPONENT ITS TEACHINGS, INDEPATIGABLE SUPPORTER OF ITS INSTITUTIONS, VALIANT DEFENDER OF ITS PRECEPTS. LONG RECORD OUTSTANDING SERVICE ENRICHED ANNALS CONCLUDING YEARS HEROIC OPENING EPOC FORMATIVE AGE BAHÁ’Í DISPENSATION.”

We vividly remember our last goodbye to Dorothy on a November morning in New Delhi. She was to leave the hotel for another lecture at a college. Elegant in her simplicity, she looked like a young girl going to a feast. Although she was suffering with a bad cold and a temperature, she looked as beautiful as ever, smiling with a sweetness that cannot be forgotten. Our separation was moving and affectionate. The greatest tribute we can pay to the memory of the beloved Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker, is the certitude that her sacrifice, born from her deep dedication to the Faith, was made in the same selfless spirit of service which distinguished her brilliant life. Her noble personality shall never be forgotten by ours and countless generations of followers of Bahá’u’lláh.

2. Mr. Edwin Matton, Ibid, p. 4
3. Ibid, p. 1

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The Path to God

by Dorothy Baker

He who would view religion impartially must remove himself sufficiently from any single part of it to look upon the panorama. At first he will see only wilderness, and will become confused, berating the sense of honesty that bade him see. Looking back through history, however his eye will catch sight of a white highway somewhat hidden by the thickets of the wilderness, but very straight, and marked at definite intervals by brilliant lights. What is that path through the maze of human thought and feeling? Is it a figment of the imagination, or has a merciful Creator given to His created a planned Way to Him? Steadily rising in the world today is the disturbing belief that religious institutions have failed. The sincere seeker finds in every house of Worship, be it Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism or Muhammadanism, the same exalted sentiments of worship and of brotherhood, yet sees the failure of each to translate that sentiment into the disposition of its people. The church, a house divided against itself, is torn by nationalism, racial suppressions and economic injustice. At such a time Bahá’u’lláh recalls us to the oneness of the foundation of all religions and to the essential rightness of that foundation. Religion has never failed, though human institutions have had their hours of birth and death.

Even earthly cultures have resulted directly or indirectly from the impetus of revealed religion. The lettered Jews sprang from the spiritual genius of Moses; the glory of ancient Persia reflects the fire of Zoroaster; unfolding Europe lifts her spires in homage to the glorious Nazarene; the mathematics of the Arabs of Cordova, the architecture, astronomy and poetic genius of the Muhammadan world in the middle centuries bespeak in like manner the gift of Muhammad. The force which has repeatedly, and often out of the blackest despond, brought into being such brilliant marks of progress, and more amazing still, renewed that grip on life, joy and salvation which characterizes the spring season of a great religion, is the eternal Christ, the Word that is in Prophethood. Through it man is imbued with the Holy Spirit and is motivated by a master emotion. One hundred years after Jesus lived on earth Greek Christian would not have raised sword against Roman Christian. He would have been conscious first that he was Christian, second that he was Greek. Today one is first German, French, American or English, and as an afterthought we are Christians together. In the spring-season of Christianity the master emotion was a com-
mon love for God, and other emotions were sublimated to it. Nothing short of such vitality can today raise to the point of good health the spiritual temperature of the world.

That the seed of such a renewal is even now at work cannot be doubted. While on the one hand we have a falling away of faith, on the other hand are to be found signs of the budding of new spiritual powers. Thousands of seekers, Galahads in quest of Truth, have scaled walls of superstition and intolerance which were centuries in the making. The Message of Baha'u'llah, divine in origin and free from artificial wrappings, constitutes a new light to the seeker and reopens before his eyes the kingdom of heaven.

But what is the kindom of heaven? Does the goal we seek pertain entirely to other-worldliness? Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." One would do well to ask oneself each morning, "Do you live in heaven?" Neither heaven nor hell can be limited to place, but rather are described by Baha'u'llah as conditions. To the Eskimo hell has ever been an ice-floe to which one infinitely bound; to the Arab it is boiling oil into which one is cast; to some of the ancients it appeared as a refuse heap outside the city gate. The paint brush of symbolism has faithfully portrayed in terms of mortal experience, a state of utter deprivation, suffering and loss that is applicable to both this world and the next. Heaven, on the other hand, is conscious nearness to God, and this condition too is possible on earth. To be sure, the worlds beyond are an endless reality, for the soul, a creation of God, cannot be annihilated. As the child in the womb of the mother develops faculties for its earthly experience, similarly we develop in this matrix world our spiritual sight, hearing, speech and the like, for an abundant life through all the further realms of God. Indeed, so infinitely precious is that continuance that Baha'u'llah says, "If anyone could realize what hath been ordained—he would immediately yearn with a great longing for that immutable, exalted, holy and glorious station."

To continue in heaven, one must necessarily be born into that condition here. 'Abdu'l-Baha, explains that to be in heaven is to "move in the atmosphere of God's Holy Will." Surely this is heaven, but who can discover the will of God? Baha'u'llah gives us the key. "Whatsoever hath been revealed in His Tablets is but a reflection of His Will. So complete must be thy consecration that every trace of worldly desire will be washed from thy heart. Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants and the keys of My mercy for My creatures."

Revelation, the open door to paradise, is indissolubly linked with the Messenger. With one gracious gesture God bestows upon the world a divine physician, an infallible law-giver, a perfect pattern of His holy attributes, and a point of union of a man with his God. Happy is the heart that directly experiences fusion with the Manifestation of God's Perfection. Paul would be made alive in Christ Jesus. Ali, youthful disciple of this day, proclaimed as he gave his life, "If I recant, whither shall I go? In him I have found my paradise." The Word is the bread of life, one Word throughout the ages and cycles, though the speakers have been many. How well has God done His part! The soul, refreshed by the heavenly bread and waters of Revelation, finds itself on the ancient, eternal path. To tread that path with dignity and joy is the birthright of every man. Therefore once in a thousand years God in His great compassion clears the path of the accumulation of superstition and imagination that the way may be made plain once more for the sincere seeker. And this has He done today through Bahá'u'lláh.

But we have yet to travel that path, to become steadfast to enter the City of Certitude, and to come into spiritual possession of life through the motivation of the Will of God. Granted that God has done His part; what steps are left to us?

The call of God is simple, clear, compelling. Baha'u'llah reminds us that the first need is for a pure heart and a desire to become ever more pure. He proclaims, "My first counsel is this: possess a pure, a kindly and a radiant heart that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting." A static purity cannot exist. Today's degree must melt into tomorrow's. Even the fire of tests and

When our beliefs are raised to the plane of deeds and our hearts harmonized with a common passion, then society will inherit a new earth.

The Hands of the Cause at Third Intercontinental Conference, in Swe­den. Mrs. Baker is at far left, second row.
. . . renunciation is still the law of rebirth, and he who would side step this law in his life will be spiritually impoverished.

Delegates to Central American Annual Convention in 1952. Mrs. Baker is fourth from left, sitting.

ordeals are a blessing to this end. “With fire we test the gold,” Bahá’u’lláh writes. How else can gold be purified? Great souls discover that they are either the possessors or the possessed. Life, the teacher, becomes the enemy of the soul who, steeped in self-love, is the continual prisoner of the clutch of circumstance; but the friend of one who, purified of self-demands, counts as pure gain the lessons of this sometimes ruthless teacher, and learns to possess it all, a happy treasure, for the sake of God, the Dear, the Knower.

The second step is assuredly the attainment of understanding. Meditation and prayer, ’Abdu’l-Bahá assures us, are the wings of our understanding. Facilities allowed to rust in blind imitation or fallen into disuse, must be called into activity. ’Abdu’l-Bahá points out that the mind is like a mirror which reflects that to which it is turned. If the mirror reflects that to which it is turned. If the mirror reflects the lustful and sordid, can the owner claim better than the lowest condition? If the same mirror becomes the reflector of arts and scientific realities its status is undeniably high. Greatest of all is the noble station of the soul that turns its mirror toward the spiritual Sun of Revelation and becomes warmed and illumined by its direct ray. A well-known business genius attributes a large measure of success to undisturbed meditation upon his affairs for fifteen minutes at the beginning of each day. He is undoubtably correct. How much more, then, it is necessary that the soul seeking a heavenly condition learn the use of such a faculty for the reflection of the kingdom of heaven. More interesting still, consider the possible result of a whole world of people using the power of meditation, or reflection, for the dispensing of God’s affairs on earth. Such meditation is akin to prayer.

What sincere traveler would not give the half of his kingdom to consciously walk and talk with God? Yet the science of prayer is so little understood that in the words of Tennyson we are:

“A child crying in the night,
And with no language but a cry.”

How different the mature experience of the heart that turns in complete abandonment to the Will of God, never dictating always listening. The fears, bafflement and complexities of the world fade before the grandeur of his adoration. His heart is a shrine in which he meets with his Beloved. Four suggestions are made for us by ’Abdu’l-Bahá. “The worshipper must pray with a detached spirit, unconditional surrender of the will, concentrated attention, and spiritual passion.”

When ’Abdu’l-Bahá was in New York, He called to him an ardent Bahá’í and said, “If you will come to me at dawn tomorrow, I will teach you to pray.” Delighted, the man arose at four and crossed the city, arriving for his lesson at six. With what exultant expectation he must have greeted this opportunity! He found ’Abdu’l-Bahá already at prayer, kneeling by the side of the bed. He followed suit, taking care to place himself directly across. Seeing that ’Abdu’l-Bahá was quite lost in his own reverie, he began to pray silently for his friends, his family and finally for the crowned heads of Europe. No word was uttered by the quiet man before him. He went over all the prayers, he knew then, and repeated them twice, three times—still no sound broke the expectant hush. Supreptitious he rubbed one knee and wondered vaguely about his back. He began again, hearing as he did so, the birds heralding the dawn outside the window. An hour passed, and finally two. The man was quite numb now. His eyes, roving along the wall, caught sight of a large crack. He dallied with a touch of indignation but let his gaze pass again to the still figure across the bed. The ecstasy that he saw arrested him and he drank deeply of the sight. Suddenly he wanted to pray like that. Selfish desires were forgotten. Sorrow, conflict, and even his immediate surroundings were as if they had never been. He was conscious of only one thing, a passionate desire to draw near to God. Closing his eyes again he set the world firmly aside, and amazingly his heart teemed with prayer, eager, joyous tumultuous prayer. He felt cleansed by humility and lifted by a new peace. ’Abdu’l-Bahá had taught him to pray! The “Master of Akka” immediately arose and came to him. His eyes rested smilingly upon the newly humbled believer. “When you pray,” He said, “you must not think of your aching body, nor of the birds outside the window, nor of the cracks in
the wall!" He became very serious then, and added, "When you wish to pray you must first know that you are standing in the presence of the Almighty!"

What balm is in detachment. What peace is in true surrender to His Will. And as to spiritual passion, who shall enter paradise without it? Verily I believe that God will choose to lift into His very Presence the least peasant who hurst himself upon the breast of God in fiery supplication in preference to the kings and learned men of the whole earth if to the latter the smug complacency of a dulled age is sufficient. In the book of Revelation it is said, "So because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth!" 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "In the highest prayer men pray only for the love of God." This is spiritual passion indeed.

Even prayer and meditation, mighty channels of spiritual vitality, do not fully constitute the steps of man to the kingdom of God. The religion that is fruitless is dead. Bahá'u'lláh writes: "Let deeds not words, be your adorn ing." Sincere prayer and meditation lead us to the next great step, effective living. Good deeds are the wealth of the friends. "Come not into My Court with empty hands," we are urged. Even daily work done in the spirit of service is accounted by Bahá'u'lláh as worship, and living apart for pious worship is discouraged. The very motive power of progress on the path to God is supplied by acceptable deeds, for spirituality itself, far from being a subjective experience, is the reflection of Godliness into channels of human living.

The greatest deeds are those of purposeful sacrifice. So great is this wealth that through it man's life takes on a sovereignty. Useless asceticism is not implied, for Bahá'u'lláh says, "Deprive not yourself of what is created for you." There is today, however, even in religious trends, a common emphasis on acquisition rather than giving. As truly as that the acorn is sacrificed to achieve the oak, renunciation is still the law of rebirth, and he who would side-step this law in his life will become spiritually impoverished.

Sacrifice for the eternal Cause of God is the greatest of all. Consider the peculiar joy of the apostles of all ages. The ruthless grip of circumstance can remove the pleasures and joys of the world with a single blow, but the poise and serenity of these spiritual giants points to an almost unbelievable freedom. What earthly bondage could touch a Stephen, spat upon and stoned, who cried, "Behold, I see the heavens opened!" Hasan, a Persian, starved and persecuted for the sake of his Lord, finding himself at last in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, knew the earth to be a handful of dust in his fingers while every joy and fragrance of spirit filled his being. Haider Ali, whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá called the angel of Akka because he had suffered every persecution, said quite simply to an American, "I have known only joy." The same joyous sovereignty completely enveloped the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá whose years of imprisonment were worn like an ermine cloak. At one time he wrote, "Though I stay in prison it is just like paradise; afflictions and trials in the path of God give me joy; troubles rest me; death is life; to be despised is honor. . . . Seek, O servant of God, this life until day and night you remain in limitless joy."

The secret of so great a station is intimacy with God through His Messenger, an intimacy in which pure and selfless love is born. True love for God generates love for humanity for one who strives to serve God will find he can only do so by serving man. This devotion is a step immeasurably great along the Way. 'Abdu'l-Bahá calls every soul to have love and more love, a love that melts opposition, sweeps away all barriers, abounds in charity, large-heartedness and noble striving, boundless, irresistible, sweeping love. "Ah me!" he writes, "Each one must be a sign of love, a center of love, a sum of love,—a world of love, a universe of love! Hast thou love? Then thy power is irresistible. Hast thou sympathy? Then all the stars will sing thy praise."

These steps will lead inevitably to unity, the command of God for this age. Unity is not only the last step but the proof of the spiritual reality of the other steps. A Bahá'í becomes a Bahá'í only when this ideal is expressed in his life. He must seek to be the embodi-

"If you will come to me at dawn tomorrow, I will teach you to pray," said the Master.

Five members of the National Assembly of the United States left in 1954 to take up pioneering posts. They were, left to right, Dr. William Kenneth Christian, Mrs. Mamie Seto, Mrs. Elsie Austin, Mrs. Dorothy Baker, and Mr. Matthew Bullock.

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ment of love untainted by arrogance. The door is open to black and white, rich and poor, fellow countryman and foreign born. He extends the hand of friendship to every sincere soul and honors at his table every type and kind in the garden of his Lord. No ephemeral lines divide him from his fellows. He glories in the accomplishments of the strong and is a steward of the rights of the weak. He is, in short, the servant of all, the friend of all, the lover of all. He has cast himself into the sea of unity.

Baha'u'llah writes, “Ye are the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch. Deal ye with one another with the utmost love and harmony. So powerful is the light of unity that it can illumine the whole earth. . . . Exert yourselves that ye may attain this transcendent and most sublime station . . . this goal excelleth every other goal; this aspiration is the monarch of all aspiration.” Moreover, He assures us, “That which God willeth shall come to pass and thou shalt see the earth even as the most Glorious Paradise.”

A unity greater than fellowship will exist between the true lovers. Out of perfect union with the Will of the Beloved will appear a common passion, unity in the love of God. This celestial accomplishment of the near ones will give rise to the harmony of the race.

This in short is the path to God renewed. When we attain a united faith through the ever-flowing waters of Revelation; when our beliefs are raised to the plane of deeds and our thoughts harmonized by a common passion, then heaven will be opened before every sincere soul and society will inherit a new earth.

Today the stage is set for the greatest spiritual drama of history, for the rebirth of the powers of the human race will be for the first time world wide and in proportion to infinitely higher development. The promise of the end of the world is kept. The old world passes; tomorrow, swords are beaten into ploughshares. Baha'u'llah fulfills and renews all of the great Scriptures of the world and infuses all things with new life. He is the Michael spoken of by Daniel for the troublous time of the end when there is increase of knowledge, and running to and fro. He is the One promised by Jesus, of whom that sanctified Spirit said, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.” He is the Mihdi promised by Muhammad. He is the Friend spoken of by Gautama, and the Sunrise of Zoroaster. His universal Spirit is the “Glory of God that shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” His coming is the bow of promise in the sky. “Lo, every stone and clod crieth, ‘The Promised One hath appeared, and the Kingdom is to God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Pardoner.’”
Tanzanian Exhibition

A Bahá’í Exhibition was held at the Saba Saba Fair in Dar Es Salaam last July. Many people visited the booth and seven of those declared. Over 3,000 people saw showings of “It’s Just the Beginning” during the week long exhibition.

Hands Cause visit Swiss

Two Hands of the Cause of God visited Basel, Switzerland earlier this year. In August Hand of the Cause Mr. Khádem met with the Bahá’ís and spoke of this life in the Faith. Hand of the Cause Mr. Kházeh visited in September and told of his meetings with the Guardian and how they have affected his life.

Ghana Assembly

Members of the fourth National Spiritual Assembly of Ghana with Auxiliary Board Member Mrs. Vera Edwards.

Left to right, first row: Mrs. Edwards, Mr. Ernest Bentil, Prince Abaidoo, Mr. David Tanyi (Treasurer).

Second row: Mrs. June Jackson (Secretary), Dr. Vadlamudi, Mr. Abdu’l-Illah Yazdani, Mr. Emanuel Kumi.

Third row: Mr. Gordon Jackson (Vice Chairman), Dr. John Powell (Chairman).
The Kings who said no

A set of eight portraits of kings and rulers to whom Bahá'u'lláh addressed Tablets is now available through the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre.

The pictures are available in black and white prints, black and white glossies, and black and white 35mm slides.

Unlimited international rights have been secured for the reproduction of these pictures by any Bahá'í institution, and for reproduction of these pictures by any other media in connection with a Bahá'í story.

Your local Bahá'í librarian or authorized Bahá'í distributor may have them in stock, or can supply you with prices and ordering information.

If these materials are not available in your area, please write the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, New York 14564, for additional information.

International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre
On Lady Blomfield
by O. Z. Whitehead

A Pioneering Context

The Cost of Constancy
by Ugo and Angeline Giachery
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**COVER PHOTO**

Bluefields Bay. Most transportation is limited to boats, such as the ones on the cover. Bluefields is six hours by bus from Managua, the capital of Nicaragua. Air travel is possible, but expensive, and the schedules are extremely limited.

**CORRECTIONS**

Bahá’í News regrets the unfortunate misplacement of four paragraphs in the article by Ugo Giachery, Birth and Development of the World Centre, printed in the December, 1973 issue. On page 3, column 3, the paragraph beginning, “I could then fully share...,” through the paragraph beginning, “The golden threads...,” were inadvertently shifted from their true position at the end of the article.

On page 1, Bahá’í News, January 1974, in the title to an article by A.Q. Faizí, Toward the Unity of East and West, the name of the Sháh was misspelled. The accepted spelling is Muṣṭafá’d-Dín Sháh.

**POSTAL INFORMATION**

Bahá’í News is published for circulation among Bahá’ís only by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, as a news organ reporting current activities of the Bahá’í world community.

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Cablegrams

Design for building accepted

JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE ACCEPTANCE EXQUISITE DESIGN CONCEIVED BY HUSAYN AMANAT FOR BUILDING TO SERVE AS PERMANENT SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE MOUNT CARMELO DECISION MADE TO PROCEED NEGOTIATE CONTRACT CONSTRUCTION THIS NOBLE EDIFICE SECOND THOSE BUILDINGS DESTINED ARISE AROUND ARC CONSTITUTE ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER BAHÁ'Í WORLD.

FEBRUARY 8, 1974

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Passing Karen Bare announced

DEEPLY GRIEVED UNTIMELY DEATH VALIANT DEDICATED MUCH LOVE MAID SERVANT BAHÁ'U'LLÁH KAREN BARE. HER DEVOTED SERVICE PIONEER FIELD SPLENDID EXAMPLE OTHER YOUTHFUL BELIEVERS; ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL SERVICES. PRAYING SACRED THRESHOLD RICH REWARD BLESSING ABHA KINGDOM.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Passing Philip Marangella marked

DEEPLY GRIEVED LEARN PASSING PHILIP MARANGELLA DEVOTED SERVANT BAHÁ'U'LLÁH STEADFAST SUPPORTER COVENANT HIS PIONEER SERVICES TIRELESS WORLDWIDE TRAVELS BEHALF FAITH MOST PRAISEWORTHY PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HIS SOUL ABHA KINGDOM ADVISE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL SERVICE.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Passing Anna Kunz announced

DEEPLY GRIEVED PASSING ANNA KUNZ STEADFAST DISTINGUISHED HANDMAID BAHÁ'U'LLÁH HER ASSOCIATIONS BELOVED MASTER DEVOTED PIONEERING SERVICES EUROPE OVER EXTENDED PERIOD UNFORGETTABLE ADVISING GERMAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE PRAYING SHRINES PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHA KINGDOM.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

February, 1974 / BAHÁ'Í NEWS
Argentina:

Television broadcast

An estimate of 20 million people in Argentina recently learned something of the Bahá’í Faith from a popular national television program, “Lunching With Mirtha Legrand.”

Miss Legrand, whose 90-minute show is broadcast from Buenos Aires, invited a representative of the National Spiritual Assembly to explain the beliefs of Bahá’í to her viewers. The Legrand show, featuring a round-table conversation with five important and unusual people, is aired each weekday. The show is pleasantly staged, and the questions are in excellent taste, according to the Argentine Proclamation Committee.

Miss Legrand twice read the quote, “The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens,” on the air. She placed the Bahá’í representative at the head of the table, and asked him the first questions.

At the end of the program she spontaneously embraced her Bahá’í guest, and remarked that the Faith would now be known throughout Argentina. More than 30 telepone calls and telegrams on the Bahá’í Faith were received at the studio while the show was still in progress.

International Youth Conference

Bahá’í is attending an international youth conference near Alajuela, Costa Rica, sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Central America. Approximately 120 people attended, including Counsellors Artemus Lamb and Alfred Osborne, and Auxiliary Board member Rodrigo Tomás of Costa Rica. Participants at the 26-30 December conference were from El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, and the U.S.
Canada:
Teaching conferences

The Continental Board of Counsellors for North America has initiated a novel project to help to strengthen Canada's Local Spiritual Assemblies. The elements of this project are a pledge and a challenge. The pledge: to commit their entire personnel and resources to the task of helping to develop vigorous local teaching plans throughout Canada. The challenge: a call to every local institution to commit itself to matching the effort invested in this project by the Counsellors themselves.

This project was formulated by a committee of Hands of the Cause, Continental Counsellors, and Auxiliary Board members at their annual meeting in Chicago last September, after hearing a representative of the Canadian National Assembly describe his country's interim year plan to stimulate more local initiative in teaching the Faith.

To carry the plan into effect the Counsellors have been conducting a series of weekend teaching conferences throughout Canada, to inspire the friends to be more active teachers. By Ridván they will have participated in 70 such conferences.

The first day of these two-day meetings is devoted to a consultation on teaching with the entire Baha'i Community from the two or three localities invited to attend. The second day is spent in intensive, action-oriented consultation with the Local Assemblies from these communities, to work out a specific teaching plan the Assemblies will commit themselves to follow. The Counsellors, the Local Assembly members, and representatives of the National Assembly take part in this session.

"This is the first time, to our knowledge, that a Continental Board of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly have decided to collaborate on such an ambitious and closely integrated nationwide consolidation program," a report in the Canadian Baha'i News commented. "The program is also unique in the effort it is making to involve every one of Canada's 200 Local Assemblies," the report added.

"Virtually every National Baha'i administrative agency in Canada, as well as the Local Spiritual Assemblies, are intensively participating in this experimental project.

The initial conference of the series was held in Saul St. Marie, Ontario, on October 20. The National Assembly representative there said of the conference: "The most significant impression I received from participating in this conference is that there is a new strength building, a deeper insight and a much broader scope of the Local Spiritual Assembly's potentialities."

Historic meeting in Wilmette

A series of historic meetings between the Canadian National Assembly and the National Assembly of the United States took place in Wilmette, Illinois, between Feb. 15-18. The Canadian National Assembly is shown above with the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

United States:
Conference planned

More than 6,000 people are expected to attend a conference in St. Louis, Missouri, next 29 August to 2 September, planned by the National Assembly of the United States to launch the forthcoming five-year international teaching plan. The St. Louis conference may become one of the largest gatherings in Baha'i history.

A 10,000 seat auditorium in downtown St. Louis has been reserved for the occasion, and preparations for the four-day program are now well underway.

The St. Louis conference will afford an opportunity for the National Assembly to share with the friends the goals of the new plan to be won by the United States.

A special program for children will be a feature of the conference, as will a major exhibit of Baha'i art.

Bulk sales increasing

A dramatic indication of growth in the Canadian Baha'i community was given in a recent report from the National Treasurer showing that sales of Baha'i literature jumped from $7,500 in 1964, to $68,400 in 1973.

The Canadian National Assembly has also established a construction fund for a new Haziratu'l-Quds; "the largest single project undertaken by the Canadian community to date," according to the treasurer's report.

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temperatures in National Center have included the lowering of room as a safety and security precaution. Some the building also remain lighted at night.

An energy conservation plan for Bahá'í properties in the United States has been developed by the National Spiritual Assembly, to cooperate with government efforts to conserve critically short fuel supplies.

The most striking feature of this plan has been to eliminate the nighttime use of floodlights around the Temple. The House of Worship's dramatic lighting system has not been used since November 26. This action has been noted in press reports around Wilmette, where the House of Worship is considered a local landmark.

An exception to the new policy will be made by the National Assembly on Bahá'í Holy Days, when the lights will be turned on during the evening hours. Some of the walkways circumscribing the building also remain lighted at night as a safety and security precaution.

Other energy conservation measures have included the lowering of room temperatures in National Center offices, and at Bahá'í properties in South Carolina, New Jersey, Michigan, and Maine.

Dr. Rexford Parmelee, secretary of the National Bahá'í Properties Committee, said the new energy program "should in no way reduce school and institute sessions, or the volume of teaching activities."

He said a policy of economy is not foreign to Bahá'í administration. "National committees have consistently striven for moderation and economy," he said.

While only three or four dollars a day is saved by keeping the outside lights off, the measure serves to pointedly demonstrate the high sense of public responsibility felt by the National Assembly, Dr. Parmelee said.

The Bahá'í Home for the Aged, also in Wilmette, has not been included in the conservation program, because of the special health needs of its elderly residents. The use of fuel and other energy there remains at approximately the same level as before.

**U.N. Day observance**

The Bahá'ís in the United States have observed United Nations Day, and UN Week, since 1947, when the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada first established an official relationship with the United Nations Office of Public Information.

To observe the anniversary of the inauguration of these observances, the UN invited political leaders and press representatives from 30 nations to a one-day symposium on the pressing economic problems of developing nations. Non-governmental organizations were also invited to attend. Representatives of the Bahá'í International Community and the National Assembly of the United States were present for the observance.

In an opening address, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim said the purposes of the UN Charter—"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," and "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom"—cannot be regarded separately.

"They are part of our mandate," he said. "Improvements in the social and economic fields cannot be achieved in circumstances of war and tension. Severe social and economic imbalance are, in themselves, a threat to international stability."

He said the UN's International Development Strategy, a cooperative undertaking with developing nations to improve the living standards of their peoples is "the most comprehensive attempt yet made to see development not as a 'problem' of the developing countries, nor as the subject of a new appeal to the generosity of the industrialized nations, but as a condition of fundamental world imbalance which can be, must be, and can only be righted, by the international community acting in concert."

The Secretary-General ended his presentation by restating the essential goal of the world organization: "The principal purpose of the United Nations is the restoration and maintenance of peace," he said.

"We cannot achieve a lasting peace in a world of glaring economic, social and human imbalances," he continued. "To correct this imbalance is therefore an urgent challenge confronting the world community. It can be met. It cannot wait."

Following Mr. Waldheim's remarks, 111 of the Non-Governmental Organizations, among them the Bahá'í International Community, presented to him a statement of support for the goals of national and world development. The document was presented at a ceremony attended by ministers of planning and government officials from developing nations, international press representatives, and educators.

"As organizations devoted to humanitarian causes, we recognize that on this increasingly interdependent planet, societies can no longer remain isolated—the rich from the poor, the advantaged from the disadvantaged," the statement said in part. "Too many problems are common to all mankind—pollution of the air and waters, epidemics, drug abuse, the threat of over-population, dwindling mineral and food resources, to name but a few. Unless the nations of the world unite to overcome these problems, the nations themselves will surely be overcome."
India:

Proclamation weeks

Roberta Barrar

Proclamation weeks are a time of great joy in India. Well ahead of time permission is secured for the placement of banners throughout the towns; lists of offices and banks to be visited are compiled and maps are drawn; prayer sessions are held and invitations to neighboring communities to participate are mailed.

In Poona, during my recent visit there, the Bahá'ís arranged for an exhibition at one college of a series of posters describing the Faith. The community set up a table and gave out flyers and information. In the afternoon there was singing and a talk by Narulla, formerly a Sikh, who's entire family is now Bahá'í. A singing group visited a number of elementary schools to sing songs and give the Message. Hundreds of children sat patiently on the floor listening, then they sang songs to return the favor. Teaching teams visited the hostels of several colleges and gave the Message.

In the south, Bangalore-Mysore, the friends have about 600 people on a mailing list for a correspondence course on the Bahá'í Faith. During a week of proclamation there the teaching teams on one occasion went to a college cafeteria to take a short break. Within ten minutes a crowd gathered at three separate tables near them to learn about the Faith.

In Sholapur, in Western India, the teaching team took its meals, and shared the evening entertainment with the village deepening conference being held there simultaneously. One villager told the story about a band of gypsies that had come near his village. His neighbors were terrified. They closed their shops and went home. But he went to investigate for himself, and discovered that they were a group of harmless families, nomadic because of famine. He brought them home to meet the townspeople. He suggested that independent investigation was one method that could be applied worldwide to help bring about understanding and peace.

Hawaii:

Television series

A television program on the Bahá'í Faith, featuring the Hand of the Cause William Sears, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Garcia, and the new Bahá'í Chorus, was broadcasted throughout the Hawaiian Islands December 24.

The program was the first of a series of 13 shows the National Assembly of Hawaii has scheduled for broadcast. It is hoped they will begin to aired in time to inaugurate the new global teaching plan at Ridván.

The half-hour, color program, was telecast during prime viewing time by the American Broadcasting Corporation in Hawaii.

The New World

Gina Garcia

We barely had time to weed our vegetable patch after returning from New Zealand before we received a call from the Hawaiian National Assembly. Hand of the Cause William Sears was going to Hawaii to work on some television programs and the National Assembly wanted us to assist in their production.

The series is entitled "The New World." It consists of thirteen informal half-hour programs that feature brief talks, songs by the chorus and beautiful slides. We completely filmed and recorded two shows in color and enough music for the remaining 11 shows has been taped. Future programs will feature Bahá'í entertainers such as Vic Damone, Seals and Crofts, and Dizzy Gillespie, as well as outstanding Bahá'ís in other fields such as education or law. There was a great spirit of cooperation among the friends working on the project. We recorded over 70 Bahá'í songs. We rehearsed during the day and the shows were filmed between midnight and 5 a.m. at the only time the television studio was available. ABC (Channel 4) in Hawaii has already previewed the first program featuring Hand of the Cause Sears and has agreed to show the entire series, one program each Sunday. Individual shows or the entire series will be available for purchase through the National Spiritual Assembly of Hawaii. An announcement will be made when they are available.
Togo:

Youth project

On Sunday, November 25, the Bahá'í youth of Tomé, Togo, in West Africa, set out on a project to the neighboring community of Agoueve. The trip was intended to promote fellowship and to enable the youth to serve in another community.

Joined by Agoueve Bahá'ís, the youth visited the homes of believers and talked to passers-by. Following lunch two youth gave talks on the covenant and various other Bahá'í topics. There was singing throughout the day. The atmosphere of fellowship and unity made the young believers reluctant to gather their belongings and leave for home at the end of the day.

Botswana:

Bushman Assembly

The all-Bushman Local Spiritual Assembly of Tshasane, in the Kalahari Desert of Botswana, was elected at Ridván, 1973. From left to right, standing: Ci-Gau, Titi, chairman; Siolo, secretary; Kaka. From left to right, seated: Matshipa; N!g'ae-Nobo; Baberi; Mpalo. The Local Assembly of Tshasane was first formed in 1972.

N!g'ae-Nobo, seated second from left, died in childbirth since this photograph was taken. Realizing that a Bahá'í burial was necessary, the Bushman Bahá'ís complied. They read the “Remover of Difficulties” prayer which they had memorized in their own language, Hoó, and interred the body with the head facing north, toward the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land.

Philippines:

Quezon City Assembly

For the first time in the history of the Faith in the Philippines, Quezon City, the national capital, elected a Local Spiritual Assembly last Ridván. Happily this has resulted in the holding of regular meetings and the development of teaching plans. The Hand of the Cause of God Colvis Featherstone visited the community in August, 1973, and met with about 50 Bahá'ís and visitors. Mr. Featherstone and his wife also visited the cities of Baguio and Naga, where he addressed hundreds of students and faculty members at different colleges in each city. The President of the University of the East, in Baguio, was so impressed with what he heard in Mr. Featherstone's talk, that he invited the Bahá'ís to return to share their teachings with the rest of the school population of 60,000 students.

Great Britain:

Gillespie tour

Mr. John “Dizzy” Gillespie, the celebrated American jazz trumpeter, played a successful three-week engagement in Great Britain recently. He not only attracted the Jazz fans and music critics there, but considerable publicity for the Bahá'í Faith as well.

One of Britain's leading newspapers, the Manchester Guardian, printed a long feature article on Mr. Gillespie. Thames Television, broadcast a late-night interview on his Bahá'í beliefs and their effect on his music.

Many of the friends attended performances by Gillespie's quintet. One of their compositions is called, “Olinga,” in honor of the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga.

Operation HAMPER

Operation HAMPER, based in London, has been involved in three missions to date, and has already netted almost $200 from its activities.

HAMPER is a catering service. It got its name by combining the initials of its four founders—Hazel, Ann, Mahnaz, and Pamela. Its business is to prepare and serve food and refreshments to Bahá'í gatherings, at prices that are at once modest, but still high enough to provide a moderate profit. The profit goes to the National Bahá'í Fund.
Lady Blomfield:
an aristocrat of the spirit

by O.Z. Whitehead
In a stimulating introduction to her inspiring, richly informative book *The Chosen Highway*, Lady Sara Louisa Blomfield (designated Sitarí Khánum by 'Abdu'l-Bahá), has given an account of the first time that she and her daughter Mary (called Parvine by the Master), heard the Baha’i Faith mentioned. It was at a reception given by Madame Lucien Monad at her house in Paris, early in the twentieth century. An attractive young guest, Miss Bertha Herbert, after seating herself between them, said to the Blomfields, “We have been taught to believe that a great Messenger would again be sent to the world. He would set forth to gather together all the people of good will in every race, nation and religion on the earth. Now is the appointed time! He has come! He has come!” Lady Blomfield was impressed. “These amazing words,” she has affirmed, “struck a chord to which my inner consciousness instantly responded, and I felt convinced that the portentous announcement they conveyed was indeed the truth. Great awe and intense exaltation possessed me with an overpowering force as I listened.”

Assured by Lady Blomfield that she and Mary were deeply interested, Miss Herbert soon made an appointment for them to meet Miss Ethel Rosenberg, a distinguished painter and second woman of the British Isles to enter the Cause, and Hippolyte Dreyfus, the first French believer. These two remarkable people gave the Blomfields much information about the Faith.

On their return to London they became acquainted with Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper, the first Bahá’í of the British Isles. She and Ethel Rosenberg met with the Blomfields to make plans for spreading the Message.

From the time Lady Blomfield first heard of the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh, her foremost aim was to serve His Cause. Late in August 1911, when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was still in Egypt, but preparing to leave for Europe, she sent Him an invitation to stay at her home at 97 Cadogan Gardens, in London. A few days later, she received the following telegram in reply:

‘Abdu’l-Bahá arriving in London 8th September. Can Lady Blomfield receive Him?’

Mary Blomfield has described her mother as she was at that time: “She had the beauty of a mature soul. The moulding of her face was lovely. Her facial expressions ever changing, reflected the spiritual harmony within. She wore garments with long flowing lines which made her seem taller than her natural height.”

Lady Blomfield has written that when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá entered her house, “a silence as of love and awe overcame us, as we looked at Him. One saw as in a clear vision that He had so wrought all good and mercy that the inner grace of Him had grown greater than all outer sign, and the radiance of this inner glory shone in every glance and word and movement as He came with hands outstretched.”

Every day the famous, the obscure, the talented, the ordinary, the rich, and the poor came there to meet the Master. With much charm and consideration Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney and his wife, Laura, both of whom knew Persian, translated what the Master said into English for everyone to hear. Lady Blomfield has recounted touching stories of His deeply compassionate treatment of individuals in great distress, and stories that demonstrated His delightful sense of humor. On one occasion He was asked whether the misery-laden world would ever attain happiness: “It is nearly two thousand years since His Holiness, the Lord Christ taught this prayer to His people: ‘Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,’” the Master
replied. "Thinkest thou that He would have commanded thee to pray for that which would never come? That prayer is also a prophecy." After a stay in London of almost four weeks, He left on 3 October for Paris, to live in an attractive, comfortable apartment that the Dreyfus-Barneys had located at 4 Avenue de Camoëns, near the Quai de Passy, and the Trocadero Gardens. Every morning in His sitting-room, 'Abdu'l-Baha explained the Baha'i Teachings to the many people who came to see Him. He gave special attention to workers in humanitarian societies who were attempting to relieve the suffering of the poor. The Dreyfus-Barneys now translated what He said into French.

Lady Blomfield, her sister Ellinor, named Nuri by the Master, her daughter Mary, and friend, Miss Beatrice Platt, called Verdiyeh by Him, took notes in English on 'Abdu'l-Baha's addresses. After the ladies carefully assembled their notes, they sent them to the Master for His consideration. Well pleased with their work, He asked for its immediate publication. As a result, during May of 1912, this collection of superlative lectures was released in England under the title *Paris Talks*, and somewhat later in the United States as *The Wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Baha*. Owing to the devotion and efficiency of the book's composers, who had the foresight to record the English translations of the talks, this volume will always serve as a priceless introduction to the Cause and as a source of illumination to the believers of the West.

The Master gave lectures not only in His own apartment, but in many other places. On 22 October He concluded a most powerful address with these reassuring words:

"God leaves not His children comfortless, but, when the darkness of winter overshadows them, then again He sends His Messengers, the Prophets, with a renewal of the blessed spring. The Sun of Truth appears again on the horizon of the world shining into the eyes of those who sleep, awaking them to behold the glory of a new dawn. Then again will the tree of humanity blossom and bring forth the fruit of righteousness for the healing of the nations. Because man has stopped his ears to the Voice of Truth and shut his eyes to the Sacred Light, neglecting the Law of God, for this reason has the darkness of war and tumult, unrest and misery, desolated the earth. I pray that you will all strive to bring each child of God into the radiance of the Sun of Truth, that the darkness may be dissipated by the penetrating rays of its glory and the winter's hardness and cold may be melted away by the merciful warmth of its shining."

On 2 December 'Abdu'l-Baha left Paris for Egypt. After spending the winter there, He sailed from Alexandria to New York City, where He arrived on 11 April. At the end of His historic journey throughout the United States, lasting almost eight months, He sailed for England on 5 December to arrive at Liverpool on 13 December, "Have today taken Palestine. Notify the world that 'Abdu'l-Baha is safe."
Any kind of suffering touched Mother profoundly, but the sight of young men maimed for life tortured her beyond words.

These three photographs at the right show Haifa around 1929 (left), Haifa in 1940 (center) and Haifa today (right).

and in London three days later, on 25 March 1912.

Staying with Lady Blomfield as before, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again received a constant stream of visitors. Hand of the Cause, Hasan Balyuzi, has reported this delightful incident that took place there: “When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sat down to dinner on Christmas Eve, He said, playfully, that He was not hungry, but He had to come to the dinner table because Lady Blomfield was very insistent; two despotic monarchs of the East had not been able to command Him and bend His will, but the ladies of America and Europe, because they were free, gave Him orders.”

One evening, in the drawing-room of her house, the Master asked Mrs. Gabrielle Enthoven, “What is your great interest in life?”

She replied: “The Drama.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: “I will give you a play. It shall be called ‘The Drama of the Kingdom’.” Without notes, and only pausing for the translator to speak, the Master gave her the outline of a moving, elaborate pageant about the coming of the Promised One. Some years later, Mary Blomfield, by then married to Basil Hall, wrote a play based on the Master’s outline. In 1933, the Weardale Press in London published her play.

Lady Blomfield’s father-in-law, Dr. Charles James Blomfield, Bishop of London for twenty-eight years, was once a tutor to Queen Victoria. Through him Lady Blomfield knew people at court. On 16 January, she gave the Master a statement which she had written about the Cause and the purpose of His visit to London. She asked His permission to send this statement to George V, to assist her in arranging a meeting between ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the King. Although the Master liked her statement and thought it well worth making, He advised her not to deliver it. He was afraid that her sincere intention, if carried out, might result in misunderstanding. That same day, at her home, the Master gave an instructive talk, in which He said that the believers needed to develop wisdom, insight, and steadfastness, and should give their undivided attention to the Cause in order to achieve its advancement. On 21 January 1913, He left London to visit Paris for a second time.

When the First World War began, Lady Blomfield, Mary, and Ellinor were living in Geneva, Switzerland. Soon afterwards the trio moved to the Hotel d’Jena, in Paris, to work for the French Red Cross, at the Hospital Hotel Majestic. May has written: “Any kind of suffering touched my Mother profoundly, but the sight of young men maimed for life, and the new and horrible experience she had to endure during the dressing of their wounds, tortured her beyond words.”

The Blomfields continued to help with the wounded in Paris until their hospital unit was transferred to another city in March 1915; at which time they with the wounded in Paris. For the remaining three years of the war Lady Blomfield served on relief committees, gave regular assistance at numerous hospitals, and kept an open house for wounded soldiers. Despite her vigorous wartime service, she never failed to support Bahá’í meetings whenever it was possible to hold them, and regardless of how many people attended.

In the spring of 1918, she received a deeply disturbing telephone message from an authoritative source: “‘Abdu’l-Bahá in serious danger. Take immediate action.” Without delay she went to Lord Lamington, a distinguished Scottish peer who admired ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. She told him what she had just learned. He promptly wrote a letter to the Foreign Office, stressing the noble services that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was performing, not only for the people of Palestine, but for all of humanity. He delivered this letter to Lord Balfour, the Foreign Secretary. Lord Balfour quickly sent a cablegram to General Allenby, which said: “Extend every protection and consideration to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, His family, and His friends, when the British march on Palestine.” As soon as General Allenby had taken Haifa, several days before he was expected to do so, he wired London: “Have to-day taken Palestine. Notify the world that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is safe.”

Lady Blomfield learned afterwards that her old friend, Major Wellesley Tudor-Pole, had sent the terrifying message which she received by telephone. Upon learning that the Turkish High Command threatened to crucify ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on Mount Carmel if the Turkish army should have to evacuate Haifa, Major Tudor-Pole made every effort to insure His safety. Although the influential men to whom he first appealed for help knew nothing about
He gave special attention to those who attempted to relieve the suffering of the poor.

The center photograph of Haifa shows the city shortly after it was bombed by Italian war planes on July 15, 1940. One person was killed and several injured during the air assault.

'Abdu'l-Bahá and saw no urgent reason to assist Him, the Major finally found one officer with important connections who showed some interest in the matter. With his help the Major was able to send a message to the British Foreign Office.

At the end of the war, domestic affairs at home kept the Blomfields from making their intended pilgrimage.

Around 1920 Lady Blomfield made the decision to spend part of each year in Geneva, Switzerland. While in Geneva that year she became a close friend of Eglantine Jebb, founder of the "Save the Children Movement," in Geneva, and put him to bed for several days, where she, Lady Blomfield, the Guardian's sister, Rouhangeze, and some others, did what they could to comfort him.

After a delay of some days because of passport difficulties, Shoghi Effendi, Rouhangeze, and Lady Blomfield sailed from England for Egypt on 16 December. From Egypt they went by train to Haifa, arriving on 29 December. Mary Basil Hall felt sure that her mother's companionship on this journey was of great help to the grief-stricken Shoghi Effendi.

During her first weeks in the Holy Land, Lady Blomfield had the great privilege of collaborating with Shoghi Effendi, now Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, on a pamphlet entitled "The Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá," composed of an account of the tragic event, and reflections on this agonizing development.

In one most eloquent passage they have written: "The eyes that had always looked out with loving-kindness upon humanity, whether friends or foes, were now closed. The hands that had ever been stretched forth to give alms to the poor and the needy, the halt and the maimed, the blind, the orphan and the widow, had now finished their labor. The feet that, with untried zeal, had gone upon the ceaseless errands of the Lord of Compassion, were now at rest. The lips that had so eloquently championed the cause of the suffering sons of men, were now hushed in silence. The heart that had so powerfully throbbed with wondrous love for the children of God was now stilled. His glorious spirit had passed from the storm and stress of well-nigh eighty years of indefatigable toil for the good of others." 16

In March 1922, Shoghi Effendi called together a group of Bahá'ís from various countries, including Lady Blomfield, to consult with them on vital matters concerning the development of the Cause, particularly about the possibility of electing The Universal House of Justice at that time. He decided that The House of Justice could not possibly be established until the Local and National Assemblies were functioning in those countries where Bahá'í communities existed.

For the first three years of his ministry Shoghi Effendi carried out with no
Lady Blomfield worked constantly on her book, overcoming great difficulties to do so.

The house at 4 Rue Camoens, in Paris, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed during his visit there.

interruptions his manifold and overwhelming tasks, despite his almost unbearable grief over the passing of the Master, and the strain and suffering caused by the plotting of the Faith’s enemies. On 5 April 1925, however, he left the Holy Land for Europe, where he would remain until he could regain sufficient physical strength and spiritual energy to resume his work of the service. Before departing, he stipulated that Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, was to “administer in consultation with the family of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, and a chosen assembly, all Baha’i affairs during his absence.”

Lady Blomfield remained in the Holy Land for several months after Shoghi Effendi’s departure. She heard thrilling stories about the Heroic Age of the Faith from The Greatest Holy Leaf, Muníríh Khánum, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá’s widow, Túbá Khánum, His daughter, and several other survivors of those early years. Lady Blomfield took comprehensive notes during these meetings, hoping to include these stories in an intended book.

Muníríh Khánum wrote to Basil Hall during this period: “We are all very glad to have the honorable lady, Síyári Khánum, Lady Blomfield, in our midst. Her presence gives us much joy. We look upon her, not only as a friend, but as one of our dear family.”

In 1930 Lady Blomfield made a second journey to the Holy Land to gather more material for the book she now definitely planned to write. At the end of this visit she returned to England, where for the rest of her life she shared a house in Hampstead, a district of London, with the Basil Halls. For several years, Lady Blomfield worked constantly on her book, overcoming great difficulties in doing so. She finished it a few weeks before her death on the last day of 1939.

The Hand of the Cause, Hasan Balyuzi, who at her request wrote the preface, has declared: “The Chosen Highway” will forever remain the greatest monument to the achievements of its author... and to generations yet unborn it will hand a message rich in enlightenment.”

While going through her papers Mary was surprised to find how much she had written. With no apparent thought of publication, in diaries and in engagement books, Lady Blomfield had described her dreams and visions. Mary felt that a prayer, written faintly in pencil on an old piece of paper, expressed well the theme of her beloved mother’s beautiful and saintly life:

O God! My Beloved! All my affairs are in Thy hands. Be Thou the mover of my actions, The Lodestar of my soul, The voice that crieth in my inmost being, The object of my heart's adoration! I praise Thee that Thou hast enabled me To turn my face unto Thee, That Thou hast set my soul ablaze With remembrance!  

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid. Page 149.
4 Bahá’í World. In Memoriam Síyári Khánum (Sara, Lady Blomfield) by Mary Basil Hall. Page 149.
5 The Chosen Highway. Pages 149-150.
6 Ibid. Pages 171-172.
9 The Chosen Highway, Page 155.
10 Bahá’í World, Page 652.
13 Ibid. Page 221.
15 Ibid. Page 436.
18 Bahá’í World Page 653.
19 Ibid.
20 The Chosen Highway Preface Page V.
21 Bahá’í World, Page 656.
In Memoriam

Karen Bare

Mrs. Karen Bare was in Hawaii in 1969 waiting for news of her husband, an officer in the Air Force serving in Vietnam, who had been reported missing in action. When an urgent call came from Haifa for pioneers to travel to the Republic of Cameroon, in Africa, she volunteered immediately. Within a few weeks she was at that post, arriving June 20, 1969, and settling in a part of the country that had the greatest need for pioneers. Her activities as a pioneer were steadfast and varied, including serving as Secretart for that National Assembly, travelling and teaching, offering friendship and hospitality to believers and visitors.

Mrs. Bare was killed in an automobile crash, while on a visit to her family in the United States, in early January. In commenting on her life and services the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í of the Cameroon Republic said:

"The tragic news of the death of our dearly-loved young Bahá'í sister, member of our National Spiritual Assembly and of a number of National Committees and ardent promoter and protector of the Bahá'í Faith, came as a great blow to our Bahá'í Community. The friends in Cameroon are grief stricken and even before receiving the inspiring cable from our Supreme Body, memorial meetings have been held in a number of places.

"Karen Bare was especially loved by the Cameroonian women and children, on whom she poured her love. She forgot ease and comfort and even during the Fast, in the heat of the day she walked five miles to visit villages around Victoria for teaching and deepening.

"Her home was the home of all visitors and pioneers who came to Victoria. The Persians are famous for their hospitality but several remarked that they had seen none to equal hers.

"When the Bahá'ís of Cameroon read the cable message from The Universal House of Justice, they will feel some comfort for their sorrowing hearts. We hope that the youth will be inspired by her devoted service (in the pioneer field) and splendid example both here in Cameroon and in her mother land."

Anna Kunz

Mrs. Anna Kunz, a pioneer in Switzerland for over twenty years, passed away in Berne on 10 August 1973 after a brief illness. Her daughter, Mrs. Margaret Ruhe recalls events in the life of this "distinguished handmaid of Bahá'u'lláh."

Mother was born in Switzerland, the eldest of ten children of the Reverend Adolph Bolliger of the Reformed Church. Her father was a professor of theology at the University of Basel and a pastor of the New Meunster Church of Zurich.

As a young girl, Anna enrolled in a Home Economics school in Berne and, after graduation, taught there for a year. At the age of 24 she married Dr. Jakob Kunz, professor of physics at the University of Illinois. She moved to Urbana, Illinois with him where she lived for 36 years. My sister and I were born there.

Almost the first year of their marriage my parents began attending Bahá'í meetings. Mother recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of God for this day at once. She became a Bahá'í about 1914 and remained loyal and steadfast throughout her life.

In 1921 my parents sailed to Egypt and then on to Haifa for pilgrimage at the Holy Shrines. They first met 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Tiberias in March, 1921, and later again in Haifa. That experience was the spiritual pinnacle of my mother's life. She adored 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His Teachings.

In Urbana Anna Kunz served for many years on the local Assembly, much of that time as chairman. She enjoyed administrative work and was a good executive. At the age of 50 she learned to type to better serve the Faith. After her husband died, she went pioneering back to Switzerland. She lived there for 23 years, served on the NSA for 16 of those years and as secretary for 10. When she passed away, the Universal House of Justice cabled their sorrow at the passing of a "steadfast, distinguished handmaid of Bahá'u'lláh."

My mother was a strong personality. She demanded the highest standards of performance of herself and of those around her. She was family-oriented; the integrity and warmth of the family circle were important to her. All her life she remained close to her daughters and their families, adored her five grandchildren and was proud of her distinguished sons-in-law, one a lawyer with the United Nations, and the other a doctor serving on the Universal House of Justice.

Our home was a haven of peace, rest and hospitality for all who came there. Scientist and poets, among them Radindranath Tagore, visited us. Louis Gregory, Dorothy Baker, Dr. Zia Bagdadi, Corinne True, Allen McDaniel, and Madame Orlova, were our guests on many occasions.

Mother was respected for her knowledge of the teachings, her wisdom and sound judgement. She was thoughtful and always knew how to bestow special love on her family and friends, by being perceptive of their needs and wishes. At 43 she learned to drive and often went from house to house to pick up friends for the meetings.

In the personal and intimate details of her life she was a Bahá'í. Cleanliness, neatness, frugality and meticulousness were her hallmarks. She knew the power of prayer and her prayer book was always at her side.

Mother served the Faith with distinction, dedication and dignity for almost 60 years. Up to her last day, she maintained a deep interest in every detail of the growth and development of the Faith. Her love and encouragement of the friends were shining beacons to all who knew her. I think she truly "lived the life" that we all aspire for.

"Grant then, O my God, that Thy servant may consort with Thy chosen ones, Thy saints and Thy Messengers in heavenly places that the pen cannot tell nor the tongue recount."

Bahá'u'lláh

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A pioneering context:
Bluefields, Nicaragua

compiled by Roberta Smith from
letters to the U.S.
International Goals Committee
from Richard and Kristine Wilson
We arrived in Bluefields, Nicaragua, in April 1969, during the dry season. Bluefields is a town of 17,000 people, and a major Nicaraguan port on the Caribbean. It is situated at the mouth of the Bluefields River, poised on the edge of a vast swamp, and surrounded by beautiful but stifling tropical forests.

The town was settled in the 18th century by the British, who intended to establish plantations to grow and export bananas. It got its name from the Dutch pirate Bleuwfeldt. The banana business flourished for a while, until the trees became diseased, and buyers went elsewhere for their fruit. Today relatively few bananas are exported from this region. Instead, the people on this coast are engaged in cultivating cocoa, lumbering certain hardwoods, and processing shell fish, all for export. About 80 percent of the people are Creoles; the remainder, Chinese, and Indians.

The National Assembly of Nicaragua had asked us to assist in consolidating and forming assemblies in coastal areas, where the majority of Bahá'ís live. We soon learned that the people were very friendly, but they had many problems. Large numbers were unemployed and were very poor. They sought escape through liquor and gambling; the crime rate was high. Carnivals and week-long rum parties were a major form of entertainment.

There were only two factories in the vicinity of Bluefields, both owned jointly by Americans and the Nicaraguan government. When job openings did occur, lines of people would form, all clamoring for the dollar-a-day positions. Even children were employed to clean the shrimp vats and carry the endless tonnage of waste. My wife, Kristine, and I had to create our own work since there was none to be had in Bluefields. With the financial assistance we received from Bahá'ís in the U.S., we were able to stay.

Everything in Bluefields was expensive. All food, except rice, beans, and fruit, was imported from the United States. A teabag cost a nickel and soda pop fifteen cents; prices that were out of the reach of the local inhabitants. Consequently infant mortality was

Opposite: On the main street in Bluefields, the most prominent building is the Moravian Church.
high, and few people lived to old age. They were taught that modern concepts of medicine and health were evil, and so turned to the “bush doctor” for temporary relief from suffering.

The river water was undrinkable and the rainwater, though fairly clean, often had worms in it. Malaria, carried by the ever-present mosquitoes, was a constant problem. I was sick with it three times in ten months.

When we arrived in Bluefields there seemed to be no housing available. After some searching we found a large frame house available for $75 a month rent. In the States it would have been considered substandard, but in Bluefields it was quite nice. We had a private outdoor toilet, a tank to collect rainwater, a yard with fruit trees, and an attic for guests to sleep in. Often Indian friends visited, once they became accustomed to our presence there. The large house was our only luxury, and we were fortunate to have it, as it served as a location for feasts and firesides.

The major means of transportation was waterborne: small riverboats packed with bananas, cocoanuts, and pigs, in temperatures that reached 100 degrees. In certain seasons one could also walk along the miles of white beaches, with feet covered to protect them from the sand flies and other insects.

Continental Counsellor Artemus Lamb once gave us the idea of having a radio program. Each week I wrote a fifteen-minute script which was broadcast on Sunday afternoon. The program reached far into the interior of the country, possibly into Honduras and Costa Rica as well. As we traveled to the remote villages afterwards it was as if someone had gone before us. Many families in Bluefields were also reached in this way.

We learned some of the local Indian language and attempted to translate songs and some prayers for broadcasts. In the native language the word “Bahá” means “that”. The term “Bahá’u’lláh” means, “that which is coming.” And the word “Bahá’í” means “that’s it.” Therefore, when we say, “Bahá’u’lláh has come,” we are saying, in the native language “that which is coming has come.”
Opposition to the Bahá'í Faith in Nicaragua was widespread, because of the many missionaries, anthropologists, and strong Catholic and Anglican organizations active in the country. Yet in time they began to respect the Bahá'ís because of the earnest efforts that were made to explain the aims and beliefs of the Bahá'í Faith to all people.

Although the problems in Bluefields were great, the rewards of pioneering overshadowed the grief. Some of the indigenous Bahá'ís rose above the crippling influences of local conditions, and held fast to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. They went on their own to villages throughout the region, and told the people of the advent of the Promised One. Many accepted the Faith, and many wished to learn more.

On one occasion we set off to visit an Indian village near Rama, an inland journey of 60 miles along the Bluefields river. It had been visited by Bahá'ís eight years before. We paddled up the river in a boat made from a hollowed log, and reached our destination in six hours. The two Bahá'ís who lived there were still dedicated believers. They, and every other villager came to greet us. Their home is so isolated that one of the Bahá'ís had never heard of the United States; and yet they gave us their house and four eggs, to make our stay more comfortable. The eggs were the only ones in the village.

The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh can no longer be ignored in Bluefields. Our weekly radio program, the unceasing labors of Cecilia King from Panama, and the “shot in the arm” visits from Bahá'ís of other countries, taught everyone on the coast that the Faith exists, and that it is moving forward. It was respected by the people and often criticized by the churches. Even though the membership was numerically small, everyone was aware of the Faith, and watchful of its progress.

Of course the work has only begun. Bluefields needs more pioneers; it needs an institute, and a school for training local teachers. The challenges of this climate and country create unique, problems for the pioneers. The rewards here are yet to be reaped.
The Cost of Constancy:

impressions of Lydia Zamenhof

by Ugo and Angeline Giachery
Had she lived a normal life, Lydia Zamenhof might have reached her seventieth birthday on 29 January 1974. We met her in New York, in the autumn of 1937, and were captivated by her charm, culture, and consecration to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. The latter was a rare quality in an Esperantist; of all those we had met before, only a handful had shown any interest in the Bahá'í Faith.

From our first meeting we were impressed with Lydia Zamenhof's determination to foster the unity of mankind. She was armed with faith in Bahá'u'lláh, and the universal language invented by her renowned father,1 Ludwig Zamenhof.

The youngest of three children, Lydia Zamenhof was born in Warsaw, Poland2, in 1904. Her parents were of Jewish ancestry and they gave their children a sound education. Lydia's brother Adam, became a prominent ophthalmologist; her sister Zofia became a physician; and Lydia herself obtained a degree in law from Warsaw University.3

Lydia Zamenhof was born an idealist. In her parents' home, love for humanity and a spirit of unity were permanent themes in the education of the three children.

When Lydia received her law degree in 1925, she decided not to pursue a legal career, but rather to promulgate the knowledge of Esperanto. She had received certification to teach from the Czech International Institute of Esperanto at the Hague.

In 1913, at the age of nine, Lydia took part in the universal Esperantist Congress in Berne, Switzerland. Her father, interviewed at the congress by a representative of the 'Christian Commonwealth,'4 said, "I have deep interest in the Bahá'í Movement, because it is one of the great world movements which, similar to ours, educates men to brotherhood and invites them to know each other better and learn to love one another." He later added, "I highly esteem the personality of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his work. In him I see one of the greatest benefactors that humanity has produced."

It was the unforgettable Hand of the Cause of God Martha Root who led Lydia Zamenhof to the Bahá'í Faith. Miss Root seized every opportunity to contact the Zamenhof family. In April
Her family accused her of betraying the Jewish Faith and for a time she was persecuted by them.

Polish Jews being marched away by German soldiers after the occupation of Warsaw.

1926, she was the official representative of the Bahá’í Faith to the dedication of the monument erected upon the grave of Dr. Zamenhof in Warsaw. On that occasion Lydia told Miss Root, “It seems to me that Esperanto is nothing else than a school for future Bahá’ís. The Bahá’í Faith is a step forward, it is much deeper.”

Several months later, in Edinburgh, Scotland, the 18th Universal Congress of Esperanto was held, in the same Freemason’s Hall where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had spoken in 1913 to the Esperanto Society. Miss Martha Root was again the official Bahá’í representative. She opened the Congress with a talk entitled, “The Positive Power of Universal Religion.”

This Congress was the first gathering Lydia Zamenhof attended as a Bahá’í. Motivated by her belief in Bahá’u’lláh, she undertook the study of English, to better understand the Sacred Writings being translated by Shoghi Effendi. From that time forward she devoted her life to two purposes: the propagation of the Bahá’í Revelation, and the teaching of Esperanto.

Her new religious beliefs created some difficulties for her. Members of her family accused her of betraying the Jewish Faith, and for a time she was persecuted by them. But she was deeply rooted in the love of God, and met obstacles with a fortitude that increased her fervor and dedication.

She traveled widely, giving lectures and talks, and her skill as a translator was frequently invaluable. She translated the works of several Polish novelists into Esperanto, and as she became well versed in the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, devoted her varied talents fully to the Bahá’í Cause. She wrote articles in Esperanto and English for periodicals in many parts of the World. She translated into Esperanto the Kitáb-i-Ikân, the Wisdom of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi, The Goal of a New World Order, A World Religion, and the Unfoldment of World Civilization. In her eagerness to share the Faith with her countrymen, she translated The Hidden Words, Some Answered Questions, and Esslemont’s Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era, into Polish.

In 1937, at the suggestion of Shoghi Effendi, the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada invited Lydia Zamenhof to visit America. Within a week of her arrival in New York on 29 September, she started a class on Esperanto. Later she taught courses in Philadelphia, Detroit, Lima, Cleveland and Eliot. She was heard many times on radio, and she lectured often in colleges, churches, and other gatherings.

Public appearances before large audiences were always a sacrifice for Lydia Zamenhof, who was very reserved and preferred privacy to such grand exposure. But when anyone mentioned Bahá’u’lláh, or her father’s language, she would become electrified, and her personality, as if by magic, would be totally transformed. Forgetting herself, her voice trembling, though convincing, she would tell of her life and her belief in Bahá’u’lláh. Her favorite subject was her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. During that time she enjoyed moments of deep communion with the Greatest Holy Leaf, conversed extensively with the Guardian, and spent sublime periods in prayer and devotion at the Holy Shrines.

On 28 November 1938 she returned to Poland. The political climate in Europe was rapidly deteriorating and the fear of another global conflict was spreading. In view of the imminent danger, Lydia Zamenhof wanted to be with her brother and sister, in Warsaw. It was there that she completed the translation into Polish of Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era, confiding to friends that Shoghi Effendi had urged her to hasten completion of the project.
In the last letter she sent to the United States, dated 18 August 1939, she wrote: "There are now five Baha'is in Poland. When I think of such a little number, I accept everyone with joy, knowing how important each one is." In that same letter, she outlined her plans to attend the 19th Esperantist Congress in Lwow, in September, and then to go to Holland for a few weeks. Neither of those trips was ever begun.

Two days after the letter reached its destination, Poland was invaded by the German army. Repeated efforts to obtain news of Lydia were unsuccessful even through the International Red Cross. Later we learned indirectly that she and her family had first been confined with other Jewish citizens to the Warsaw Ghetto. In 1942, the Zamenhof family was shipped to a concentration camp where professional people were executed by firing squads. Dr. Adam Zamenhof was among the very first to be shot. In August 1944, Dr. Zofia Zamenhof was executed in the same manner. Some days later Lydia was sent to the gas chamber in the Treblinka Concentration Camp, near Warsaw, and afterwards cremated.

Until the very last moment, it was later reported, Lydia Zamenhof was concerned with the well-being and safety of others. When it became evident that all the Jewish prisoners confined in Warsaw would eventually be put to death, the non-Jewish Esperantists of the city (among them some Baha'is), contacted her to arrange her escape from Poland. She refused, saying she preferred to end her life with her family, and did not wish to endanger the lives of her faithful friends.

We learned of this episode from the late Hand of the Cause of God Hermann Grossmann. One of the very first believers in Germany, he too was imprisoned and persecuted for his belief in Bahá'u'lláh, and was able to gather first-hand information on the death of Lydia Zamenhof. When he recounted this heartbreaking story to us his body shook with great emotion and tears ran down his face.

When we remember the altruism, the perseverance, and the love of Lydia Zamenhof, despite all her suffering, we are reminded of the verse revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in one of his prayers: "Blessed is he that hath set himself towards thee, and hasted to attain the Day-Spring of the lights of Thy face. Blessed is he who with all his affections hath turned to the Dawning-Place of Thy Revelation and the Fountain-Head of Thine inspiration. Blessed is he that hath expended in Thy path what Thou didst bestow upon him through Thy bounty and favor. Blessed is he who, in his sore longing after Thee, hast cast away all else except Thyself. Blessed is he who hath enjoyed intimate communion with Thee, and rid himself of all attachment to any one save Thee."”

1. Dr. Ludwig L. Zamenhof, a Polish physician and the creator of Esperanto.
2. At the time of Lydia Zamenhof's birth, Poland was a Grand-duchy of czarist Russia. This condition ended in 1918, after 87 years of Russian domination.
3. Equivalent to a Doctor of Laws degree.
5. The Congress at Edinburgh, The Bahá'í World, Vol. II. 1926-28, p. 265-68. (Also can be found in 'Abdu'l-Bahá, by Hasan M. Balyuzi, p. 363-64.)
7. Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh, New York 1938, pp. 33-34.

Lydia was armed with faith in Bahá'u'lláh and the universal language invented by her renowned father.
In our world you can easily see the forest for the trees.

If you have imagined that *World Order* magazine is only for Baha'is in the United States, you have been mistaken. Our field of coverage is as broad as our name implies. Our writers are from every corner of the globe. Our purpose is to explore the relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings, to give our readers a truer sense of the options and alternatives open to a society in the thrall of great historical forces, as it searches for lasting solutions. In short, we try to give you a glimpse of the forest of human endeavor, rather than of the single trees of its isolated developments.

In recent issues we have published articles on such varied subjects as the generation gap, collective security in a nuclear age, the rights of women, ocean resources and their proper use, the dilemma of intellectuals in this troubled age, Pablo Casals at 91, Paul Tillich and his outlook, the Muslim clergy, the world's search for peace—all clearly, articles of international scope and interest. We think you may be interested in *World Order*.

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COVER PHOTO

Area teaching conference held last Nov. 11-12 to mark the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh, in Ikot Uba village, Akpabuyo, Calabar, Nigeria.

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS

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CORRECTIONS

The author of the article, "A Pioneering Context: Bluefields, Nicaragua", which appeared in the February Bahá'í News was incorrectly named Richard Wilson. The author's name is Robert Wilson.

POSTAL INFORMATION

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Around the World

Africa:

Bahá'ís called dynamic force

Dr. Kingsley Dinga Dubé, Senior Information Officer for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, was the speaker at the gathering sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly of North East Africa, in Asmara, Ethiopia, December 10, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The meeting was held at the Officer’s Club in Asmara, which filled to capacity for the event.

In the course of his talk on the civil rights of individuals, Dr. Dubé said he found the Bahá'í Faith to be a “dynamic faith,” and “a dynamic force in the shaping of the true spirit that we are looking for in the world.”

“Your efforts to promote human rights for all men and women,” Dr. Dubé said of the Bahá'ís, “you have set your souls the standards which all men and women should strive for. You stand for the urgent implementation of fundamental justice. You stand for the need to foster international solidarity.”

“The Bahá'ís believe in the soundness or sanity of pacific solutions to human problems,” he said. “The Bahá'ís stand for the righteousness of respecting the political and civil rights of the individual. You also are trying everything possible to urge mankind to see to it that policies are followed which will result in the equitable distribution of wealth.”

He went on in this fashion for some time. He ended by saying that he felt that Bahá'ís were true promoters of human rights, and that he considered them “an arm of the United Nations in Ethiopia.”

A questioner in the audience afterward asked why he spoke at such great length about the Bahá'í Faith and its relation to UN ideals, and seemed to exclude other religions from his praise. Dubé said in referring to the Bahá'í Faith he also meant “like-minded organizations,” or religions with the same basic principles.

Dr. Dubé, 45, was born in Southern Rhodesia. He studied in Rhodesia and New York. In 1968 he was appointed Political Affairs Officer for the U.N. Secretariat; one year later he was appointed to his present position.

More Africans attend school

Fifty African believers were among the eighty participants at the annual West African Summer School at Bomi Hills, Liberia, between December 21-30, 1973. This figure represented an increase of more than 100 percent over the previous year in attendance by the African Bahá'ís. Believers from Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast, and Ghana attended the 10-day session, as well as Bahá'ís from many localities in Liberia. Three Continental Counsellors for North western Africa participated: Mr. F.A. Ekpe, of Nigeria; Mr. D. Kázimi, of the Ivory Coast; and Mr. H. R. Ardiikani, of Senegal. Even members of the Nation Assembly of West Africa were also present.

One of the goals set for the summer school was to proclaim the Faith to residents of Bomi Hills. Six teams covered the district on 28 December, inviting people to a public meeting at City Hall that evening. Approximately 50 people arrived that night to hear Counsellor Ekpe speak on the principle of progressive revelation, and to view a Bahá'í film on the dedication of the Panama Temple.

On one of the school days a former superintendent of the Bomi Territory, of which Bomi Hills is a part, addressed assistants in various capacities. The first National Bahá'í Youth Conference between December 9 and 15.

The first National Bahá'í Youth Conference of Tanzania, East Africa, conducted between December 9 and 15.
the Baha'is, saying he had been impressed during his tour of office with the determination of Baha'i institutions to turn aside all financial aid from individuals and organizations not associated with their Faith. The superintendent, who had been helpful to the Baha'is, said he was honored to have been able to contribute in some small way to the progress of the Cause in Bomi Hills.

Paraguay:

A lesson well learned

The difficult town of Villarica (pop. 25,000) was recently selected by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Paraguay as the site for a large-scale proclamation. Teaching in the area has progressed slowly, so careful preparations were made for a public meeting in the local movie theater. Radio publicity was begun one month before the proclamation. Street banners in the town heralded the event. United Nations and Baha'i films were ordered, Continental Counsellor Athos Costas was invited to speak, and 300 pamphlets were set aside for distribution during the teaching campaign.

Baha'i teachers were pleased to see 20 people in the audience at 8 p.m. on the night of the public meeting. In this town particularly, it showed their planning had been well-rewarded. A hundred more people arrived by 8:30, and more appeared to be on their way. An hour later, when the program finally started, more than 4,000 people sat in the audience, politely listening to the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

More than 20 percent of the town's population participated in that public meeting, which, according to its own testimony, taught the National Assembly a lesson: next time literature would be sent for thousands; and follow-up meetings would be scheduled at the local theater, at the cultural center, and at the home of Villarica pioneer Iraj Pakravan.

Mexico:

Youth appear on television

The National Bahá'í Winter School of Mexico was conducted between 23-30 December at the Martha Root Bahá'í Institute outside the Mayan town of Muna, on the Yucatan peninsula. More than 100 Baha'is attended, some driving from distant Mexico City, others arriving by bus over the mountains from Puebla. Continental Counsellor Mrs. Carmen de Burafato, and Auxiliary Board members Mrs. Marie Novak and Mr. Antonio Salazar, a resident of Muna, took part in the program.

On the eve of the opening of the institute Mrs. Burafato was invited to appear on a television program in Mérida, the capital of Yucatan, to explain the teachings of the Faith. She made a second appearance on the program at the close of the Winter school, accompanied by three youth. The station later invited a group of Bahá'í youth to appear on a special program, to sing Bahá'í songs and talk about the Faith.

On 31 December, Mrs. Burafato met with the Governor of Yucatan, Carlos Loret de Mola, and presented him a volume of Bahá'í Writings.

For recreation at the end of one session a group of Bahá'is accompanied Mr. Salazar to the nearby Uxmal ruins, to inspect the 'pyramid of the prophet'. On an upper section of the pyramid an ancient mason had hammered a nine-pointed star into the stone. Mr. Salazar prefaced the visit with an account of Indian prophecies which refer to the advent of a great Manifestation.

"The Bahá'í Faith in Action" was the theme of the Winter School. Some of the class discussions centered on topics like the need for greater participation by women; the difference between a community with a functioning Spiritual Assembly and a community without one; and the education of children.

New Delhi, India, Winter School, held November 2-4, 1973 at the Bahá'í National Center.
Trinidad:

Assembly meets island official

The Governor General of Trinidad and Tobago, Sir Ellis Clarke, met with representatives of the country's National Spiritual Assembly for a courtesy visit 16 October 1973. Miss Shasi Sedaghat, chairman of the Assembly, and Mr. Samuel Lancaster, secretary, presented two Bahá'í books to Sir Ellis, and for almost an hour, conversed about the Bahá'í Faith with the Governor General. Sir Ellis showed interest in the basic principles of the Faith, and asked about the progress of teaching in Trinidad and Tobago. Miss Sedaghat expressed the appreciation of the Bahá'ís for the cooperation the government has demonstrated in efforts to publicize the tenets of the Bahá'í Faith.

Faith attracts school principal

Shortly after the National Assembly of Trinidad and Tobago decided to explore the possibility of presenting lectures at secondary schools on the islands, the principal of Minerva College, in Port of Spain, invited Bahá'ís to speak to his students regularly on Thursdays. Neville McLean was introduced to the Faith by his step-daughter, a Bahá'í, who asked that he investigate it himself. At first Mr. McLean was reluctant, he later said. But after reading one of the books he had received from his daughter, he determined to invite the Bahá'ís to lecture at his college.

The Minerva students have shown almost as much interest in the Bahá'í Faith as has their principal. They not only attend the lectures faithfully, but have also asked to be shown Bahá'í films, and now even purchase Bahá'í books regularly. The Thursday lecturers are Mr. Lawrence Coward, vice-chairman of the National Assembly, and Mr. Samuel Lancaster, its secretary. On one occasion Continental Counsellor Peter McLaren spent an entire evening with the students of Minerva.

In addition to the class discussions, the students have heard Bahá'í entertainers. Two American singing groups that have visited the country recently have been invited to perform at the college. Miss Terry Madison and Miss Shirley Yarborough were the first group; Gregg Shaw and Mrs. Debby Bley the second.
Pakistan:

Tribe practices Faith

A series of photographs of Baha'is of the Bhil tribe, of Thatta, Pakistan, were taken during a recent visit there by members of the National Spiritual Assembly and the Auxiliary Boards. Photograph A shows the visitors with the men of the Bhil tribe. Chief Sardar, a Baha'i, stands third from the left. It is customary among the Bhils to offer a turban or a scarf to those who visit the Baha'i Center for the first time. Photograph B is of newly enrolled Baha'i women and children. Photograph C shows some of the Bhil children enrolled at the Thatta Baha'i School. The teachers are standing third and fourth from the left, and second and third from the right.

Bangladesh:

Faith attracts city residents

Seventy-five Baha'is, and their guests from Denmark, Guam, and Malaysia, attended the second Baha'i Winter School of Bangladesh, at the National Baha'i Center in Dacca, January 25-27, 1974. A large Banner announcing the event was placed atop the Haziratu'l-Quds, attracting a substantial number of inquiries from city residents during the meeting.
Chile:

Chile plans large deepening project

Six of Chile's seven foreign pioneers attended the Continental Board of Counsellors Conference in Valparaiso, Chile, in November 1973. Sitting are Mrs. Paula Siegel, with her daughter Lua, left, and Laurel Schaeffer, right. Standing from left to right: John Caruana, Robert Siegel, Reed Chandler, Continental Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi, and Bill Allmart. The seventh pioneer, Miss Betty Becker, was ill in Punta Arenas when the photograph was taken. The pioneers will participate in a large-scale deepening project in Southern Chile during March and April. The project will be sponsored by the Hand of the Cause of God Ruhiyyih Khánum. A report of the project will appear in BAHÁ'Í NEWS.

Malta:

Malta elects Local Assembly

The first Local Spiritual Assembly of Malta, formed at Ridván 1973. The independent state of Malta consists of three islands in the Mediterranean Sea, about 58 miles South of Sicily, Italy. The major island of the group—Malta—is 95 square miles in area. The country's population is 330,000. The members of the Assembly are, seated from left to right: Ms. Beatrice Newman, vice-chairman; Ms. Mary Newman; Ms. Olga Mills, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to Malta; Ms. Jean Campbell, treasurer. Standing from left to right: Mrs. Paulette Crockford; Mr. Cecil Crockford, secretary; Mrs. Ghodsieh Ala'i, chairman; Ms. Marion Bradley; and Mr. Philip Harcourt.

Indonesian family life

Children's class sponsored by the Local Assembly of Tambakredjo, East Java.
The first nine days:

Selections from the diary of Agnes Parsons
on the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Washington, D.C.

Few Bahá'ís in America received as many blessings during the visit of the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in 1912, as did Mrs. Agnes Parsons, of Washington, D.C. Selections from her diary, dealing with the first days of the Master in the United States, have been edited for use in Bahá'í News, and are printed below. A brief biography of Agnes Parsons was published in Bahá'í News in July 1973. Some additional information about her efforts to achieve race unity in the U.S. will appear in a forthcoming edition of World Order.

Saturday, April 20, 1912

'Abdu'l-Bahá's steamship Cedric reached New York Wednesday night, April 10th, 1912. Many Bahá'ís were at the wharf to greet Him, but the passengers were not permitted to leave the ship until late Thursday morning because of illness in the steerage. The Bahá'ís were there early. And 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent them a message not to wait, that He would see them later at the hotel. But they would not go away. When the reporters boarded the Cedric—off quarantine—they found 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the upper deck. He was dressed in a long, flowing black Oriental gown, underneath which was another of a light tan color. On His head He wore a snow-white turban. He gave the reporters a hearty welcome and He proved such a good talker that there was no occasion to ask questions. He talked of newspapers, of women's suffrage, of universal peace, of religion, and of Persia. When the Cedric was opposite the Statue of Liberty, 'Abdu'l-Bahá extended His arms in a salute and referred to His own long exile in Syria. The skyline of New York greatly interested Him. He called the skyscrapers "the minarets of the Western world's commerce and industry." Many were on the pier to greet Him, and the welcome pleased Him immensely. He, however, shrank from a public reception and asked, through Dr. Aminu'llah Farid, that they go away, saying that He would meet them in the hotel in which He would stay in the afternoon.

I gave Mirzâ [Ahmad] Sohrâb a letter to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and another to Mirzâ Asadu'llah, but the letter did not come to this country. I received a letter from Mirzâ Sohrâb dated April 12th, saying 'Abdu'l-Bahá seemed inclined to stay at an apartment, coming to our house each day for meetings and appointments, and he enclosed a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, kind and lovely, but making no promises. I wrote again saying the house was all arranged for His party, and reminded Him of His promise in Syria to stay with us. Through Dr. Farid has come a Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, kind and lovely, but making no promises. I wrote again saying the house was all arranged for His party, and reminded Him of His promise in Syria to stay with us.

Today, April 19th, has come a telegram from the Master to Jeffrey, saying, "LETTER RECEIVED. GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SKE, MYSELF AND TRANSLATOR COME YOUR HOUSE. (SIGNED) ABBAS." Mirzâ Sohrâb told me over the telephone that he had also just had a telegram saying they would leave Saturday, 8 a.m., but not to let it be generally known. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had a very appreciative reception in New York. I cannot however write of the meetings and interviews as I must begin tomorrow to record the details of His visit here.

Sunday, April 21, 1912

'Abdu'l-Bahá, Dr. Farid, Dr. Getsinger, and two Persians, arrived in Washington about one o'clock on Saturday, April 20th. Mrs. Hemmick sent her motor, and I my carriage, to meet the party. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had asked that the time of His arrival be kept quiet as
He was anxious that no demonstration be made. He was met by Mirza Sohrob, Mme. Florence Breed Khan and her children, and immediately brought to our home. The day before leaving New York, He had interviewed two hundred and fifty people in the morning, besides speaking before large audiences in the afternoon and evening, and Dr. Farid thought it would be wise for Him to rest as much as possible before the meeting at which He would speak in the evening. Consequently, He went to His room where He rested before luncheon and again immediately afterward, while Dr. Farid and I went to a reception at Rauscher's. When we returned, 'Abdu'l-Baha, Dr. Farid, and Mr. [Charles Mason] Remy went for a short drive.

While we were at dinner, Mrs. [Helen S.] Goodall and Mrs. [Ella G.] Cooper arrived to see 'Abdu'l-Baha by appointment, which detained us. The meeting was held at the Carnegie Library. When we reached the hall we saw that every inch of standing space was occupied. A path had to be made along the halls and stairs for our party and I noticed that there were several who reached out to touch His garment. There were present five reporters, taking account of the proceedings.

'Abdu'l-Baha made His address which Dr. Farid translated into beautiful English. He spoke mainly of peace and arbitration. The people were asked to stand while He gave His blessing in Persian—this was not translated. There was great insistence on the part of many in the audience to meet Him, but this had to be refused as He needed rest.

When we reached home, 'Abdu'l-Baha's evening meal was served to Him in the morning room and we talked for some time. I asked about Mr. (F.D.) Millet who was recently lost in the Titanic disaster, telling 'Abdu'l-Baha that He had been very dearly beloved. Mr. Millet was an artist whose person and whose work had been appreciated in both Europe and America. 'Abdu'l-Baha's answer was: "Where one has been devoted to his work in life—art, or whatever it may be—it is regarded as worship and he is undoubtedly surrounded by the mercy of God." He also said: "If one does you a service and at some other time a wrong, overlook the one for the other—think only of the good."

I told him that from having thought that Muhammad was an imposter I now knew Him to be one of the Prophets of God.

'Abdu'l-Baha has His meals as follows: 7 a.m., Tea and bread; 1:30 p.m., Dines with the family; 4 p.m., Tea; 7:30 p.m., Sits with the family at dinner, but partakes of no food Himself; 10 p.m., Simple meal. While sitting with the family last night at the dinner hour, He looked over many cablegrams mainly from foreign and far-off places, congratulating America on having the honor of His presence.

On Sunday morning 'Abdu'l-Baha had interviews with Mrs. Sexton, Mrs. Noyes, and others. I was present with Mrs. Noyes. She asked many interesting questions concerning rhythm. The time between half-past nine and ten 'Abdu'l-Baha spent with Jeffrey, looking at his toys, books, and pictures. Afterward they went on the roof garden together. At eleven o'clock 'Abdu'l-Baha in company with some of the Persians of His party walked to the station hall on Connecticut Avenue, where He gave a beautiful address, after which He came down the aisle greeting the people. The children were brought forward and put into His arms. The blessing, given in Persian, was not translated. I took Jeffrey Boy to the service with me—he remained until after the address was made. 'Abdu'l-Baha, Dr. Farid, and Dr. Get­singler drove for an hour after the meeting, then went to Mrs. Hemmick's to luncheon. Mrs. Seth Ackley and Mr. [Oscar W.] Underwood were present.

I was eager for 'Abdu'l-Baha to see Mrs. Noyes dance, in order that He might say whether, from the ethical standpoint, there was any value in her work. Before leaving in the morning He very indulgently promised Mrs. Noyes to see her dance at 3 o'clock, if she would return at that hour, adding, as though He were very much amused: "I've done almost everything, but I've never watched dancing." After seeing Mrs. Noyes dance, He said it was very good and blessed her work.

At 4 o'clock, 'Abdu'l-Baha, Dr. Farid and I went to the Universalist Church, of which Dr. Van Schaick is pastor. We found him standing on the pavement, waiting to receive 'Abdu'l-Baha. Whom He conducted through a side door to the chancel. Dr. Van Schaick said that because of the many engagements of the great Teacher of the East, the order of the service would be changed—that 'Abdu'l-Baha would first address the audience and then leave. Dr. Van Schaick made an address of welcome to which 'Abdu'l-Baha responded; then He gave a beautiful address—the theme unity—which was quickly and most satisfactorily interpreted by Dr. Farid. A prayer in Persian by the Master followed. When I supposed that 'Abdu'l-Baha would be free to leave and go home for a little rest, Dr. Van Schaick made such a strong appeal from the people to shake hands that the request was granted. It was quite a long time before we were able to return. But instead of finding an opportunity for a quiet rest, we found a group of people awaiting 'Abdu'l-Baha in the little room: Mirza Ali-Kuli Khan, Mme. Khan and the two oldest children; Mrs. [Frances] Breed and a young secretary of the Persian Legation; Mrs. Severance and Mrs. Lane; also Mrs. Lane's brother, who had been on the ship with 'Abdu'l-Baha, a friendship having sprung up because of the children's fondness for 'Abdu'l-Baha. He (Mrs. Lane's brother) was quite surprised when he reached Washington to find that his sister had become interested in the Bahá'í Teachings.

Tea was served in the large room, a circle being formed; 'Abdu'l-Baha, as it were, at the head of the circle. After this group left, 'Abdu'l-Baha returned to the little room, where Dr. Farid read to Him for half an hour. After this He had an interview with Mr. Innes and Mr. Cram, which had been previously arranged.

'Abdu'l-Baha with the Turkish Ambas­sador, Diyâ Pâshâ.
He had interviewed 250 people in the morning, besides speaking, before large audiences, in the afternoon and evening. . .

'Abdu'l-Bahá handed me a pair of glasses, asking to try them on. I was obliged to tell Him they did not suit. 'Abdu'l-Bahá then gave them to Mr. Parsons, who accepted. 'Abdu'l-Bahá took out another pair, asking me to try them. They did not seem to help the eyes, so I gave them back to Him; but He put them in the case and handed them to me. Of course, I shall keep and try them again. After lunch 'Abdu'l-Bahá rested until four, when He had interviews for three quarters of an hour. At four forty-five He went into the large room to meet and talk to the great number who had assembled to see Him. This talk was along the general lines of the former addresses, but more fitted, I thought, to deeper thinkers. He said religion is one—imitations of religion, many. Mrs. Richardson sat next to me. She said: "Isn't He a dear?" "Oh, is it over? I'm coming again tomorrow."

The people lingered a long time after the talk. The Persians who were present went into the little room with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, where tea was served, and they probably discussed business matters for a while. Certain people were taken into the little room to meet be faithful and said He had prayed for all. Afterward He gave each servant a handmade silk handkerchief as a souvenir.

'Abdu'l-Bahá saw several people before He went out for a drive. He returned in time for luncheon. Before He went for His drive He gave Jeffrey a very handsome Persian inkwell. At lunch He presented Mr. [Arthur J.] Parsons with a manuscript of Bahá'u'lláh. It contains very interesting illuminations. Just before or after lunch (I cannot recall the exact time)
where His dinner was served. He preferred hearing the music at a distance. Juliet Thompson, who had telephoned me of her arrival, came in and 'Abdu'l-Bahá invited her to sit with Him. "Eat, eat!" He said. So a plate was brought and she shared the meal with Him. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said Mrs. Randolph's music was very good, then jokingly said: "Ask Dr. Getsinger to sing now—he sings like a canary."

Dr. Randolph came for Mrs. Randolph. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked that he sit by Him and He spoke of the healing power of music in the belief of the ancient Persians—certain airs were supposed to be healing to tuberculosis in its early stages.

Also, the subject of Charles Rann Kennedy's play, The Terrible Meek, was commented upon. Mr. Kennedy had persuaded 'Abdu'l-Bahá to see the play in New York. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said "If, instead of making it sensational, he had taken certain incidents in the life of Christ, the play would have had great value!" Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá touched on the salient points in the life of Christ in a most wonderful manner.

During the evening Mr. Parsons asked me to put on the Persian costume and show it to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. As I came into the room, He laughed and shouted: "Mrs. Hemmick!" The costume had many bright colors.

Tuesday, April 23, 1912

On Tuesday, after seeing several people in the morning, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Dr. Farid went for a short drive, stopped at Mr. and Mrs. Hannen's, and afterward went to Howard University, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá made an address before a large audience of professors and students. He dwelt largely upon the need for love and unity between the white and black races and spoke of the gratitude which the colored people should feel for the white, because through them came not only freedom for their race, but the beginning of freedom for all slaves. He also told them that through education the difference between the two races would be lessened.

From Howard University 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Dr. Farid were taken to Mme. Khan's, where I also was at lunch with the party. There were nineteen present besides 'Abdu'l-Bahá. These are the names that I recall: Mirzá Ali-Kuli Khan, Mme. Khan, two children, Mrs. Breed, Mrs. Severance, Mrs. Goodall, Mrs. Cooper, Miss A. Dow, Dr. Getsinger, Dr. Farid, Mirzá Sohrab, Miss Juliet Thompson, Mr. Louis Gregory, Mr. Remey and myself. A Persian meal was served. The flowers were lovely, rose leaves having been strewn over the table. There was some delay in the luncheon, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá saw fit to change the places of some of the guests. 'Abdu'l-Bahá insisted that I have the arm chair that had been set at the table for Him and so I was next to Him, Mrs. Severance next to me. On the other side of 'Abdu'l-Bahá sat Mrs. Goodall, Mrs. Breed and Miss Juliet Thompson—the other seats Mme. Khan arranged. After luncheon 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to a group of people in an upper room; later, to 30 or 40 who had assembled in another room to hear an address.

The Turkish ambassador [Diyá Pâshá], who had previously met 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was present. He had a talk with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, came into the long room to hear His address, and said to someone: "I want to go to the home where He is going to speak next." So he came to my house and afterwards invited 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Dr. Farid, Mrs. Parsons, and myself to dine on Thursday evening.

The young Turkish secretary was speaking very appreciatively of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when I had the opportunity of commenting on the breadth of the Teachings—I told him that from having thought that Muhammad was an imposter I now knew Him to be one of the Prophets of God. He replied that the Muhammadans were much more liberal than the Christians, inasmuch as they have accepted Christ as a Prophet, whereas the Christians did not accept Muhammad.

Admiral [Robert] Peary was also present. I heard 'Abdu'l-Bahá compliment him on having reached a point very far to the North. From the Khan's we returned to this home, where we found the place thronged. There were probably 250 people present, many standing. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of the Titanic disaster. When He finished, He said, "I am very tired! Next time I will do better." After the talk, He went into the little room where He saw several people, then for a drive with Mrs. Hemmick. The Turkish Ambassador also drove with them, being so interested in the conversation. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá returned He went into the morning room where Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Belmont, Miss Juliet Thompson, and two Persians were assembled. Tea was served and 'Abdu'l-Bahá honored me by giving me tea which had been specially prepared for Him. Very soon afterward the Persians left and we succeeded in getting 'Abdu'l-Bahá into His room for a rest, before going to the colored church, where He was to make an address in the evening. He was not with us, as usual, during the dinner hour.

After dinner, 'Abdu'l-Bahá went with Mirzá Ali-Kuli Khan to fulfill the engagement at the Metropolitan Church. When He returned, we sat with Him while He had His evening meal, talking along general lines. Mr. Parsons and Dr. Farid had chocolate. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had invited me to sit next to Him on the sofa. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá started off to bed Mr. Parsons assisted Him up the stairs, and I heard Him say lovingly to Mr. Parsons, "My son, My son." (Someone told 'Abdu'l-Bahá that this was Royall's [Parsons'] eldest son) birthday. "Why was I not told before, that I might have prayed for him at dawn," He said.)

Wednesday, April 24, 1912

Wednesday morning was given mostly to private interviews. A drive to Arlington had been arranged by Dr. Farid. At noon, just before we left the house, I said to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "May I have a few of your roses and may I choose them?" I intended to take the least beautiful ones. 'Abdu'l-Bahá made the choice Himself, taking them out one by one, saying "I will carry them." While we were waiting for the TOP: A second floor room of the Parsons' house. BOTTOM: The library of the Parsons' home, also on the second floor.
carriage, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Dr. Farid, Mr. Remey and I walked up 18th Street nearly to 'T'. 'Abdu'l-Bahá observed an electric motor on the other side of the street, stopped, remarked about it, and asked the price. As none of us possessed one, it was very amusing to hear how we groped around for the price. Finally Mr. Remey said he thought that they could be bought from $800 upward to $2,000 and promised to get a price list for 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We then walked on and as we turned back saw the carriage approaching. When we reached Arlington, we got out at the house and went through some of the rooms. Afterward we sat outside, 'Abdu'l-Bahá enjoying the softness and freshness of the air, which was laden with the odor of flowers; admiring the view in the distance, with the domes of the Capitol and Library showing up conspicuously. After this we walked down to the tombs. On the way, as I passed the monument of General King, I said, "This is where my Father's best friend is buried." 'Abdu'l-Bahá took out a white rose and placed it on the monument. When we reached the graves of my Father and Mother, He divided the roses, placing them in the receptacles for flowers, then chanted a Tablet—a large portion of which Dr. Farid took down. 'Abdu'l-Bahá came up, "Let us go to the graves of our loved ones, and that it is very wrong unless I did this, the constant thinking of which Dr. Farid took down.

"The staircase leading to the front door of the Parsons' house.

"An office on the second floor of the Parsons' home.

"Theodore Roosevelt's daughter, [Mabel]"
Mr. Parsons, and myself. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was seated opposite the Ambassador. Mme. Khan was to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's right, and the Ambassador's daughter to His left. I was to the right of the Ambassador, Mrs. Williams to the left. The Ambassador had much conversation with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Turkish. The latter part of the dinner, the Turkish Ambassador drew out from his pocket a paper on which was written some sentiments in praise of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was not outdone, for He likened the Ambassador to the sun. I hope to get the translations. The Ambassador's nephew and some members of the Embassy came in after dinner.

'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Ambassador remained in the room where the men had smoked until Dr. Farid joined them, suggesting to 'Abdu'l-Bahá that it was time to leave—so I imagined, as He very soon went down and we followed. 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave me a small package to keep for Him for the present.

Friday, April 26th, 1912

On Friday morning I dressed early hoping to get over to the Unitarian church to hear 'Abdu'l-Bahá speak to the Women's Alliance, but it was quite over when I reached there, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá was on His way home. I found Dr. Farid and Mirzâ Sôhrâb at the church—they said the address had been much appreciated. I do not recall the subject. I took the carriage on Massachusetts Avenue and was brought home—asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá if He would drive, but He said He preferred to walk. Mirzâ Maîmûd was standing at the door. I asked if he were going with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. "I have not been told to do so," was His reply. 'Abdu'l-Bahá went out alone.

Before the luncheon hour a message came from Mrs. John J. White, making the request of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to speak to a few people at her home. He again preferred to walk. The Turkish Ambassador was to be with us at luncheon, as well as Nina Hopkins. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not return by half past one our luncheon was late. It was about two when we sat down to the table. Miss Hopkins spoke French to the Ambassador and again, as on the night before, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Ambassador talked a great deal in Turkish. At one time when they were speaking and seemed amused, I said in a low voice to Dr. Farid, "I think we should hear what that was." His reply was, "I have not been told to translate it." It was quite late before the Ambassador left, after which there were interviews, and at a quarter to five, the meeting in the large room. It was filled with people, eager to hear His last talk at my home. His subject was the human and divine Spirit in man. He made a little farewell talk also, expressing his gratitude and happiness, and added and admonition to all who had heard the spiritual Teachings to endeavor to gain something from them. Before dinner I was given a private interview with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when we spoke of Mr. Parsons and Jeffrey.

'Abdu'l-Bahá rested during the dinner hour. Knowing that Dr. Farid had had such full days and so much responsibility, I suggested that he also rest, which he was glad to do. But he did not allow himself to fall asleep, fearing that he would not awaken in time. I was sorry I had not thought to tell him that I would see that he was aroused at the proper time. He had food with 'Abdu'l-Bahá when we returned in the evening. At a quarter to nine we left for Continental Hall, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was to speak. We stayed in a very comfortable room, until the early part of the program was over. Mr. [Samuel] Gompers [labor leader] was brought in to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Among other things, he said: "I try to do my duty." 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "If each one tried to do his duty there would be no labor question." 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of what women had done and the great work they would do in the future; the fact the Continental Building had been so beautifully planned and built by women was an indication of what women could do with the proper training. A large part of the lower portion of the building was filled, but the galleries were not. After the speaking we went back to the same room, where several people were introduced to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. On our way we met Mrs. Scott, the president of the D.A.R.'s, and had a few words together.

When we returned home, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had His evening meal and food was also served to the others. We sat in the small room and had a very interesting talk.

Saturday, April 27, 1912

Early Saturday morning 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent for me. I dressed and got down in fifteen minutes. I found Mrs. Belmont fitting His coat, which she was making for Him. He said some very sweet things about her and asked me to look after her.

The night before I had seen Mrs. Nourse at the Continental Hall and invited her to lunch on Saturday. Mr. Parsons had had a talk with Mrs. Cabot. She was in Baltimore and left her phone number with Mr. Parsons, so I called her up and invited her to lunch also. Mrs. Cabot had a lovely talk with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. During luncheon 'Abdu'l-Bahá talked of the proper method of taxation. He said a great deal. The following I remember clearly: that if a man owned only one house and land, the products of which supported his family, he should not be taxed for that; but if he owned a second house, a certain rate should be levied on that. If a third, a greater rate, etc. By this method, a man could not accumulate a colossal fortune. We appealed to Dr. Farid to put all that was said regarding taxes into English for us. He said it would be better for him to write it in Persian, correct it and then translate it into English.

Juliet Thompson came in for quite a while on Saturday. Miss Gaith arrived in the afternoon, expecting to spend the night and attend the reception.

I went down at 9:30 p.m. and found everything looking very lovely. I had arranged for 'Abdu'l-Bahá to sit on the large sofa in the southeastern corner of the library, but others took possession of it. As I had to receive the guests, I did not hear in detail the way in which people were presented to Him. Several told me of things that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had said to them. To General Greely He
said: "I have often sympathized with you in the experiences of hardship which you had in your earlier years," showing that He knew the General's history and adventures in the Arctic regions. To Admiral Wainwright: "You are an admiral because you believe in peace." Admiral Wainwright answered: "My wife makes me do so!" I found that Mrs. Sherman Miles had not met Him and I told her I wanted to present her to Him. He said something very lovely about her: "You are a good daughter and here is your good mother." I said: "She has a good mother of her own." Just then Mrs. Noble came up. I said: "This is her mother." 'Abdu'l-Baha replied: "You are very happy to have two mothers." This was interesting, as I have had a very unusual affection for Julee, although I have seen little of her.

Most of the people had gone away by the time I went down to the music room. We expected ‘Abdu'l-Baha would follow, but a little later, when Dr. Farid went upstairs to see if He would grant an interview to Mr. Garfield, who had come in, he found that ‘Abdu'l-Baha had gone to bed. The music seemed to be enjoyed and seven persons spoke in complimentary terms of the way things went off.

Sunday, April 28, 1912

Early Sunday morning Dr. Farid arranged for Mr. and Mrs. Karney Carr to have an interview with ‘Abdu'l-Baha at 2:30 p.m. They are both thoughtful, spiritual people. Dr. Chase would come with them as he had not been able to see ‘Abdu'l-Baha before.

Mr. Innes, who particularly asked for another interview, was asked to come at 9:30 a.m. I telephoned Dr. Farid, asking if I could be present at the interview with Mr. Innes, if there were no objections. Dr. Farid said there would be no objections, so I sat at the large table in the library and ate my breakfast while the talk progressed. Many interesting questions were asked and answered. I remember distinctly that ‘Abdu'l-Baha said: "A man who has been injured should not retaliate—but that the law should carry out retribution. In its doing so there is not the spirit of revenge, for this that the law does is for the safety of the body politic."

Sunday morning ‘Abdu'l-Baha went to call on the Turkish Ambassador. He asked me to accompany Him, which I did. The conversation was in Turkish. The Ambassador’s son, a very polite young man, spoke English with me until I said to him, “We can have a conversation at another time. I do not wish to deprive you of hearing what ‘Abdu'l-Baha and your Father have to say.” So he listened, and all seemed intensely interested.

After this visit we drove to the White Lot and then home to luncheon. There were many private interviews in the early part of the afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. Carr and Dr. Chase had to wait some time. ‘Abdu'l-Baha had them come to His own room and they were greatly interested in His answers.

Dr. Farid and I were in the carriage with ‘Abdu'l-Baha on the way to the station. We stopped at Mrs. Hemmick's to say goodbye, but she was out. Afterward, we drove to Mrs. John J. White's. She was most happy to have another word with ‘Abdu'l-Baha before He left. The Turkish Ambassador and his son came to the station to say goodbye, leaving before the train did, but the rest of the party—Mirza and Mme. Khan, Mirza Sohrab, Mr. Remey, Mrs. Belmont, the “little girl” [Leone] and two or three others, remained to see the train go off. ‘Abdu'l-Baha assured me that He would be with us although He was going to Chicago.

I. Jeffrey Parsons, younger son of Mr. and Mrs. Parsons.
It was January 26, 1974. As we flew towards Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, I wondered if anyone else on board the plane was aware that this was an anniversary. One year ago this same weekend, on January 25, 1973, the first flight of Operation Airlift Bahamas had taken off from Fort Lauderdale International Airport and had landed one-half hour and 50 air miles later—on Grand Bahama Island.

The other eight passengers and the pilot of our 10 seater twin-engine private plane were enthusiastically pointing out landmarks on the island, stretching in a long emerald curve below us. Oil storage tanks marked one end of a long narrow road. "That's Pinter's Point," someone said. "There are many new Bahá'ís there." The road, a narrow strip winding along the gem-green of the subtropical island, appeared to go from point "A" to point "B" with no real purpose. Small houses were placed along its length. No visible line indicated where Pinter's Point left off, and Lewis Yard, or Hunters, began.

For me the flight was a time for reflection. When Operation Airlift Bahamas began in 1973 there were three Local Spiritual Assemblies in the Bahama Islands, one in Nassau, the capital, the others (none of which were functioning), on Grand Bahama Island. Pioneers had been sent to Grand Bahama Island to reactivate the Bahá'í communities there. The goals in the Bahamas were an integral part of the Nine Year Plan, and had to be won.

The plane banked to the left, the port wing dipping toward the sea. The tourist posters describing the Caribbean are no exaggeration. The dark shadows of the reefs stand out boldly against the white sandy sea bottom. With a little imagination one can see ship wrecks left from the days when the pirates occupied these islands. The sea is a clear turquoise, and when the sun dances off the waves and ripples the effect is like sparkling diamonds.

My mind flashed back to that first trip to Freeport, just one year ago. The Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Spiritual Assembly had undertaken the task of coordinating a series of teaching trips to the Bahamas under the guidance of the International Goals Committee of the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly. The goals were to reactivate the existing Bahá'í communities; to help the Local Spiritual Assemblies on Grand Bahama Island, and in Nassau; and to build additional Bahá'í communities, and win goals of the Nine Year Plan.

Ron Hauck, a Fort Lauderdale Bahá'í, owner and operator of an aeromotive company, had offered the Assembly the use of one of his charter planes, if the friends would cover gasoline and other incidental expenses, such as landing and immigration fees. It was the height of the winter season in Florida, and Ron's planes were solidly booked by charter parties and tourists. Each trip the teaching teams took in one of his planes amounted to a real sacrifice on his part. But without the use of his planes the teaching trips would have been too expensive to make, and could not have been undertaken. A series of eight trips were scheduled in 1973. A total of 63 Bahá'ís (20% of whom participated in more than one trip) traveled to the islands, with three trips to Nassau and five trips to Freeport between 25 January and 22 April. It was the first teaching journey for many of these

TOP: Florida teaching team members with friends at the home of Mrs. Williams in Hunter, Grand Bahama Islands, during a recent teaching consolidation trip.
BOTTOM: One of the teams during a March, 1973 trip to the Bahamas. Standing in front of the Bahá'í Center are (left to right): Ms. Jean Bellows, Mr. John Hatcher, Ms. Linda Shaw, Mrs. Sandi Bullock, with her baby, Poova, Mr. Charles Bullock, Ms. Fern McBride, Ms. Marcia Groen, Mr. Siggie Shaw, and Ms. Liz Venter.
The Bahá'ís.

The Bahama, in the West Indies, consist of a chain of 700 islands (30 of them uninhabited), and 2,000 islets and reefs extending 760 miles southwest from Grand Bahama Island (the point nearest to the U.S.A.). New Providence Island, one of the smallest of the chain, is the most important; it contains the capital, Nassau. The rest of the archipelago is known collectively as the Out Islands, and is at a more retarded stage of development. The population of Nassau is more worldly-wise than that of the Out Islands. Nassau is the most popular tourist resort, having many glittering hotels, yacht basins and expensive tourist shops.

The Bahá'í community of Nassau is mainly comprised of native Bahamians. Many can trace their ancestry back to the American Revolutionary period, when the Colonial loyalists under the very favorable terms extended by the British Crown, emigrated from the newly-independent territories, bringing with them their Negro slaves. Reaching the Bahamian people with the Bahá'í Message was not difficult. The fact that the teaching teams were not tourists, that they visited the areas where the people lived, removed from the tourist routes, intrigued and impressed them. Native Bahamians declared their belief in Baha'u'llah on each occasion when Bahá'ís sojourned in the islands.

The Bahá'ís of Nassau worked with us at all times, street teaching, often leading the teaching and the deepening work, and guiding us through their Assembly decisions. Karen and Bob Leonard and their daughters, pioneers to Nassau, provided welcome hospitality, transportation, love and constant assistance.

Of course, the Bahamians living on all of the islands share the same heritage. The Bahá'í communities on Grand Bahama Island, however, are largely made up of Haitians, emigrants from their own island country. The Haitians, away from their native soil, "outsiders" amongst the Bahamians, speaking Creole and French, with very little English, accept the Faith readily, and begin to teach their friends immediately.

Describing a typical teaching situation in Freeport will more dramatically demonstrate the challenge of teaching in the Islands, and the power of the Holy Spirit when the friends are sincere in their approach.

It was one Friday in March, during our third trip to Freeport. Some of the Freeport friends, and Charles and Sandi Bullock, the pioneers who lived at the Bahá'í Center, met our plane. By this time the immigration and customs men knew us well, and let us pass very quickly. They knew that our cameras, guitars, slide projectors, sleeping bags and teaching books, would not be given as gifts, but would go back with us on the Sunday return flight. The officials, usually stern in their demeanor, joked with the Bahá'ís. They let us pass without questioning. Our identification cards were officially stamped, "No Gainful Occupation Permitted," a provision which makes it impossible for pioneers to be self-supporting in the Bahamas.

Charles and Sandi had an old beat-up car, which had been donated to the Faith. Gasping and wheezing, it managed to get us to the Bahá'í Center. Our first activity upon arrival was to meet with the pioneers, who explained the plans for the weekend. The first visits these guidelines came from the pioneers, and from the Local Assembly of Fort Lauderdale. But as our teaching progressed with many visits, the Freeport Spiritual Assembly began to meet, and we were soon working under its instructions. The local believers then began to arrive, bringing their children. After the evening meal, teams were sent out to work in 5 different towns. The people in Williamstown are all Bahamian, so an English-speaking team was assigned there. The other teams each had at least one French-speaking believer.

During the day the teams would seek out the believers, offering them deepening on the spot on a one-to-one basis, making friends, accepting new declarations, and giving out invitations to the evening meetings. The teams would return to the Center for dinner, sharing marvelous native dishes served with macaroni and cheese. Afterwards they would again split up for the meetings in the goal areas.

This particular Saturday we presented a Local Assembly Seminar. Many of the friends were there. The old car had served well a shuttle bringing Bahá'ís from all areas. We presented deepening materials, using flip charts in French and English; those who understood Creole had everything translated for them. A trial Assembly meeting was held, the "members" having been asked to resolve a hypothetical problem that was meaningful to their culture. After they worked their way through the steps of deciding the problem, certaining the facts and determining spiritual principles that pertained to the facts—we listened from the kitchen as they began their consultation. For the situation was real. There was question of their unity and sincerity. Many talked, while others were silent. We heard the chairman recognize one of the friends, the newest Bahá'í, who spoke no English, and understood only a little French. Slowly and carefully began to talk for the first time that day. His understanding and depth of spirit, and through his statement the meeting ended with a unanimous decision.

Our next trip to Freeport include pre-election seminar. The Center was crowded. During the period of the pre-election list, the friends prayed, meted, and carefully looked over the election list, which contained...
The goals of the Nine Year Plan had been met. The Freeport Assembly had become strengthened, and later in the summer, with the help of the Assembly of Fort Lauderdale, had reached out to the neighboring island of Abaco. Through continued teaching trips during the summer months many staunch new believers were found in the villages of Crown Haven and Fox Town.

My thoughts crowded back to the present moment, as we prepared to land once more in Freeport. What had happened in the intervening months? Why were we going back to Freeport to start nearly all over again? What had happened to the Assembly of Freeport?

Our plane was landed. We were once again in familiar territory. But our arrival this trip was different. There was no one there to meet us; the faces of the customs officials were unfamiliar; Charles and Sandi had long since left the island, there being no work for non-Bahamians.

We hired a couple of taxis and made our way to the Center. No one was there and the door was locked. The old car sat parked forlornly in front of the door. A few of the friends set out on foot for Trish Newton’s house to find the key, while the rest of us searched about and found the back door open. We’d brought our own food with us from Florida; soon lentils and Spam were bubbling on the stove.

After dinner we prayed. The car wouldn’t go. Perhaps we could pool our resources and rent a car? That would be a last resort. We prayed some more. We had to visit all the believers that weekend.

Charles and Sylvia Thompson are Bahá’ís from Lewis Yard. Charles, an excellent mechanic, has an old worn car, a mélange of makeshift parts that can reliably carry 8 or 9 people. I don’t think any of us were thinking about Charles when he pulled up to the door of the Center that night. I know he was certainly surprised to see us! He had stopped by to check the Center and answered our prayers!

Charles and Sylvia worked with us the entire weekend, taking us to all the teaching areas. Their little girls went out with the teams, helping them find the friends, many of whom had moved. Everywhere we went we found familiar faces, faces that lit up when they saw us, faces of our brothers and sisters, our family! Happy to see us! Welcoming us!

Antoine Imbert is a tailor in Pinters. He often let us sit and rest in his tailor shop, and always listened as we told the story of the Faith to his friends, who joined us on the long wooden benches. Antoine’s smile when he saw us enter his shop is a memory to last a lifetime. “It’s you!” he exclaimed. “I asked about you . . . I thought you might never come back!” And then, later, “I am a Bahá’í now, too!” His hands are always busy, sewing, pinning, pressing. His noble face is always smiling; there is a depth and a stillness to him. His decision to become a Bahá’í was reached after long thought and our many visits to his shop. Antoine helped us. That night, after his working day was finished, he found all the friends that we had missed, and told them where we were there.

The next day, Sunday, our meeting began in one of the yards near Antoine’s shop. Chairs were brought from open doorways. We began the meeting with four people. Soon there were fifteen. We sang, we prayed, and we talked about forming a Spiritual Assembly of Pinters Point. Three new friends became Bahá’ís that day. All the friends learned to say “Allah-u-Abha!”

The team that worked in Williams­town had difficulty finding the Bahá’ís. An Assembly had been elected there also. Papa G., an old Bahá’í in Williamstown, told us, “If a man starts a job he shouldn’t leave until it is all done, otherwise it will fall down.” But we always have to leave.

We were late for our plane that Sunday. After many months away from Grand Bahama Island, all the communities had been reactivated in one weekend. Plans were set in motion to hold a by-election to replace the members of the Spiritual Assembly of Freeport who had had to leave the island when the Bahamas achieved independence in July. All were told of our arrival this trip, scheduled for February. The goal of the next trip would be to conduct an institute and begin training teachers amongst the believers.

And so, Operation Airlift Bahamas continues, with teaching trips still scheduled for all three of the islands. Gradually, slowly, the work will be done. We live on faith, and we know it will be done. The signs are there.
A bi-monthly magazine for Bahá'í children, with articles, stories, puzzles, and games that introduce children to the treasures of their Faith—and helps to prepare them to become active and deepened members of the Bahá'í world family. Child's Way can give ideal assistance to parents in providing Bahá'í instruction to their children. Try us for a year. Six issues for $4.50; $5.00 outside the United States. Send orders with payment to Child's Way, 415 Linden Ave., Wilmette, Ill., 60091.
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COVER PHOTO

Baha'is attending the 65th National Baha'i Convention in Wilmette: (from left to right) Mr. Larry A. Gooden, Mr. Franklin Kahn, Mr. Dan Yazzie, Ms. Mary Jackson, the Hand of the Cause of God Paul Haney, Ms. Littlebrave Beaston, and (in front) Mr. Vance Thompson.

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CORRECTIONS

The photographs on pages 6 and 9 of the March Baha'i NEWS were incorrectly credited to the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Washington, D.C. They were printed courtesy of the National Baha'i Archives. We regret the error.

POSTAL INFORMATION

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Five Year Plan released

To the Bahá’ís of the World

Dearly-loved Friends,

A span of eighteen years separates us from the centenary of Bahá’u’lláh’s Ascension and the unveiling of His Almighty Covenant. The fortunes of humanity in that period no man can foretell. We can, however, confidently predict that the Cause of God, impelled by the mighty forces of life within it, must go on from strength to strength, increasing in size and developing greater and greater powers for the accomplishment of God’s purpose on earth.

The abundant evidences of Divine confirmation which have rewarded the strenuous and dedicated efforts of the Bahá’í community during the past decade are apparent throughout the earth and give incontrovertible assurance of its capacity to win the good pleasure of Bahá’u’lláh and answer every call made upon it in His service.

The Five Year Plan to which this community is now summoned is the opening campaign of these critical years. It is the third global plan embarked upon by the Army of Light in its implementation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan, that world-encompassing programme disclosed in His perspicuous Tablets and described by the Guardian of the Cause of God as the Charter for the propagation of the Faith throughout the world. It was the Guardian himself, the beloved “sign of God”, who, through his exposition and interpretation of the Revelation, through his discipline and education of the Bahá’í community and through a series of national plans assigned to the various units of that community, forged the Administrative Order of the Faith and made it an instrument for the carrying out of this great Charter, and he himself designed and launched the first global plan, the unique, brilliant and spiritually glorious Ten Year Crusade. The victories of that crusade implanted the banner of Bahá’u’lláh throughout the planet and the following Nine Year Plan reinforced and extended the bastions of the Faith and raised the number of National Spiritual Assemblies—the supporting pillars of the Universal House of Justice—to one hundred and thirteen, a number increased to one hundred and fifteen by the formation at this Ridván of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Hong Kong and South East Arabia.

This Five Year Plan has three major objectives: preservation and consolidation of the victories won; a vast and widespread expansion of the Bahá’í community; development of the distinctive character of Bahá’í life particularly in the local communities. The achievement of these overall aims requires the accomplishment of particular tasks at the World Centre of the Faith, and by national and local communities.

At the World Centre work will continue on the collation and classification of the Sacred Texts; authorized translations of three compilations of Scripture will be made and published, namely, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Áqdas, prayers and extracts from the Writings of the Báb, greatly augmenting the fragments of His Utterance now available in the West, and of the Master’s works comprising a wide selection from the vast range of subjects illumined by His Divine wisdom; construction will begin on the building on Mount Carmel to serve as the seat of the Universal House of Justice and it is hoped to complete it during the Five Year Plan; further extension and beautification of the gardens and lands surrounding the Holy Places will take place; strengthening of the relationship between the Bahá’í International Community and the United Nations will continue; and efforts will be constantly made to protect the Faith from persecution and to free it from the restraints imposed by religious orthodoxy.

In the international sphere the erection of two Mashriqu’l-Adhkárs—one in India and one in Samoa—will be initiated; eight International Teaching Conferences will be held during the middle part of the Five Year Plan; two for the Arctic, one in Anchorage and one in Helsinki during July 1976, one in Paris in August 1976, one in Nairobi in October 1976, one in Hong Kong in November 1976, one in Auckland and one in Bahia, Brazil in January 1977 and one in Mérida, Mexico in February 1977.

Sixteen new National Spiritual Assemblies will be formed, namely, the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahamas, Burundi, Cyprus, the French Antilles, Greece, Jordan, Mali, Mauritania, the New Hebrides, Niger, Sénégal, Sierra Leone, Somalia,
Download and French Guiana, Togo, and Upper Volta; their national Haziratu'll-Quds, Temple sites and endowments must be acquired; the dissemination of news and messages, so vital to the knowledge, encouragement and unity of the Bahá’í community, must be made efficient and rapid, and in anticipation of a vast expansion in the number of believers, of Local Spiritual Assemblies and of localities where Bahá’í’s reside a coordinated programme of translating and publishing Bahá’í literature with the eventual aim of providing the Sacred Text and the teachings of the Faith to all mankind is to be developed—a programme which will include the founding of six Bahá’í Publishing Trusts and the continued subvention of Bahá’í literature, 409 inter-Assembly assistance projects are scheduled and, at the outset of the Plan, 557 pioneers are called for.

One of the distinguishing features of the Cause of God is its principle of non-acceptance of financial contributions for its own purposes from non-Bahá’ís; support of the Bahá’í Fund is a bounty reserved by Bahá’u’lláh to His declared followers. This bounty imposes full responsibility for financial support of the Faith on the believers alone, every one of whom is called upon to do his utmost to ensure that the constant and liberal outpouring of means is maintained and increased to meet the growing needs of the Cause. Many Bahá’í communities are at present dependent on outside help, and for them the aim must be to become self-supporting, confident that the Generous Lord will, as His efforts increase, eventually enable them to offer for the progress of His Faith material wealth as well as their devotion, their energy and love.

The proclamation of the Faith, following established plans and aiming to use on an increasing scale the facilities of mass communication must be vigorously pursued. It should be remembered that the purpose of proclamation is to make known to all mankind the fact and general aim of the new Revelation, while teaching programmes should be planned to confirm individuals from every stratum of society.

The vast reservoir of spiritual energy, zeal and idealism resident in Bahá’í youth, which so effectively contributed to the success of the Nine Year Plan, must be directed and lavishly spent for the proclamation, teaching, and consolidation of the Cause. Spiritual Assemblies are urged to provide consultation and the offer of guidance to Bahá’í youth who seek to plan their lives in such a way as to be of utmost service to the Cause of God.

The education of children in the teachings of the Faith must be regarded as an essential obligation of every Bahá’í parent, every local and national community and it must become a firmly-established Bahá’í activity during the course of this Plan. It should include moral instruction by word and example and active participation by children in Bahá’í community life.

This Five Year Plan must witness the development in the world-wide Bahá’í community of distinctive Bahá’í characteristics implanted in it by Bahá’u’lláh Himself. Unity of mankind is the pivotal principle of His Revelation; Bahá’í communities must therefore become renowned for their demonstration of this unity. In a world becoming daily more divided by factionalism and group interests, the Bahá’í community must be distinguished by the concord and harmony of its relationships. The coming of age of the human race must be foreshadowed by the mature, responsible understanding of human problems and the wise administration of their affairs by these same Bahá’í communities. The practice and development of such Bahá’í characteristics are the responsibility alike of individual Bahá’ís and the administrative institutions, although the greatest opportunity to foster their growth rests with the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

The divinely ordained institution of the Local Spiritual Assembly operates at the first levels of human society and is the basic administrative unit of Bahá’u’lláh’s World Order. It is concerned with individuals and families whom it must constantly encourage to unite in a distinctive Bahá’í society, vitalized and guarded by the laws, ordinances and principles of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation. It protects the Cause of God; it acts as the loving shepherd of the Bahá’í flock.

Strengthening and development of Local Spiritual Assemblies is a vital objective of the Five Year Plan. Success in this one goal will greatly enrich the quality of Bahá’í life, will heighten the capacity of the Faith to deal with entry by troops which is even now taking place and, above all, will demonstrate the solidarity and ever-growing distinctiveness of the Bahá’í community, thereby attracting more and more thoughtful souls to the Faith and offering a refuge to the leaderless and hapless millions of the spiritually bankrupt, moribund present order.

“These Spiritual Assemblies,” wrote ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “are aided by the Spirit of God. Their defender is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Over them He spreadeth His Wings. What bounty is there greater than this?” Likewise, “These Spiritual Assemblies are shining lamps and heavenly gardens, from which the fragrances of holiness are diffused over all regions, and the lights of knowledge are spread abroad over all created things. From them the spirit of life streameth in every direction. They, indeed, are the potent sources of the progress of man, at all times and under all conditions.”

During the Five Year Plan Local Spiritual Assemblies which are being formed for the first time, are to be formed whenever there are nine or more adult believers in the relevant area; thereafter they must be elected or declared at Ridván. National Spiritual Assemblies are called upon to assign, and encourage the Local Spiritual Assemblies to adopt, goals within the overall framework of the Five Year Plan, to consult with them and to assist them to make great efforts to gradually assume their proper function and responsibilities in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. The friends are called upon to give their whole-hearted support and cooperation to the Local Spiritual Assembly, first by voting for the membership and then by energetically pursuing its plans and programmes, by turning to it in time of trouble or difficulty, by praying for its success and taking delight in its rise to influence and honour. This great prize, this gift of God within each community must be cherished, nurtured, loved, assisted, obeyed and prayed for.

Such a firmly-founded, busy and happy community life as is envisioned when Local Spiritual Assemblies are truly effective, will provide a firm home foundation from which the friends may derive courage and
strength and loving support in bearing the Divine Message to their fellow-men and conforming their lives to its benevolent rule.

The deeds and programmes, all these multifarious world-wide activities to which you are summoned have but one aim—the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. At every stage of this process and at all levels of Bahá'í responsibility, whether individual, local or national, you will be encouraged, advised and assisted by the divinely ordained institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, an institution powerfully reinforced by the successful establishment of the International Teaching Centre. Through the emergence of this Centre the seal has been set on the accomplishment of the goal, announced nearly ten years ago, of ensuring the extension into the future of the specific functions of protection and propagation conferred upon the Hands of the Cause in the Sacred Text. Through the work of the International Teaching Centre, which supervises and coordinates the work of the Boards of Counsellors around the world, the love, the guidance, the assistance of the Hands, through the Boards of Counsellors, their Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, permeates the entire structure of Bahá'í society.

The Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic world commonwealth have indeed assured to that growing community, the care for its welfare, for the development of its character, for its spiritual encouragement which are among the duties of their high office.

As the old order gives way to the new, the changes which must take place in human affairs are such as to stagger the imagination. This is the opportunity for the hosts of the Lord. Undismayed and undeterred by the wreckage of "long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions", now being "swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines", the world community of Bahá'ís must surge forward eagerly, and with ever-increasing energy, to build those new, God-given institutions from which will be diffused the light of the holy principles and teachings sent down by God in this day for the salvation of all mankind.

The Universal House of Justice
Naw-Rúz 1974

Charles Mason Remey dies

CHARLES MASON REMEY WHOSE ARROGANT ATTEMPT USURP GUARDIANSHIP AFTER PASSING SHOGHI EFFENDI LED TO HIS EXPULSION FROM RANKS FAITHFUL HAS DIED IN FLORENCE ITALY IN HUNDREDTH YEAR OF HIS LIFE BURIED WITHOUT RELIGIOUS RITES ABANDONED BY ERSTWHILE FOLLOWERS. HISTORY PITIABLE DEFECTION BY ONE WHO HAD RECEIVED GREAT HONORS FROM BOTH MASTER AND GUARDIAN CONSTITUTES YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE FUTILITY ALL ATTEMPTS UNDERMINE IMPREGNABLE COVENANT CAUSE BAHA'U'LLAH.

April 8, 1974

Architects sought

The Universal House of Justice will soon be considering the selection of architects for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkârs to be erected in India and Samoa.

Those wishing to be considered as architects for either of these Temples are invited to submit statements of their qualifications. Such submissions may include examples of work previously designed and/or executed and, if desired, any thoughts or concepts of proposed designs for the Temples may be expressed in whatever way the applicant chooses.

The design of each Temple will be developed by the architect selected in relation to the climate, environment and culture of the area where it is to be built.

The initiation of construction of those Temples is a goal of the current Five Year Plan, and consequently those interested should forward their submissions at an early date to the Universal House of Justice, Bahá'í World Centre, P. O. Box 155, Haifa 31-000, Israel.

April 8, 1974
Paul Haney

United States:

Paul Haney visits Convention

The Hand of the Cause of God Paul Haney attended the 65th National Bahá’í Convention in Wilmette as the official representative of The Universal House of Justice, and helped to launch the Five Year Plan in the United States.

Mr. Haney addressed the delegates on several occasions during the Convention, held from April 25-28. Before reading the Five Year Plan Messages from the House of Justice on Saturday, April 26, he provided some background information about their formulation, noting that the origins of the Plan went back to 1971, when The Universal House of Justice asked the Hands and Counsellors to submit their views about the needs, requirements, and opportunities that would develop during the next phase of Bahá’í expansion. Their recommendations were studied frequently during the subsequent development of the Plan, he said.

Intensive work began in September 1973, with the formation of the International Teaching Centre in Haifa. One of the functions of this new institution, of which all the Hands and three Counsellors are members, is to make recommendations to the House of Justice on global, regional, and national teaching plans.

Shortly after its formation the Teaching Centre met in consultation with The Universal House of Justice for a full day at Bahji, at which time guidelines toward formulating the Plan were discussed, Mr. Haney said.

“That bounty of meeting with The Universal House of Justice under those circumstances, of course, gave us a tremendous impetus in beginning the spade work on the Plan,” he said.

The Plan is more than the general statement of purpose embodied in the Naw-Rúz Message of the House of Justice, he added. It also includes 115 separate national plans, each tailored to the individual requirements of the communities for which they were formulated.

The preliminary recommendations of the International Teaching Centre were turned over to the House of Justice after months of work, and brought by the Supreme Body into their “complete and unerring” final form, Mr. Haney said.

Puerto Rico:

First Bahá’í School

The first Bahá’í School in Puerto Rico was held during a week last December at the Girl Scout Camp in the hills outside of Anasco. Although the school was by no means centrally located, more than sixty persons from every section of the island attended and enthusiastically participated in activities between Dec. 24-30. Also in attendance were Continental Counsellor Paul Lucas and Auxiliary Board member for Puerto Rico, Mr. Felix Gomez.

All classes were given in both Spanish and English—some by bilingual teachers, some with the aid of

Chile:

Bahá’í Pioneers spoke about the Faith at the only public school in Porvenir, Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost region of Chile, during a two-day visit in March. After the visit two laminated photographs of Bahji were donated to the school. In the photograph above, Rob Siegel, one of the pioneers, sings to the school children.
translators, and others in separate sections for each language. Counsellor Lucas gave daily classes on the Covenant and Administration with repeated emphasis on methods of consolidating inactive communities and local spiritual assemblies, daily self-examination, and the setting of realistic personal goals. Mr. Gomez gave daily classes on living the Baha'i life. The Youth Committee for the island presented a five-class course on being a Baha'i in a non-Baha'i world. Other topics covered in classes included Radiant Acquiescence, Islam, History of the Baha'i Faith, The Baha'i Fund, Marriage, The Role of Women in the Baha'i Faith, and a review of literature and materials available in the bookstore or by order.

Lengthy breaks were scheduled between classes for meals—which were as Puerto Rican in flavor as the pioneer cooks could make them—family activities, running errands out in the "Old World", keeping the camp clean, and relaxing. Stimulating impromptu deepening sessions could be heard as volunteers washed dishes and cleaned the sleeping quarters and other areas.

Each evening, special activities, such as a slide program of the Holy Places in Iran and Israel, prayer sessions, and even a performance by a concert violinist, were held. Long after the children had gone to bed, one could still hear prayer groups and animated discussions of the day's classes.

Belize:

Counsellors attend Institute

FOUR CONTINENTAL COUNSELLORS took part recently in a Baha'i conference at the new teaching institute in the village of Blackman Eddy, in Belize. Two buses starting at different locations a good distance from Blackman Eddy picked up Baha'is at points along the way, depositing more than sixty of them at the institute for the day-long meeting February 17. The institute, shown at right, is at the top of a hill, overlooking a river. Counsellors for Central America Artemus Lamb, Carmen de Burafato, Rowland Estall, and Alfred Osborne made presentations during the day.

Central African Republic:

Radio Program attracts many

IN MARCH, 1973 the Baha'is of the Central African Republic were granted permission by the Head of State to present a regular weekly radio program on the national broadcasting network, the only one in the country. This privilege had previously been granted to only three other religious groups. Since that time more than 50 programs designed to serve the double function of teaching and consolidation have been broadcast. Although there is no way to accurately measure the public response to the broadcasts, there are indications that the impact has been far-reaching. One can often hear people singing or whistling 'La foi Baha'i le unit les gens,' the theme song of the program, and more than 30 letters have been received from listeners—a significant fact when one realizes the difficulty of assembling the materials for a letter in these remote rural areas.

The broadcasts have brought many people into the Faith, directly and indirectly. More than 1,000 believers have enrolled in the past year, far more than any previous year. The program reaches all strata of society and greatly facilitates teaching, since almost everyone already has heard of the Faith and is favorably disposed toward it.

This sustained public proclamation also seems to have had influence on the leaders of the Republic. In a speech, broadcast to commemorate the birth of his son, the President of the country, who is a Catholic, stated that there is only one God and that He has spoken to man through different Messengers—Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, Moses, Abraham, "and many others whose names I've forgotten." A letter from the National Spiritual Assembly to the Head of State congratulating him on the birth of his son was read repeatedly on the radio as part of daily news presentations. Since that talk was given, the Bahais, along with other religious groups, have been invited to send representatives to two social/traditional gatherings at the Presidential Palace.

Spain:

Graciosa receives special visit

ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN Baha'is on the Canary Islands for 20 years, none had ever visited the little island of Graciosa, which has no telephone and postal service. The only means of communication is by radio, or messages hand-carried by resident fishermen.
The Bahá'ís in the Canaries had sent invitations to all inhabitants in other remote islands, inviting them to subscribe to a correspondence course on the Bahá'í Faith. But because Graciosa had no postal service, invitations were not sent there. Consequently, the Bahá'ís decided that someone would have to go personally to visit Graciosa and give the Message of Bahá'ulláh.

A young Canadian residing in the Canaries, whose Spanish was still imperfect, and who had only a little money, determined to make the journey, putting his trust in God.

He inquired of a fisherman the cost of transport to Graciosa and learned that the one-way fare was 1,500 pesetas. The young man had only 300 pesetas with which to make the entire journey, putting his trust in God.

Shortly after he landed on Graciosa, he inquired of a fisherman the cost of transport to Graciosa and learned that the one-way fare was 1,500 pesetas. The young man had only 300 pesetas with which to make the entire trip. A second fisherman who had offered to transport him for 500 pesetas agreed, upon learning of his mission, to charge only 250 pesetas.

A bouquet of flowers was sent to the hotel to greet him on his arrival in Graciosa on February 7. Two weeks later, a delegation appointed by the National Assembly visited him there. Included in the delegation were Mr. Niu Tuataga, a Samoan member of the Auxiliary Board who served as translator, and Mr. Hawea Grant, a representative of the Maori race. In deference to the royal visitor, Mr. Grant wore a 200-year-old Maori cloak, an heirloom of his tribe which is worn only when in audience with royalty. When not in use the cloak is kept in the vaults of the Bank of New Zealand.

The National Spiritual Assembly of New Zealand said that the Malietoa "demonstrated that quality of deep humility that is characteristic of true royalty and with unfailing graciousness and charm spoke to the friends about the Faith and its development, and expressed the hope that soon would be witnessed visible evidence of its establishment and triumph in the heart of the Pacific area."

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New Zealand:

Visit from Samoan ruler

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Denmark:

Summer School praised

Although we are exhorted to "let deeds, not words, be our adorning" Bahá'ís often may not realize how they impress others as they go about their daily teaching and deepening activities. Here we have the rare opportunity to see through the eyes of a disinterested observer the Bahá'í Summer School sessions held in Lolland, Denmark, July 29—August 5, 1973. The following are excerpts from a report written by the director of the Lolland High School where the school was held. This report, reprinted with his permission (obtained by a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Denmark), was distributed to over 1000 members of the School Union and to high schools throughout Scandanavia.

The attendance at the Summer School was over 100, one of the largest ever hosted in Lolland. It taxed the available accommodations and so, since the weather was sunny and warm, about 75 people pitched their tents on the lawn. "A veritable tent city was built up...a multicolored, picturesque spectacle (such as this) made innumerable people on the street stop and stare at the open-air paradise where there were tents of every color, shape and size...and guitar-playing and singing people from every nation [who spoke] a series of languages, from Lapp...to Hindi.

"I cannot say how many course participants we have had over the years we have been here since 1951—it does add up to several thousand...the Bahá'í community had the happiest, nicest, friendliest, and heartiest participants we have had in all the years. In eight whole days, we did not hear a single sharp exchange of views among the participants, no negative criticism at all and not so much as the slightest hint of anything one could call 'gossip'.

"It had become a natural part of their being in confrontation with others to interpret and understand each other in the best way...I have never met such people as these Bahá'í adherents,...who were so little absorbed in themselves and so much absorbed by the welfare of others. I was dazzled by that fact and have wondered about it over and over again since then. But I was not in a position to find out if it was owing to their religion or if it was a tradition of their gatherings that had been established over the years...I succeeded, however, in getting a kind of visible proof of the disconcerting form of assemblage of these people. I filmed them at random, not following any definite plan...because the multicolored tenting ground and the foreign-looking persons...appeared
Canada:

Mass teaching in cities

A Canadian ethnic teaching team has recently been visiting cities in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, to launch proclamations designed to teach minority groups and explore new and creative methods of teaching Bahá'í children.

The Spiritual Assembly of Calgary, Alberta, reported that more than 90 new adherents to the Faith were enrolled as the teaching team carried out its objectives to enlist the help of every community member, to increase the size of the community by enrolling minorities, to develop materials and methods for children's classes, and to train new believers to spearhead the work amongst their people in teaching the Faith and building the Bahá'í community.

Approximately 70 per cent of the community participated in the project and although the Assembly had selected the Chinese, Slavic and Canadian Indian minority groups as their points of focus, members of a wide variety of ethnic groups enrolled, including Chinese, German, Indian and eastern European. A number of youth enrolled as well.

Children's classes were arranged and a large percentage of the new believers began teaching their friends and relatives.

A side effect of the project was the coverage of Bahá'í activities in the news media. A well-known radio program devoted 55 minutes to the Faith which was broadcast throughout southern Alberta. Bahá'ís appeared on cable television on four occasions, and a leading newspaper carried an article on the Faith.

The project had been launched in a most propitious atmosphere at an orientation meeting intended for Bahá'ís only. When the Bahá'ís gathered at the Indian Friendship Centre in Calgary, they found several Indians playing Canadian folk music. A quorum of the Spiritual Assembly met on the spot and decided to seize the opportunity to teach. The Bahá'ís proceeded with the social part of their program inviting the musicians to play. Following music, dancing, and a brief presentation by the Bahá'ís, nine of the new friends chose to embrace the Faith.

By April the tour of the ethnic teaching team neared completion. The team coordinator, Mr. Poova Murday, said, "For years now I have been inclined to believe that mass teaching was only possible in remote villages, towns, and islands... after the four months of training on this project I have totally changed my mind on the subject. In the very near future, even in the most sophisticated cities, intelligent, well-laid plans for reaching the masses will meet with astounding success..."

Britain:

Teaching at Crafts Fair

A meadow at the Medieval Fair in Barsham, Suffolk, recently provided a beautiful setting to teach the Faith in England. On one weekend alone, the crafts fair was visited by over thirty thousand people. Bahá'ís from various communities helped to man the small exhibit explaining the stations and Writings of the Central Figures of the Faith and displaying large, colorful photographs of the Holy Shrines. A comprehensive collection of books and pamphlets were displayed and purchased by inquirers, and in the evenings many people came to firesides around a campfire.

Historic Youth gathering

Youth from all of Australia recently gathered in Araluen near Perth in Western Australia for the first national Bahá'í function ever held in that part of the continent. Almost fifty years ago another historic meeting took place in Araluen, when Clara and Hyde Dunn met with Martha Root in 1925.

Counsellor Howard Harwood, Auxiliary Board members Margo Jackson and John Davidson met with youth from Malaysia, New Zealand, New Hebrides and the United States, as well as Australian youth. All the states of Australia were represented among the one hundred participants at the conference.

A new awareness, maturity and dedication were demonstrated by the youth as they studied and discussed their role in building the new world order. The participants agreed upon a threefold purpose for the conference: 1) to be spiritually rejuvenated and inspired by the fellowship and activities, 2) to make specific teaching plans and set deepening goals, and 3) to act.

A number of youth volunteered to travel teach in various states to help maintain goals and assist jeopardized assemblies. Following a discussion on "The Lifeblood of the Cause," the conference participants set a youth fund goal. Another goal set was to bring the total number of youth to 2,000 by the next conference, planned for January 1975, including a sub-goal of 300 new youth by Rídván 1974.

April, 1974 / BAHÁ'Í NEWS
Rafieh: “patient handmaiden of God”

Service in the House of ‘Abbúd

by Elizabeth McKenty
A bright light in High Point, North Carolina, has begun shining in another place. Mrs. Rafieh Mansour, 87-year-old granddaughter of one of the famed martyrs of the Heroic Age, 'Abdu'l-Rasoul, and herself privileged to live in the Holy Land from 1889 to 1938, passed away peacefully in her sleep on Naw-Rúz, 131 B.E. Her death occurred on the very day she had previously mentioned as being the time she would wish to enter the next world. During the first three years of her stay in 'Akka, she was many times permitted into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and retained until her death clear recollections of those youthful experiences. Even her death became an instrument for teaching the Faith, as Bahá'ís and friends throughout the community gathered to pay tribute to her life at a memorial service on Saturday, March 23, in High Point.

It was on Thanksgiving weekend, 1973, that I had the privilege of a weekend visit with Mrs. Mansour. She lived with her daughter and her son-in-law, Vedad and David Jurney, and their children, Nabil and Riaz, in North Carolina. Mrs. Mansour left the Holy Land in 1938, at the instruction of the beloved Guardian, and lived in Iran before coming to America.

To see Mrs. Mansour in this last year of her life was to learn something of the power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Time had reduced her physical self to small proportions; she had to walk very carefully with a cane, but her light-filled eyes, full of purpose and of love, belied her years.

Shortly after I arrived at her home I found Mrs. Mansour sitting in the living room. She hugged me with surprising strength, and, although inches shorter than I, reached up and covered each cheek with kisses. "God has sent you! God has sent you!" she murmured. Later she explained that certain precious belongings, including a handkerchief of Bahá'u'lláh, were in her possession and she had been praying for someone to come and handle-deliver these to Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh, chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly. She said, "I do not want to trust them to the mail, and have prayed for someone to come and help me take care of this obligation." In a small packet, enclosed in a lace and silk envelope, she sent this blessed handkerchief, a piece of the pillow case of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, hair of the Greatest Holy Leaf, and other precious items which are now safely stored in the National Bahá'í Archives in Wilmette.

Seated side by side on a sofa, we entered, through her words, into a world of early Bahá'í history, of martyrs, of suffering, of deprivation, all clothed in the glory of certitude about the plan of God for this Day. Praise of Bahá'u'lláh was constantly on her lips and each memory would be interrupted with some interjection about the divine wisdom hidden in every situation. She was oblivious to her own self, unaware of the effect of her humble, glowing face as she spoke of the mysteries of God and the assistance surrounding His servants. Her brownish skin, creamy and beautiful, took on an added lustre when she spoke of the kindness of God and the wonder of her experiences with Bahá'ís. Her clear penetrating eyes probed to be sure her hearers were understanding her words, sometimes translated by her daughter and sometimes compressed into a few, eloquent sentences of English, which she spoke hesitantly but well.

My first question concerned her hands, at rest in her lap but laced with blue veins and showing the signs of years of work. "Have you sewn for members of the Holy Family?" After a long sigh, she said:

"That was sometimes permitted me. One day, I went to see the wife of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She was sewing His long abá. She asked me if I had time to work on it at the hemline. I straightened the hem and fixed it, with deepest pleasure. It was the last gown He wore before His ascension."

Such were the moments that filled her memory. Her own marriage had been arranged by the Master, and the first three days after it took place, personal gifts to the couple arrived each day from Him. Her trousseau was largely the gift of the Greatest Holy Leaf. When her children were born, she was visited by the Greatest Holy Leaf and the wife of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as well as the other ladies of the Holy Household. Her daughter, Vedad, was born in the House of 'Abbád. Sometimes she would live for a week or two in the Master's home when there was sewing to be done. On Holy Days, she would experience the observance in the presence of the Holy Family. At the end of her life, in High Point, North Carolina, these moments clothed her, making the frailties of old age insignificant in the presence of such gratitude and conviction.

As I tried to learn the details of her life, it was not her own life that stood foremost in her memory. Each event was linked to some happening at the World Centre or in the family of the Master. Even her birthday was unknown to her, except for the year, 1886. Speaking of her mother, Zekrieh, Mrs. Mansour said:

"My mother often told me that one day the Master said to her, 'Zekrieh, there are so many people whose heart's desire would be to serve in the house of Bahá'u'lláh, but I want to give this house (the House of 'Abbád) into your hands. I want your praise and thanks to reach the Shrine of the Báb (across the bay from 'Akka to Haifa).' " Mrs. Mansour recalled: "My mother took care of that large House by herself. She had great energy. Her parents had been the first believers in Baghdad. They accepted the Faith in the days of Táhirih and it was her grandfather who helped to escort Táhirih from Baghdad back to Iran."

Mrs. Mansour spoke of an uncle, Muhammad Hasan, who had served as a secretary to Bahá'u'lláh when He was in Adrianople. She reverently unfolded a large linen handkerchief which Bahá'u'lláh had one day given to him. This uncle had been sent back to Baghdad when he had been living with his relatives at Mosul he had been promised by the Blessed Perfection that he would be invited to return in one vahid (nineteen years). Such was his certitude that, although he suffered greatly when the Bahá'ís were expelled from Baghdad and sent in poverty to Mosul, he tended his small shop and planned for the nineteenth year. When that time arrived, he sold everything, put his affairs in order and remained silent when people questioned his actions.

One of Muhammad Hasan's nieces, Jamalieh, was at that time a servant in the Holy Household, in 'Akka. On a Bahá'í Holy Day, she entered the pres-
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ence of the Blessed Perfection to pay Him respect. Mrs. Mansour recalled the events:

“While she was there, Bahá’u’lláh asked her to make a wish, since it was a Bahá’í Holy Day, and He would grant it. My aunt bowed her head respectfully but could not answer. Two or three times she was invited by the Blessed Perfection to state her wish. In the meantime, the Greatest Holy Leaf arrived in the room. Jamalíyeh turned to her, saying: ‘What shall I say?’ and the Greatest Holy Leaf replied: ‘Why don’t you ask that your grandmother and uncles and family be permitted to come to ‘Ákká?’ This Jamalíyeh did. Bahá’u’lláh immediately sent for His secretary and commanded: ‘Send a cable to the family of ‘Abdu’l-Rasúl, at Mosul, telling them that they have permission to live in the Holy Land, at ‘Ákká.’”

In this way, when Rafíeh was three years old, her family had the joy of being invited to move to the Holy Land, exactly nineteen years after her uncle had been promised this reunion by Bahá’u’lláh.

At this point I told Mrs. Mansour that she had chosen a beautiful family. Her eyes were lowered to the floor and she replied: “I am nothing. I am the dust. It is the blessing and the bounty of Bahá’u’lláh and of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.”

The long journey from Mosul to ‘Ákká, in carts for the overland route and in small boats for the sea passage, remained vivid in Rafíeh’s memory. It was a three-month-long trip by caravan, from Iraq, through Beirut and Damascus, to Palestine. Mrs. Mansour remembered it with pleasure to the very end of her life. “Everyone was happy,” she recalled. “I remember some things, like being lifted down from a cart to walk alongside the caravan. In one village, Mardindi, I sang a Turkish song. The people liked it; the song happened to be from their village. They smiled and threw flowers at me.” Rafíeh also saw cane sugar hanging in the windows of shops as they passed through Damascus. When asked if she were tired or ill during this long trip, she said: “No, never. I was very happy. All my family were happy to be going to Bahá’u’lláh so the journey did not seem long.” At this point, in a clear voice, Mrs. Mansour sang a verse of the folk-song.

Then she began recalling her first visit to Bahá’u’lláh: “My mother took me to the House of ‘Abbud. The Bahá’í ladies entered the room where my cousin was in charge of preparing the samovar for tea. Bahá’u’lláh was seated on the diván. The ladies sat, very respectfully, with their hands folded. Then Bahá’u’lláh inquired about the health of each member of the family. I do not remember what else He discussed, but I remember He asked about the health of each person. Tea was served, and before we left He gave us His blessing. No one spoke in His presence until He addressed them.” Then, very firmly, she said: “You do not speak in the presence of Bahá’u’lláh unless He bids you to do so.” Even thinking of that moment, her body became more erect and her eyes flashed with the memory of it.

Mrs. Mansour recalled that on another occasion, which she believed to be a Holy Day, she accompanied her grandmother into the presence of Bahá’u’lláh. They made the trip together to Bahji and waited for a few moments in a room adjoining that of the Blessed Perfection. It was a large room, and a curtain was drawn across the entrance to the room of Bahá’u’lláh.

“We were waiting for Bahá’u’lláh to give permission for us to enter,” she remembered. “Suddenly the curtain was drawn back and Bahá’u’lláh Himself stood in the doorway. I remember the creamy color of His garment. He began asking about everyone, and looking at me, standing beside my grandmother. He said: ‘Does this child go to school?’ My grandmother answered that I was studying in a small class with a Bahá’í teacher, and this answer was accepted.”

I asked Mrs. Mansour whether she had ever written her memoirs. “Yes, I tried to tell these things in a small book, which I made copies of for my four children. I have one copy, but not in good handwriting, for the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.” (As a child, one of Mrs. Mansour’s teachers was the noted calligrapher, Mishkin-Qalam. Right up to her death, Mrs. Mansour’s handwriting remained beautiful. In her earlier years, it was considered outstanding Persian script. She added that she wished to make a better copy for the National Spiritual Assembly, but agreed to forward the one which was already prepared and it now is in the Archives in Wilmette. Mrs. Mansour sent a note with the volume, together with other precious gifts, and it was returned to her signed by all the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, assuring her that these will be preserved for the future.)

It was shortly after this meeting that Bahá’u’lláh became ill and ascended. When asked whether the Master chanted at the services for the Blessed Perfection, Mrs. Mansour said: “I do not remember. I remember that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá made arrangements for the Shrine to be readied by the evening of the day of His passing. So many non-Bahá’ís, mul láhs and officials came when they heard of the passing. For forty days, everyone mourned. Each day people would come to ‘Ákká, to Bahji, both Bahá’í and non-Bahá’í, and they would always be received by the Holy Family and be fed. Everyone grieved.”

Those calamitous days, in 1892, experienced by a six-year-old child, still brought heavy sadness to her face when she remembered them.

We turned to her own upbringing in ‘Ákká. Happily she recalled those rare days when she was instructed in penmanship by Mishkin-Qalam. “I remember,” Mrs. Mansour said, “the Master instructing that Bahá’í children were not to attend Muslim or Christian schools in Haifa and ‘Ákká at that time, but were to have their own teacher and be instructed in spiritual matters as well as reading and writing. We had, first, Jenaíbí Amir, from Nayriz, who taught us Persian poetry, passages from the Qur’án and from the Bahá’í Writings. Unfortunately, he soon became ill and died.

“My mother continued teaching us at home, and my father and uncle taught us prayers and poetry. Later, a Bahá’í lady came and taught. Non-Bahá’í children also attended her classes. We also learned Bahá’í songs.”

Mrs. Mansour recalled vividly some
of the humorous incidents. She remembered that her uncle, who was caretaker of the pilgrim house in ‘Akka, had taught a parrot, who had been given to ‘Abdu’l-Baha as a gift, to say “Allah-u-Abha.” When anyone near, the parrot would say this Bahai’i greeting. He also learned to say, “Begu, begu, begu, Ya Bah.”’” That means, “Say, say, say, Ya Bah.” Those who heard the parrot speak without seeing the bird thought they were hearing a human voice.

“One day ‘Abdu’l-Baha sent for my uncle, saying: “Muhammad Hasan, tomorrow you bring the parrot here so I can present it as a gift to the governor of ‘Akka.’” My uncle took the parrot in his cage to spend the night in the home of the Master. The cage was placed on the windowsill in the hall.

“‘Abdu’l-Baha used to get up at dawn to walk and meditate and pray in the courtyard of the house, when everyone else was asleep. As He was walking nearby, the parrot said ‘Begu, begu.’”

“Oh, ‘Abdu’l-Baha was so happy!” Mrs. Mansour laughed at the memory of it.

“The parrot said again, ‘Begu, begu.”

“And ‘Abdu’l-Baha went toward him and He said, ‘What shall I say?”


“‘Abdu’l-Baha told my uncle, ‘Oh, Hasan, today the parrot saved himself from going to the Governor. This parrot saved his life because he told me, “Say, say!” and I said “What shall I say?” and he said “Begu Ya Bah!”” He said it so fluently, so eloquently. You take him back for the pilgrims. I don’t want to send him away.’

“When the parrot died, my uncle kept his feathers and wrote in his beautiful handwriting, ‘These are the feathers of the parrot that belonged to ‘Abdu’l-Baha, which the Master mentioned several times, praising the fluency of this parrot’s talk.’”

(This visit to High Point to interview Mrs. Mansour occurred at the time of the observation of the anniversary of the ascension of the Master. Mrs. Mansour gave each one of us a feather from the parrot as a remembrance.)

So many questions came to mind, sitting with this Bahai’i servant. Only a few could be asked at a time, to keep from taxing her physical strength. I asked about the period of the Master’s travels in the West. She said that all were so happy that he was out of prison and able to travel that they did not grieve at His absence. “We turned to the Greatest Holy Leaf and she guided us in all our affairs,” Mrs. Mansour recalled. “We went on with our work and our families as if the Master were with us, knowing He had left her in charge. I remember that He left so suddenly, we were all surprised to know of His departure. While He was in prison, He could not leave the gate of the city of ‘Akka. For long periods, He could not go to Haifa when He was in prison.” Long sighs marked these recollections.

“Rafieh, what can you tell us about the beloved Guardian?” The question evoked a long, searching look. “Have you seen his picture?” she asked. I told her I had. She continued, “He looked sweet, very sweet. Everything good and beautiful.” She recalled how happy both he and the Master had been when the Master was preparing to take Shoghi Effendi with Him to the United States and got a tailor for his clothes. Through the perjury of one of His attendants and the ruling of Italian officials, Shoghi Effendi and two other members of the party had to return to Haifa. Rafieh remembered the grieved bearing of the Master on His return from America.

“He went straight to Munirih Khanun, his wife, and said: ‘I am burned from this Dr. Farid.’ There is an expression in Persian, ‘My liver has melted, this man has burned me so much’, and this was the tone of the Master’s statement. When the beloved Shoghi Effendi returned from the beginning of this trip, he was sent to Beirut to school.”

Another scene brought to life by Mrs. Mansour was the experience of living at Abi-Sinann during the First World War. This was a small Druze village where the Master arranged for the Bahai’s from ‘Akka and Haifa to be evacuated. “We all went there, my husband, my two sons, one of them only four months old and the older one, two years.” Asked it if were “hard for the Bahai’s to be there,” again Mrs. Mansour smiled, a surprised smile. “No! No! No! Not at all! The Master arranged everything. We went to Abi-Sinann, east of ‘Akka. It was not so hard to be in the villages around ‘Akka.”

“Shaykh Salih was the head of the whole village. He called all the people and said: ‘Abbas Effendi is coming here and bringing the Bahai’s. Is any one has a room he doesn’t need, they will pay to rent it.’ All of his people accepted to make rooms available. Shaykh Salih himself gave his house to the Holy Family. He was the head of the village and very devoted to the Master. His house was a new building, and ‘Abdu’l-Baha paid him generously for the use of it.”

Others in Abi-Sinann at that time included Lua Gerisinger, Dr. Habib Mu’ayyad and Badi’ Bushrui. “Dr. Mu’ayyad had just finished his internship in Beirut,” said Mrs. Mansour, “and the Master invited him to stay in the village and take care of the Bahai’s. He shared a room with Badi’ Bushrui, teacher of the Bahai’s children, so that the room served both as a dispensary and a school.”

Her happiness in Abi-Sinann brought many expressions of gratitude. “Thanks to Bahai’u’llahi! Thanks to ‘Abdu’l-Baha! He took care of everything!” When she was questioned about the famine at that time, Mrs. Mansour responded: “These were very good times. We were all with the family of ‘Abdu’l-Baha. Very, very good times, as if we didn’t know there was a war. We had not anything to eat sometimes, as the locusts covered the sky. Nothing could be seen, everything was black like the ground. The locusts ate everything green, everything on the trees. People had money but they could not buy anything. But we were never hungry. Enough food was provided when we needed it. ‘Abdu’l-Baha brought grain and distributed it among Bahai’s and non-Bahai’s alike. The Master would visit the different homes and sometimes share a meal with friends.” Again, the glory of her experiences transfigured her face.

When they returned to ‘Akka, famine was so extreme that she remembered putting some cracked wheat outside in the sun to dry and on her return found

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LEFT: Entrance to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's house at Bahjí. TOP: This was the first greenery Bahá'u'lláh had seen in the seven years of His incarceration in 'Akka. BOTTOM: The House of 'Abbúd where the Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed.
that it was stolen. The same happened with onions hung to dry in Ferdoz garden, near the garden of Ridván. But those days lived in Rafieh Mansour's memory as days of nearness to the Center of the Covenant, blessed days that will never come again.

The burden of her years made it impossible to gather all the flowers from her memory, but sometimes just one sentence would convey a whole episode. "The day of my wedding — this was the day of the Master's release from prison — we were full of fear for Him, and instead everyone came out of the prison and it was a day of great happiness."

Another time, early in the morning, she was approaching the House of the Master and saw Him coming towards it. "I ran to open the door for Him. And He came, and He said, 'Allah-u-Abha' to me!"

"I was overwhelmed!" Here, Mrs. Mansour's daughter translated her phrases. "My mother says she was ashamed, she was not worthy for 'Abdu'l-Bahá to say 'Allah-u-Abha' to her."

Searching for the memory of her last visit with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, she remembered that her older daughter shared the experience with her. "The last time in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, my older daughter was with me, just a small child then. The servant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá brought a carriage to take me to His home for some sewing. When we arrived, my daughter Behjat was crying and going around in the big halls. All of a sudden 'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived and called: 'Behjat, why are you crying?' He took her hand, led her to the living room and put her next to Him on the couch.

"Then He went to an open cupboard and took out some almond candy for her. I was worried that she bothered Him, but He smiled and said He was happy with her. He said: 'Doesn't she resemble Jamalieh?' (This was the aunt to whom Bahá'u'lláh had granted the wish.) The Master said again to me, 'Doesn't she look like Jamalieh?'

"'I said, 'I don't remember.' "Then He said, 'Yes, yes.' He was pleased." Mrs. Mansour remembered that at this time 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not sleep well at night and many times she woke during the night to hear Him chanting. After several days, she and her daughter returned to their own home, her work in the household of the Master completed.

"One day," said Mrs. Mansour, "someone came, early in the morning, knocking at the door. Then my husband came and said, 'Everyone get up and dress. We have to go to Haifa. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has passed away!' Oh, we cried! The neighbors came to see what was going on. They heard the crying. We got on the train to Haifa."

Mrs. Mansour and her family were among the thousands at the funeral. "From everywhere," she recalled, "people had come — officials, poets, Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís. From the door of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's house to the Shrine of the Báb, all space was filled with people. These people were Christian, Muslim, all religions, everybody. And the poor who were there cried: 'Oh, what has happened? Our Father has passed away! Our Father..."

For the next forty days, the House of the Master was filled with His grieving friends. The Covenant-breakers, too, came at that time. They were courteously fed, according to Mrs. Mansour, and then one of the daughters of the Master quietly asked them to leave.

So the procession of events in the Holy Land, from 1889 to 1938, passed across the inner eye of Mrs. Mansour and produced these moments for us to share. When the beloved Guardian asked everyone to leave the Holy Land in 1938, she immediately obeyed and went with her family to Iran. In the middle fifties, when the beloved Guardian called on the Persian pioneers to settle other countries, and places within their own country where Bahá'ís were needed, Mrs. Mansour again responded by moving to an outlying area. Later she came to America with her daughter, and in the closing years of her life shared with the Bahá'ís of her immediate vicinity some of the perfume of these experiences in the Holy Land.
Howard MacNutt: An immortal name in Bahá'í History

by O.Z. Whitehead
On January 1898, at the home of Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, Howard MacNutt and his wife Mary recognized the Station of Bahá'u'lláh.

During their first four years in the Bahá'í Community the MacNutt's lived in a house at 731 St. Nicholas Avenue in New York City. After that they moved to a much larger house at 935 Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn. They used both of their homes principally to serve the Cause.

Early in his Bahá'í life, Mr. MacNutt undertook the study of Persian and Arabic. As a result he was able to help in the first English translation of the priceless Kitáb-i-Iqán, revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.

On July 4th, 1894, Miss Sarah J. Farmer formally opened the Center of Green Acre at Eliot, Maine, "for the purpose of bringing together all who were looking earnestly towards the New Day, which seemed to be breaking over the entire world." In 1896, Miss Farmer heard of the Bahá'í Faith and found perfectly expressed in the Holy Writings the ideals of love and unity that she was trying to foster, with help from such men as Ralph Waldo Emerson and John Greenleaf Whittier. In 1900 she made a pilgrimage to 'Akká and asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá to accept as a gift the facilities of Green Acre. On her return home she invited the Bahá'ís to use these facilities. Mr. MacNutt became deeply interested in the development of Green Acre. During summer conferences at this delightful, historic spot on the sloping banks of the Piscataqua River, four miles from the ocean, he gave many inspiring lectures.

Early in 1905, the MacNutt's and their friend, Julia M. Grundy, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In her touching account of this unforgettable experience, which she called "Ten Days in the Light of 'Akká", Mrs. Grundy made several vivid references to the MacNutt's. The pilgrims stayed in the prison house. One day when the Master came to see them unexpectedly, He said, "...tonight there will be a meeting of the believers here. At the table they will be gathered together from all parts of the world, This is the reason of my happiness, seeing the East and the West joined in the Kingdom of God. May all the believers in the world be so joined until the whole world shall come under one rule and all nations be as one family. This will surely come to pass." Then turning to Mr. MacNutt, He asked, "What do you say to this?" He answered "What could I say that would add to an already perfect wisdom!" 'Abdu'l-Bahá responded: "May we all be perfected in the Wisdom and Light of the Blessed Perfection." Again to Mr. MacNutt, "Will you speak?" He answered, "It is a blessed privilege to listen. I am usually called upon to speak but I love to listen." 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "May you always listen, always hear, always speak with the power of the spirit." That evening at the Feast, in the large hall of the prison house, while He was serving each guest, the Master said: "This is the blessed supper of the Lord, for we have gathered under the shadow of the Blessed Perfection."

A guest at this Feast, the saintly Mirzá Asadu'lláh-i-Isfahání, who in 1898, at the request of the Master, had safely taken the remains of the Báb from Iran to the Holy Land, and who, in 1900, in an extended visit to the United States of America had helped the believers there to recover from the shock and confusion over the defection of Dr. Ibrahim Khayru'lláh, introduced Mr. MacNutt with these words: "He is one of our eloquent American brothers who has great power. God has given him the power to attract souls to the Fountain of Life. His words are like a magnet." As he looked at those around him, Mr. MacNutt said, "In
these Baha’i faces one can see the image of the Blessed Perfection. He is here. I will take this picture to the American believers. Their spirits are with us at this table of love.  

The next morning when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá joined the pilgrims for breakfast, Mrs. MacNutt explained what she thought were the three progressive spiritual steps to follow. They were: obedience as Christ taught; renunciation as Muhammad taught; and pronouncement as revealed by Bahá’u’lláh. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, “If you pray that you may all be assisted to attain these stations in the Cause of God.” He continued: “The cause of my happiness is meeting you here and seeing your faces filled with the Light of God. I shall never forget the beautiful meeting last night. You must meet together in this way in America ...”

On May 7, 1905, at Genealogical Hall in New York City, shortly after he and the rest of his party had returned from the Holy Land, Mr. MacNutt gave a moving talk entitled, “Unity Through Love.” He recalled what the Master had asked him shortly after his arrival at ‘Akká: “How are the beloved of God in the city of New York? Are they united? Are they in love and harmony? Are they enkindled by the fire of the Love of God?” Mr. MacNutt’s answer: “There are more signs of unity and love among us in New York than there have been in the history of our organization; and this is owing more to the good work of our women than to any other one cause.” He paused, and said to the audience, “You should have seen the holy light of joy and happiness upon His face, as He heard this answer.”

Instead of encouraging the pilgrims to ask questions about science, metaphysics and philosophy, Mr. MacNutt informed his audience, the Master tried to show them how to apply the divine principle of love to their lives. He was most anxious to know how the friends were behaving toward one another and what efforts they were making to teach those who, because of ignorance and superstition, were veiled from the Glory of Bahá’u’lláh. Mr. MacNutt advised Bahá’ís “not to make the pilgrimage from a mere motive of self-satisfaction or spirit of inquiry, but to go to ‘Akká for the people, to bring back from the Master that which will accomplish the work of God and assist in the development of humanity.”

He recounted how one day he said to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that he wished he could take the Master’s “living face” back to America for the friends to see as he had seen. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered, “My love is my face; take it to them; tell them to see me in their love for each other.”

During the spring of 1911, in a Tablet which He revealed to the much loved Juliet Thompson, the Master wrote: “Announce on my behalf to Mrs. MacNutt, I do not forget thee and my beloved friend, Mr. MacNutt, for one breath; nay rather, I beg continually for your divine confirmation and supreme assistance.”

On that time-honored morning of April 11, 1912, when the Master arrived in New York aboard the S.S. Cedric, a large group of believers had gathered there to meet Him. He sent them a message of love, but in order to avoid a public scene, He asked the believers to leave and join Him at four o’clock that afternoon at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kinney. After all but two believers and a deeply interested friend had obediently left the pier, Mr. MacNutt and Mr. Mills escorted the Master from the ship, and led Him a short distance down the pier to Mr. Mill’s car for the drive into the city.

The next day a large group of Bahá’ís is assembled at the home of the MacNutt’s in Brooklyn to hear the Master’s second formal talk in America. Mr. MacNutt took notes, as he did during at least seventeen other talks the Master gave in this country. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá began this beautiful presentation by saying, “This is a most happy visit. I have crossed the sea from the land of the Orient for the joy of meeting the friends of God. Although weary after my long journey, the light of the spirit shining in your faces brings me rest and reward. This is a spiritual house; the home of the spirit. There is no discord here; all is love and...
"There are more signs of daily and love among us in New York, than there have been in the history of our organization." He then clearly stated that only through the intense sufferings and hardships that Jesus Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh had endured was it possible to hold such a meeting, and for all to proclaim the unity of the human family.

At twenty minutes before midnight April 14, three days after the Master's arrival in New York City, the Titanic, the largest steamship ever built, grazed an enormous iceberg on the fourth day of her maiden voyage from Southampton, England, and two hours later, sank. Because there were an insufficient number of lifeboats on board for 4,000 passengers and 800 crew members, 1,500 people drowned. On the day the newspapers printed this tragic story, the Master took a drive through the streets of New York with Mr. MacNutt. "Shall any of these things you are looking upon remain or endure?" the Master asked. "If you possessed all you could wish for — these great buildings, wealth, luxury, the pleasures of life in this world — would any of these things increase your eternal happiness or insure you everlasting existence? I am summoning you to the world of the Kingdom. . . . For the world of the Kingdom is a world of Lights, a world of happiness, a world of accomplishment, the real and eternal world." Mr. MacNutt has written that in conclusion, after a lengthy pause during which He looked thoughtfully out of the window, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said calmly, "I was asked to sail upon the Titanic, but my heart did not prompt me to do so." During His first days in New York City, while he was residing at the hand-
inquirers alike still have a precious oppor-
tunity to read and study all of the Master's available American addresses. They serve as models to many Bahá'í speakers. Distinguished historians of the Cause often quote from these gemlike talks.

'Aibá'-Báhh once asked the Mac-
Nuts to try and hold on to their house in
Brooklyn, where He had visited, and where so many splendid meetings had taken place. Early in 1920, however, they decided to spend the rest of their lives in a concentrated effort to teach the Cause in other parts of the country. After Mr. MacNutt had retired from his profession, he and Mary sold their house and moved to Florida. They spent five of the next winters serving the Faith in various cities of Florida. They spent one winter in California teaching the Faith.

Thornton Chase, not only the first American believer, but also the first believer of the West, was a close friend of Howard MacNutt's. A touching photograph of him, which he declared his favorite, shows him standing close to Mr. Chase's grave in the cemetery of Inglewood, a suburb of Los Angeles. In his middle sixties, Mr. MacNutt had a strong, handsome face and a sturdy body. His kind, gentle expression showed charm and humor. White hair covered his head. With deep love and much fervor, he seems to be praying for his departed friend.

Howard and Mary MacNutt both died in Miami, Florida, as a result of injuries received from accidents, he on December 26th, 1926, and she one month before. In "America and the Most Great Peace," his magnificent essay on the spiritual history of that country, the beloved Guardian has numbered MacNutt among eight immortal names who "will forever remain associated with the rise and establishment of His Faith in the American continent and will continue to shed on its annals a lustre that time can never dim."
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COVER PHOTO

The Hands of the Cause of God residing in North America while attending recent conference in Wilmette with National Assembly; from left to right: Mr. John Robarts, Mr. Dhkru'llâh Khâdem, and Mr. William Sears. story page?

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS


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Australia

Sydney affirms UN declaration

A SPECIAL SERVICE was held in the Bahá’í House of Worship in Sydney, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the signing on December 10, 1948, of the Declaration of Human Rights, by the member states of the United Nations.

Among the guests were members of the National Spiritual Assembly, representatives of the Continental Counsellors, and officials of the United Nations. The Australian Bahá’í interest in this momentous celebration was given excellent newspaper coverage throughout the country.

In all, sixteen Bahá’í communities in Australia conducted programs on this special day. They ranged from seminars and lectures, to concerts, film programs, and even an open-air prayer meeting by candlelight.

Interview show explores Faith

IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, the Bahá’í Faith was introduced to the audience of a popular television program. “No Man’s Land,” by a reporter who presented probing questions with courtesy and sympathy. To help her prepare for her interview and her introductory remarks, she was invited to spend an evening with a Melbourne Bahá’í family. The sensitive program which she produced subsequently, included shots of the House of Worship in Sydney, filmed specially for this program.

Ecuador

Indians to get own literature

THE CAYAPA INDIANS, who dwell in the Ecuadoran province of Esmeraldas, can now read Bahá’í literature in their own Cayapa language. The National Assembly of Ecuador recently announced the achievement of this significant goal, noting their particular satisfaction that the task was accomplished by a native believer, who obtained the help of a sympathetic Cayapa Indian in translating a Spanish-language pamphlet. As Cayapa is not a written language, an oral translation was recorded phonetically, to produce the new and welcome pamphlet.

“The first few Cayapas accepted the Faith late in the Nine Year Plan and have shown marked spiritual capacity,” a report of the National Assembly said. “We are overjoyed at having this little booklet available in Cayapa for use in the deepening and consolidation work among these delightful people.”

Hawaii

Hilo will host twenty nations

MORE THAN TWENTY COUNTRIES—among them the United States, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and several African nations—will be represented at the Bahá’í International Youth Conference in Hawaii, August 4-8. The Hawaiian National Assembly has encountered a sustained and world-wide interest in attending this conference, and has already once extended the registration deadline.

The Hand of the Cause of God Abú’l-Qásim Faizi will represent The Universal House of Justice at this event. Other Hands of the Cause will attend, among them Mr. William Sears and Mr. Dhibru’Uah Khádem. Rep-

Mr. Michael Bluett, a student at the Australian National University in Canberra, the nation’s capital, sits at the controls of the campus radio station, preparing for the weekly Bahá’í broadcast. For some time the Bahá’í students at the university have produced a ten-minute fireside for Radio A.N.U.’s Sunday afternoon “Religious Hour”. They have considered it an effective way to reach a sizable group of students and teachers.

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representatives of the Continental Coun­sellors and the Auxiliary Boards will also be participating.

The conference will be held at the Civic Auditorium in Hilo, Hawaii. It will begin with a traditional “luau”, as part of a scheduled “Unity Feast”, on August 4. The conference will start officially on the evening of August 5, after a day-long guided tour of such island attractions as the Mauna Loa and Kilauea volcanoes, and the snow-capped Mauna Kea, the highest peak in the Pacific.

A public meeting during the conference will feature Seals and Crofts, the popular singers from the United States. Post-conference proclamation events will be held throughout the Hawaiian islands.

A conference fee of $40 will be collected from each person attending. The fee will cover transportation from the airport to the hotels on arrival, and car fare back to the airport at the close of the conference; transportation to and from the conference site; a tour of the island of Hawaii; a Hawaiian “luau”; noon and evening meals during conference sessions; and registration. Hotel costs for each person (with a room occupancy of three to four people), will range from $30 to $60 per night.

International travelers must first land in Honolulu, then make a connecting flight to Hilo airport.

India

Message taken to Andamans

Two traveling teachers recently spent three weeks in India’s Andaman Islands, approximately 400 miles west of Burma, in the Bay of Bengal. They were successful in presenting the Teachings of the Faith to most of the leading people in Port Blair, the principal city, including the island’s Chief Commissioner, who administered the territory for the Indian government.

The visitors, Mr. and Mrs. Chaterjee, were entertained during their stay by the Bishop of the Andamans, who enquired about the Faith and extended every possible assistance and courtesy.

"It was really a miracle of Bahá’u’lláh to find ourselves being entertained in the Bishop’s house on Christmas day, and at his invitation, discussing the Faith with his other guests," the Chaterjees reported to the National Assembly of India.

A cooperative proprietor of a local bookshop allowed the couple to display Bahá’í books in his store. A presentation of books was made to the college library in Port Blair. Newspaper interviews were arranged, and a thorough presentation on the Faith was made to a group of wives of government officials.

The purser of the ship on which the Chaterjees traveled, a noted Bengali author, renewed an interest in the Faith which had been kindled on an earlier voyage by an Australian Bahá’í. In one of his books this writer mentioned the Bahá’í Faith and told of his first encounter with it.

"He became very friendly and invited us to his cabin for tea each day and we talked about the Faith," the Chaterjees reported. "In addition, we spoke to many of the passengers about Bahá’u’lláh."

Honduras

Believer joins Indian council

A National Indigenous Institute was recently formed in Honduras to consider ways of channeling assistance to the nation’s Indian population. The
individuals chosen to serve on the panel were prominent Hondurans, from an assortment of professional backgrounds. Only one foreigner was selected: Mrs. Wanita M. George, a pioneer to Honduras, and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly.

The appointment was in apparent recognition of her years of service to the Jicaque Indians of Montaña de la Flor, Honduras. She has visited the Jicaque Reservation regularly for thirteen years. On each monthly visit she takes a mule load of handwoven baskets back to the city to market for the tribe.

A Honduran journalist, also appointed to the indigenous institute, recently devoted much of her column in a leading national newspaper to a discussion of the Bahá'í belief in unity. "Bahá'ís value and look out for the welfare of the Indians," she said.

Italy

Exhibit tours Italian cities

Italy's first traveling Bahá'í exhibit is proclaiming the Faith to thousands of Italians in major centers. Known as the "Mostra di Perugia", this lively display of photographs and maps, captions and quotations, quickly communicates the history and teachings of the Faith to the curious visitor.

At an art gallery in Scandicci (see photos), a workers' town in Tuscany, the ten-day exhibit daily attracted students, merchants, and civil servants. Every visitor read Eduard Benes' tribute to the Faith, saw photographs of the Shrine of the Báb and Bahá'í temples, and studied the latest world statistics of the Faith. The majority stayed to discuss the objectives of the Faith with the Bahá'í youth on duty.

This mobile proclamation, designed and assembled by the Bahá'í youth of Perugia, has been shown during the past year in a dozen Italian cities, including Venice, Catania, Cagliari, Pisa, Livorno, Mantova. At Scandicci the reaction to the exhibit was typified by a local painter:

"Most Italians don't have the patience to listen to another man's ideas on religion, but this show tells you a lot, quickly and painlessly."

Jamaica

Jamaica active in using radio

A series of twenty half-hour radio programs on the Bahá'í Faith were recently produced by the National Assembly of Jamaica, and were broadcast during a five-week period beginning February 12, Monday through Thursday, at 12:30 A.M.

"The impact of the radio program was extremely encouraging," the National Assembly reported, "especially the response received from the rural areas, where radio has a wider audience than in city centers where television is available."

Although few direct enquiries were received, Bahá'í travelers in rural areas were frequently asked when the radio series would be resumed, the National Assembly said. "It is felt that still further progress could be made within the limits of the twenty broadcasts if the time allotted to us was earlier than midnight," the National Assembly noted.

"Had it not been for the time factor, we feel that a larger audience would have been reached. It is evident, however, that the radio program experience was a worthwhile one."

The National Assembly observed that more might have been achieved had manpower been available in rural areas to capitalize on the interest created by the broadcasts. The Assembly has offered to supply copies of its scripts to other national communities interested in exploring the uses of radio for proclamation and deepening.

Children's classes

PARAGUAY—Children's classes in Pedro Juan Caballero, Paraguay, with pioneer and teacher Mrs. Josephine Johansen.
Belize

Radio program six years old

For almost six years the National Spiritual Assembly of Belize produced a monthly fifteen-minute radio program to proclaim the Faith in this Central American Republic, and to deepen the knowledge of the Bahá'íis themselves. The program, featuring a panel discussion on what were considered timely and relevant issues, became a valuable tool for heightening the public interest in the Bahá'í Teachings, as well as enhancing the prestige of the Cause of God in Belize.

A report from the National Assembly of Belize received at the World Centre in March, stated: "You will be happy to hear that beginning the first Wednesday in October, the radio program 'The Bahá'í Viewpoint' will be heard every Wednesday at 9:30 A.M., instead of only monthly as in the past."

Panama

Color show on Faith telecast

A one-hour color television program about the Bahá'í Faith was recently broadcast on the major network in Panama City. The content of the program was organized by Continental Counsellor Paul Pavón of Ecuador.

An international, interracial group of Bahá'ís took part in the program. The panel included Cuna Indians, Panamanians, Costa Ricans, Ecuadorians, and North Americans.

The two-year-old Panama Temple.

The television time was offered by the vice-president of Panama City's Channel 4 during an interview with the National Assembly's Publicity Committee. He proposed that Counsellor Pavón be interviewed along with other Bahá'ís during a popular half-hour afternoon program.

When the guests were already assembled and Mr. Eduardo Frangias, the interviewer, was ready to begin taping, word came that the program was to be expanded to one hour. An urgent consultation among the Bahá'ís produced the decision that the film on the dedication of the Panama House of Worship would be shown in the additional time granted. But it was promptly discovered that only the English version of the film was available. Mr. Pavón was forced to provide a simultaneous translation into Spanish of the film's narration, which from Panamanian accounts was accomplished brilliantly.

During the remainder of the program each Bahá'í guest was introduced, and a number of them answered questions posed by Mr. Frangias (who later suggested taping additional programs in the future). Some of the questions: "What do Bahá'ís believe?", "What does the Bahá'í Faith offer the world?", "What are North Americans doing in Panama for the Faith?" A number of songs were performed as well.

The station reportedly received calls for several days from viewers requesting additional information about the Bahá'ís.

Panama Temple gets cleaning

The dome of the two-year-old Panama Temple, discolored by a dark mold growing in the grout holding the ceramic tile chips in place, recently got its first good bath. The mold developed as a consequence of the torrential rains and accompanying humidity common to the area for months each year.

A platform on rubber tires was constructed to give the maintenance crews maneuverability atop the dome. It was anchored to the cupola support posts with plasticized cables.

From the platform the mold was sprayed with a high-grade cleaning solution. A coat of concrete sealant was added afterwards, which is expected to keep the tile free of further growth for many years.
Structure in the garden park of Lota Alto, one of the communities visited by Chilean teachers (a); descending from Lota Alto to Lota Bajo is rough but panoramic. Coal is mined from the ocean floor and it is not uncommon to find beaches strewn with coal stone (b); the central plaza of Valdivia (c); secretary of Chilean National Assembly drafting letter to be given to authorities in cities visited by teaching project (d); Miss Consuelo Muñoz, a member of the teaching team, answers questions for an inquirer in Valdivia plaza (e).
A campaign to expand and consolidate the Faith among the Mapuche Indians in their mountain lands outside Temuco, in south central Chile, was undertaken in late January by the National Spiritual Assembly, at the close of a Baha'i Youth Congress in nearby Nueva Imperial. Teams of National Assembly members, some adults, and a large number of youth, opened twelve new areas to the Faith in this rich agricultural region, enrolling 136 new believers.

Temuco itself has no Baha'is. It is one of the more active economic centers in southern Chile, as well as the center for the South American Missionary Society and the American Baptists, who conduct a number of public schools there. The Indians in outlying areas use the city as a market for their textiles and other products.

Encouraged by the results of teaching in the region the National Assembly is considering ways of conducting intensive follow-up programs. "The chances to open more the Mapuche zone have always been there," the National Assembly noted in a report on the campaign, "but we think that now we must take the opportunity and enable hundreds of these waiting souls to enter the Faith."

Professor aids teaching work

While spending a month in Chile on academic business recently, Dr. 'Ishrat H. Naqvi, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Saskatchewan in Regina, Canada, placed his free time at the disposal of the National Assembly for teaching and other Baha'i work. Having received a good deal of advance notice the National Assembly was able to develop an impressive itinerary for Dr. Naqvi, taking full advantage of his exceptional talents.

In Santiago Dr. Naqvi gave an address on the relation between science and religion at the National Hazratu'l-Quds. He was interviewed before his talk by the Catholic University's television news team. The film was broadcast the following evening during an 8 P.M. telecast.

Among the 70 people in the audience for his talk was the Mayor of La Cisterna, a municipality adjoining the capital, Santiago. The Mayor was given a number of Baha'i books by the National Assembly. A few nights later Dr. Naqvi gave a talk in La Cisterna itself. The Mayor was again among the guests.

Teaching team tours country

In late March, another team of Chilean teachers traveled more than 300 miles in a two-week period, visiting six cities in the south. This time 32 new believers were enrolled by the nine-member team, among them university students, farm laborers, housewives, and office clerks. At some locations crowds of as many as 200 people gathered to hear of the Baha'i Faith.

The teaching trip was organized with the help of Continental Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi, who assisted in developing guidelines for the project. It was financed with a contribution from the Hand of the Cause Ri'iyih Khanum.

The trip began in Concepcion, Chile's second major seaport; it ended in Chiloé, the lush, still, offshore Pacific island, that influenced many ancient Indian legends.

Fourteenth National Convention

Chile—The Fourteenth National Convention of Chile was held in Valparaiso, April 26-28. Shown in the photograph are visitors and delegates from coastal Iquique in the north, to the seaport of Punta Arenas in the south. The principal topic for discussion was the Five Year Plan. The National Assembly announced it had scheduled two conferences in June to launch the Plan. One was to be held in Santiago, the national capital, the second in Vadivia, a provincial capital in south central Chile.
More than five hours of free radio time was given to Bahá'ís on teaching project, (a.); Bahá'ís participating in teaching project, (b.); direct teaching in the plazas, (c.); pier leaving the mainland near Puerto Montt for the island of Chiloe, (d.); Continental Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi, left, giving Bahá'í books to the Mayor of Concepcion, second left, (e.).
An historic conference to brief the members of major Bahá'í institutions in North America on the measures adopted to execute the Five Year Plan was held by the National Spiritual Assembly in Wilmette, Sunday, May 26.

Present at the conference, in addition to the members of the National Assembly, were the three Hands of the Cause residing in North America (Mr. Sears, Mr. Robarts, and Mr. Khadém); the four members of the Continental Counsellors for North America (Miss True, Dr. Pereira, Mrs. Sherrill, and Mr. Gardner); the members of the Auxiliary Board; and representatives of major committees of the National Assembly.

It was the first time in the development of the Faith in the United States that representatives of all these institutions came together to discuss aspects of the teaching work. Intended primarily to inform the members of the Auxiliary Board of the steps to be taken in launching the new Plan, this conference signaled, according to the National Assembly, a new phase in collaboration among the preeminent Bahá'í institutions in this country.

It was also seen as the first implementation of an October 1, 1969 recommendation of The Universal House of Justice that the Counsellors and Auxiliary Board be well informed of the plans of the National Assembly. In that message outlining the relationship between the Continental Counsellors and the National Assemblies, the Supreme Body, said: "It is the Spiritual Assemblies who plan and direct the work, but these plans should be well known to the Counsellors and Auxiliary Board members, because one of the ways in which they can assist the Assemblies is by urging the believers continually to support the plans of the Assemblies."

At the close of this conference the National Assembly said future meetings with these institutions would be scheduled to keep them informed of developments in the implementation of the Five Year Plan. The Assembly called this particular meeting, "the fifth stage in the launching of the Five Year Plan in the United States. "The stages were explained in the National Assembly's annual report:

"The release of the Naw-Rúz message from the Supreme Institution sounded the bugle call; the initial discussions, involving two Hands of the Cause, all four Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assembly, constitute the rousing of the chief officers; the National Convention, the display of the colors; the post-Convention Conferences, the diffusion of field officers; the anticipated joint meeting of the Continental Counsellors, National Assembly members, Auxiliary Board members, and National Teaching Committee members in May, the issuance of operating orders; and the St. Louis Conference, the complete call to arms—the mobilization of all detachments of the Army of Light toward the conquest of their assigned objectives."

since ridván the House of Worship in Wilmette has opened daily between 8-10 am to allow the friends to gather to read and to chant the Holy Word. Previously the House of Worship opened at 10 am.

The decision to extend the hours during which the Temple is open for use was made by the National Spiritual Assembly, to respond in an effective way to the Five Year Plan goal of developing the distinctive characteristics of Bahá'í society.

In amplifying its explanation of this goal of the Plan, the Supreme Body explained that one distinctive characteristic would be the gathering of the believers daily between dawn and two hours after sunrise, to listen to the reading and chanting of the Holy Word. The new hours would serve to align the activities of the House of Worship more closely with its essential purpose, the National Assembly said.

No formal devotional program is or-
ganized on a regular daily basis. The friends are free to read or chant the Sacred Scriptures, if they feel moved to do so.

On Holy Days, however, the National Assembly has instructed that a formal devotional program be conducted. In addition, on these special days the House of Worship is to be opened as close to dawn as possible.

As of May 1 the workday at the National Baha'i Center was scheduled to begin a half-hour earlier than it had before. The staff was to report at 8:30 A.M., rather than 9:00 A.M.

Mr. Yazzie said he could grasp the spirit and motive of the consultation. He said the need for a universal auxiliary language was very clear, and that Indian youth should strive to become proficient in English. Mr. Yazzie studied English years ago, but has since forgotten much of it.

He was pleased to meet other Baha'is, and said he was impressed with the unity, sincerity, and enthusiasm of the delegates. The Convention was unique in his experience of political and religious meetings, because Baha'is were highly motivated in achieving their goals, he said. Mr. Yazzie felt this was a great accomplishment.

At the close of the interview he expressed thanks "to the leaders who planned the meetings", and said he would take his impressions of the Convention to his people, to educate and uplift them with the spirit he felt at this Convention.

School holds final session

About 80 people attended the final session of the Geyserville Baha'i School April 5-8, conducted at a rented facility near Santa Cruz, California. Upon completion of its spring session, the renowned school quietly ended its activities, after almost 50 years of service to Baha'is in the western United States.

The Geyserville school's 80-acre campus was located near the Russian River, 90 miles north of San Francisco. It was purchased by the State of California in January 1973 to facilitate a highway expansion project. The school's subsequent academic sessions were continued—until its closing April 8—in rented facilities in the Santa Cruz area.

Geyserville has been replaced by the new 67-acre John and Louise Bosch Baha'i School, located sixteen miles from Santa Cruz on the north end of

Unity affects Indian visitor

Mr. Dan Yazzie, a Navajo medicine man who hosted a large Baha'i proclamation on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona last July, was one of the many visitors to the 65th National Baha'i Convention in Wilmette last April 25-28. Mr. Yazzie first encountered the Faith in 1971, and has since taught many people on the reservation, where he is an honored and respected tribal leader.

Mr. Franklin Kahn, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly, translated Mr. Yazzie's remarks during an interview at the National Baha'i Center. Although he did struggle to understand the proceedings in English,
who spoke on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas; Mrs. Violette Haakes and Mrs. Nura Ioas, who formed a team for a two-hour lecture on the Holy Family, emphasizing the station of its women members. Continental Counsellor for Western Asia Iraj Ayman, who arrived at the school unexpectedly, shared impressions of teaching in his part of the world, and assisted Dr. Banani with his class on the Aqdas. A 27-member choral group called The Welcome Change, gave a one-hour recital of their music during a balmy Sunday afternoon.

The new Bosch school near Santa Cruz encompasses large stands of redwood, fir, oak, and madrone, extensive areas of open, rolling land, and a small lake. From several vantage points on the property, set at an elevation of 2,000 feet, the Pacific Ocean is clearly visible five miles away.

The main building has a dining hall for about 70 people, a fully equipped commercial kitchen, an expansive lobby, a game room, a snack bar, and locker rooms for the heated, filtered, 30-foot by 60-foot swimming pool on the property. There are, in addition, ten individual cabins (nine with fireplaces), three duplex cabins, and three separate homes on the new campus.

Negotiations for the purchase of the Bosch school began in January 1973. They were completed eleven months later.

Switzerland

Party held for Hand of Cause

A FAREWELL PARTY for the Hand of the Cause of God Dr. Adelbert Mühlenschlegel was recently given by the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland and the country's 25 Local Spiritual Assemblies. After a long residence in Switzerland Mr. Mühlenschlegel moved to Germany in December, where he took up residence near the House of Worship in Frankfurt.

Mr. Mühlenschlegel was given a suitcase-full of presents by his hosts (one present from each Spiritual Assembly) to demonstrate the affection of the entire Swiss community. Most of the gifts were humorous items. The Spiritual Assembly of Binningen, for example, gave him "a bottle of Binningen air" to take back to Germany. Several poems were written and recited, including one by Dr. Mühlenschlegel himself. (See poem below).

To The Friends in Switzerland

The heavens are radiant and the mountains beckon; The seas are luminous and the meadows are in flower.

O, would that I could forever drink of this beauty!

But never does life hold out to us the glitter of promise

for all the wishes that glow in our hearts.

Soon you, dear land, will have disappeared from my sight—
you, healer of the sick, the depressed. As once our Guardian, here too will they be healed.

Like his, our hearts will be forever bound to you:

our souls breathe, lovingly cheered, true friendship,
those noblest sentiments that life can give us,
in happiness and sorrow.

A beacon in this dark mill of fate, which sheds a glorious light on our terrestrial tumult, and into the unknown to all eternity.

O Thou Heaven-ordained power of Unity which lovingly embraces all opposition, in Thy purity bless this land and teach its souls Thy tenderness which ever understands, ever forgives, and is merciful!

We roam afar, yet here remain at home.

Though we long tarry at firesides abroad,
in hearts and spirit we remain one; that this perplexed, hate-ridden, tangled world may become a paradise—

and we serve, serve...
Tributes to heroic sacrifice

A colleague recalls the achievements of
The Hands of the Cause of God Dorothy Baker
and Keith Ransom-Kehler

By A.Q. Faizí

Impressions of Mrs. Ransom-Kehler

"... whereas in days past every lover besought and searched after his Beloved, it is the Beloved Himself Who now is calling His lovers..." Bahá'u'lláh (Gleanings, p. 320)

What an ecstasy and holy rapture to be in the presence of the beloved Guardian. To every pilgrim it was a state of spiritual enchantment that could only be obtained in his presence. Wonder, awe, and reverence were awakened in his visitors by his dignified and exalted personality. Days passed like swiftly gliding rivers, but the sweet memories of those hours of pilgrimage remained vivid and unstained by the erosions of time, returning to mind again and again with undying gratitude and affection.

It was during my last pilgrimage, on the first day of my arrival in Haifa, while walking on the slopes of Mount Carmel, that the Guardian expressed sorrow because of the passing of a "valiant martyr and a virtuous peer," Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler. With intense longing she had gone to visit the homeland of Bahá'u'lláh and, with unabated determination, had done her utmost to open a way for the entrance from the West of Bahá'í literature into Persia, and for mitigation of the oppressions suffered by her fellow believers. She suffered grave disappointments and defeats; finally in Isfahan, physically exhausted, she succumbed to smallpox, and died a few hours after its onset.

The Guardian spoke on that walk of how great a teacher, how eloquent a writer she had been. He then very lovingly made mention of Marzieh Khánum and said that she wrote like Mrs. Ransom-Kehler, instructing me to send a warm letter to her on his behalf.

He expressed sorrow because none of the promises given by the Persian authorities to Mrs. Ransom-Kehler were ever fulfilled. In his boundless blessings he termed her the first American martyr in Iran and an ember from the fire of the love of God. We walked on.

Then, as if the veils of time and space had been parted so that he might behold horizons far away, the Guardian, after a long moment of silence, said the funeral of Mrs. Ransom-Kehler had been a very important event in Isfahan. The Bahá'í friends had followed her coffin with the deepest respect. The inhabitants of the city had stood on both sides of the main streets down which the cortege had traveled. Taken by surprise, they related to each other that a great American teacher had passed away in their city. The Guardian's description was moving and wonderful, one to bring tears of pride and sorrow.

Before my pilgrimage ended, the Guardian sent me a large envelope. It contained a large leaf onto which flowers of varying sizes and colors were pressed in a very beautiful design. He instructed me to take this gift of love to Isfahan and there to lay it upon the grave of Keith Ransom-Kehler, martyr.

What a painful moment when one finally had to leave the presence of
Shoghi Effendi. With tears in my eyes and the darkness of all the disappointments of the world in my heart, I bade him goodbye, and departed for Damascus from Haifa, to proceed through Iraq into Persia. It was a long journey; and in those days the great hazard lay in the crossing of the trackless desert between Damascus and Baghdad. A single car dared not traverse the wastes lest it break down or be irretrievably lost. Therefore, in Damascus I waited until such time as at least six cars would form a caravan, driving together for safety.

When finally the little caravan assembled, we set out through that lifeless, empty, boundless space, which was the picture of my own heart, devoid of hope and happiness. How could it be otherwise, when it had been so swiftly taken away from the mountain of God, the abode of the sign of God on earth? And now, crossing the bleak wastes at night, the moon, the stars, the whole firmament looked upon me from above, as if conscious of the emblem of love which I was honored to bear to its recipient. No marks, no traces of paved roads, no river or little hills showed where we were, yet the cars sped onward. I wondered how the drivers would ever reach their destinations safe and sound. "How do you find your direction?" I asked our driver; "There is no sign here." Said the driver, pointing first to the desert sands, then, smiling, to the sky, "In the desert, that star is our guide." It was the polar star toward which he gestured, and I was strengthened, consoled, made meditative looking at that star, like a diamond nail fixed forever, holding together the firmament. What happens, I pondered, when we Bahá'ís fix our gaze upon him whose light followed the Master? Never, never will we be lost in the trackless wastes of our lives if we live by the Guardian's direction.

Three days before the Bahá'ís of Persia were to hold their annual meetings to commemorate the martyrdom of the Báb, I reached Isfahan. The friends, informed of my coming, looked eagerly forward to the arrival of the Guardian's great gift. The Local Spiritual Assembly of Isfahan invited all the friends to congregate in the Bahá'í cemetery on the day of the anniversary of the martyrdom of the Báb, to pay tribute to the American woman who had died in their city on October 23, 1933.

On that wonderful, tragic, memorable day of the Báb, groups of the friends proceeded from their villages and from the city of Isfahan itself to the Bahá'í graveyard outside the city limits. Meanwhile, the news sped round the Muslim community that the Bahá'ís were making a visit to the grave of the foreign woman who spent "all her yesterday's" in the promotion of the Cause of peace and love, the Bahá'í Faith. The people understood only that she, the stranger, was to receive a great posthumous honor, a prize never sought, but won through her great spirit and sacrifice. With confused feelings they watched the Bahá'ís exulting in this important event. Gathering on the roofs of their houses and on the minarets of their mosques, they felt the irrepressibility of the Faith and the failure of their fight against its aims. They could not quite believe this wonderful spectacle of the Bahá'ís daring to gather in solemn march, in spite of all that had happened to them, in honor of a noble woman from America. For it had not been too many years since their fathers had witnessed the martyrdom of the two brothers, Hasan and Husayn, gloriously entitled "The King of Martyrs" and "The Beloved of Martyrs." To them that bloody event signaled the end of the dangerous Faith with which the two brothers were affiliated and for which they offered their lives. The Isfahans, as so many others in Persia, wondered at the speed with which the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh had spread, so amazingly, from the East to the West; a process exemplified by this American woman buried in the environs of their city. The hearts of men's hearts would ever burn for this union which already Bahá'u'lláh had visibly created.

Assembling then in silence about the grave in the cemetery, the Bahá'ís raised their unspoken praise of her whom they had come to honor, perhaps in poetic words such as these:

"For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths..."

"For you they call the swaying mass their eager faces turning..."

Not for them the empty gestures of which so often we read in our newspapers, when men of politics, of military affairs, or of mundane importance place wreaths on the grave of some "unknown soldier," summoning up all manner of ceremonies for such an occasion: guards of honor, soldiers and bands for music, all in rows to excite the hearts of people by their guns, drums and bugles. What are all these for but to honor soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for man's brutality, when he is farthest from God; honor offered too late to young men.
who went under fire, enduring all manner of atrocities to win “a handful of dust,” yet without a godly objective to sanctify their sacrifices. By contrast, our martyr Keith Ransom-Kehler had a heart lit with the celestial fire. She offered her life, not for savagery but for the promulgation of peace and the establishment of the kingdom of love on this earth; well-known here in this mortal world, she was far better known in the realms of the martyrs. And the simple Bahá’í men and women who assembled about her grave were people who many times had been sorely tried in the fires of oppression, never faltering nor fleeing. Never had wealth or luxuries been distinguishing features of that beloved steadfast group; instead, they were imbued with the noble ideals of their great Faith, suffering the oppressive and vindictive actions of a malevolent Persia in silence and resignation, whether young or aged, new in the Cause or old in its beliefs.

These true people stood in two rows about the grave, watching with eager eyes the precious gift as it was carried to its final place of honor. In the solemn stillness the drops of tears which were fast rolling down their pale faces were the best songs from their hearts, the fittest words to express their appreciation for those days and months of heroine Keith’s ardent labor, those long nights devoid of ease that she had spent in the service of the Faith in their country.

Then the day was done, and the darkness fell from the wings of night. There flashed into my heart a feeling of joy mingled with a sense of the beloved Guardian’s presence, such that my soul could scarcely resist. Would that my pen could express the thoughts and feelings awakened in the friends at that moment of a great day of honor to an inimitable Bahá’í soul. Full of the meaning of that hour, the friends silently left the cemetery to return to their abodes, numbed by the ecstasy awakened in their hearts, full of the tenacity of their devotion reawakened.

As they departed from the graveyard, leaving the flowers in tribute on the resting-place of their much-loved American sister, was it possible that the ever-smiling Keith Ransom-Kehler might take the flowers to her breast in the ethereal realms, for the approbation of her fellow martyrs?

Mrs. Dorothy Baker

Dorothy Baker: “Martyr Pilgrim”

The beloved Guardian initiated the first International Conferences in 1953. The Bahá’í communities throughout the world were moved and thrilled, and those who could travel made their way to one or more of these Conferences.

The one held in India was the most picturesque. A great variety of colorful dresses added beauty and atmosphere to the assemblage of friends who were seated under a large tent, in semi-circular files. East and West met each other in perfect unity and mutual understanding. People of different colors with varying racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds came together and for the first time tasted the beauty and felt deeply the joy of knowing one another. And for the first time they truly comprehended that they were members of one body, still unfortunately separated by the cruel forces of prejudice, hatred, and ignorance. Now under the canopy of love and unity, they shed tears of joy and often their feelings were uncontrollable.

All the speakers responded to this feeling of unprecedented joy. Their voices sometimes broke with emotion. Deeply touched by the rapture of those moments, I wrote down the beautiful words of the speakers; but when Dorothy Baker started to speak, my pen would not move. I could take no notes.

She stood elegantly upon the stage, and when she spoke, she seemed to abandon her physical temple. A certain mysterious power caused eloquent words to flow from her lips with the clarity and unerring direction of a mountain stream as it moves swiftly over small pebbles. Her soft penetrating voice had the ring of indescribable music. Her face received fresh lights of joy from the worlds beyond.

She continuously spoke about the beloved Guardian, but never during her visit to India did she speak about her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I remained with her during her entire stay in New Delhi, even to the last moment when she was settled in her train compartment. Accompanied by her adopted son, Shahriyar, she continued her journey, making trips to other states of India. She bade me farewell as I stood on the pavement beside her train; the last thing I could see was her hand waving goodbye.

After finishing her mission in India she proceeded to Pakistan, where, in Karachi, she had meetings with representatives of religious and civil institutions of the country.

I followed her by prayers and received news of her tremendous victories on all fronts. Yet something in her life has remained a mystery to me. What passed in her dear heart during those last days, and what urged her to talk to the friends in Karachi of her sweetest reminiscences? Why did she share, on that particular visit, the memory of her four-day pilgrimage, about which she made no mention in India? Was it the ecstasy of her soul that prompted her to speak? Was she feeling within the very essence of herself that her meeting in Karachi would be her last chance to be with the people of this world? Could her soul no longer endure separation from her Lord? She sang her last song, then began her flight to Europe.

“Welcome, a thousand welcomes my martyr pilgrim,” were the first words of the Guardian when she entered his room. She sat enraptured with the joy of beholding the countenance of the Sign of God on this planet. Overcome with the emotion of the moment, she tried desperately to speak, but she
could only ask, "Why martyr, beloved Guardian?" The sweet consoling words of the Guardian brought a blissful peace to her soul: "Because you asked three times to come on pilgrimage, and three times I sent you to different fields of teaching and you accepted the mission with radiant acquiescence."

In her address to the friends in Karachi she emphasized the fact that human souls were like pieces of sponge. The presence of the Guardian was like an immense ocean. When the tiny pieces of sponge were placed in the ocean, they absorbed water according to their capacity and no more.

Almost twenty hours after her memorable meeting in Pakistan the Bahá’í world was shocked to hear that our precious Dorothy Baker had drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, between the coasts of Italy and France.

According to ancient mythology, the beautiful Europa was taken up into the air on the back of the Golden Fleece. There, amongst the immensely glorious clouds, shining from the rays of the sun, she watched the wonderful works of God and, in her ecstasy and joy, she could no more hold fast, and fell into the depths of the Mediterranean Sea. Her disappearance moved the hearts of the people of the ancient world so greatly that they called one whole continent after her: Europe.

Our wonderful Dorothy Baker also was flying over the Mediterranean on her return from the four glorious banquets that were spread so generously by the beloved Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith in the four corners of the globe. She had witnessed how lovingly the Bahá’ís invited the scattered members of the human race to unite and participate in the joyful ceremonies of the Kingdom of God, and, with a heart brimful with profound sadness, she lamented the stubbornness with which mankind deprived itself of all these manifestations of love and spiritual regeneration.

As a brilliant member of the Hands of the Cause of God, she did all in her power to awaken this heedless and corrupt generation and guide them to the path of God. Her sorrow was indeed great to perceive how, in their pride and ignorance, they disregarded the Divine Teachings and spent their God-given talents and energies in acts of brutal destruction and savagery. She was deeply aware of the impending disaster which, because of man’s heedlessness, was bound to overtake the world.

We cannot know for certain what was in the mind and the heart of this beloved servant as she winged her way towards what she no doubt believed would be further fields of service. But we see dear Dorothy in our mind’s eye, fresh from the fields of victory which she had so deservedly won, radiant with that inner spirit we had so recently witnessed on her tour of India. Perhaps just before the plane dropped so abruptly from the sky, she read once again that beautiful and soul-stirring supplication: "Lord give me to drink from the chalice of selflessness, with its robe clothe me and in its ocean immerse me." Thousands might chant this prayer each day, but only for her was the plea for eternal freedom and everlasting joy answered so dramatically.

For although her body entered the majestic blue sepulcher of the Mediterranean, her soul continued its upward flight through unlimited worlds of God, to shine forever from the horizon of service and self-sacrifice. Hereafter, all the dwellers of the seven seas and seven oceans shall receive and accept the message of the Day of God and "all the seas shall have pearls."

To understand the sweet reference of the beloved Guardian, we must recall the following: "When the beloved Master reached the most desperate moments of His eventful life, one of the enemies went to His house and very cruelly announced to Him, 'The decree is issued. You will be either exiled to the deserts of Africa, or hanged in Jerusalem or be drowned in the Mediterranean Sea.' The Master listened in perfect silence and proved so calm and resolute that His enemy who announced all such revengeful events became angry. The Master amazingly said, '... Mediterranean Sea! What an immense sepulcher!' This is the reason why the beloved Guardian said that now this immense sepulcher belongs to Dorothy Baker and all seas shall have pearls.
A profile of Juliet Thompson
—her times with the Master in New York

by O.Z. Whitehead
While I was visiting my mother and brother in New York in December, 1950, I went to a fireside at Juliet Thompson’s home at 48 West 10th Street. She had shared that apartment for many years with her friend Marguerite Smyth, and their devoted servant, Helen James.

Ali-Kuli Khan, his daughter Hamidan, and Marjorie Morten, arrived before Juliet did. I liked their faces, and I wanted to know them. After awhile Juliet walked quietly into the room, as if she did not expect anyone to notice her. She had wonderful warm eyes and a delightful smile. She sat down on a comfortable chair near the fireplace, and in a hoarse, attractive voice, she asked two or three people in turn to “speak to us a little.”

She drew them out easily. Ali-Kuli Khan gave a brilliant, fascinating analysis of a talk by the Master. Marjorie Morten told a touching, humorous, dramatic story of her first experience with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Someone asked Juliet to describe His visit to the Museum of Natural History. Without hesitation she began her story. “One Saturday afternoon in July, during 1912 when the Master was in New York, Mother and I decided to visit Him,” she said. “As we approached the house where He was staying we saw Him coming down the steps with some of the Persian friends. He greeted us warmly and said to Mother and me, ‘Come with us to the Museum of Natural History.’ Neither Mother nor I could understand why the Master had decided to visit this museum on such a hot July afternoon, nor would we have thought of asking Him. We just happily followed Him and the Persian friends across the streets to Central Park and into the park itself. With weary steps the Master walked ahead of the rest of us. Perspiration streamed down His back.

“When we came near to the museum I saw the many steps that led up to the entrance. I could not bear to see the Master climb them. I looked for another way of getting into the museum and I found a little door to the right... of the steps. Between us and the door was a grass plot with a sign in the middle that said ‘Keep Off.’ In spite of this I started to walk across the plot. Before I had reached the door it opened. An old guard appeared from inside. He had grey hair and rather Semitic features. I stood where I was, but he walked up to me, and said, not unkindly, ‘Don’t you see the sign?’ I said, ‘Yes, but couldn’t you make an exception just for this afternoon? We have with us a most distinguished guest who has come to this city with a message of world peace.’

“The old guard looked at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with much interest and said, ‘He reminds me of the prophets of Israel, of Isaiah and Daniel.’ I said to him, ‘His name is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Servant of God. We sometimes call Him the Master.’ The guard continued to look at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. ‘I feel sure that it would be all right for him to come through this door,’ he said. The Master came towards us. My mother and the Persian friends followed Him. The guard led us through the door up into the main hall of the museum.

“The Master looked up at the huge whale suspended from the ceiling. He said with much amusement, ‘Fifty Jonahs could have gotten into that whale.’ The Master stayed only for a short time in the museum. He walked before us down the steps through the side door and on to the grass. He sat down with His back against a tree. The old guard came up to me and said, ‘Do you think that your friend would mind if I went over and spoke to him?’ I am sure that He would be very glad if you
did,' I said. The old guard walked over and stood beside 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The Master said to him, 'Is it all right for me to sit here?' 'I am sure that it is,' said the guard. 'Don’t you want to sit down here with me?' said the Master. 'Oh no! That would never do,' said the guard. 'But after you have rested for a while would you like to come into the museum again and see some of the other exhibitions?' The Master said, 'No, I have seen enough for today. Often I get tired of this world and yearn to explore the other worlds of God. May I ask you this? If you could choose either to be in this world or in the next, which one would you take?' After a moment of thought the old guard answered, 'I think that I would stay in this world because I am sure of it.' 'Would you?' said the Master. 'I’d take the next world. When one goes there it will be like going to the second floor of a house. One will still know of this world and be in the next.' The Master said, 'No, I have seen enough for today. Often I get tired of this world and yearn to explore the other worlds of God. May I ask you this? If you could choose either to be in this world or in the next, which one would you take?'

I was moved by this story; I asked Juliet to tell us another. She smiled, and began again.

Some of the Bahá’ís, including myself, decided to give the Master a birthday party. A few of them baked a cake. We took several taxis to the Bronx. The Master rode in the first one. As soon as His taxi arrived the Master got out of it and walked into the park ahead of the rest of us.

A group of young boys gathered around Him and started to laugh. Two or three of them threw stones at Him. With natural concern many of the friends hurried towards the Master. He told us to stay away. The young boys came closer. They jeered at Him and pulled at His clothes, but the Master did not become cross. He smiled at them radiantly. The boys continued to behave rudely. The Master turned towards the friends. 'Bring me the cake,' he said. No one mentioned to Him that we had brought a cake. Some of us complained, 'But 'Abdu'l-Bahá the cake is for your birthday.' 'Bring me the cake,' said again. A friend uncovered a large sponge cake with white icing and gave it to the Master. As soon as the boys saw the cake they began to calm down. They looked at the cake hungrily. The Master took it into His hands and looked at it with pleasure. Now the boys stood quietly around Him. 'Bring me a knife,' said the Master. A friend brought Him a knife. He counted the number of boys standing around Him and cut the cake into as many pieces. Each boy eagerly took his piece and ate it with relish. When they had finished they ran happily away.

The following Friday I went to Juliet's house. She was under a doctor's care and could not come downstairs. The few of us who were there sat in the front room. Marguerite, whom I had heard the others call "Daisy", was very concerned about her friend. "Juliet overdoes," she said. "I have written to the Guardian about this. He wrote back that I should counsel her."

Juliet was born in Washington, D.C., in 1873. From childhood she demonstrated a talent for painting. Her parents sent her to the Corcoran Art School. When she was almost twelve her father died. He left his family little money, though; fortunately, Juliet was already able to sell her pastel portraits. By the time that she was sixteen, although she had not yet completed her training, she had achieved a fine reputation for her work.
Deep study with Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl and May Bolles helped to confirm Juliet in the Faith.

When I went to sleep that night I did not expect to wake up again. I had a dream and in it I saw a most wonderful-looking man. He said to me with complete assurance, ‘You will get well.’ By the next morning my fever had disappeared. In two or three days I was completely recovered. I did not know who this man was nor did I know how to find out. Several years after this experience I went to study art at the Sorbonne in Paris. While I was there I saw a photograph that I knew was of Him. Someone said, ‘He is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Servant of God.’ I became a believer in 1901.”

In 1901, Alice Barney, the mother of Laura Clifford Barney, invited Juliet to come to Paris with her mother and brother to study art there. In the French capital, Juliet became close to May Bolles, Lua Getsinger, Thomas Breakwell, Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney, and the great Persian teacher, Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl, whom the Master had sent to France. Deep study with Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl and May Bolles helped to confirm Juliet in the Faith.

When she finished her studies at the Sorbonne, Juliet, with her mother and brother, returned to New York. Service to the Cause of God became the major aim of her life. Possessed of rare spiritual magnetism, she taught the Cause with much love to all those who seemed to be seekers after truth. Many have already observed that the regular meetings at her studio brought great happiness to countless people who attended them.

From the time she recognized the station of Bahá’u’lláh, Juliet had longed to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and to meet the Master. In 1909 her opportunity came to make the pilgrimage with two close friends, Edward and Carrie Kinney.

From July, 1909, when Juliet first met the Master in ‘Akká, through December 5, 1912, the day of His departure from New York City and the last time she was to see Him, she kept a vivid and thrilling diary of her personal encounters with Him and the things she saw Him do.

During her visit in ‘Akká Juliet wrote:

Our Lord called Carrie, Alice, and me separately to His room and gave us the priceless privilege of seeing Him dictate Tablets. I sat on the divan, my eyes upon His white-robed figure—I could scarcely raise them to His Face—as He paced up and down that small room with His strong tread. Never had the room seemed so small—never had He appeared so mighty. A lion in a cage? Ah no! That room contain Him? Why!—as I felt that great dominant Force, that Energy of God, I knew that the earth itself could not contain Him. Not yet the universe. No! While the body, charged with a Power I have seen in no human being, restless with the Force that so animated it, strode up and down, up and down in that tiny room, pausing sometimes before the window below which the sea beat against the double seawall. I knew that the Spirit was free as the Essence Itself, brooding over regions far distant, looking deep into hearts as the uttermost ends of the earth, consoling their secret sorrows, answering the whispers of far-off minds. Often in that walk back and forth He would give me a long, grave glance. Once He smiled at me.

During a visit with Him a little over two years later on August 27, 1911, at the Hôtel de la Paix, at Lake Geneva, she wrote:

I said to myself as I looked on that celestial radiance, “If He never gave me so much as a word, if He never glanced my way, just to see that sweetness shining before me, I would follow Him on my knees, crawling behind Him in the dust forever!”

The Church of the Ascension, so called because of the beautiful and celebrated painting of the Ascension of Jesus Christ which hangs above the altar, is located at Fifth Avenue and 10th Street, just half a block from the house where Juliet and her mother lived. Before she became a Bahá’í, and for many years afterwards, Juliet frequently attended this church. Once Juliet said to me, “I was very much in love with the Rector, Dr. Percy Grant, and I wanted to marry him. The Master said that I could not marry him. So I married him.”

On Thursday, April 11, 1912, the Master arrived in New York. Upon Juliet’s urging, Dr. Grant asked Him to address his congregation on the following Sunday morning. According to notes in The Promulgation of Universal Peace, He started His talk by saying, “In his scriptural lesson this morning the reverend Doctor read a verse from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, ‘For now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face.’” With clarity and force the Master explained what Baha’u’lláh had come to do and His relationship to Jesus Christ.

Juliet later recounted to me, “At the end of the Master’s talk Percy asked the choir to sing, ‘Jesus Christ is risen today.’ I hurried into the vestry and waited impatiently for Percy to appear. The suspense became unbearable. ‘Juliet,’ he said when he entered, ‘I did it all for you.’ My heart sank; I was almost sure that I could never marry him. He did not come into the Faith. The Master said not to see him again. Although it was hard I obeyed the Master.”

The Bowery Mission in New York was a place of refuge for derelicts who often slept on park benches or doorsteps. Juliet’s mother had forbidden her to give the Message there. In February 1912, she deceived her mother for the first time in her life, and, accompanied by her close friend Sylvia Gannett, she went to the Mission and gave a talk.

After she had finished speaking Dr. Hallimon said, “We have heard from Miss Juliet Thompson that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá will be here in April. How many of you would like to invite Him to speak at the Mission?” The three hundred people in the room arose to their feet, to signal their desire for the visit.

Upon His acceptance of this invitation the Master gave Juliet a thousand franc note to change into American quarters and asked her to meet Him on the following evening at the Mission with these quarters in a bag. She and Edward Getsinger, both carrying a
Although the Master gave Juliet twice as many sittings as He had promised her, she actually finished His portrait in three.

Juliet was often with the Master. On November 15, 1912, less than a month before His departure from the country, He gave a most powerful and comprehensive talk in her house. He spoke upon "the distinctive characteristics of the Manifestation of Baha'ullah and proved that from every standpoint His Cause is distinguished from all others."  

'Abdu'l-Baha's departure from New York was very painful for Juliet. Her unhappiness intensified when He could not assure her that she would again attain His physical presence. On June 29, 1916, the Master wrote:

"Thy letter was received. It contained the most great glad tidings—that is, praise be to God, in New York the divine believers are united and agreed. For my heart there is no greater happiness than the unity and concord of the friends. The progress of the world of humanity and the illumination of the hearts and lives of the people are realized through unity and agreement and the promotion of the Word of God. Difference destroys the foundation of the divine edifice, causing coldness amongst the souls and the lethargy of all the active members. I hope that, day by day, this bounty may become more revealed in New York. Truly, I say, if the believers of God become united together with heart and soul, in a short while they will shine forth like unto the sun; they will obtain a joy and happiness the splendor of which will be cast upon all the regions of America."

Juliet said to me, "I was anxious to teach the Faith in prisons. The Master did not encourage me to do this. He said that I should work hard in my profession and give my free time to the Cause."

A Tablet from the Master, which Shoghi Effendi translated on April 4, 1919, included the following council: "O thou Juliet! Endeavor in thy profession thou mayest secure comfort for thy respected mother."

The Master advised Juliet to marry a certain believer. But she did not feel that they would be happy together, and after much prayer and consideration she pleaded with 'Abdu'l-Baha not to insist that she marry this man. Some time later He wrote to her saying she need not do so.

Like all deeply spiritual people Juliet found even the thought of war abhorrent. As the First World War dragged on in Europe and she realized that the United States was gradually being drawn into the conflict, she spoke out against it. Only the absence of the Master's permission kept her from appealing to President Wilson directly.

In a Tablet revealed after the war (in December, 1918) the Master advised her: "Do ye not refer regarding any matter in these days to the President of the Republic."  

Although Juliet often wrote to the Master and received from Him Tablets that clearly showed His deep love for her and His appreciation of her services, she was not able to visit Him again. In 1926, she made the pilgrimage and shared with her young companion, Mary Maxwell, the privilege of meeting the Guardian.

Juliet spoke to me with much sadness about the Covenant breakers in New York City. Ahmad Sohrab, for many years closely associated with the Master, as His secretary and the recipient of countless blessings from Him, tragically refused to accept the authority vested in the Guardian by the Master's Will and Testament. He succeeded in distorting the mind of Julie Chanler, a rich and socially prominent member of the New York community. With her assistance he established a group he called "The New History Society." This deplorable act caused great sorrow to the Guardian and to the Bahá'í world.

Juliet said to me, "Julie Chanler was
a very close friend of mine. Ahmad took her away from her husband and gained an hypnotic influence over her. He turned her against the Guardian and took her out of the Faith. The Guardian forbade all the believers except myself to see Julie and Ahmad. The Guardian asked me to try and help them understand their terrible mistake. I went to see Julie and Ahmad often for some time and tried to reason with them, but with no good effect. I could do nothing. The Guardian wrote me to stop seeing them. I called on them once more to say good-bye. As I was leaving their house I could hardly look at Ahmad Sohrab."

Once, during a pilgrimage, Juliet saw a small dome-shaped house, and was thrilled to learn from someone that Mary of Magdala was said to have lived where this house stood. The Master told Juliet the true story of this Mary. In the late nineteen-thirties Juliet wrote a most moving book about her entitled I. Mary Magdalen.

Juliet has vividly described the great suffering of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, Mary's appeal to Claudia, the wife of Pilate, to save Jesus from crucifixion, the walk with Him to Golgatha, the crucifixion itself, the meeting of Mary with her Lord in His heavenly body near the threshold of His tomb, her meeting with John directly afterwards, to whom the Lord had also just spoken, and their efforts, at first unsuccessful, to convince the other disciples that Jesus would be with them forever.

Not yet widely known, this inspiring book is bound to attract more and more readers as time passes. Written with a fine understanding of the eternal relationship between Mary Magdalen and her Lord, its beautiful description of her transformation from the gentle, appealing mistress of Novatus, to the Covenant, in which she composed a touching account of His life, and a clear and forceful explanation of His Station. She wrote, "When 'Abdu'l-Bahá ascended in 1921 to His 'original abode,' plunging the Bahá'í world into such grief as is only felt once in an age when disciples mourn their Lord, His last Will and Testament came as a complete surprise, an inestimable bounty to His confused and desolate believers. For in it He appointed His own grandson, the beloved Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and His successor and sole Interpreter of the sacred Books, so we found our Faith still safeguarded from schisms and divisions—still led through a Focal Point of 'unerring guidance.'" 12

During part of the Second World War Juliet and Daisy Smyth pioneered in Mexico. After the war was over they spent some time teaching in New Orleans, Louisiana.

On my return to New York City from Los Angeles in June 1953, a few weeks after the start of the Guardian's Ten Year Crusade, I went to see them. They lived in an apartment next to the graveyard of St. Mark's in the Bowery. This long and narrow apartment was situated on the first floor and had high ceilings and big windows. The two women were comfortably seated in Juliet's bedroom and they greeted me warmly. Juliet said, "We wrote to Shoghi Effendi and asked him if we should pioneer. He answered that we should as soon as I am well enough to go." In the meantime they planned to give firesides in their new apartment. To their great disappointment, Juliet's doctor advised them to wait until her health had improved before undertaking to entertain guests.

With rare compassion Juliet tried to help everyone she met, irrespective of their present character or past life. She gave much attention to the maladjusted and to moral failures. She did not judge people. When she heard that two persons who had apparently betrayed their country were about to be executed she said, "I feel sorry for them. I am praying for them." She said to a sincere believer who had a serious psychological problem which he was trying to overcome, "When I reach the kingdom I will speak to the Master about you." In obedience to the Master's words she had grown to love all people. In spite of this, she did not naively think that the believers always behaved well, and she also realized that they sometimes hurt each other.

One afternoon when I was sitting with Juliet, a young pianist, an agnostic, joined us and attacked the Faith violently. I became angry and could not understand why Juliet put up with him. She just smiled and looked at her friend with fondness unmixed with irritation. "Doesn't he disturb you?" I asked after he left. "He didn't affect me in the least," she answered.

Juliet believed emphatically that in the future all mankind would enter the
Baha'i community. She realized, however, that life had veiled most people and that much time would pass before they could tear away these veils.

When I left for my pilgrimage in January 1955 these two ladies still hoped to be able to pioneer. On my last night in Haifa I said to the Guardian, “Shoghi Effendi, Juliet Thompson and Daisy Smyth are most anxious to leave the City of the Covenant according to your instructions, but Juliet’s frail health keeps her in bed most of the time.” With perfect understanding he replied, “Tell them to get the best medical aid possible for Juliet and not to worry. Say that I thank her for her past services.” Soon after my return to New York I went to see them, and told Juliet of the Guardian’s statement.

On the night of December 2, 1956, during a meeting of the Spiritual Assembly of New York, a telephone call came from Daisy informing us that Juliet was dead. The Assembly said a prayer for her. The funeral was held the following Saturday. Some 150 Baha'is and a few non-Baha'is attended the service.

Borrah Kavelin, then chairman of the National Assembly of the United States, read the Guardian’s moving message, suffused with grief, and with joy for her achievements:

Deplore loss much-loved, greatly admired Juliet Thompson, outstanding, exemplary handmaid of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Over half-century record of manifold, meritorious services, embracing the concluding years of Heroic and opening decades of Formative Ages of Baha'i Dispensation, won her enviable position in glorious company of triumphant disciples of the Beloved Master in the 'Abha Kingdom. Advise hold memorial gathering in Mashriqu'l-Adhkâr to pay befitting tribute to the imperishable memory of one so wholly consecrated to the Faith of Baha'u'llah, and fired with such consuming devotion to the Centre of His Covenant. 13

Notes

2. Ibid., pp. 54-55.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

An illustration by Juliet Thompson of a scene in her book I, Mary Magdalen concerning the life of Mary Magdalen, the follower of Christ.

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In our world you can easily see the forest for the trees.

If you have imagined that World Order magazine is only for Bahá'ís in the United States, you have been mistaken. Our field of coverage is as broad as our name implies. Our writers are from every corner of the globe. Our purpose is to explore the relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings, to give our readers a truer sense of the options and alternatives open to a society in the thrall of great historical forces, as it searches for lasting solutions. In short, we try to give you a glimpse of the forest of human endeavor, rather than of the single trees of its isolated developments.

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World Order

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**COVER PHOTO**

*Mrs. Sophie Maka of Guinea at a Commission on the Status of Women meeting at the United Nations.*

**PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS**


**POSTAL INFORMATION**

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The Bahá’í Center at Puleia was erected with volunteer labor from the friends in that community.

Western Samoa

New institute built by local believers

Construction of a teaching institute at Lelata, Apia, in Western Samoa, was recently completed after many months of work by the growing Bahá’í community there. The building, set in a pleasant garden, is constructed of timber and concrete. The octagonal roof is tiled in mottled blue, and is surmounted by a cupola, on the interior portion of which is affixed the Greatest Name.

The friends of Western Samoa volunteered their labor to pour the concrete floor, to construct the latticed concrete walls and pillars supporting the eight laminated ribs of the roof, and to assemble the octagonal roof at the construction site. The prefabricated roof was purchased at

Interior view of the teaching institute. The warm timber with which the octagonal roof is lined is also used on the one solid interior wall.

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The Baha’i Teaching Institute in Lelata, Apia. The unusual design and pleasant setting of the building attracts many local visitors and seekers. Many people in Western Samoa are learning of the Faith because of the increased activities at the center.

A Baha’i meeting in progress in the newly constructed Baha’i Center at Puleia, Savai’i Western Samoa. The multi-purpose structure made of locally available materials is a focal point for many Baha’i activities.

The Baha’is of Lelata designed and manufactured the concrete blocks which form the lattice-work walls on three sides of their new institute.

a reasonable price in New Zealand. It was shipped to Western Samoa for assembling.

Although intended originally for use as a teaching institute, the building can be used for other Baha’i activities, such as conferences, annual conventions, receptions, and Feasts. Its design is suited to the sub-tropical climate of Samoa, offering shelter against both sun and rain, while at the same time being open on three sides to provide maximum ventilation. The solid fourth wall is of the same timber used in the ceiling construction. A small enclosed room has been attached to this wall to provide storage for chairs, mats, and teaching materials. The mats will allow the friends to sleep at the Institute during conferences or gatherings that last more than a single day.

The building was dedicated at the start of the 1973 National Convention in Apia, to mark the successful completion of the Nine Year Plan. Baha’is used the building even before construction work was completed, and it has since become an attraction for local visitors because of its unusual design and pleasant setting.

In Puleia, on the island of Savai’i, the Baha’is have found an even more economical solution to their growing need for space. Using only locally available materials—heavy timbers, poles, stones, and matting—and the volunteer labor of the friends, a Baha’i center was constructed, which has become the focal point for many of the activities in the area.
Ethel Rosenberg
the first English Bahá'í
by O. Z. Whitehead
E than Jenner Rosenberg, the first English woman to embrace the Bahá’í Cause in her native land, was born in Bath, England, on August 6, 1858. She came from a family of artists. Her grandfather, Thomas Eliot Rosenberg, was a well-known painter of miniature portraits and landscapes. Ethel, the eldest of the three children, spent her childhood in Bath. When she was a young girl, her mother counselled her, “Watch for a great teacher sent from God.”

Ethel became a deep student of the Old and New Testaments. She also gained a thorough knowledge of French. During her early teens, she moved to London to study art under Legros, a fine teacher at the Slade School. At the start of her career she painted both landscapes and full-sized portraits, but gradually she became accomplished in miniature portraiture. A large number of colorful personalities sat for Ethel. Her work has often been exhibited in the Royal Academy.

Early in 1898, her close friend, Maryam Thornburgh-Cropper, an American living in England, received from Mrs. Phoebe Hearst in California a letter which contained some impressive statements about the Bahá’í Faith. Shortly thereafter Mrs. Cropper was convinced that Bahá’u’lláh was the Promised One, and she accepted Mrs. Hearst’s invitation to join her party of fifteen on a pilgrimage to ‘Akka. Deeply affected by “the spirit and words of the Master,” and by her whole unforgettable experience in the Holy Land, Mrs. Cropper, upon her return to England, began, as she herself has described, “to spread the teaching, to mention the Name of Bahá’u’lláh, and acquaint the world with the Message.”

During the summer of 1899, Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper, who was the first believer in the British Isles, helped lead Ethel Rosenberg into the Cause. This gifted woman, in company with her American friend, was soon teaching the Faith to many people in London. At the end of January 1901, she enjoyed the priceless experience of visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the Holy Land. Not yet confined to the city limits of ‘Akka, He was then living in Haifa.

In Miss Rosenberg’s valuable notes of this pilgrimage are recorded moving stories recounted by the Master and members of His family about their life with Bahá’u’lláh in the Most Great Prison; explanations by the Master of many difficult passages in the Gospels; and advice that He offered the Bahá’í community in general. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá once said to her, “It is said of Mary Magdalen that out of her went seven devils. This means seven evil qualities which Jesus cast out of her by teaching her the Truth. She was not such a bad woman as some suppose before her conversion, but the wonder is that such a saint and miracle of purity and goodness could have been created by the New Birth. She was greater than all the disciples of Jesus because she alone stood firm after His death and never wavered.”

She spent some time studying Persian, and was able to assist in some early translations of the Holy Writings.

On another occasion He said to her, “In these early days of the Faith it is of the first importance that all the believers should have the right qualities and show forth the right attributes. One unconquered fault could cast one down in a single moment from the highest station to the lowest. We must strive to change our bad qualities into good ones, quick temper must be changed into calmness, pride into humility, falsehood into truth, deceit into frankness, laziness into activity . . . .”

Miss Rosenberg left Haifa in April 20, 1901, the Governor of ‘Akka informed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that He and His brothers, by the decree of Sultan ‘Abdu’l-Hamid, would now be strictly confined within the city limits. After returning to London, Miss Rosenberg read often from her pilgrimage notes at Bahá’í meetings. She gave excellent public talks before large audiences. She spent some time studying Persian, and was able to assist in some early translations of the Holy Writings.

Late in 1901, at the instruction of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the greatly revered Mirzá Abu’l Fadl visited the United States to help strengthen the newly established community there, and to protect it from those who had broken the Covenant. Ethel Rosenberg accompanied him to America to help in the teaching.

In April 1904, Miss Rosenberg made a second pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Laura Clifford Barney, a brilliant young American Bahá’í living in Paris, was her companion on the journey. Still confined to the city of ‘Akka, the Master and His family were living in the Prison House. For eight months Miss Rosenberg lived there as His guest. She has written of this experience, “To sit at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s table, in His simple, home, with Christians, Muslims, Jews, and those of other faiths, all of them breathing forth the spirit of living brotherhood is a privilege not readily forgotten.”

During her visit, enemies of the Cause became particularly vicious in their attacks against ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and caused Him and His loyal followers enormous problems and indescribable grief. Deeply distressed by these developments, Miss Rosenberg asked the Master why He, a perfect man, had to suffer so. His answer to her: “How could they [God’s teachers] teach and guide others in the way if they did not undergo every species of suffering to which other human beings are subjected?”

The Master often instructed her in the Holy Writings.

In this passage He explained the nature of prayerful intercession:

By the mercy of God, not through His justice, the condition of those who have died in sin and unbelief can be changed. As we have the power to pray for those souls here, so we shall have the same power in the Kingdom. The power of this prayer of intercession is a special teaching of this religion.

The things she learned directly from the Master, of course, gave her an invaluable source of accurate knowledge and information. She made a second and then a third teaching trip to the United States of America, and she served the Cause for long periods in France. During 1907, in Paris, Miss Rosenberg and the distinguished first
French believer, Hippolyte Dreyfus, explained in detail the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh to the saintly Sara Louisa, Lady Blomfield, and her daughter, Mary.

In January 1909, Ethel Rosenberg made still another pilgrimage to the Holy Land, just a short time after the Master was freed from confinement in 'Akká as a consequence of the revolt of the young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress. In July of the previous year the committee had instructed Sultán 'Abdu'l Hamid to restore the suspended constitution and to free all political and religious prisoners within twenty-four hours. Despite these instructions, the hostile 'Akká jailors refused to free the Master, until they were again ordered to do so by the authorities in Constantinople. When Ethel Rosenberg visited the Master in 1909 he had not yet left 'Akká to reside in Haifa. "What can the friends do to increase their numbers and to make their work more effective?" she asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá. His answer she later published in Star of the West:

The members of the little groups should love each other and be devoted friends. The more they loved each other, the more the meetings would attract and draw others, and the more they loved, the more their influence would be felt. . . . I say also in English, that you may understand how much I mean it that love is the foundation of everything.

During this visit Miss Rosenberg painted a fine miniature portrait of the Greatest Holy Leaf. . .

During this visit Miss Rosenberg that it was important for her to work on her painting so that she would have sufficient means of support.

In 1910, when there was still a scarcity of literature about the Faith in English, Miss Rosenberg wrote a brilliant, instructive essay, entitled, "A Brief Account of the Bahá'í Movement." Published during the following year for the Bahá'í Society of London by two commercial publishers, it was sold for one penny a copy. This stimulating work is composed of a brief, but thorough history of the Cause, from its birth until the early twentieth century. It provides a convincing explanation of the Stations of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, gives pertinent comments about the Holy Writings, with quotations to demonstrate the logic of the text, and offers forceful statements about the aims of the Cause. She has defined the Bahá'í belief that Revelation is progressive in these words:

Just as the rising of the sun chases away darkness and floods the earth with light, so does the rising of the heavenly sun of the Prophet above the horizon of humanity flood the world with light. As long as His teachings in their purity shine upon humankind, the world is illuminated; but as through the lapse of time the teachings become forgotten, misunderstood, and obscured, the night once more returns, until at its darkest period we may again expect the coming of the dawn, and once more the sun of truth arises in a special manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

In a concluding passage she says: Bahá'ís declare that in this Revelation all the expectations of various Faiths are fulfilled and that the way is open to a great mutual recognition that we are, indeed, all children of the Supreme, and that the world is entering upon an inheritance that has been foretold by the Prophets since the beginning of time. A world consciousness is arising that will cause all nations to think and act like one man.

Shortly after her essay was published the Master arrived in England (September 4, 1911) to make His first teaching tour of a Western country. Except for three days which He spent in Bristol, 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed at Lady Blomfield's home at 97 Cadogan Gardens in London for nearly four weeks. On the day of His arrival, Miss Rosenberg was among the believers, waiting to give Him a joyful welcome. Lady Blomfield has written:

It was especially touching to see Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper and Miss Ethel Rosenberg, who had visited Him in the prison fortress of 'Akká, and who had been the first to bring the Message to London, coming day after day, as though transported with gratitude that He was now free to give His Message to those who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness, . . .

Not content just to attend these daily meetings and to delight in the presence of the Master for as long as possible, Miss Rosenberg arranged for Him to speak at other places, as did Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper, Miss Elizabeth Herrick, and Miss Marion Jack. On September 8, 1911, the Master gave an address at Miss Rosenberg's home:

Praise be to God, that such a meeting of purity and steadfastness is being held in London. The hearts of those present are pure, and are turned towards the Kingdom of God. I hope that all that is contained and established in the Holy Books of God, may be realized in you. The messengers of God are the principal and the first teachers. Whenever this world becomes dark, and divided in its opinions and indifferent, God will send one of His Holy Messengers.

On October 3, 'Abdu'l-Bahá left

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London to visit France, Egypt, and the United States. He did not return to London until December 16, 1912. Miss Rosenberg was again among the large group of believers who came to meet Him at the railroad station. Until He left for Paris on January 21 of the following year, she did all that she could to serve Him.

Owing to these two visits of the Master to England, the Bahá'ís in London became more closely united than ever before. According to His instructions they intensified their efforts to teach the Cause. During the First World War, which started in August 1914, and continued for more than four years, exacting wartime duties often kept the friends from teaching and from attending meetings. Throughout this conflict, however, despite her frail health, serious financial difficulties, and the lack of public interest in the Faith, Miss Rosenberg continued her Bahá'í classes without intermission.

In January 1915, as secretary of the Bahá'í Society of London, Miss Rosenberg wrote a touching letter to the editor of Star of the West, informing of the tragic passing on December 31 of Daniel Jenkyn, a young English believer much loved by the Master. She referred to his association with the Christian Commonwealth Fellowship, which gave him excellent opportunities to speak of the Cause to many seekers of truth, his recent teaching trip to Holland and the vast correspondence he had undertaken in order to help spread the glad tidings.

In the fascinating diary which Dr. John E. Esslemont kept of his first visit to Haifa in November 1919, he recorded that on the day of his departure the Master spoke to him with much concern about Miss Rosenberg's difficult financial situation, her delicate health, and her brother's illness. The Master gave Dr. Esslemont fifty pounds in Turkish gold to take to her and said that the friends must try to help and take care of her. Some minutes after one o'clock on the morning of November 28, 1921, the Master ascended to the Abhá Kingdom. Deeply thankful to be near Him at that time, Miss Rosenberg later wrote a beautiful letter to the beloved friends of England in which she vividly described that heartbreaking event. In the letter she related this unforgettable incident:

About ten days before the end, He left His little bedroom in the garden and came into the house. He told His family that He had dreamed in the night that Bahá'u'lláh had come to Him and had said, 'Destroy this room immediately,' and therefore He did not like to sleep outside any more, but would come into the house. The family were thankful, as they felt He would be nearer to them if He needed any service during the night. They now understand the symbolism of the saying—the "room" being the Beloved One's body.

In conclusion she wrote, "I am sure we all feel that now is the time for us all to be united with the utmost love and firmness—to increase our activities tenfold in teaching and spreading the goodness of the Kingdom." 15

When Shoghi Effendi, the newly appointed Guardian, called together in March 1922 a small group of well-known and devoted Bahá'ís from America, England, France, Germany and Persia, to consult with him on vital matters concerning the development of the Cause, he asked Miss Rosenberg to join this group. Within a month she returned to England. Shortly afterwards, in an effort to obey the Guardian's instructions, the communities of London, Manchester, and Bournemouth, elected nine from among their membership to serve on the Bahá'í Spiritual Assembly for England. A year later the first National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles was established. Ethel Rosenberg was a member of both institutions. She also served as secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of London.

Miss Rosenberg died in London, on November 17, 1930, at the age of seventy-two. Mrs. Annie B. Romer, an American who had worked for the Cause in the British Isles for many years, and at that time secretary of the London Assembly, wrote, "The end was peaceful for this devoted servant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whom He knew and loved so well and to whose devotion and untiring labors He often paid priceless tribute by voice and pen." As soon as Shoghi Effendi had been in-
formed of her passing, he sent by cable this message to the friends in London: “Deeply grieved passing Rosenberg, England's outstanding pioneer worker. Memory of her glorious service will never die. 'Abdu'l-Baha's family join in expressing heartfelt condolences to her brothers and relatives. Urge friends hold befitting memorial service.”17

A few days later the Bahá'í Community of the British Isles held such a service for its "long time friend and counsellor," at the Bahá'í Center at Walmar House, Upper Regent Street, London.

Notes
2. From the Notes of Ethel Jenner Rosenberg taken in 'Akká and Haifa February and March, 1901, in Bahá'í Archives of the United Kingdom, 27 Rutland Gate, London, p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 29.
10. Ibid., p. 16.
15. Ibid., p. 301.
17. Ibid., p. 263.
Delegates to the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the first day of deliberations, January 14, 1974. The 32-member Commission discussed measures and programs for the advancement of women and their integration into international development.

The Status of Women

A progress report on United Nations deliberations

by the Bahá'í International Community
The Commission on the Status of Women, an agency of the United Nations, recently held its 25th session at UN Headquarters in New York. The Bahá’í International Community was represented at this gathering, which began on January 14 and continued until February 1. Several statements on the status of women drafted by the Bahá’ís were circulated and received generally favorable comment from the delegates. A principal item on the agenda for discussion was International Women’s Year, set for 1975, which Bahá’í communities around the world will help to commemorate.

Since 1952, the year of its formation, the Commission on the Status of Women has recommended many resolutions and conventions to the Economic and Social Council, to which it is affiliated. Many have been adopted. Its recent outstanding achievement was the preparation of a Declaration for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women for ratification by the General Assembly. The declaration was approved by that body in 1967. Although this document is an expression of the current goals and aspirations of the world community, it is not legally binding on governments, and there are frequent gaps between these expressed aims and actual practice in many areas of the world.

At this most recent meeting of the Commission Mrs. Eugenia Stevensen, Ambassador of Liberia to the Federal Republic of Germany, and temporary chairman of the gathering, opened the proceedings by reminding the delegates that while the countries of the world had accorded women political rights, women were confronted with problems of unequal opportunities and invisible barriers to participation in the political, economic, social, and cultural developments of their countries.

Leticia Ramod Shahaini, the delegate from the Philippines elected permanent chairman of the 25th session, called for the exercise of a spirit of understanding and tolerance by the delegates. The improvement of the status of women, she said, "provided a broad area for cooperation in a way unmatched by any other issue before the United Nations."

Setting the tone for the strenuous work schedule which was to follow, Mrs. Helvi Sipila, Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, the highest ranking woman in the United Nations Secretariat, spoke of the tasks still facing the world community. There is a universal trend not to consider women’s contributions in economic life, whether as mothers and wives, or as decision-making consumers, she said. In both developed and developing countries women have a lower level of vocational training than men, belonging, for the most part, to the lowest income groups and holding positions of lowest rank. Very few women participate in determining policy in any country’s administrative or economic life, Mrs. Sipila noted. In most countries maternity and child health services are very poor. Women often suffer cruelties to which men are not subjected, especially in time of war and in emergency situations. She also mentioned the general selfish attitude, often nourished by the media, supporting the existence of stereotyped sex roles, and undermining the dignity of women as human beings.

What follows is an account by the Bahá’í International Community of the activities of the 25th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.
The principle of equality does not necessarily imply that men and women must exercise the same functions.

The French delegate, Miss Jeanne Chaton, center, complimented the Bahá'í delegates on the constructive views of their Faith. The Bahá'ís were invited to a reception at the Mission of Finland, by Finnish delegate Mrs. Helvi Saarinen, right.

Some of the statements circulated by the Bahá'ís at the session are also reproduced.

The agenda of the Commission at this session reflected the direction of action now being undertaken by the governments through the United Nations. While there has been little interest on the part of governments in improving the status of women, the interrelationship of all human problems is being more and more recognized. The problems of development, for instance, cannot be solved without taking into account the status of women. Action called for by various branches of the United Nations Secretariat does not get the necessary response from governments because of national interests and priorities. The years ahead—1974, adopted by the General Assembly as “World Population Year,” and 1975, designated “International Women's Year”—as well as action on the problems of economic, social and cultural development, were mentioned in this session of the Commission as important opportunities for the advancement of women.

The Bahá'í International Community, as a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, was invited to offer suggestions for International Women's Year, as well as to report on how widely it had publicized and implemented the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. United Nations documents E/CN.6/NGO/251 and E/CN.6/NGO/252 contain our response. Though the information was sent in the form of letters to Mrs. Bruce, Deputy Director, Center for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, these communications were unexpectedly put out by the Secretariat as official statements of the Bahá'í International Community. Document E/CN.6/NGO/247, the intended official statement, was also circulated and received favorable comment from delegates and NGO representatives. It is interesting to note in a footnote to document E/CN.6/NGO/252, the Preliminary Report on the Status of Women in the Bahá'í World Community, submitted by the Bahá'í International Community, was made available to the Commission's delegates.

The Commission passed a number of resolutions, especially on the subject of the integration of women in development. Rural women in developing countries, recognized as the most neglected group in human society, were the subject of much discussion, and the Commission passed several resolutions intended to assist them. This was also the aim in strengthening the cooperative effort of UN agencies with intergovernmental organizations such as the Inter-American Commission of Women, the Arab Women's Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa.

Though the Commission's delegates were interested in a stronger commitment of governments and peoples to raise the status of women, states have not been able to agree on a Convention which, when ratified by them, would become law. It was agreed that governments are to be asked their views on a proposal for a Convention formulated by a working group of the Commission at this session. The Commission will then act upon this matter at its 26th session, in 1976.

The question of family planning was discussed in relationship to a number of items on the agenda; and the official UN position is that parents should have the right to decide the number and spacing of their children. Education of women to insure this right was a concern of the Commission. There are wide differences in the population policies of governments, some nations feeling the need for increased population along with greater economic and social development, others concerned with over-population. As there are also wide differences between countries regarding the general advancement of women, the diversity of opinions voiced served to bring out the great
need for recognition of the organic oneness of humanity and for cooperative effort between nations and peoples. Exclusive national interests are still a great deterrent to progress in the area of the status of women, as in all fields of concern at the United Nations.

International Women's Year (1975), with its theme of “Equality, Development, and Peace,” was discussed fully. The stated aims of that Year are: to promote equality of men and women; to ensure that full integration of women in the total development effort, especially by emphasizing women’s responsibility and important role in economic, social and cultural development at the national, regional and international levels (this will be emphasized during the Second United Nations Development Decade); and to recognize the importance of women’s increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and cooperation among States and to the strengthening of world peace.”

The Bahá'í International Community representatives to the Commission, Victor and Betty de Araujo, have also been participating for some time in the work of a committee of non-governmental organizations interested in the status of women. Two statements formulated by that committee and presented to the Commission on the Status of Women—one, UN Document E/CN.6/NGO/249, on “Obstacles to the Attainment of Equality of Men and Women,” and the other, E/CN.6/NGO/248, on a “Proposed Program for International Women’s Year,” were signed by the Bahá'í International Community. As plans go forward for International Women’s Year the Bahá'ís will continue to be active in this committee, since it affords an opportunity not only to voice Bahá'í views, but also to help bring unity of understanding and cooperation among NGO's at the United Nations.

It would seem that International Women’s Year will afford Bahá'ís in all parts of the world a special opportunity to teach the Faith through increasing awareness of our unique contribution to the equality of men and women, as well as by demonstrating our interest in the other two themes of the year.

At the Commission session the United States delegate proposed that an international conference be held during International Women’s Year, and the government of Colombia has offered to host the conference in Bogota. Since the UN General Assembly has allocated quite limited funds for International Women’s Year—80 percent less, for instance, than those provided for World Population Year—the Commission re-

**Women by nature are more inclined to peace.**

*Delegates at the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations.*
United Nations Economic And Social Council Commission On The Status Of Women Twenty-fifth session Item 10 of the provisional agenda

Work Program And Medium-Term Plan

Statement submitted by the Bahá’í International Community (in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II)

1. The Bahá’í International Community, comprising Bahá’í communities in 335 countries and territories, in which its members—men and women representing over 1,600 tribes and ethnic groups—express a world-wide unity in diversity, appreciates this opportunity to make a few observations bearing on the place of education in the successful integration of women in development.

2. In the view of the Bahá’í International Community, particular emphasis should be placed on the education of women and the importance of their unique contribution to the advancement of civilization. While universal compulsory education applies to both sexes, because of woman’s role as mother and first educator of the child, the education of women is more important than that of men, and if parents are unable to fulfill their duty to educate both boy and girl in a family, the girl should be given preference. This is not to imply that women are to be considered only in relationship to the rearing of children and the duties of the household; for it is important that women develop all latent capacities, obtaining by way of their constructive pursuits the recognition of complete equality.

3. Furthermore, while some of the qualities and functions of men and women differ, neither sex is inherently superior or inferior, nor should this affect the expectation of equal rights. In a world in which the forceful and aggressive qualities by which men have dominated over women are becoming neither necessary for survival nor desirable for the solution of human problems, mental alertness, intuition and the spiritual qualities of love and service in which the woman is strong are gaining in importance. The new age will surely be one in which the so-called masculine and feminine elements of civilization will be more properly balanced. As women receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women is universally recognized, the natural inclination of women to peace and the fact that they find it more difficult to sacrifice their children and to sanction war will prove of great benefit to the world.

4. It is our belief and experience that it is possible to maintain the constructive cultural differences and the unique contribution which each person as well as each local and national group can make to the development and advancement of mankind, while at the same time freeing men and women from their divisive prejudices. To achieve this, it is necessary, however, to provide all humanity with an education that will awaken both men and women to the particular requirement of our age—the unity of mankind. In the view of the Bahá’í International Community, there must be education towards a consciousness of the organic unity of all life, towards the development of qualities and virtues which are the true and distinguishing characteristic of the human race, and towards a dedication to the solving of human problems in a spirit of service.

5. While education is recognized as significant to motivation and change in attitudes, if women—and indeed men also—are to make a meaningful contribution to society, it should be an education that goes beyond the training of human beings intellectually or for the acquisition of skills. The experience of the Bahá’í International Community for over a century is that a deeper understanding of the purpose and value of human life resting on a spiritual foundation which ensures the full growth of qualities such as trustworthiness, honesty and justice is an important aspect of such an education. A sense of worth, assurance and courage, as well as knowledge of direction, are dependent upon the attainment of spiritual as well as material goals. Progress, often considered in terms of man’s physical well-being, and development expressed as use of human resources to provide a higher standard of living, should have other dimensions if human beings are to attain full realization of their potentialities and the willingness to use their talents in helping others attain happiness.

United Nations Economic and Social Council Commission On The Status Of Women Twenty-fifth session Item 3 of the provisional agenda

International Women’s Year

Statement submitted by the Bahá’í International Community (in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II)

The Secretary-General has received the following statement which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

Suggestions And Proposals For International Women’s Year

The Bahá’í International Community, bearing in mind the purpose for which International Women’s Year has been dedicated (General Assembly resolution 3010 (XXVII)), and the report of the Secretary-General on International Women’s Year (E/CN.6/576), would like to offer several observations and proposals which we feel may be a contribution to the draft program of action for that Year to be presented to the Commission on the Status of Women at its twenty-fifth session in 1974. These suggestions are made in view of the particular interest of the Bahá’í International Community in the principle of the equality of men and women, as well as the role of women in relationship to development and the advancement of peace in the world, which the Bahá’í teachings emphasize, and which Bahá’í communities around the world are already aware of and committed to.

In a statement concerning the advancement of women, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Program said that “the key to development in the coming decade is the universal acceptance of the need to progress”. In making proposals for International Women’s Year we feel that certain points might be considered which would help to define “progress” to give a clearer sense of direction, as well as to determine the most effective and constructive form of action. Progress is often considered only in terms of man’s physical well-being, his material needs, development being directed to the accomplishment of a higher standard of living. While the Bahá’í International Community feels that such development is essential to the well-being and happiness of human beings, we would suggest that there are other dimensions of progress which must be included if human beings are to attain full
realization of their potentialities. A deeper understanding of
the value of human life and of its quality, resting on a spiritual
foundation which will lead ultimately to the attainment of
co-operation between nations for the advancement of all man-
kind; the loving assistance which human beings, men and
women, must give to each other; the qualities of trustworthi-
ness, honesty and justice which must be developed if humanity
is to advance—are all important aspects of education which
must be included. Most people would agree that education is
the key to the motivation and the change in attitudes necessary
if the generality of women are to make a meaningful contribu-
tion to society; but it should be an education that goes beyond
the training of human beings intellectually or the acquisition
of skills. A sense of worth, assurance and courage are dependent
upon the realization of moral and spiritual character—a fact
that is becoming increasingly apparent in both the rich and the
poor countries of the world.

The Bahá’í International Community would like to offer the
following suggestions which the Branch for the Promotion of
the Equality of Men and Women may wish to consider incor-
porating in some manner in the programs for International
Women’s Year.

1. To encourage the independent search for truth, free of
influence of family, community or nation. This is not to say
that women are to be taught a truth; but rather that the spirit of
free, impartial and independent investigation should lead in a
constructive way to the breaking of inhibiting and outdated
traditional patterns and lead ultimately to unity of understand-
ing and of action. The spirit of independent thought must be
fostered if women are to gain knowledge, conviction and cour-
age to take initiative in abandoning traditional ways which
impede not only their own advancement but the advancement
of men as well.

2. To place emphasis on the responsibility of women to
acquire education, to become proficient in the arts and sci-
ences, proving by their accomplishments that their abilities
and powers have merely been latent. The devotion of women
to the industrial and agricultural sciences, for example, in a
spirit of service to the greatest needs of mankind at the present
time, will demonstrate their capability and ensure the recogni-
tion of equality in the social and economic areas of life. The
promotion of the rights of women by means of demonstration
or by pressure groups may result in divisiveness; while con-
structive contributions will be recognized and appreciated. It is
mentioned in the Bahá’í writings that “when the actions of
women show their power there will be no need to proclaim it
by words,” and “that when men recognize the equality of
women “there will be no need for them to struggle for their
rights.”

3. To stress that the principle of equality in rights does not
necessarily imply that men and women should, or must, exercise
the same functions. There are differences between men and
women in qualities and powers: men's alertness, intuition and
the spiritual qualities of love and service are qualities in which
women are strong. There is need for greater emphasis on these qualities
and a better balance between spiritual and material powers if
humanity is to progress. However, “the fact that there is not
equality in functions between the sexes should not infer that either
sex is inherently superior or inferior to the other, or that they are
unequal in their rights.” (From the Bahá’í writings.)

4. To place greater emphasis on the importance of the contribu-
tion of women as mothers and as educators of children. The Bahá’í
writings make clear that “the education of women is more neces-
sary and important than that of man, for the woman is the trainer
of the child from infancy. If she be defective and imperfect herself,
the child will necessarily be deficient; therefore imperfection of
woman implies a condition of imperfection in all mankind, for it is
the mother who rears, nurtures and guides the growth of the
child.” It is for this reason that Bahá’í parents are urged to give
preference to the education of girls if both boys and girls in the
family cannot be given equal opportunity for education.

It is not the Bahá’í view, however, that women are to be
considered important only in relationship to the rearing of children
and attending to the duties of the household. The importance
placed on the education of women in the Bahá’í Faith is intended
to bring about the equality of men and women.

5. To place emphasis on the assistance which women can give
to humanity as peace-makers. Because women by nature are more
inclined to peace, and find it more difficult than men to sanction
war, as they participate in human affairs, gaining the right to vote
and exercise this right, their voice will naturally influence humanity
in peaceful ways. The Bahá’í writings make clear that “when all
mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the
equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war
will be utterly destroyed. Equality between men and women is
conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women
will never be willing to sanction it.”

6. To educate every person towards the realization of the or-
ganic oneness of mankind. Since it is a Bahá’í conviction that the
good of any part is dependent upon the good of the whole, as long
as women are held in an inferior position and do not attain equality
with men, men too will be unable to “achieve the greatness which
might be theirs.” This principle operates in all areas, whether in
relationship to race, class or national differences in the world. As
is true of the family—in which all the rights and prerogatives
of each and every member must be preserved, while at the same
time sustaining the unity of the family—the well-being of humanity
is dependent on an equitable and just relationship between nations
and the orientation of national Governments towards the whole of
mankind.

The Secretary-General has received the following statement
which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of
Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

Since this is the first occasion we have had to report on
publicity given to the Declaration on the Elimination of Dis-
crimination Against Women, we would like to mention that as
far back as 1968 we were making available to our affiliates
information on that United Nations instrument, as well as
mailing supplies for United Nations Day or Human Rights
Day meetings. In a circular letter of 12 February 1968, sent to
Bahá’í National Spiritual Assemblies, offering suggestions for
kinds of activities their communities might undertake during
the International Year for Human Rights, we suggested spon-

United Nations Economic and Social Council
Commission On The Status Of Women
Twenty-fifth session
Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

International Instruments And National Standards
Relating To The Status Of Women

Implementation Of The Declaration On The Elimination Of
Discrimination Against Women And Related Instruments

Statement submitted by the Bahá’í International Community
(in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council
(category II))

June, 1974/BAHÁ’Í NEWS 13
The education of women is more important than that of men.

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Dr. Victor de Araujo, the United Nations Representative of the Bahá’í International Community outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.

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and other participants.

The Bahá’í representatives covered most of the meetings during the three-week span of the Commission’s session and had excellent opportunities to meet informally with the delegates and their alternates from the thirty-two countries represented. They were officially invited and attended receptions at the Philippine Consulate General (given by Ambassador Shahani, Chairman of the Commission), at the United States Mission (given by Mrs. Patricia Hutar, United States delegate, and Ambassador Barbara White), and at the Mission of Finland (given by Mrs. Helvi Saarinen, Finnish delegate, and Ambassador Aarno Karhilo, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations and the President of the Economic and Social Council for 1974). They also attended a luncheon given by Mrs. Ruda Mohammed (Rapporteur of the Commission and Counsellor of the Mission of Nigeria) at her home. Mrs. de Araujo attended a luncheon given for delegates and a few representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations by Women United for the United Nations, a non-governmental organization. At all these social functions they were able to establish a very warm relationship and make many friends among the delegates.

They had wonderful opportunities to speak about the Faith, as many welcomed further information about the Bahá’í teachings—their questions prompted by the statements which had been officially distributed, and the mailing made by the Bahá’í International Community office. Mrs. Shahani thanked the Bahá’í representatives for the “valuable contribution” which they had made to the work of the Commission. The delegate from France, Miss Jeanne Chaston, also complimented them on the constructive views of the Bahá’í Faith and spoke of the uniqueness of the Bahá’í contribution. (She had met the Hand of the Cause Dr. Ugo Giachery, Mr. Albert Lincoln, and Miss Guilda Navidi at the 1971 UN seminar on racial discrimination in Nice). The alternate representative from Finland, Miss. Hilkka Pietala, remarked very favorably on the activity of Bahá’ís on behalf of the UN in her country. Dr. Janet Cockcroft, the delegate from the United Kingdom, showed great interest in a conversation with Mrs. de Araujo, asking many questions on the Faith.

A mailing of the Bahá’í statement (UN Document E/CN.6/NG0I247), as well as a reprint of the article, “Women: Attaining Their Birthright,” by Constance Conrader, which appeared in the summer, 1972 issue of World Order magazine, was sent to every delegate, alternate and adviser at the beginning of the Commission session. Many remarked on having received the material, thanking the Bahá’í representatives or mentioning that they had read or intended to read the Conrader article at a later time.

As long as women are unequal, men will not attain the greatness which might be theirs.
The value of prayer

by John Robarts
Talk given by the Hand of the Cause 
John Robarts on the subject “Renewal of Faith Through Prayer” at 
the House of Worship in Wilmette, 
March 20, 1974.

From my earliest days in the Faith* it 
has seemed that we have had too few 
speakers. Anybody who was willing to 
give a talk would receive many invita-
tions. In that long-ago period when 
I was first a believer, I went to many 
places in Canada and the United States 
to speak. I must tell you about one place 
because it often comes to my mind 
when I consider the subject of prayer. It 
was on April 17. I had been invited to 
address a community where there were 
eight believers and they needed a ninth 
to form their Local Spiritual Assembly 
a few days hence. My plane was de-
layed and I arrived late while prayers 
were being said. I was ushered to a seat 
beside the chairman. When the prayers 
were finished, he whispered to me 
(there were about 45 people in the 
room), “John, do you see that tall man 
in the third row, center? He is the only 
non-Baha’i in the room. We need him 
for our Assembly on Thursday!”

I stood up and looked at my oppo-

tent. He was a nice person. I noticed he 
had very large eyes. I began to speak 
but soon felt that I wasn’t doing very 
well. I didn’t seem to be inspired and 
suddenly I realized that my friend’s 
eyes were opening and closing very 
slowly, and then to my horror, they 
closed and clicked shut. I had lost my 
man. He was sound asleep! In my de-
spair I turned to Bahá’u’lláh and said, 
“Dear Bahá’u’lláh, please come to my 
aid. We need that man for our Assem-
bly on Thursday.” I went on with my 
talk and what seemed like a bright idea 
struck me, which I felt must have been 
the answer to my cry for help. In quite a 
loud voice, I said, “Bahá’u’lláh said, 
“The people are wrapped in a strange 

sleep!”” And I banged the table with 
my fist. The man woke up as though he 
had been shot and he stayed awake. He 
became a Bahá’í that evening, and 
helped to form the Assembly on Thurs-
day!

I think this is a good illustration of 
renewal of faith through prayer. It cer-
tainly renewed my faith when I saw 
those beautiful eyes open again and it 
renewed his when he really turned his 
heart to Bahá’u’lláh. We were all very 
happy.

That incident reminds me that when 
we call for help from God, we know 
that it will come. Never has man more 
desperately needed faith than he does 
now. I hope to show there is no way to 
find it other than through fervent prayer 
and service to His Cause.

There is one prayer many Bahá’ís say 
every day. Throughout the world 
Bahá’ís are saying it constantly and the 
planet is being bathed in its beauty. It 
is, 

“I bear witness, O my God, that 
Thou has 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 
Thy, the Help in Peril, the Self-
Subsisting.”

I should like to comment on the first 
of the three sentences of that prayer, “I 
bear witness, O my God, that Thou has 
created me to know Thee and to wor-
ship Thee.” This means that our pur-
pose in life, the one purpose for which 
we were created, is to know God, to 
love Him, to worship Him, to serve 
Him, to obey Him and to come close to 
Him. This is our one purpose in having 
been born. And yet it is a purpose 
which mankind is not fulfilling.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, 

“Is it not astonishing that although 
man has been created for the know-
ledge and love of God, for the virtues 
of the human world, for spirituality, 
heavenly illumination and life eternal, 
nevertheless he continues igno-
rant and negligent of all this? 
Consider how he seeks knowledge of 
everything except knowledge of 
God.”

This is one subject man does not 
seem to be interested in. Yet there is 
one hope: that we should come to 
know, to love and to serve Him. It is 
the one thing that we all should do, and 
Bahá’u’lláh has come to tell us how to 
do it, and that is one reason we were 
given that one beautiful prayer quoted 
above.

The essence of the message of every 
religion the world has known is the love 


*Mr. Robarts and his wife Audrey have 
been Bahá’ís since 1937.
One thing I haven’t mentioned but which is very important in relation to prayer is the fact that we are assured that God will assist all those who arise to serve Him. We are like that. Mankind is surrounded by the love of God always. It is there for us, and like the sun and the rain which continue pouring out their life-giving qualities whether the little tree is outside or not, the love of God surrounds us always. However, we have to do something about it. We have to get into the love of God. Jesus said, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee.” We must knock. We must get into the sunshine of the love of God if we are to receive its benefit and we need it desperately. We need it now as we have never needed it before.

‘Abdu’l-Baha said, 

There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer.

Man must live in a state of prayer. The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication. Prayer is conversation with God.

While man prays, he sees himself in the presence of God.

However, verbal repetition of prayer does not suffice. One must live in a continual attitude of prayer.

Man becomes like a stone unless he continually supplicates to God.”

I spend much of my time traveling, visiting many countries and meeting the Baha’is and their friends. Very often we will sit and talk about the teachings and about prayer. It is often a surprise to me how some of the friends say they don’t pray. One devoted believer told me that Bahá’u’lláh had said work is worship, that he works so many hours in a week for the Faith he has no time left to pray. Others say they don’t understand prayer, they don’t see why they should pursue it. It seems to me these friends are missing a priceless pearl.

A few weeks ago, while I was on a tour, a fine young man asked me if I could give him some comfort, which he said he needed badly, and he explained that he had been living the kind of life that he was sure God could never forgive him for. He asked me, “How can I possibly square myself with God?” My heart ached for him, he was so sincere, and yet I was so glad to be able to assure him that he had already been forgiven, that God is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise, the Ever-Forgiving, the Ever-Loving, the Most-Merciful. He said, “How I wish I could believe that.” I
happened to have a quotation from the Qur'an in my hand where Muhammad had said, "Prayer is a ladder by which every one can ascend to heaven." He seemed to be comforted by that assurance that everyone can ascend to heaven.

"Abdu'l-Baha said,

"Supplication to God at morn and eve is conducive to the joy of hearts and prayer causes spiritual and fragrance. Thou shouldst necessarily continue therein." And He said, "Know that nothing will benefit thee in this life save supplication and invocation! Into God, service in His vineyard, and, with a heart full of love, to be in constant servitude unto Him."

On another occasion He said that saints become saints through prayer, supplications, purification of the heart and good wishes.

I have a friend in Toronto who was invited to be the best-man at a wedding in Chicago one Christmas. He was very anxious to go, but Christmas was the busiest season of his business year. He didn't think he should take the time off but finally he did. He booked his passage and closed his office early, but not quite early enough, and he raced all the way to the airport, praying and calling upon Baha'u'llah from the very depths of his being. He just had to get to that wedding. He arrived at the airport in time to see his plane depart. Despite all his prayers, and his great need to be on that plane, it was gone. He told me later, "John, I sat down and I cried." Can you imagine his despair? As he was sitting there in his agony of soul he heard an announcement of the departure of another flight for Chicago. He inquired and was told that his plane had been routed through Detroit, but this one was going through Buffalo, and if he hurried he might be able to get a seat on it. He hurried and he arrived at the wedding on time. The first flight had mechanical trouble and was grounded in Detroit. I ask you, were his prayers answered? We all know of many similar instances where fervent prayer is answered. 'Abdu'l-Baha assured us, "God will answer the prayer of every servant if that prayer is urgent. His mercy is vast, illimitable. He answers the prayers of all His servants."

Bahá'u'lláh affirmed, "The heavens of Thy mercy and the oceans of Thy bounty are so vast that Thou hast never disappointed those who willed to come to Thee." 'Abdu'l-Baha said that, in all the worlds of existence there is nothing more important than prayer. "Prayer is the key by which the doors of the Kingdom are opened."

In a letter to a young woman who asked how to attain spirituality, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian, said in part, 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 should 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 spirit of the age, taken on the whole, is irreligious. Man's outlook on life is too crude and materialistic to enable him to elevate himself into the higher realms of the spirit.

"It is this condition, so sadly morbid, into which society has fallen, that religion seeks to improve and transform. For 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. It is not sufficient for a be-

Auxiliary Board members Elizabeth Martin and Peter Khan with Mr. Robarts.

June, 1974/BAHA'I News 19
‘Abdu'l-Bahá said that repetition of words does not suffice. We should do our best to have some understanding of the meaning of what we are saying.

Five Year Plan Discussion in U.S.: Scene from a gathering on May 26 in Foundation Hall of the Hands of the Cause and Continental Counsellors in North America and the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, Auxiliary Boards and national committees.
and the earth. By Thy Most Great Name, O Thou Lord of all nations! I have desired only what Thou didst desire, and love only what Thou dost love.

It seems to me we are saying to God that whatever He sends to us will be accepted with radiant acquiescence. If we say that often enough we will believe it. I feel one of the great bounties of this part of that prayer is that when something does happen to us, if our house burns down, if we lose our job, become ill, lose a loved one, we have already assured God that His Will is our desire. We should become strong and able to accept adversity when it comes. We know a large proportion of the things we worry about don’t happen anyway, but we should have confidence, assurance and faith from a repeated reciting of this part of that prayer.

One thing I haven’t mentioned but which is very important in relation to prayer is the fact that we are assured that God will assist all those who arise to serve Him. This assistance is ever-present. I might illustrate this in a somewhat lighter vein with a little story.

There is a situation which we sometimes have in Bahá’í communities where the wife is a Bahá’í and her husband is not, or vice versa. Would any of you be interested in knowing about a technique for overcoming this very sad situation?

In Africa, I met a young African, a beautiful soul who was a very active Bahá’í but his wife was not only not a Bahá’í, she was very antagonistic to the Faith. One time he gave an address at a Bahá’í conference. I listened and was surprised to hear him speak very lovingly of his wife. After the meeting I asked him, “George, is your wife a Bahá’í?” “Yes,” he said, “she is.” I said, “That is wonderful. How did you bring her into the Faith?” He said, “Oh, it was one of those natural kinds of things. She got to the point where she loved to be with the Bahá’ís.” He said, “You know, I do a lot of teaching; four or five evenings a week we have meetings, and of course when my wife was so opposed to the Faith, I couldn’t have her there, could I? The difficulty was that our house is so small. There is only one room. During those meetings, there was no place for her to go. We have no neighbours. So she would go out to the back and sit or stand under the banana tree. ‘Well,’” he said, “she became a Bahá’í during the last rainy season!”

Beloved friends, I wish you all a very happy Naw-Rúz.
Child's Way

A bi-monthly magazine for Bahá'í children, with articles, stories, puzzles, and games that introduce children to the treasures of their Faith—and helps to prepare them to become active and deepened members of the Bahá'í world family. Child's Way can give ideal assistance to parents in providing Bahá'í instruction to their children. Try us for a year. Six issues for $4.50; $5.00 outside the United States. Send orders with payment to Child's Way, 415 Linden Ave., Wilmette, Ill., 60091.
Agnes Alexander, by Beth McKenty, page 4
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To John with Love, by Marzieh Gail, page 8

Complimentary copy, First National Bahá'í Conference, Aug. 29-Sept. 1
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COVER PHOTO
Cover photo: Louise and John Bosch at the Geyserville Bahá'í School.

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS

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The Hand of the Cause Jalál Kháźeh attended the Bahá’í Convention in Brazil, held in the mountain resort of Campos do Jordão, from April 27-May 1. Seated beside him is Counsellor Leonora Armstrong and Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Nyiza Tuetz. The Gentleman seated beside him is Mr. Abdol­lah Sahíhi, who served as interpreter for Mr. Kháźeh.


**Star of the West, Vol. 22, No. 7, October 1931, p. 208**

The following account concerns the international travels of the Hands of the Cause of God at Ridván, 1974. It includes excerpts from the Bahá’í International News Service Bulletin, published in Haifa, Israel. All cablegrams mentioned were sent to The Universal House of Justice. —Ed.

Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum represented The Universal House of Justice at the historic election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Hong Kong. The consolidation of the community of Hong Kong was a goal of our beloved Guardian’s Ten Year Crusade and it is fitting that Amatu’l-Bahá should have been present to witness its establishment as a national pillar of the administrative framework of the Cause.

From Hong Kong came the following cabled message: “Offer sincere gratitude for having honor of Amatu’l-Bahá as representative. Feel this bounty and presence two Counsellors, two Auxiliary Board members and representative mother Assembly, will greatly help us achieve successes ... We pledge carry out objectives of Five Year Plan and beseech your prayers Holy Shrines for our rapid achievement all goals.”

Rúhíyyih Khánum also attended the National Convention of Burma which was held in Daidanaw, traditionally known as “Abdu’ll-Bahá’s village.” The Faith was first established in Burma in May, 1878 through the visit of Mirzá Jamál Efendi and Siyyid Muştafá Rümí, two early teachers of the Cause who first brought the message to a number of countries in southern Asia. The National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma was formed in 1923—one of the earliest national communities—and Burma formed an independent National Spiritual Assembly in 1959.

The following cable was received from Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum: “Wonderful visit, steadfast active Burmese community. Convention enthusiastic new Plan. Over 1,200 attended Ridván Feast Daidanaw ...”

The Annual Convention of the United Kingdom cabled: “Deeply appreciate presence dearly loved Hand of the Cause and Madam Giachery ... Conscious ever-abiding presence spirit beloved Guardian proudly launch Five Year Plan dedicating hearts, love, energies swift implementation. One hundred and forty pioneer offers. Implore prayers ... enable British Bahá’í community lay victories triumphantly threshold Bahá’u’lláh.”

A preliminary report received from Persia indicated that the National Convention was held in an atmosphere of enthusiasm and joy. The delegates and friends in attendance pledged to provide the entire budget for the work of the Five Year Plan for Persia. After attending the Convention, the Hand of the Cause A. A. Furútan remained in the country for some time at the invitation of the National Assembly to support the teaching and consolidation work. This visit, his first to Persia since 1966, provides an opportunity for Mr. Furútan to see his old friends, and participate in the launching of the Plan in that country.

Various northern European islands were visited by the Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlenschlegel before he attended the German National Conven-
The Hand of the Cause Rūḥīyyih Khánum visits with the President of India, Mr. V. V. Giri, in the Presidential offices in New Delhi, on June 14, 1974. Rūḥīyyih Khánum was in New Delhi to represent The Universal House of Justice at the National Bahá’í Convention of India.

Rūḥīyyih Khánum with Indian Foreign Minister Sardar Swaran Singh, in New Delhi, June 14, 1974.

Rūḥīyyih Khánum calling on the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, Mr. Baleshwar Prasad, on June 14, 1974. Looking on are Mrs. Violette Nakhjavani, and Mr. R. N. Shah, secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of India.


In addition to attending the Japanese National Convention, the Hand of the Cause William Sears is meeting with the friends in Korea and will revisit Hawaii to assist with the filming of a television series about the Faith. From Tokyo came cabled greetings: “Grateful message Five Year Plan; Convention delegates elect first National
Venezuela

Indian and pioneer married in Venezuela

The first interracial marriage between a pioneer from the United States and a Guajira Indian took place in Venezuela last May 25. The Spiritual Assembly of Los Hermanitos, in the Guajira region of the country's far West, witnessed the Bahá’í marriage of Miss Ana Mercedes Montiel and Mr. Arlen Dufresne. The prefect of the region came with his secretary from Sinamaica, miles to the north, to preside over the necessary civil ceremony. Continental Counsellor Donald Witzel attended both ceremonies.

The following day Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Cecilia Yguaran joined Mr. Witzel in dedicating the first local Hazíratu’l-Quds in Venezuela. The entire community of Villa del Rosario participated in the dedication of their local Hazíratu’l-Quds, the first in the country.

From Papua and New Guinea came word: “We are happy bounty having Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone, two Auxiliary Board members. Friends are happy get Five Year Plan. We will all try to work hard fulfill all goals set forth.”

A large number of national communities in the islands of the South Pacific have had the pleasure of welcoming the Hand of the Cause Rahmatu’llah Muhajir as he proceeded to the Australian National Convention which cabled: “Hand of the Cause Muhajir, Counsellor Perks, members National Assembly, five Auxiliary Board members, 63 delegates, 250 observers assembled Melbourne overwhelmed supreme outpouring divine inspiration Five Year Plan raise community Greatest Name unprecedented heights. Total body friends assembled Convention poised respond total commitment grasp challenge attain rapid maturity triumphant conclusion ensure survival human race . . .”

The Hand of the Cause Abü’l-Qásim Faizi attended the National Convention of Turkey and a teaching conference there following which he has embarked upon a global journey of five months’ duration which will take him to a number of countries in Latin America, to the United States, Hawaii and Canada, and to various centers in Europe.

The Fourteenth National Bahá’í Convention in Venezuela was held April 27-28 in Campamento Nora, near Caracas, the capital.

Mr. Arlen Dufresne with his wife Ana Mercedes.
Impressions of meetings with the great Hand of the Cause of God in Hawaii during the final years of her life.
Reflect ye how this daughter was confirmed. . . . She became the cause of the guidance of a gathering of people. . . .

Baha'i service, much of it in virgin teaching territories, Miss Alexander was like a bird momentarily resting, but longing to fly to some new land.

Her health frail and her years very advanced, she still radiated contentment and great pleasure at the past and present moments of her life. Her eyes turned to the Hand of the Cause Ali-Akbar Furutan, there to pay his respects to a fellow servant of the beloved Guardian. “I remember you well,” she said distinctly. “You are the young man who stood up at our meetings in Haifa and translated.” So she recalled the historic conclaves of the Hands of the Cause in the crucial period following the passing of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

And the two shared a silent, deep moment of remembering.

“I am very blessed,” she continued. “I had this fall in Japan when I was staying in a hotel in Tokyo some time ago. I was taken to University hospital to be treated for a broken hip.” When her visitors began murmuring their sympathy, she raised her hand. “I had a delightful stay in that hospital for two years,” she said firmly. “It was a very pleasant time. I met many people. I didn’t suffer at all.

“I do still have a little difficulty with my leg so that I can’t run around the way I would like to, but I am very comfortable now.”

After a few moments of exchanging messages about shared friends in the Faith, Miss Alexander was asked how she had entered the Cause. Here are some of her words.

“Strangely enough, it was in Rome that I received the Message. I had gone to Europe with friends and had visited in Paris. When they were leaving, I wrote to my father in Honolulu and asked him what I should do. [The Alexander family there has had a distin-
guished name since the earliest days of the missionaries, and Miss Alexander’s mother was from the equally well-known Baldwin family.] He said: ‘Go to Rome. It is pleasant to live there.’ So I went to Rome. I was in a very pleasant boarding house, but then I thought to myself, ‘What good did it do for me to come to Rome when I could give the money to the poor?’ It puzzled me as I felt deeply the poverty of many of the world’s people.

‘Then one day, in the dining room of my boarding house, at the first table on the right side, I saw a lady seated with her two daughters. I just could not keep my eyes from her. Then one evening in the parlor I overheard a word or two that she was speaking with someone. She said that she was to leave in the morning.

‘An intimation came to me that night that Christ had come and was on this earth. I just could not sleep. I thought of going to the woman and then I thought, ‘It is a strange thing, in the night, to go to a stranger’s room.’ So I waited until the morning.

“In the morning, they were packing to leave when I went to their room. I remember coming from breakfast and going to their door. When it opened, the lady looked at my face and said: ‘I see by your face you know it!’

“I simply said: ‘Christ is on this earth!’ That was all.

“I had the feeling, you see. I didn’t know what it was, when I looked across the dining room at her. She was spiritually glowing, as she had just come from Haifa where she visited ‘Abdu’l-Baha. She was a widowed schoolteacher from Washington, D.C., named Mrs. Dixon. She died many years ago, but once when I returned from Europe to Green Acre she and her daughters were at the school with me. When her husband died she had used her small inheritance for pilgrimage for herself and her two daughters.

“Think of it now!” Miss Alexander’s face shone with wonder. “She said to me that morning, ‘I see by your face you know it!’

“There was nothing to give me,” recalled Miss Alexander, “except one prayer written out in longhand, for there was no literature then. I asked her, ‘How will I find more about this?’ She wrote on a slip of paper some addresses.


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But I had to be tested at once. You know you do not grow until you are tested. I was young and innocent. I went to my cousins' church and after church I went up to the pastor and told him I had something to tell him that was very important, something for him to study. I told him that Christ had come again, and was on this earth in Palestine!

"Of course, all he did was take out his Bible and try to straighten me out. I simply said: 'I am here.'

The lady answered, 'I think you want my daughter.' This was the mother, who was not a Bahá’í. Then I met May."

"Then I looked at the slip of paper. The nearest address was Paris. I went to the address of May Bolles. Someone opened the door. Of course, I didn’t know what May looked like. I simply said: 'I am here.'

"The lady answered, 'I think you want my daughter.' This was the mother, who was not a Bahá’í. Then I met May."

"Then I looked at the slip of paper. The nearest address was Paris. I went to the address of May Bolles. Someone opened the door. Of course, I didn’t know what May looked like. I simply said: 'I am here.'

The tears flowed as she recalled that moment.

"I remember going with May to my first meeting. Someone said: 'Is she a Bahá’í?' May said: 'Look at her face!' Remembering this, the tears stopped and her frail shoulders shook with laughter.

"In those days, when we enrolled we simply wrote to 'Abdu’l-Bahá and He welcomed us by letter. I had done this before leaving Rome. I stayed on in Paris for three and one-half months, and went to meetings. May was my spiritual mother. This is my story."

Our first visit with Miss Alexander ended, but during several other brief visits in the following two weeks she helped to fill in more details of her life story. In reply to a question one morning about how she happened to go to Japan, she said:

"One night, in Honolulu, I had gone to hear a lady speak on her efforts to raise money for a school for girls in Japan and this tremendous feeling came to me. I went to the library and began to take notes and study about Japan. My father asked what I was doing. I said I was going to Japan. My father immediately put money in the bank for me to go to Japan when the right time came. At the same time, my father went into the hospital. He was not very ill, and was only there for a check-up. I went to see him and he looked well. That night a nurse phoned from the hospital and said: 'Your father just died.' It was so sudden! My dear mother had been frail for some time. When we went to tell her, she said: 'I see papa over there and he is beckoning to me to come to him.' Shortly after this, my mother died as well. My sister was not a Bahá’í. She went to visit relatives in California, and wrote me from there: 'I wish you could go to Japan because it was papa’s wish.'

"After some time, I joined a party going to Europe and when that party was broken up in 1913, I wrote to the Master to ask whether I could visit Haifa. He replied: 'It is best that thou goest directly to Japan and while there..."
be engaged in spreading the fragrances of God.'

"I was then in Geneva but I went to Marseilles and took a steamer for Tokyo. I was on it one month without any news at all. When I arrived at the port of Yokohama in Japan, there was a letter from my sister, saying that she was so worried because there had been no word. In Tokyo, I had friends from Honolulu who were teachers, and very broadminded. They arranged for me to come there and live in a boarding house beside their house. They had a meeting Sunday night and deeply believed that all religions were true. I arrived in Tokyo on a Friday, so in two days I was able to attend their meeting. After the meeting, I found myself surrounded by some Japanese men and I told them I was a Baha'i. The next morning one came to see me, wanting to know more about the Faith. That was the beginning."

Another day, Miss Alexander said: "Did I ever share with you the story of how May Maxwell became a Baha'i? As I understand it, Dr. Getsinger and Mrs. Phoebe Randolph Hearst called on Mrs. Bolles in Paris, where Mrs. Bolles was acting as chaperone for two nieces of Mrs. Hearst. Turning to Dr. Getsinger, Mrs. Bolles said to him: 'My daughter is ill and I wonder if you could do something to help her?' He came back to the room, after examining May, and said: 'I think my wife has something to help her.' And so Lua--you have surely heard of Lua--came to see her and told her about 'Abdu'l-Baha. May immediately became alive.

"She wanted very much to go with the party on pilgrimage to Palestine but it was a very expensive trip. Mrs. Hearst learned from Mrs. Bolles of May's interest in the Faith and said: 'I would be glad to take your daughter with me!' So Mrs. Hearst took May with her to the Holy Land. When May got there and saw 'Abdu'l-Baha, she immediately knew Him as she had twice seen Him in dreams. From that day, she was born again."

Eyes misted with tears and her face glowing at the memory, Miss Alexander almost whispered, "Think of it! A little, frail lady who had been ill in bed for almost two years and could scarcely go from her couch to her bed, then leaving for a trip to Palestine!"

During our final visit, when it was time to leave, I asked Miss Alexander if she would please write something on a piece of paper which I could keep with my cherished Baha'i belongings. She agreed, carefully arranged a small piece of paper on a book on her lap, and wrote these words: "I thank Baha'u'llah for giving me the blessing of meeting with another dear Baha'i sister, Beth." Nowhere did the piece of paper have her name on it.

Praised by the Master in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, Miss Alexander forty years later earned this tribute from the beloved Guardian:

"Agnes Alexander, distinguished pioneer Faith, elevated rank Hand Cause. Confident appointment will spiritually reinforce teaching campaign simultaneously conducted North, South and Heart Pacific Ocean." That tribute is dated March 27, 1957.

Now, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the island of Oahu is blessed not only with the earthly remains of the Hand of the Cause Martha Root but also of the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander, both steadfast servants of the beloved Guardian who spread the divine fragrances to their last breath.
For John, with love

Personal memories of the illustrious John Bosch, early Bahá'í teacher, pioneer, and friend of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

By Marzieh Gail

September 4, 1946

Monday we went down from Cloverdale, driving a cautious thirty in the shiny blue De Soto—our first since the War. The low hills had that hard, baked feeling that seals you in, safe and dry from the wadded fogs of the Bay Region, down to the south, nonexistent and nonexistent and nonexistent and nonexistent.

We turned off the highway into the Geyserville School grounds, up the curving road the Maintenance Committee has enlarged, to the parking space they leveled off with the bulldozer, south of the Big Tree. We got out and walked, and ate a couple of the purple, stained-glass-window plums, with sky-blue dust on them, fallen in the dust of the orchard. Reluctantly, we crossed the wooden bridge over the gulley, going toward the ranch house. For nineteen years now, I had been coming to this place, and John had always been here, all that time, for me, and now he was not here.

Perhaps I was wrong. All around us, in the quiet heat and dust, I could feel him speaking.

"Nurani," he was saying, "Nurani"; luminous, luminous. It was the name ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had given him, long ago. It was the white, radiant name. Now John was saying it to me, in the old way—with his voice, that had so much light in it (I can only think of light in connection with him; the tall, transparent figure, the shining white beard, thick, white silk hair, the light suit, the white felt hat. White candles, maybe; white sun on the hills; yards of white cloth for a turban. His hat, at least, I saw, a few moments later, hanging on its peg in the ranch house). His voice repeated the tones of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s voice as the Master Himself had spoken the name; vibrant and happy and as though everything in the universe was all right. Perhaps John was saying this to Harold and me now, because he knew how we felt with him not here. Or again, it was all in my mind; but what is the world of the mind; no one knows; no one can bound it.

We rang the doorbell and it seemed an incongruously natural, everyday thing to do. A handsome, brown Persian boy, Shidán, let us in. Louise is alone now, and Shidán is spending his vacation from college here at the School to be with her. Then Louise was at the door, bowed over, the gray hair cropped short, the blue-gray eyes smiling.

"We’ve come to take you for a drive."

"Oh, no, I cannot—"

"But we want to go and say a prayer at John’s grave."

Shidán broke in, "Here’s the car you needed, Louise."

"Well, get the shovels, then," Louise said, and started up the steep stairs, that she had gone up and down so constantly these years, serving John, who lay most of the time up there in the bedroom, withdrawing farther and farther from what we think is the real world but the dying and the dead know is only a reflection and shadow.

Except when otherwise specified, the historical material in this article consists of conversations with John (in 1939) written down by me as he spoke, and of written information supplied by Louise. Tablets, letters and cables were copied in the presence of John or Louise from documents supplied by them. This account varies in many respects from that in the Geyserville Press of July 26, 1946; certain of the statements there published were—through no fault of the paper and owing to the natural cares and confusion attendant on the funeral—erroneous.

A brief review of John’s life, using data supplied to the writer by him, and after his passing, by Louise, will be of value to historians:

John David Bosch was born at Neu-St. Johann, Canton St. Gall, Switzerland, on August 1, 1855. His parents were Michael Johann Bosch and Maria Biegmann; he had three brothers and three sisters, and was his parents’ fifth child. When he was nine, his mother died, and he was then brought up by his oldest sister, whom he loved all his life. After attending elementary and preparatory school in Neu-St. Johann, he left Switzerland with a sister and her husband (the Zuberbuhlers), arrived in America in 1879, and went to Amboy, Nebraska where on arrival the Zuberbuhlers purchased a farm. He practised his trade of cooper, “helped with the building of the railroad, and also farmed.” He was in Los Angeles, California between 1884 and 1889, and became a citizen of the United States in Los Angeles County in 1887, the document also being registered in Sonoma County in 1892. He married Kathie Krieg in ‘85 or ‘86, the marriage ending in divorce around ‘89. It was about this period that he went to Germany, France and Spain to study winemaking. After holding various good positions in the Valley of the Moon, he purchased the thirty-five acres constituting the original extent of his Geyserville property on October 26, 1901 from Emily B. Smith

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Louise moved rapidly over our heads, changing her dress, and Shidáñ told about the grave. Louise and John had bought their graves on a hilltop, in one of those dry, northern California cemeteries, all perpendicular dirt roads, dust and lizards and purple-trunked manzanitas, rocks and unexpected flowers, or sometimes a rare, elegant gravestone, decorously out of place in the lost hills. Since the War, there had been no caretaker, and there never had been any water here, except the winter rains. Louise, who hardly eats or sleeps, and works always, in the house and grounds, and at her correspondence that comes from all the friends of a long lifetime, was worried over this grave. She had been driven up there a few days before, and gathered the dry flowers left from the funeral to burn them; now she wanted the sandy gravel, piled up from when the grave was dug, leveled off or shoveled away.

“I can only take one shovel,” the boy confided to us, “or Louise herself will take the other and set to work and no one can stop her.”

We sat on the hilltop, gingerly, on the cement ledge of the rectangular, parched lot. John’s long body lay there beside us, under the gravel—as if he were lying in his bed, as we last saw him; the gravel folded lightly over him. I knew there was a coffin under the mound, but it was as if John were lying there, under the bedclothes. He seemed to share our problem about the grave.

A weaving of vineyards and blue mountains rolled away beneath us. The grapes climbed here almost to the hillside, close at hand, heavy blue bunches on the russet vines. I suddenly remembered John in his light clothing and white felt hat, with the vivid hills of Geyerville. In 1905, John became a Bahá’í, his teachers being Mrs. Beckwith, Mrs. Goodall, Mrs. Cooper and Thornton Chase. John was delegate from California and Honolulu to the first Bahá’í Temple Unity Convention, Chicago, March 21, 1909. In April, 1912, when superintendent of the Northern Sonoma County Wineries, he went East to be with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and on his return was instrumental in appealing to the Master to visit the West. He was Thornton Chase’s literary executor. On January 19, 1914 he married Louise Sophie Stapfer of Zurich, Switzerland, in San Francisco. In 1920, with Louise, he left for Tahiti in March, pioneering there and leaving in September. In November, 1921, he and Louise were present in Haifa at the time of the Master’s passing. Appointed by the National Spiritual Assembly with two others to locate a place for the establishment of a center “along the lines of Green Acre” John offered his property for this purpose, the institution beginning its functions in 1927. From this period on, he continued to serve in many ways until his long, final illness. He passed away July 22, 1946, and was buried in Olive Hill cemetery, Geyerville, following a befitting memorial service held July 24 in the Bahá’í Hall, Geyerville School. Under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly, a memorial service was also held for him in the Bahá’í House of Worship, November 24. His tomb is covered with a long plaque (the work of John Quinn) made of hammered bronze and bearing the Greatest Name. The underbrush has all been cleared away, exposing a whole new range of mountains, the western mountains that shut Geyerville off from the sea. When we saw the place recently, we knew we were watching one of the loveliest views in the world. It was a soft autumn day. “The mountains seem so near,” Louise said dreamily. “That means rain.” M.G.

It was during the prayer that I understood how completely selfless Louise is. behind him, smiling, carrying a basket of these blue grapes to give us. “I am a fruitarian,” he said.

The baked dust lay warmly around us. Louise wore a white and black print dress with a high collar, and over it a black coat. She sat on the ledge, her blue-gray eyes looking up at us. Then we had prayers, Harold’s from Prayers and Meditations, page 77, and Shidáns low, mourning-dove Persian chant. Shidáñ, looking like a sunny, brown Italian, began with the casualness of youth to shovel off the top of the plot, and smooth it. He, open-throated and strong, his brown hair gleaming in the sunshine, and Louise in terminal black, both against the far blue hilltops, talked back and forth through the spiced wind: “This is the earth from the interior of the grave; this was removed for the hole to be made; now it should be put back on the plot again,” said Louise.

“No, these are only rocks,” said Shidáñ. “Look at the other plots—hard and smooth. Let me make this one like the rest.”

Each of them smiled a little and winked confidentially to us, about the other. Youth and age, amused at each other, for being youth and for being age. Each one hopeless, the other thought; to be put up with and served, but to shake one’s head over.

A line of pink flowers, amaryllis, like trumpet lilies only pink, several on a stem, pulpy and delicate, jutted on naked green stalks from a barren neighboring plot. A lizard rustled over the grave, a taffeta rustle, soft, like a thought that escapes you. We sat on the concrete ledge in the warm circle of heat, looking down over the sky and the world. It was during the prayer that I understood how completely selfless Louise is; I could feel the presence of Harold and Shidáñ there beside me but I could not feel Louise there at all, and had to open my eyes to make sure she was with us, holding on to my arm. The earthly Louise is already as ethereal as John.

“The void, the void he has left...” she began in the careful, almost whispering voice.

Whenever John said “Louise” he said it in a special way. You knew the word was important. He dwelt on it, italicized it; you knew he looked up to that word. Their marriage was a special marriage, as the Tablet revealed for them by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá proves. It was a marriage for always. Even now there has been no separation, really. There we were, sitting on the grave-edge with Louise, and there beside us was John’s long, light form; the long, light earth piled up, not away, but present and participating; after all, you can’t bury sunlight.

“Louise,” he would say, and the word was prolonged, solemn, humorous.

Once when I was trying to write his biography and wanted to know how tall he was, to put it down for posterity, he couldn’t remember. “Let’s measure you, John,” I said. We were in his high-ceilinged office in the old ranch house, with the polished walls of redwood. Everything was in its place, and all immaculate. “Let’s stand you up...”
John said at the Swedenborgian and I was a day man. My time was important so far as the future Geyersville was concerned.

Once, trying to unravel his history from the neat envelopes he had filed it in, and the sentences he had decided on, probably years before, and no longer altered (because often, when I'd ask him again about some episode in his life, he would reply in the same brief, economical words as before), I asked him, "Where did you meet Louise?"

"I didn't meet her," he answered. The meaning was clear. He couldn't imply a time when they were not together.

"I started to correspond with her through Lua Getsinger."

He had met Lua in San Francisco in 1912. She spent a week at Geyersville, staying in the long front room of what is now the Collison house. Lua said there was a young Suisseese at Briarcliff Manor, serving as health officer, who was a Baha'i. "So I dropped her a few lines." He thought a Swiss girl from Zurich who had a position like that would be just right for him. She had also worked four years in Eliot, Maine, with Sarah Farmer. "Did you propose to her before she came out West?"

"Just as much as I could by mail."

"Was Lua very beautiful?"

"Most beautiful to me. She wore her regular costume. Looked more or less like a nurse, or like some of the Catholic sisters. Beautiful blue eyes. She was nearly as tall as Louise. Lua was a good speaker. Impressive. Spiritual."

"Who do you know now like that?"

"No comparison."

The day we had this conversation John told me that his letter to the Master dated September 18, 1919, was very important so far as the future Geyersville School was concerned.

Louise and John were married in San Francisco by a Swedenborgian minister at the Swedenborgian Church.

John had been married once before. He had met Lua in San Francisco he wired John; they would stop at different hotels, but dined together. "He was very tall—about six feet two. He always ate two or three ice creams after supper; he always dug a big bite right out of the middle of it to start with. Around eleven o'clock, he used to say, 'Now, John, I guess it's about time to take you home.'"

Arm in arm, they would go to John's hotel, talking steadily about the Cause. They would sit in the parlor. "About one o'clock I used to say, 'Now, Mr. Chase, I guess it's about time to take you home.' We used to wonder what the policeman on the beat thought about us. One night we brought each other home till four in the morning."

John Bosch was now a Baha'i. On May 29, 1905, he went down to the winery office very early and wrote 'Abdu'l-Baha: '... may my name be entered in the Great Book of this Uni-

Their marriage was a special marriage, as the Tablet revealed to them by 'Abdu'l-Baha proves.

The book was Phelps' Abbas Effendi, just published. Mrs. Beckwith told him, "To hear of this is the greatest of privileges, but will be followed by the greatest obligations. You had better not know of it if you cannot follow it up." She referred John to Mrs. Goodall of Oakland for further instruction.

It was his busy season, the time for picking grapes. For three months he couldn't go. Then, one November afternoon, he went to Mrs. Goodall's; he had no introduction, but mentioned Mrs. Beckwith and Phelps' book, and that was enough. Kathryn Frankland was there. The two women talked to him. He bought all the available pamphlets, mostly by Thornton Chase, the first American Baha'i, and the book Hidden Words. From that day on, he attended meetings. He told me that sometimes he had to choose between his Masonic club (he was a thirty-second degree Scottish Rite Mason), the saloons in San Francisco and the Oakland meetings:

"I would have one foot on the ferry and one on the wharf, but something inside would say, 'I'd better go over to Oakland.' Sometimes they had from twenty-five to forty-five women there and I was the only man and never said a word. I let them all talk by themselves. I kept going; I stuck with it."

Dr. D'Evelyn became a friend, and Thornton Chase. In those days Thornton Chase had an important insurance position in Chicago, with a salary of $750 a month which diminished every year, because the Faith meant more to him than his business. Whenever he was coming to San Francisco he wired John; they would stop at different hotels, but dined together. "He was very tall—about six feet two. He always ate two or three ice creams after supper; he always dug a big bite right out of the middle of it to start with. Around eleven o'clock, he used to say, 'Now, John, I guess it's about time to take you home.'"

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1. The other finishing school with which Louise was connected was Rosemary Hall, Connecticut.
The after effect of drinking is depression, but the wine of the love of God bestows exaltation of the spirit." John was superintendent of The Northern Sonoma County Wineries. He had forty men in four wineries under him. In one year, he crushed up 15,000 tons of grapes, which makes over two and a quarter million gallons of wine. "I thought it over," he said. It was not long before he decided to retire.  

From Montclair, New Jersey, June 24, 1912, the Master directed John to write Herrigel, the German, to lead him to firmness, and contrasted his backwardness in the Faith with the strength and firmness of Miss Knobloch. This Tablet was addressed to both John and Burbank. An extract reads, "As to my coming to California it is a little doubtful for the trip is far and the weather hot and from the labors of the journey the body of 'Abdu'l-Bahá has not much endurance. Nevertheless we shall see what God hath decreed." On August 1, the Master wrote John from Dublin, New Hampshire: "O thou who art longing for the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá! Your yearning letter was wonderful and eloquent and its effect upon 'Abdu'l-Bahá was inexpressible. I long very much to fulfill the request of the friends, but I am yet in these parts, until later the requirement of wisdom will be revealed. If the western cities demonstrate their infinite firmness in the Covenant, this will act as an attractive magnet to draw 'Abdu'l-Bahá..." On August 10, John wired: "I made special trip to San Francisco today. A great spirit of prayer, thankfulness, joy and hope filled the Assembly. Tonight anticipating the coming of the Center of the Covenant unity and firmness are manifest. This supplication begs earnestly for Thy personal presence, from D'Evelyn, Lua, Straun, Bozark and Chase. John D. Bosch." 'Abdu'l-Bahá answered John by wire August 13, from Dublin: "Your telegram was the cause of much happiness God willing I will depart for the western part give this glad tidings to each and all." John told me this was the first telegram announcing the Master's journey West. Mrs. Goodall received the second. John's was sent him in care of Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, who forwarded it to him with this note: "Awful temptation to open this!! Do let us know if it is very encouraging—Greetings, E.G.C."

But it was not the same with Thorn-
ton Chase. That great man, who had been a captain in the Civil War, a student at Brown University and later superintendent of agencies for the Union Mutual Life Company, and was "the first to embrace the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in the Western world"—felt that the Bahá'ís, himself included, were not worthy of the Master's visit.

"John, don't you think it's too soon? The Bahá'ís aren't ready."

"Well, I'm ready for Him," said John.

As the Master reached San Francisco, Thornton Chase died. "It was too much for him," John told me.

All Thornton Chase's Bahá'í papers and books, and five or six calligraphs by Mishkin-Qalam, were willed to John. Mr. Chase had sent on most of his Tablets to the Chicago archives, but John received about ten of them in a tin box. Mrs. Chase burned some fifteen hundred of her husband's letters (not Tablets) before John could get to Los Angeles, he said.

In 1939 when we talked over his life, John remembered the minutest details of the things that were important to him, and generally in the same words; the other things, not vital, he let slip away. Before urging the Master to come West, he, unable to wait, had been East to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá; this journey was always present in his mind.

When he heard that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was on the high seas, he had felt a great urge to be with the Master. He went to San Francisco to get permission from the president of the California Wine Association, Percy T. Morgan, to go East. Morgan said, "Why do you want to go, in this bad April weather?" John said: "Because I feel like it." "Very well," said the president, "if the wineries are in shape."

He took the first train East. It didn't go fast enough. In Washington he phoned Mason Remey to see if the Master had arrived there. Mason told him 'Abdu'l-Bahá was still in New York, but was expected in Washington. John left on the night train. At five-thirty the next morning he was at the Hotel Ansonia; he went upstairs to see the door of the Master's room. Dr. Getsinger was there and recognized John from a photograph. John asked for an early appointment with the Master and the Master sent word "in a few minutes."

Then Dr. Getsinger called John in.

"I went as a business man. I had some questions to ask. When I saw Him I forgot everything. I was absolutely empty."

In the conversation that followed, 'Abdu'l-Bahá told John all the things he had wanted to know.

"Foolishly I said, 'Oh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, I came three thousand miles to see you.' He gave a good hearty laugh—you know what a wonderful laugh He had (here John laughed as the Master had, that faraway morning, and I caught the sound of that worldshaking laughter: Olympian—knowledgeable—the laughter of omniscience—I don't know how to say it; this was not the only time John seemed to me like a reflection of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. There was something about his presence; something spotless or fragrant, but not as we know the words. I had noted this in Hājí-Amin, too, in Persia. And He said, 'I came eight thousand miles to see you.'"

"'I told Him I was in the wine business and grossed fifteen thousand tons of grapes in one season, which makes over two million gallons of wine. 'Oh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá,' I said, 'I'm a foreigner, born in Switzerland, and have not the

A drawing of John Bosch by Mark Tobey.

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command of the English language. I would love to be a speaker. All I am doing is to give away pamphlets and as many books as are printed.'

"He looked serious. He said, 'You are doing well. I am satisfied with you. With you it is not the movements of the lips, nor the tongue. With you it is the heart that speaks. With you it is silence that speaks and radiates.'

"We had tea together. I was there about half an hour. He said, 'You are one of the family; you come in and out anytime you want to.'"

It was a cold, snowy day. In the forenoon John was in and out of the room, watched people coming by the dozens to see 'Abdu'l-Baha, listened to 'Abdu'l-Baha's words to them. Around noon, he circled the block to look at the Hotel Ansonia. Back at the front door, he saw many people rising in the lobby:

"When His majesty came—how straight He walked!—they all rose.

"'Abdu'l-Baha walked to the first of three waiting automobiles. The other two were already filled with Bahá'ís and their friends. All at once I saw the Persian in the first machine pushing the air at me so I backed up, thinking he wanted me to go away [this Persian gesture for "come here" looks much like the American one for "go away"; it often confused the early American Bahá'ís]. Then I saw Mountfort Mills standing there making a pulling gesture at me so I went forward. 'Abdu'l-Baha grabbed my hand and pulled me into the rear seat; Mountfort closed the door and I was alone with 'Abdu'l-Baha.

"The believers had planned to show the city to the Master; the stores, hotels, banks; to give Him a good time seeing New York. Just as I stepped into the machine and was seated, 'Abdu'l-Baha looked at me. He just looked at me, and all at once with an immense sigh—or what you call it better than a sigh—like the whole world would be lifted from Him so He could have a rest. He put His head on my left shoulder, clear down as close as He could, like a child, and went to sleep.

"I was still as a mouse; I didn't want to move—I didn't want to wake Him up. The trip was nearly a half hour and often I wondered what the others thought—that 'Abdu'l-Baha was looking out of the window all the time. 'Abdu'l-Baha woke up just as we stopped at the Kinneys' home.'"

John had not been invited, he told me, but he went in, met the Edward B. Kinneys that day for the first time, and lunched there. At three the Master addressed about one hundred and fifty people in the large studio, speaking perhaps a quarter of an hour. Edward Getsinger placed an armchair in the middle of the room but the Master did not sit in it. People were standing along the walls and 'Abdu'l-Baha walked from one to the other, and took their hands to say good-by. A young girl was on John's right. 'Abdu'l-Baha smiled at her and walked past John to another young woman on his left. "He just turned His head and He didn't look at me, just passed me and took the girl's hand. If I ever had cold feet and weak knees it was then. It took me a few seconds till I remembered the words He had said in the morning: 'You are one of the family now.' That was why He didn't say good-by to me. It was one of the worst punishments I ever had in my life, till I remembered.'

I asked John to describe the Master. He told me that 'Abdu'l-Baha's eyes had a luminous white ring around the iris; that He had a wonderful smile and also a very serious look. John looked in the glass, trying to explain the Master's complexion: "His skin-color was the color of my forehead." John's fair skin was lightly tanned by the California sun; I would have described his skin with a Persian term—"wheat-colored.""

"I never paid any attention to how He looked. I only know every time I was with Him I was way down below Him—way down in the bottom. Like nothing. His hair was gray and white and shining; a little curly. You always felt a nearness to Him even when He was far across the room." John said a person's atmosphere or presence affected him strongly; he called it their aura.

"John went to most of the meetings for about five days in New York and then someone put him in the same Pullman car on which the Master traveled to Washington. The Master would leave His compartment and come out into the main "palace" car. Going through Pennsylvania an interpreter called John, and it was then that "'Abdu'l-Baha gave me the name Nurani. He wrote it in His own hand." John said Mahmud's reference to this in his travel diary is inexact (cf. Persian text, 39). John does not think he asked for a name (certainly asking would not have been in character). All at once the interpreter called out and addressed John as Nurani, and John requested the Master to write his name down. John would linger on the vowels when he said the word, and I could hear the Master's echo. He said it vigorously, positively, in the Persian way. It means luminous, filled with light.

Again, John was on the same Pullman when the Master left Washington for Chicago. For three days John attended meetings. He was present when 'Abdu'l-Baha laid the cornerstone of the Temple at Wilmette, but with his usual diffidence he let "an elderly woman" represent Switzerland on that occasion, neither of the two, however, taking active part. Many Californians had come to Chicago to see 'Abdu'l-Baha. He called them all to Him and they were with Him about one hour.

"On the last day 'Abdu'l-Baha played another trick on me. Dr. D'Evelyn and I wanted to have another meeting with Him before leaving on the ten o'clock train. We said good-by to 'Abdu'l-Baha. We heard Him speak at the hotel. But before that I invited Mrs. Goodall, Mrs. Cooper, Dr. D'Evelyn and Roy Wilhelm for supper. 'Abdu'l-Baha was walking in the park. When I was paying my hotel bill at the Plaza, a little before six, I had everything ready to leave on the ten o'clock train. I was standing at the desk, when 'Abdu'l-Baha came in. One of the Persians in His party called to me. The man at the desk said, 'Those people want you.' I stepped over to the elevator, and 'Abdu'l-Baha seized my hand and wouldn't let go, and pulled me into the elevator and up to His room on the fifth floor.' [John did not give me the date. I assume it was May 2, the day that the Master had given five public addresses.] Nobody was there except Dr. Baghdadi. 'Abdu'l-Baha did not
Plan: “I was reading that entire book from one end to the other and begging the Almighty to let me know when I had come to the place that was to be for me. When I reached the Polynesian Tablet I perceived a stir, so I stopped and read it thoroughly, many times. The next morning, or soon after, I awoke at the very earliest gray light of dawn, because something had wakened me. It was a voice that said, ‘Loti. Loti.’ I sat up and thought, ‘Well, this is strange. What is this Loti?’ So I went to John’s small room next to mine to tell him about it but he was sound asleep.”

When John wakened they consulted an encyclopedia and found that Loti was an author. Louise left Geyserville for San Francisco that same day to get Le Mariage de Loti—since this particular book included his name in the title—at the Public Library, but the book was out. About this time Mrs. Maxwell wrote her to come to Green Acre; it was hard for her to leave, as she was expecting guests:

“My husband had arranged a deer-hunting. He did not hunt himself.”

“Well, because it wasn’t in his life. He never even killed a chicken.”

In any event, Louise packed and went to Green Acre, where she set out for Miss Farmer’s house to find Mrs. Maxwell. (Louise’s friendship with the Maxwell family is very old; Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell took her on her first pilgrimage to ‘Akkâ, in 1908). Mrs. Maxwell asked her to wait a few moments in the big upstairs hall, while she got ready for luncheon. It was a warm day, but there was a draught through the hall from an open doorway. Louise started to shut the door, when she saw a little book on a small table just inside. Thinking from the size that it was the Book of Iqân, she picked it up, and sat down on the top stair in the hall to read.

“I opened the book and instead of the beloved title, to my surprise it said Le Mariage de Loti. Imagine my feelings. That trip of three thousand miles I had to take to get it.”

And so John and Louise left for Tahiti. John said that on the boat he encountered a fellow-passenger carrying another work by Loti. “For heaven’s sake,” John told him, “don’t let my wife see that book!” Its title: Vers Isfahan.*

*Towards Isfahan

Louise has already described the essentials of their Tahitian journey, which lasted six months (cf. The Bahá’í World, III, p. 368). Prefacing the story, Louise writes that as a child she had learned from Robinson Crusoe that the Polynesians were cannibals and would "eat" their enemies that they killed in warfare. So I made up my mind that if I ever grew up and traveled I would give Polynesia a wide sweep... But after having read ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s words on Polynesia I was not afraid any more and after a most interesting happening... it came about all by itself and unsought for that both John and I went to that very part of the world..."

The first Tahitian Bahá’í was Ariane Drollet, a girl of nineteen.7

John remembered things for me,

‘With you it is the heart that speaks. With you it is silence that speaks and radiates.’

5. This letter is dated March 3, 1927. It says in part: “The last meeting of the National Assembly received the interesting suggestion that steps be taken by the friends along the Pacific Coast to organize a summer Bahá’í community along the lines of Green Acre... We hope that conditions will make it possible for some such informal center to come into being in the near future and we appreciate what splendid results it would have for the Cause throughout the Pacific states.”

6. It will be recalled that Julien Viaud owes his pseudonym to the Tahitian people, who in 1873 named him Pierre Loti, Loti meaning “rose” in Tahitian.

7. Louise writes, April 13, 1947, that she is still in touch with Ariane. Earlier, she wrote me of Suzell Marchal (daughter of the man she describes as “the wonderful Mr. Ernest Marchal”), “a 6 months old baby when my husband and I came to Tahiti in 1920... In her letter she asked me if she may have our friendship and would we correspond with her? Her letter was fragrant with the perfume of pressed blossoms of the national flower of Tahiti...” Louise mentions as other Tahitian Bahá’ís George Spitz and Rene Gasse, and as others deeply interested Martial Vorns and Ernest Marchal. Still another who knew of the Faith was Alexandre Drollet, a fine old man, born in Tahiti and government interpreter there.
sharp details. When they arrived, their trunks were taken from the ship to the hotel by wheelbarrow. At the hotel, there were no rooms; then a Mrs. Maui gave them her room. At a restaurant, the Tiare, they met a young man named Martial Yorss; lunch times Louise would teach him the Faith there. His wife was in the hospital. In Papeete, not long before the Boschs came, 3,500 persons had died out of a population of 7,000, from the black plague. They piled the dead in the streets and burned them. The Yorss' four-year-old son had died, crying, "Oh maman, ne me laisse pas mourir—ne me mets pas dans ce trou noir!" It was Martial Yorss who first translated Bahá’í writings into Tahitian: the "number nine" pamphlet, but owing to various difficulties this never got beyond the proof-reading stage.

The head minister, Pomeret, was against the Faith, but a Protestant minister named Paul Deane was for it. Pomeret warned Deane against the Boschs. Pomeret said, "You're too old to embrace the new Faith." Deane answered: "I may be old, but my tongue is young."

Deane studied Some Answered Questions, Dealy, Chase. He encouraged Ernest Marchal to study. He was seventy, Deane was.

When friends are about to leave, the Tahitians give them names; John's was: Teritahi Papeete—"First king of the great family of Bahá’ís arrived among us."

"They were all beautiful to me," John said. "I like their dark skin. They are very generous; give away all their possessions."

John told me about the beautiful Madame Tepori, a leading personage, who lived on Mooria Island. They went to visit her in a small gasoline boat, perhaps thirty feet long. When they were five kilometers out in the open ocean, their engine gave out. John says there was wonderful sand, and wonderful fresh fish, at Mooria Island, and the ocean was warm. They would talk to her in French about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and she would say, "Oh, Jehovah!" "She loved us very much. When we returned to Papeete, the first passenger on the little boat was an immense pig—the second was the minister—then some Chinese—then we followed." Madame Tepori stood on the pier, tears streaming, with outstretched arms—in white, against the dark, wooded mountains, two doves flying over her. "She had beautiful feet—always walked barefooted."

Louise brought the people of Tahiti into the Master's presence, on almost the last day of His earthly life. She placed before Him the photograph of a Tahitian lady; He asked who it was; she said, the wife of a chieftain whose descendants have listened to the Bahá’í Message. He answered, "She was a good tree, she has borne good fruit!"

John Bosch was one of those whom 'Abdu'l-Bahá chose as a companion for the time when He should leave the world. Afterward, the friends saw that the Master knew the moment of His passing and had prepared for it. He had tried to make them ready. Some who had asked permission to visit Him at that time, He gently turned away. But to John He had written, "I am longing to see you," and when John and Louise, responding, asked to come, His cable replied: "Permitted." They reached Haifa about November 13, 1921.

John was present on November 19 at the Master's last public talk; 'Abdu'l-Bahá pointed to John on this occasion and addressed the talk to him: the Master spoke of divine love, and how different it is from human love, which fails in the testing and in which there is no element of self-sacrifice. He told John that the Persian believers loved him, although they could not voice their love, and that if John went to Persia they would if necessary give up their own lives to protect his. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said: "When lovers meet it may be that they cannot exchange a
single word, yet with their hearts they speak to one another. Thus do the clouds speak to the earth and the rain comes down; the breeze whispers to the trees; the sun speaks to the eyes of men. Although this is not actual speech yet this is the way in which the hearts of the friends talk together. . . . For instance, you were in America and I was in the Holy Land. Although our lips were still yet with our hearts we were conversing together." (Cf. Star of the West, October, 1922.)

Surely besides the universal meaning, there was a special message here for John, something for him to remember during the long years that were to pass before he could again be in the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “You were in America and I was in the Holy Land. Although our lips were still yet with our hearts we were conversing together.” When nine days had passed, John had once again to speak with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the words of his heart.

Three days before the last, John was in the garden and all at once he saw ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. “He walked as straight as if He had been a young man. He looked well and strong. Erect. He walked like a general. When we had made one short round, about fifty steps, He left me. He went up to the garden, and came down and brought me a tangerine. In English He said: ‘Eat . . . Good.’ I didn’t do like the Americans and put it away for a keepsake. I peeled it and ate it and put the peelings in my pocket.” This was the last time John spoke with the Master.

John and Louise told me many things about the time of the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, but they are not to be written here. Words are intrusive, and while they grope, mysteries pass on before them.

I know that John kept a vigil with members of the Household® in the room from two to four that early dawn, kneeling by the bed, then sitting on the divan along the window. Once he rose, went to the bedside, and said, “Oh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá!” John told me: “I still hoped He lived.”

John was present with members of the Household as the sacred casket was shut down. He helped to close it. John said he knew the living Master was there with them. “I felt He was there.

Not in the body—even now I feel that again—His presence. I am sure He was there.” When others raised the casket up, John didn’t understand, but he did as the others, and lifted it to his right shoulder. Then all at once he remembered how, long before, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had leaned down on his left shoulder and gone to sleep; and now, this time, the Master’s head was resting on his right shoulder. “It couldn’t have been planned,” John said.

On the long way up Mt. Carmel, Sir Herbert Samuel and the Chief of Police walked directly ahead of him. Once John looked back, and saw all the carriages, empty and left behind: the ten thousand mourners were all coming on foot, although the cortege took an hour and five minutes to reach the Shrine. Once when the tall Sir Herbert stopped suddenly, John stubbed against his heel; afterward he recalled the gentleness with which Sir Herbert asked his pardon.

John told me that already by seven that morning soldiers were lined up on both sides of the street and some were in the Master’s compound. As John had entered, on the left going up the steps, he saw an Arab soldier standing guard; the man was leaning on his gun and the tears streamed down his face.

They were always together, John and Louise, working, consulting. If Louise wrote a letter, she read it to John, and then she re-wrote it, incorporating his suggestions. In the middle of the night, if Louise happened to be staying at the old ranch house and John at the new, Louise would worry about John; she would cook him a rapid dish of scrambled eggs, and then, in heavy boots and poking the dark with her flashlight, would guide herself precariously through the night, under the trees, over the bridge, to wake John up and feed him.

Summer’s home was overrun with people crowding to the School. A few would come later, during the empty weeks after School closed, when the autumn hangs like a weight on the hills, and leaves drift down the shallow

8. The Greatest Holy Leaf.

Thornton Chase, the first American Bahá’í, and one of John Bosch’s instructors in the Faith, reading in his study.

river; the prunes, ready for picking, are blue then.

After a while it became an accepted thing that John was ill. It lasted anyhow two years, with the good days and bad ones. I saw him once during the long, last illness. He was propped up in the big bed; he was crisp and immaculate as usual, his beard rippling down silken white over light pongee pajamas. Louise had turned his bed away from the California light, because his eyes were sore. I wondered what he looked at in his mind. The hills of home, maybe: wooded hills, wooden houses, the big white church of Neu-St. Johann; across the road from the church, and separated from it by other buildings, a commodious three-story white house, set in trees on a corner lot—the house.

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where John was born. Criss-cross of roads on the hills, dotting white houses; the white clouds, the warm security of the long Swiss valley.

I talked, stupidly and artificially as you do to sick people; it is another language, not yours, a kind of sick-room pidgin, since a sickness is its own world and you are a foreigner in it. Some of the time he knew we were there; anyhow, he could feel our anxiety for him; and once there was a flash of his old humor:

"That's a handsome bed, John," I told him.

"It looks better from the outside," he said.

He died at one-thirty in the morning, July 22, 1946. He almost rounded out his ninety-first year. On the 24th, they gave him a memorable burial. Louise writes: "Leroy Ioas was the speaker and the Message of the Coming of Baha'u'llah that Leroy rendered so wonderfully was the glory of this funeral. The Message was all so delicately disclosed and so eloquently revealed by Leroy to a deeply silent and attentively-listening audience of townspeople, relatives and friends...[in] the Auditorium where in front of the stage the body was lying in state...Everything had been so perfectly arranged by the beloved friends that one could have thought it was a king who had died." The Master once told John that the Persians loved him; there were many Persians there, at his burial; two of them, 'Ali Yazdi and Shidin Fathi-Azam, helped to carry his coffin. Tributes and flowers came in profusion, and about one hundred and fifty persons were there to say good-by.

From Haifa, the Guardian cabled to the National Spiritual Assembly—in addition to his personal cable to Louise: "Profoundly grieve passing dearly beloved, great-hearted, high-minded, distinguished servant (of) Baha'u'llah, John Bosch. His saintly life, pioneer services, historic contribution institution summer school entitle him rank among outstanding figures closing years heroic, opening years formative age Baha'i Dispensation. Concourse on high extol his exalted services. Assure wife and valiant com-

Approximately 400 people attended the dedication of the John and Louise Bosch Bahá'í School in Santa Cruz, California, on July 13. The first summer session began immediately after the ceremony. Roughly 120 people can stay at the new school in cabins such as the one above. A view of the main lodge, from a playground on the 67-acre facility, is at the lower right. The photograph on the left is of the dedication ceremony itself. The Hand of the Cause William Sears is speaking. Seated at the right of the stage is Mr. Amoz Bibson, a member of The Universal House of Justice. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly are seated on the left side of the stage.
A simple dedication ceremony for the new John and Louise Bosch Bahá’í school was conducted by the National Spiritual Assembly at the new 67-acre campus in Santa Cruz, California on July 13. Approximately 400 people attended, among them the Hand of the Cause William Sears, and Mr. Amoz Gibson, a member of The Universal House of Justice.

The Bosch school was purchased as a replacement for the Geyserville school, which closed after nearly 50 years of service, to make way for an expanded California state highway system. Many older believers, whose childhood summers were spent at Geyserville, were among those attending the dedication of the Bosch school, named for the distinguished teachers and pioneers who donated the Geyserville property to the Bahá’í Faith in the 1920’s.

Negotiations to purchase the $375,000 Bosch school were begun soon after the National Spiritual Assembly knew that the Geyserville property would have to be abandoned to the state. While the negotiations were still in progress, the 1973 Geyserville summer session was held in rented facilities near Santa Cruz. The first summer session at Bosch school began on the same weekend the school was dedicated.

The Bosch school is located sixteen miles north of Santa Cruz, at the north end of Monterey Bay. On the property are large stands of redwood, fir, oak, and madrone, stretches of open, rolling land, and a small lake. From several vantage points on the grounds, set at an altitude of approximately 2,000 feet, the Pacific Ocean five miles distant is clearly visible.

The main lodge is equipped with a dining hall for seventy people, a fully appointed commercial kitchen, game room, snack bar, and a dressing and locker room for the heated 30 x 60-foot swimming pool. In addition to the lodge, the campus has ten individual cabins (nine of them with fireplaces), three duplex cabins, and three completely separate homes. There is sufficient space at the school for 125 people.

The old Geyserville property was located 90 miles north of San Francisco, on 80 hilly acres near the Russian River. Highway modifications announced by the State of California during the 1950’s would have brought an amplified highway to within 100 yards of the main classroom building.

The dedication of the Bosch school on Saturday, July 13, had as much to do with Geyserville as it did with the new campus. The speakers frequently referred to the new school as a resurrection of its predecessor institution, as a transplantation of an old diamond to a new setting. The ceremony seemed calculated to both reassure the believers old enough to recall and treasure the heritage of Geyserville of the intrinsic value of the new, and to introduce those recently drawn to the Cause to the value of the old in defining the direction in the expansion of the new. The nascent Bosch school was lashed tightly to the memory of Geyserville with the strong cords of Bahá’í history. Continuities were established, connections were demonstrated. In the end, the dedication of the new facility did indeed seem to represent the reestablishment of Geyserville in a more enhancing context, free from the blight threatened by a distorted vision of human progress.

The continuum established between Geyserville and the Bosch school was evident in the act of dedication itself. A bronze plaque that for many years had informed visitors to Geyserville that the redwood grove in which they stood was consecrated to the memory of the late Hand of the Cause of God Leroy Ioas, was moved to a similar grove on the Santa Cruz property, which in like fashion was devoted to the memory of Mr. Ioas. “This is not a new action,” Dr. Firuz Kazemzadeh said on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly. “It is the transplantation of an action, a spirit, and an attitude. . . . We Bahá’ís draw strength from our past, but not in order to contemplate the past in perpetuity. The strength of our past, the inspiration of our history, serve as the building blocks of our future.”

In his presentation on that quiet California Saturday afternoon, Dr. Kazemzadeh outlined for his audience the origins of the Bosch school, which he found in the exemplary life of John and Louise Bosch, well-loved by the Master, and in the important associations of the Boschs’ Geyserville property with the early development of the Cause in North America. Returning to the thought that in our past we can find the themes that will explain and help
build our future, he said:

“This Bahá’í sense of history is an important element in the way Bahá’ís see the world. We talk about progressive revelation, which is actually a historic view of revelation. We believe in newness, in progress; but we also believe in continuity. We do not believe that the new Faith abolishes the Faith of the past; we believe that it fulfills the Faith of the past. We believe that in order to succeed today, one must have laid a firm foundation yesterday. We know that all time is a chain stretching from yesterday until tomorrow. And so today it is appropriate for us to take a look back to the origins of the John and Louise Bosch School.”

Many of the outstanding Bahá’ís from an earlier period in America came to Geyserville—famous among them for its spirit—and on its hillsides, and among its plum orchards, they discussed the Faith and taught “homemade” courses, he recalled. This distinguished company included such names as Ella Cooper, Leroy Ioas, Amelia Collins, George Latimer, William Sears, and Charlotte Linfoot, he said. Miss Linfoot, the member of the National Assembly with the longest tenure, followed him to the rostrum.

No one had any idea, she said, that Geyserville would ever become what it did. “We knew that we were going to have wonderful opportunities to hear more about the Faith, but we had no idea as we went to this school year after year, that it would become a truly international institution, and that so many people would leave from there to pioneer and open so many parts of the world to the Faith.” Though Geyserville had been dear to the hearts of all who came within the orbit of its influence and rhythm, the hearts of the Bahá’ís would have to grow also to encompass the new school they dedicated to service that day, Miss Linfoot said. “This school will be a living tribute to the memories that were so strong and lasting at Geyserville,” she said.

The Hand of the Cause William Sears, speaking at the dedication, said it was a special day for the Bahá’ís, to dedicate a new school in the presence of a member of The Universal House of Justice. He said we could not enjoy the pleasures of such momentous gather-
In our world you can easily see the forest for the trees.

If you have imagined that *World Order* magazine is only for Baha'is in the United States, you have been mistaken. Our field of coverage is as broad as our name implies. Our writers are from every corner of the globe. Our purpose is to explore the relationships between contemporary life and contemporary religious teachings, to give our readers a truer sense of the options and alternatives open to a society in the thrall of great historical forces, as it searches for lasting solutions. In short, we try to give you a glimpse of the forest of human endeavor, rather than of the single trees of its isolated developments.

In recent issues we have published articles on such varied subjects as the generation gap, collective security in a nuclear age, the rights of women, ocean resources and their proper use, the dilemma of intellectuals in this troubled age, Pablo Casals at 91, Paul Tillich and his outlook, the Muslim clergy, the world's search for peace—all, clearly, articles of international scope and interest. We think you may be interested in *World Order*.

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The Hand of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi addresses the opening of the Hawaiian conference.

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## POSTAL INFORMATION

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Mrs. Laura Dreyfus-Barney announced

22 August, 1974

ASCENSION DISTINGUISHED MAIDSERVANT LAURA DREYFUS-BARNEY FURTHER DEPLETES SMALL BAND PROMOTERS FAITH HEROIC AGE. MEMBER FIRST HISTORIC GROUP PARIS TAUGHT BY MAY MAXWELL SHE ACHIEVED IMMORTAL FAME THROUGH COMPILATION SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS UNIQUE ENTIRE FIELD RELIGIOUS HISTORY. OFFERING ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD PROGRESS HER SOUL ABHÁ KINGDOM URGES ALL COMMUNITIES FRANCE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS GRATITUDE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Western Samoa

Head of State visits Convention

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, Head of State of Western Samoa, paid an official visit to one of the sessions of the Annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Samoa at the National Center at Lelata, Apia, on April 28, 1974. This is the first time that a ruling monarch of any country has participated in a Bahá'í function.

Exactly at noon, in accordance with the Convention program, the limousine of the Malietoa stopped outside the Bahá'í property and His Highness walked into the grounds where he was welcomed by Chief Tolefoa and the Counselor Suhaïl 'Alá'i. The friends were gathering for the official photograph and a place had been made ready for His Highness.

"You can imagine the happiness and enthusiasm of the friends when His Highness took his place in the Convention photograph," Mr. 'Alá'i reported. "Many pictures were taken, after which His Highness spoke to a few of the friends and was then escorted to the Teaching Institute building which he expressed the wish to see. He was very impressed with the building and talked in Samoan with a few of the friends who were there, encouraging them to carry on with the work assigned to them. Other friends asked for more photographs and he graciously permitted this. We then escorted His Highness to his limousine. As he departed, he lovingly placed on my shoulders the lei he was wearing," Mr. 'Alá'i continued, "expressing his delight to be present at the Convention and wishing the friends success in their deliberations."

"The brief visit of His Highness intensified the discussion of the friends during the Convention sessions and seemed to strengthen them in their determination to teach as never before and attain the goals in the shortest possible time," he concluded.

The Bahá'ís of American Samoa were invited by station KVZK-TV to prepare a series of 15-minute programs for their daily television show 'Talosaga' (Prayer Time).

Three such programs were taped using prayers and readings from the Holy Writings recited by Feti Maiava and Lina Kava, and choral selections by Bahá'í youth.

Around the World

His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, Head of State of Western Samoa (centre with lei), with Bahá'í friends attending the Annual Convention of Samoa, held at National Bahá'í Teaching Institute, Lelata, Apia, Rîdvan 1974.
India

New books will aid education of children

A textbook for use in children's classes throughout India has been published by the National Assembly's Education Committee. The book consists of 33 illustrated Bahá'í lessons for children in the first grade. The Hindi translation of the textbook will be introduced to all Bahá'í schools and children's classes in Hindi-speaking areas. Two additional textbooks for older Bahá'í children are being prepared for publication.

The volume for first graders will be printed in as many regional languages as possible (14 official languages in India). The State Teaching Committees are being encouraged to undertake the work of translation and publication.

A copy of the lesson book is being sent to all National Assemblies in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands.

Colombia

Friends in Cali meet Counsellor Armstrong

The Five Year Plan was triumphantly launched in Colombia at an international conference called by the Continental Board of Counsellors in South America. The conference was held at Cali, April 12-14 and was attended by believers from Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia and by all six members of the Latin American Board of Counsellors, three members of their Auxiliary Board and eight members of the Colombian National Assembly. A lovely Quechua woman from Ecuador who had made the long trip alone won the hearts of all present by her warmth and devotion to the Cause. When people en route asked her where she was going, and why, she took the opportunity to tell them about the conference and teach them the Faith.

For many of the Colombian friends the conference provided the first opportunity they have had of meeting the Counsellor Leonora Armstrong who came to South America as a pioneer in 1920 and is still at her post in Brazil. A talk by Mrs. Armstrong and other members of the Board of Counsellors opened the proceedings and laid a foundation for the reading of the message of The Universal House of Justice which was discussed point by point.

The specific goals for Colombia were presented and the National Spiritual Assembly explained the phases into which the Plan had been divided and what the first phase consisted of, the report of the Conference states. Specific suggestions on how to achieve the goals of the Plan and a special booklet with each goal and a space for ideas was distributed among the Bahá'ís.

A special consultation was held for the youth about their participation in the Plan... the newly formed Bahá'í Club of Quibdó, Choco presented a song which was written by one of its members and told of its plans to attract youth to the Faith both by teaching directly and social activities. The youth coordinated and organized small group discussions on various themes; many participants commented on how much they had learned from the experience of searching the Writings and consulting on each subject and afterward listening to the presentation of each group.

A call for pioneers and traveling teachers produced twenty-four offers to visit areas for one or two months in order to deepen the friends and help the Local Spiritual Assemblies function effectively. Two Bahá'ís offered to deputize pioneers—among those who volunteered was a Bahá'í who had declared the day before and who had already taught two friends who became Bahá'ís and came to the conference. They were among the seven who accepted the Faith during the conference.

The most moving event occurred when ten year old Sergio Montenegro offered to travel every weekend to teach the Faith. Sergio is the son of the late Luis Montenegro, former secretary of the National Assembly of Colombia who gave his life while serving the Cause among the Motilón Indians. Mr. Montenegro died of a heart attack on April 20, 1973, while climbing a mountain to reach the Motilón Indians to help them form their Local Assembly. Sergio offered to go to Villavicencio, a town where he and his father had traveled and taught together. Prayers were offered for the progress of Mr. Montenegro's soul and for the husband of Mrs. Armstrong who passed away exactly one year ago.

El Salvador

Faith mentioned in religion courses

The National Assembly of El Salvador recently completed an important goal: to have material on the Bahá'í Faith included in the Ministry of Education's
primary school curriculum on religious studies.

The booklet "Religious Systems of the World", which the Ministry distributes to the nation's 14,000 teachers, now includes statistical information on the Bahá'í Faith. The National Assembly has also taken steps to supply more than 200 principals with copies of Divine Symphony, by Gayle Woolson, a book which attempts brief definitions of the major religious systems, including the Bahá'í Faith.

Canada

Remarkable strides taken by believers

"The star of the Cause in Canada is rising," wrote The Universal House of Justice in its message to the Canadian community at Rýdvan 1974. In a telegram dated May, 1974 the Supreme Institution amplified its earlier statement: "Brilliant rise Canada forefront national Bahá'í communities manifested your spirited convention cable . . . " The House of Justice went on to applaud the impressive and tangible commitments made by the National Assembly and the Canadian believers in conducting their national and international assignments.

The remarkable forward strides taken by the Canadian community during the Nine Year Plan under National Assembly leadership, described by The Universal House of Justice in a letter dated April 3, 1974 as "imaginative, audacious and flexible", were reinforced during the year 1973-74, a year that witnessed a dramatic increase in enrollments among various minorities in Canada. This growth and a spirit of willingness to assume an even greater share of global teaching responsibility were reflected in the National Convention held in Toronto, April 26 to 29, 1974.

The National Assembly reported the Convention to be "... most successful . . . we feel that the Five Year Plan has been befittingly launched. Approximately 1,500 believers attended from every part of the country, a number half again as great as the largest Convention previously held . . . The friends received the Plan with the greatest enthusiasm, and we now have 113 offers for pioneer services in the overseas goals."

The dedication of the Haziratu'l-Quds took place on April 28 at Toronto as one of the events of the Annual Convention. The Hand of the Cause of God John A. Robarts gave the official speech of dedication, taking his opening words from the message of The Universal House of Justice: "The star of the Cause in Canada is rising!"

Mr. Robarts said, in part: "This is a proud and happy day for the Bahá'ís of Canada. Here we are, of all ages, having come from all parts of Canada, to attend our national Convention, and to dedicate our new National Haziratu'l-Quds on this beautiful 18-acre property near the northern boundary of Toronto. This is one of the great occasions in Canadian Bahá'í history.

"In the year 1912, Canada had the blessing of a ten-day visit from 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Montreal. Of that visit He said, 'The time of the sojourn was limited to a number of days but the results in the future are inexhaustible.' We are seeing one of those results here now . . .

"We look back upon the promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that 'the future of the Dominion of Canada is very great, and
Panama

First Páez Indians enrolled in Cause

The National Spiritual Assembly of Panama reported that during a recent teaching trip to Colombia by a Panamanian citizen, Mr. L. Cuevas, twenty-four Páez tribespeople enrolled in the Bahá’í Faith. The twenty-four were the first Páez Indians to become Bahá’ís. Their home is located near the headwaters of the 950-mile-long Magdalena River, which rises on the eastern slopes of the Andes in southern Colombia.

A visit among the Guaymi Indians

"Without a doubt this was the most exciting and rewarding trip I ever made into the indigenous zone of Chiriqui," wrote Auxiliary Board member Ruth Pringle of a visit she made to the Guaymi Indian area of Panama, accompanied by resident pioneer Grace Dean.

"The enthusiasm of the friends was truly touching," her report stated. "Delegations were sent from various communities to beg us to come to them. It was not possible to respond to all requests. Our reception in Cerro Tígre was especially worthy of note.

"To reach there is somewhat like treading the spiritual path to the Abhá Kingdom—long, tortuous and steep. When the summit is reached, one does not lose heart and give up, one really enters a paradise of natural physical beauty and spiritual blessings.

"The friends had sighted us from afar and had maintained a loving vigil for over an hour, beckoning to us and encouraging us to persevere. They rushed forth amid greetings of 'Alláh-u-Abhá! Welcome!' There must have been well over 60 friends waiting in this manner upon our arrival; later, more came."

Six communities were visited and five deepening institutes were held. The report continues:

"In most of the communities there was nearly 100 per cent participation by the friends in the meetings; some, of course, were absent from home. It is estimated that at least 823 believers were met and attended at least one session.

"The deeper one penetrates into the area, the more vibrant the communities appear. Cerro Tígre and Quebrada Nigua are examples of this. The latter has a Bahá’í population of nearly 300 believers; between these two communities it would be fair to estimate that there are probably well over 500 children of school age and no schools or hope for the establishment of a government school because of their isolation and general inaccessibility during long periods of the year. Both communities were opened to the Faith a little over a year ago through the efforts of Luis Cuevas, his brother, and Cerrillo Sanchez. Our visit was the first by believers outside the mountain area, one reason for so much rejoicing.

"Cerro Tígre, and especially Quebrada Nigua, are farsighted in their dreams for their future spiritual and material development. The latter was a beehive of activity—bringing the scattered families into a central aldea (hamlet or village) and, through community cooperation, cutting and drying lumber for a center which, God willing, will also serve as a school for the area; clearing a helicopter landing pad; and building a fund for the future piping of running water into their village from the many streams and waterfalls in this area.

"An epidemic of influenza, leaving three deaths in its wake, had recently ravaged the area of Bocas de Remedios. On the initiative of the Local Spiritual Assembly, a medical mission was twice invited to come to their assistance. For the first time in the history of this community doctors came and promised to return; they returned on March 20. Our classes were suspended so that the health workers could fulfill their duties. They worked on into the night by the light of a flashlight lantern and the battery-operated slide projector we had brought with us. Around midnight when the medical team recessed for the night, the friends, in spite of their fatigue, begged us to show them some of the slides we had brought along. In the morning the medical workers continued with their program and the Bahá’í teachers began their long journey back home. The medical team, all young university-educated Guaymi men, were highly impressed by the initiative of the community, the organization and the smooth manner in which everyone cooperated. They promised that they would mention the highly meritorious work the Bahá’ís are doing. They had many questions about the Faith and expressed interest in receiving literature... One member of the team and his wife are currently lodging in Grace Dean's house in San Felix until they can find other accommodation.

"Many changes have taken place in Bocas de Remedios since our last visit. The friends, previously dispersed throughout the hills, have come together and constructed a small aldea. The location of the Bahá’í center has been changed and the center greatly enlarged. Plans are under way and a fund created to put in a cement floor and partial walls of bricks or native stone. In front of the center, an area has been cleared to serve as a helicopter landing pad."

Rwanda

Book published in Kinyarwanda language

The National Spiritual Assembly of Rwanda has approved for immediate publication in the Kinyarwanda language a Bahá’í children's book containing twenty-seven lessons. It is planned to make the book available inexpensively so that it may be widely distributed among Bahá’í communities throughout the country.
Amatu’l-Bahá in the Far East

by Bahá’í International News Service

Amatu’l-Bahá Ruhiyyih Khánum left the Holy Land on April 13, 1974, to attend the first Convention of the Bahá’ís of Hong Kong as the special representative of The Universal House of Justice. The formation at this Ridván of the National Spiritual Assemblies of Hong Kong, and South East Arabia, brought to 115 the number of national communities participating in the launching of the Five Year Plan.

En route to Hong Kong, Amatu’l-Bahá who was accompanied by Mrs. Violette Nakhiaváni, spent a week visiting the Burmese Bahá’ís and attending their Convention which, at the request of the Daidanaw friends, was held in their village instead of Rangoon, so they could receive the Hand of the Cause in their midst. The visitors were required to obtain special permission to stay overnight in Daidanaw and application was made and granted on the grounds that the distinguished guests from the Holy Land were co-religionists of Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rúmí and wished to visit his shrine.

Daidanaw is a prosperous village of some 2,000 inhabitants, about 1,800 of whom are Bahá’ís. The most impressive edifice there is the tomb of Muṣṭafá Rúmí, a large white building with a dome, in the center of which is the grave of this exemplary and much-loved pioneer and teacher who established the Cause in Burma in May 1878, accompanied by Jamál Effendi. Muṣṭafá Rúmí died at the age of 99 and was posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi, in 1946. The Guardian wrote that the resting place of Muṣṭafá Rúmí is the foremost shrine of the Burmese believers. In this single-roomed building the Bahá’í youth had arranged a very comprehensive book exhibit. Here Amatu’l-Bahá exhibited a framed lock of Baha’u’llah’s hair which she later presented as her personal gift to the newly-formed National Spiritual Assembly of Hong Kong. As the Daidanaw friends filed by to view the frame with its precious contents,
Amatu'l-Bahá anointed them with attar of rose, a deeply moving experience. Approximately 1,200 believers were present on this occasion.

In her addresses to the friends in Burma, Amatu'l-Bahá pointed out that theirs was an old and distinguished community much loved by both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. She reminded them that long ago they had provided the beautiful alabaster sarcophagus in which the Master placed the sacred remains of the Báb, and that 'Abdu'l-Bahá had called Daidanaw—one of the first Bahá'í villages in the world—"My village." In Burma and elsewhere she often mentioned the great example set by Muṣṭafá Rúmí as a pioneer, teacher and organizer and said that the firm foundation laid by this saintly soul almost a century ago is the reason for the depth of understanding and the devotion of the believers in Burma.

A dinner in Amatu'l-Bahá's honor was given by the National Assembly of Burma at the Ḥażíratu'l-Quds in Rangoon, attended by prominent guests and members of the press, at which Amatu'l-Bahá gave a talk about the Faith.

On her arrival in Hong Kong on April 24, Amatu'l-Bahá was met by a large number of believers from many countries. A press interview was held in a private reception room at the airport which resulted in excellent coverage on the Faith. At her own request, the following day she visited the island of Macau and spent the night there. The friends showered her with love and very happy hours were spent with the Bahá'í youth and at an evening meeting to which Bahá'ís brought close friends. Prompted by the enrollment during recent months of a number of Chinese and other distinguished new believers in the extremely united and active community of Macau, Amatu'l-Bahá in her remarks to the friends quoted her mother, Mrs. May Maxwell, who likened the growth of the Cause to that of a tree which grows in stages, suddenly putting forth new branches after a period of dormancy; such is the pattern of development of the Faith in many parts of the world.

Writing of the Convention in Hong Kong, Mrs. Nakhjavání reported: "It was a wonderful event for all. After many decades of labor and love by devoted pioneers, a number of whom have passed away, the tree of the Faith had reached its fruition. In many talks in the course of the Convention tribute was paid to these valiant souls who watched this joyous occasion from the Abhá Kingdom. Like the country itself, the Convention represented the mixed races of humanity, the newly elected National Spiritual Assembly itself demonstrating this in its membership which comprises Chinese, American, Persian, Indian and Filippino believers, representing the yellow, white, black and brown races of the world. In moving talks Amatu'l-Bahá highly praised the Chinese people and referred to the Words of the Master about China and its great destiny. She said that Hong Kong and Macau are not only the obvious gateways to the masses of the members of the Chinese race but must also constitute a reservoir of qualified teachers and pioneers to be drawn upon for teaching the many large Chinese communities throughout the world."

Amatu'l-Bahá then departed for India to attend a teaching conference in Bombay from May 23-26, one of a series to inaugurate the Five Year Plan, as well as a two-day youth conference held immediately thereafter. The report continues:

Amatu'l-Bahá's love for India and its people, and their love for her, is a well-known story! On arrival at the airport she was escorted to a large specially erected tent where over 200 excited and enthusiastic believers awaited her despite the intense heat and lateness of the hour. She was garlanded with many leis of fresh flowers in the beautiful way of India. Amatu'l-Bahá addressed the friends briefly, later shaking hands with each one who was introduced to her by name. In spite of a crippling transportation strike throughout the country, over 500 believers attended the conferences; a large number of guests were from neighboring countries. On the first morning of the opening conference, after two moving addresses by Amatu'l-Bahá, one in English and one in Persian, the friends, without the slightest urging or encouragement, spontaneously poured out a torrent of pledges, cash and personal ornaments. Although these were primarily for the construction of the new House of Worship in New Delhi, other objectives of the Plan were also supported.

A splendid dinner party was sponsored by the Bombay Spiritual Assembly in Amatu'l-Bahá's honor. More than 70 guests attended, including government ministers, court officers and distinguished government figures, who were obviously drawn to the Teachings of
Bahá'u'lláh as introduced to them by the guest of honor in her short talk. In addition, a press luncheon was held, as well as a radio interview, both resulting in good publicity. On several occasions Ruhiyyih Khanum held fruitful consultations with the National Assembly and the Board of Counsellors, both jointly and separately.

Amatu'l-Baha took the opportunity of visiting the New Era Bahai School in Panchgani where she was warmly received by the principal, staff and students and gave a number of addresses drawing much pleasure from the keenly intelligent questions of the youth.

The next few days were spent in Bangladesh where Amatu'l-Baha was accompanied, at her own request, by the Counsellor Shirin Boman. The report states:

Because of the turmoil and suffering this new State has recently passed through, Ruhiyyih Khanum's heart was greatly drawn to it and the Bahai community there; her stay in Dacca, the capital, and her short visit to Chittagong, were crowded with meetings, the most important of which undoubtedly was that with President Mohammadullah. The friendly and cordial interview lasted more than half an hour and created an opportunity for Amatu'l-Baha to present the President with a copy of Volume XIII of The Bahai World. She called his attention to certain sections of the book, assuring him that obedience to government and non-interference in politics are fundamental Bahai teachings.

The last two days of Amatu'l-Baha's visit to New Delhi were busy ones. On the first of these, she met with the believers in the National Haziratu'l-Quds, and was interviewed by the press and by the National Broadcasting Overseas Service. The report of the important events that were crowded into the last day states:

The National Spiritual Assembly had arranged four extremely important interviews with the highest officials. The first, at 10:30 A.M., was with the Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi, Mr. Baleshwar Prasad, with whom Amatu'l-Baha spoke at length about the erection of the House of Worship in that city, and the purpose and spirit of Bahai Temples in the world.

At 4:00 P.M. she had an interview lasting about 15 minutes with President V. V. Giri who received her very cordially, asked questions about the Faith in Iran, expressed his appreciation for the gift of Volume XIII of The Bahai World presented to him by the National Assembly, and listened with interest to Ruhiyyih Khanum's remarks about the Bahai attitude towards obedience to government, about the erection in the near future of a Temple in Delhi and about the statistical expansion of the Faith.

At 6:00 P.M. an interview lasting about three-quarters of an hour took place with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sardar Swaran Singh, during which not only the same points were covered but the discussion expanded to include Bahai relations with the United Nations. He was also presented with a copy of Volume XIII of The Bahai World...

At 8:00 P.M. an interview took place at the residence of the Minister for Home Affairs... to whom any important matter affecting the Bahai community in India ultimately might have to be referred... He was both courteous and cordial and undoubtedly gained from the interview a better understanding of the Faith. Important points affecting the Cause were drawn to his attention and in presenting him with Volume XIII of The Bahai World the world-wide nature of the Faith was made known.

Amatu'l-Baha was the cherished guest of the Bombay community at a reception held during a one-day stay before her departure for the Holy Land. Addressing the 300 believers in attendance, she thanked the friends of that city for their warm reception of not only herself but all the conference attendants and spoke with appreciation of the generous services the Bombay community is rendering the Faith. As it is the earliest Bahai community of India, she expressed the hope that Bombay would lead the way in fulfilling the goals of the Five Year Plan.
In memory of Grace Anderson

by Beth McKenty

Mrs. Grace Anderson, one of the first American Bahá'ís to be reared in a Bahá'í home, passed away September 19 after an illness of only a few hours. Her Bahá'í funeral, held two days later in Kenosha, Wisconsin, attracted many Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í friends and was a fitting tribute to her life of devoted service.

Blessed with meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His visit to Kenosha in 1912, she had the added bounty sixty years later of visiting the Holy Land as a pilgrim and being a guest in His home. She was active in the Faith all her life, although her modesty always led her to question her own ability to serve. She never recognized the sacrificial and devoted quality of her own deeds in this Faith.

For example, when she and her husband, Alfred, heard that arrangements had to be made for someone to live in the basement of the House of Worship during the days when the cement was being poured and the temperature had to be kept constant, they volunteered to take charge of this. “I was lucky enough to find work in a laundry not too far way—we didn't have paved streets in those days in the Temple area,” she later recalled. “I would go to work evenings and Alfred would work days. This way we could cover around the clock. That was really a privilege, because we lived right there on the grounds for about a year. It helped us always to feel very close to the House of Worship.” It seems appropriate that just three weeks before her death, she was able to attend a special meeting in the House of Worship addressed by the Hand of the Cause Abú'l-Qásim Faizí and she was one of those who lingered, enjoying the fellowship of that evening, until Foundation Hall was nearly empty.

In September 1972, when the sixtieth anniversary of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Kenosha was observed, Mrs. Anderson was interviewed at her home in Waukesha. It filled her with happiness to share her memory of being in the presence of the Master. Her gratitude to her parents for having accepted the Faith and for having brought her up to know and serve its Central Figures was evident in her recollections. “I was born June 24, 1893,” she began, “and I guess I kept my mother from going to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago that fall. We lived nearby, in Milton, Illinois, and I remember her saying later that she would have liked to attend, but I was just a few months old and she was busy with her home and with me.”

Grace was the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Benning who survived to adulthood. Her mother, Elvira, had lost two sons at birth and another daughter, Frankie, died at the age of nine. One of Grace’s early memories was of a Persian Bahá’í coming to Kenosha at a time when her mother was pregnant and very ill.

“My sister and I were sent next door to stay with a neighbor, as it was time for my mother’s confinement and there were complications,” she continued. “We stood in the yard, and saw a Persian man come to our well and get water. Then he went back into the house and gave some of it to my mother who later improved. (We heard afterwards that when he had arrived, my mother was being attended by a German nurse. He had asked for water, but the nurse didn’t think it would save my mother’s life and wouldn’t tell him where it was.)

My father always believed that my mother’s life was saved through the power of prayer. Dad never felt the water had done it, but he used to say, ‘Through the mercy of Bahá’u’lláh, she lived.’”

Grace said that because she and her sister had not yet seen a picture of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, but were very familiar with Him through the teaching of their parents and the Kenosha Bahá’í community, they assumed that the Persian who came to their home was the Master. “We bowed our heads when we
Mrs. Anderson made her pilgrimage to the Holy Land in June 1973, celebrating her 80th birthday there. She is shown above (second from the right, front row) with her fellow pilgrims. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kennel, of Waukesha, escorted her to the Holy Land.

We had at that time a big hall, quite long, and tables had been put together on wooden horses, with long boards on top and beautiful table cloths over these. We were then quite a big community, perhaps around forty. I don’t know who had started the custom, but in those days we had two chairs, one placed at the head of the table and one at the foot. The chair at the head was for Bahá’u’lláh and the one at the foot was for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Nobody ever sat in them. There was a red ribbon on each one and at Feast or any other gathering the chairs were there, ready and waiting. I don’t know who originated this but it was always done. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá came in and welcomed everybody with a smile. He walked straight to the chair which was His. Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to us, ‘This is where I am to sit.’

Of the meal itself Grace remembers the Master serving food to the children who were present and taking a number of them into His arms. She spoke of the room being filled with happiness and elation. ‘Of course, you drank in every word that He said and you liked to be as close to Him as you could, but you always had to help the others to get close to Him too,’ she recalled. ‘It was one of those situations where you had to be careful that you didn’t push somebody away. Everybody wanted to be close. Afterwards, when He had spoken, everyone went and shook your hands and spoke to you. The Master had asked that only one or two of us went to the next door and got tea out of the tea chest while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá came in.

When the Master first arrived in Kenosha, He went to rest at the home of Mrs. Emma Voelz. Mrs. Goodale lived upstairs and had put her apartment at the disposal of the Master and His entourage. Later in the day, He went to the hall, where a large crowd of Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís had gathered.

‘I can’t remember exactly what time He came,’ Grace said, ‘but my husband and I were in that crowd waiting for Him. The Master shook hands with each one of us, every single person who came up that stairway and approached Him. He was standing at the head of the stairs, near a railing that led towards a long hallway.’

Grace struggled for adequate words to describe the moment of that meeting. ‘It’s something you can’t explain, exactly. It’s not for anybody to describe unless they have themselves experienced it. I don’t think I can describe it, the moment when He shook my hand. The only thing I can liken it to at all would be an electric shock. Not unpleasant. But like something just kind of went through you. It thrilled you. And He looked at you. Right through you. And the first thing He did was to say to you in English, ‘Are you happy?’

‘That was all. Just that moment. And then you went on. Of course there were so many people, there was not the chance to do or say anything more then, but later in the evening when the crowds subsided and only the Bahá’ís were left, there was a big dinner.

Mrs. Anderson made her pilgrimage to the Holy Land in June 1973, celebrating her 80th birthday there. She is shown above (second from the right, front row) with her fellow pilgrims. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kennel, of Waukesha, escorted her to the Holy Land.

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hands with Him before leaving." Grace recalled, also, climbing into a balcony seat at the Congregationalist church when the Master spoke there. "The church was so crowded, every seat was taken. The Master greeted everyone from the platform and each word He said was eagerly received."

Some extra details of the visit remained clear in Grace's memory. She spoke of Mr. Epstein, the owner of a men's clothing store who had one of the few automobiles in Kenosha at that time. When he heard of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá he offered to drive Him to His engagements. "Mr. Epstein was crippled and had a hunched back," she mentioned. "He never became a Bahá'í but he always was very friendly to the Faith."

The experience of being a Bahá'í in a small Wisconsin community, rather conservative in its outlook, always seemed to Grace to be a great privilege. She remembered one day, when she was about fifteen, being asked by some school friends if she would like to attend church with them the following Sunday. Although she was inwardly dubious about it, she asked her father's permission and he immediately gave it. "So I went," she recalled, and began laughing at the memory of it. "I guess I had a little more nerve then than I've got now, because I noticed that when the minister gave his text, his sermon didn't match it. It didn't relate to it at all. So I went up to the minister after the service and asked him about it. I was curious, not having been to church before, and I asked if he would mind explaining what he meant by the text, and why he had read it but not talked about it. He said to me, 'I never talk about it.' So I said, 'Well, why do you read it then?' He answered, 'I read it because it is from the Bible.' I said, 'Shouldn't you talk from the Bible?' He said, ' Well, I do in the sermon.' I said, 'But the sermon had nothing to do with the text!' Then he said to me, 'Well, what do you think the text means?' I began telling him my understanding, from the Bahá'í books, and he said, 'I'm not going to contradict you but I don't know where you get your information.' I said, 'Well, I'm a Bahá'í.' Since that day, I haven't been back to church!"

Speaking of Bahá'í children's classes, she said that they memorized a great deal, later rememorizing passages when the improved translations became available. When she herself became a teacher, she wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá to ask what she should teach. He replied that it would be best to use the "Hidden Words" and other books then available, and that the children should be encouraged to memorize portions of these. "So that is what we did!" she said.

Perhaps the best tribute to Grace is that she would turn to the Center of the Covenant, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and follow implicitly the advice He gave. To experience hospitality in her home, to be with her at a Bahá'í gathering, to hear her sharing her precious memories with the friends, would help any Bahá'í to deepen in his understanding of the Faith, for her actions were permeated with the love of God, a wholehearted acceptance of His Manifestations, and lifelong efforts to serve His Cause and His servants. Distinguished in her fidelity to the Cause, she now enjoys her reward, and her earthly remains lie at the side of her husband's in a small cemetery outside of Kenosha, the scene of her memorable happiness.
The conference in Hawaii was called to material and spiritual action by the Hand of the Cause of God William Sears.

Hawaii 1974

Bahá'í International Youth Conference

by Salvatore A. Pelle
The Bahá’í International Youth Conference, held in Hilo, August 4-8, 1974, is now history. But for the 1,000 Bahá’í youth and adults from 35 countries who attended, it was a spiritual experience they will not soon forget.

From a platform banked with flowers and traditional decorations of the islands, three Hands of the Cause of God brought greetings from The Universal House of Justice. For three days the Hands of the Cause and a stream of Continental Counsellors, representatives of many National Spiritual Assemblies, Auxiliary Board members, and Knights of Bahá’u’lláh shared with the assembled friends recollections of past events as well as plans for future accomplishments. The spirit of the conference steadily grew as musical groups from the continental United States, from Alaska and from Hawaii contributed their talents to the program. Throughout the conference, the haunting words of the Master, “Look at Me. Follow Me. Be as I am” were sung by many groups and by the entire audience at the closing session.

The conference, the largest Bahá’í gathering ever held in the islands, was also the first international Bahá’í conference ever held there. It received the most publicity ever given to a Bahá’í event in Hawaii, and was instrumental in bringing the Faith to the attention of more people there than had ever before heard of it. More than 16,000 people attended proclamation meetings connected with the conference and many more heard of the Faith from radio and television broadcasts. On the three consecutive Sundays preceding the event KITV in Honolulu broadcast installments of a new half-hour program on the Bahá’í Faith entitled “The New World.” Newspaper ads announced the broadcasts.

As the friends arrived on Sunday, August 4, at the airport they were greeted and transported by bus to the conference registration area at the Hilo Civic Auditorium. There they received their conference badges, programs, folders, and other information. That evening the friends gathered for a Unity Feast Luau at Wailoa Park, a few blocks from the Auditorium.
Music and entertainment at the Luau was under the direction of Auxiliary Board member Healani Alama Hamilton. Presenting a court of Old Hawaii, with the costumes of the time, the entertainment featured the music and songs of various ethnic groups of the Pacific area.

On Monday the Bahá'ís visited the volcano area of Hilo by bus. Bahá'í Conference signs were all over the Hilo area—at the hotels, on the many conference buses, at the Civic Auditorium, at Wailoa Park, and at the dormitory. Conference meals—lunch and dinner—were served at the Wailoa Park where visiting Bahá'ís could enjoy the beauty of Hawaii's land, water, and sky as they dined.

The conference was officially opened by Carol Johnson on Monday evening, a Bahá'í youth from the Waianae Bahá'í Community. Tracy Hamilton, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands, welcomed the friends to Hilo. Greeting the conference on behalf of Hilo's mayor Bruce McCall was Miss Merle Lai, an administrative aide to the Mayor. The conference then had the joy of hearing from the Hands of the Cause of God H. Collis Featherstone, William Sears, and A. Q. Faizi bringing messages from The Universal House of Justice and the International Teaching Center.

Miss Lani Tamanaha, Chairman of the National Youth Committee of Hawaii, spoke of the challenges to Bahá'í youth today. She said they must not become complacent in the Faith and must never take it for granted. Bahá'í youth must prepare themselves now to serve the Faith in later years. They must do more than their share in teaching, proclaiming, pioneering, and supporting the Funds, she said.

In their various talks the Hands of the Cause of God brought inspiration, spiritual guidance, and the experience of their dedicated lives to enrich all who heard them. Mr. Collis Featherstone said the Guardian gave a very high station to those "who arise to serve the Cause." The Five Year Plan, he said, is oriented toward Local Spiritual Assemblies. Its major objectives are to preserve and consolidate victories won, to emphasize that Local Spiritual Assemblies are the bedrock of the Administrative Order, and to stress that the Local Spiritual Assemblies have the primary function of providing protection to the Faith and to the believers. There are, he said, two types of Bahá'ís: those who join the Faith for its social qualities, and those who upon joining fall in love with the Faith and become the servants of the servants. He called on the Bahá'ís to develop those distinctive characteristics that will proclaim to the world that they are "the new race of men." Conflict and contention, he said, are not the Bahá'í way. We should turn our vision outward to the masses of mankind and reach them—change their hearts and their minds with the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Featherstone said. Bahá'ís should read the Writings and then release those forces that are God-given forces.

The Hand of the Cause William Sears pointed out that the International Teaching Center, of which the Hands are members, is an institution ordained by Shoghi Effendi and Bahá'ís everywhere should encourage and nourish this body. The Center will coordinate teaching programs developed by The Universal House of Justice, and will provide the Supreme Body and the Continental Boards with the progress reports of activities throughout the Bahá'í World.

During a question and answer period Mr. Faizi said that this is an age of exploration and discovery—man, a miniature of the universe, should have material wealth, knowledge and other talents, all of which are God-given. However, Bahá'ís should remember that these gifts should be used for beneficial purposes and for education. These gifts are excellent servants but make the worst kind of masters. "Have them under your feet," Mr. Faizi said the Guardian once told him. When he was asked numerous questions dealing with present day world problems, Mr. Faizi said Bahá'ís should learn to base their answers to these questions on the Bahá'í writings—"It is time to train Bahá'í
ABOVE: Seals and Crofts headlined the entertainment at the public proclamation held in conjunction with the Bahá’í International Youth Conference. The proclamation held at the Civic Auditorium in Hilo attracted between 3,500 and 4,000 people. The event was also broadcast over local radio in Hilo.

UPPER LEFT: The Hands of the Cause of God attending the youth conference answered questions submitted in writing from the audience. Shown above from left to right are: the Hands of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi, H. Collis Featherstone, and William Sears. Shown on the right is the moderator of the afternoon program, David Habermann.

LOWER LEFT: Mr. Featherstone addresses some 1,000 Bahá’is attending the conference.
Many messages were read to the gathering. These included messages from the Hand of the Cause of God Dikru'llah Khadem regretting his inability to attend and sending love and greetings; from the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia; from the Bahá'ís of Holland; the Bahá'ís of Korea; and the National Youth and Goals Committee of Australia.

During the conference prayers were read in more than twenty languages. Entertainment was provided by the Jin-'Ai Singers, 25 Bahá'ís from the Seattle area. Mike Tanaka, formerly of Kona, Hawaii directed the singers. The Windflower group from Alaska also performed at the conference. From Hawaii, entertainment was provided by the New World Chorus, directed by Russ Garcia; by East of Midnight, a group from Kauai; by Steve and Bunny, also from Kauai; and by Sunshine Delight, from Oahu.

The conference exhibit area was located in a building adjoining the Auditorium. Exhibits promoting the Hawaiian teaching and pioneering goals were on display. A nursery for children of parents attending the conference was also conducted.

During one afternoon session Auxiliary Board member Gina Garcia and Russell Garcia conducted a panel on teaching through music and song. Seals and Crofts participated in the presentation. They told of their experiences in teaching through music, and said that greater numbers of people are staying to hear of the Bahá'í Faith after their concerts.

On Tuesday evening the National Spiritual Assembly held a banquet for approximately one hundred people, including civic and government leaders of Hawaii, at the C. Brewer Banquet Hall in Hilo. Among the guests were Mayor Bruce McCall of Hilo, and State Representative Stanley H. Roehrig, who was representing Governor John Burns. The Hand of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi, Dorothy Nelson, Dean of the School of Law, University of Southern California, and Judge James F. Nelson of the Los Angeles Municipal Court were the speakers. The Nelsons spoke on "A New Era of Justice." They attributed much of the present trouble in the world to a dwindling sense of purpose and pointed to Bahá'u'lláh's plan for mankind as the solution for man's ills. Entertainment at the banquet featured Frank Williams, a baritone, and Minou Falahi, a soprano, who performed songs and operatic selections. The master of ceremonies was Tony Pelle.

On Wednesday the conference program dealt with youth in the modern world. The discussion chairman was Continental Counsellor Richard Benson. Next was a session on "Pioneering-Culture Shock," with Counsellor Elena Maria Marsella as moderator. This was followed by a call for pioneers. More than sixty Bahá'ís responded to the call, volunteering to fill needs around the world.

On Wednesday afternoon youth again were the focus. The topic: "Youth—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." This discussion was conducted by a panel comprised of Continental Counsellor Suhayl 'Alá'i, Marsha Wolcott Gilpatrick, and Catherine Nourse. The Hand of the Cause A. Q. Faizi spoke again in the afternoon, followed by Auxiliary Board member Jack McCants, whose topic was "Today's Martyrs."

A public proclamation Wednesday evening featured Seals and Crofts, England Dan and John Ford Coley, and other singing groups present at the conference. Free tickets for the proclamation had been given out weeks in...
advance on the island of Hilo and were in great demand. The Bahá’ís placed an exhibit in the center of town to promote the Bahá’í teachings and the public event. Between 3,500 and 4,000 people attended the concert and received the Bahá’í message. As they left the auditorium the visitors were offered Bahá’í literature. The proclamation programs was also broadcast live on radio.

The conference closed on Thursday noon. That morning the Hand of the Cause William Sears addressed the friends, urging them to arise and serve the Cause. The Faith, he said, requires not only our teaching efforts and our spiritual growth, but it also requires our support for the Fund, which in turn supports the worldwide expansion of the Cause.

Several proclamation programs were conducted after the conference. On Thursday evening a public meeting was held on Maui at the War Memorial in Wailuku. About 150 people heard a talk by Maury Willows and music by England Dan and John Ford Coley, and other singing groups from Hawaii.

On Friday evening in Lihue, Kauai, more than 100 people gathered to hear talks by Dorothy and James Nelson and music by England Dan and John Ford Coley and the Hawaii New World Singers. The program was broadcast live over radio.

On Saturday evening at the Waikiki Shell in Honolulu approximately 12,000 people heard the Hand of the Cause William Sears proclaim the Bahá’í message, and were entertained by Seals and Crofts, England Dan and John Ford Coley, Windflower, East of Midnight, Steve and Bunny Gaines, and Sunshine Delight. After the program hundreds remained for a fireside with Seals and Crofts. Bahá’í literature was made available.

The Hand of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi addresses the opening of the Hawaiian conference.
Maud Bosio, a distinguished maidservant

An account of service rendered to the Cause in Italy

by Keith de Folo
Born an Episcopalian on Staten Island in 1899, she traveled to Florence in the early twenties and became an American expatriate. The journey of Emily Maude Waterworth Bosio to Italy was paralleled by a deeper and longer voyage through Catholicism, eastern philosophies, and skepticism—all a prelude to the discovery of the Bahá'í Faith.

Although she was 54 years of age when she declared as a Bahá'í in 1953, Maud Bosio's singular and firm dedication to the Faith greatly stimulated the progress of the Bahá'í community in Italy. Everyone who remembers Mrs. Bosio, Bahá'í or not, speaks of the strong "sense of duty" that spurred her to accept any and every assignment—on national committees, organizing conferences, large and small, traveling and teaching widely in Italy and Switzerland. Mrs. Bosio also served on the Florence Assembly and on the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy. In addition, she held memorable firesides in her home for many years.

"It seemed," a friend recently observed, "as if Maud were making up for coming late into the Faith—as if there would be no tomorrow."

When in 1928 Maud Waterworth married Gherardo Bosio, a talented Italian architect, she was a tall, willowy, blue-eyed American girl—the product of a well-to-do family and a correct education. As daughters were born to them, Mrs. Bosio turned her energy and ingenuity to rearing and educating her children. But she was troubled, because she had found no spiritual path. Her husband joined her search, and together they studied and investigated the Catholic doctrine. Finally, in 1940, they became Catholics. (Years later, Mrs. Bosio said: "Even then, I had serious doubts—many.")

Tragedy struck the young family when Gherardo Bosio died at the age of 38, the victim of a brain tumor. That was in 1941, and Mrs. Bosio spent the war years in Florence giving her four daughters the best education, food and lodging possible under strained circumstances. Then and later, during her own illness, the obstacles of life seemed to strengthen Maud Bosio. Adversities were challenges to be confronted and overcome. During the war years and afterwards, as she struggled for her family, she continued to search for a stronger faith—for a way of life that would bring meaning and sense to those years of tragedy in Italy.

She investigated everything that was offered, and ultimately rejected each. "None offered a help to all of humanity," she later said.

Then in 1948, Mrs. Marion Little, the vivacious and intrepid pioneer, came to Florence from America with the objective of building a strong Bahá'í community. In her bright, sun-splashed room on Piazza Santa Trinità, Mrs. Little spoke of the Teachings that were weaving all men into a tapestry of brotherhood. At first, Mrs. Bosio wondered if this were "another one of those strange American sects." She listened carefully and read some of the Writings. Again, she questioned, investigated, and tested what she heard and saw. And she found that this new Faith was not wanting.

At the time of her declaration in January, 1953, she told artist Edwige Poggi, an intimate friend: "At last, I have found what I need.

This was the start of fifteen years of unceasing service to Bahá'u'lláh. (Not long afterwards, two of her daughters declared, and her mother, Mrs. Margaret Waterworth, became a Bahá'í in Florence at the age of 87.)

When the news of Maud Bosio's conversion spread throughout the fashionable salons of Italy, she was criticized, pitied, and snubbed by many old friends. But that didn't bother or stop her. (Eventually, most of her friends learned something of the Teachings and came to understand her decision.)

On becoming a Bahá'í, she immediately started a series of firesides in her home. For the rest of her life, wherever she lived, Mrs. Bosio's firesides were strongholds of free inquiry, confirmation, and friendliness for young and old, for people of all colors and languages. Dr. Julio Savi, a physician in Bologna, frequently spoke at her firesides during the time he was a university student. He vividly recalled the meetings in the spacious Bosio apartment on the Lungarno Amerigo Vespucci:

"The beautiful paintings, the Rus-

When the news of Maud Bosio's conversion spread throughout the fashionable salons of Italy, she was criticized, pitied, and snubbed by many old friends.
sian icon, the Florentine oil lamps, the tall windows facing the River Arno—everything reflected her grace and gentility. But what distinguished those firesides was Maud’s love for people. A love that poured through that house, a love that brought in the spirit of God.”

When the Italo-Swiss National Assembly was formed in 1953, Mrs. Bosio began her service to that Assembly. Eventually, Marion Little, Honor Kempton, and she helped to open the first Italo-Swiss Summer School. Later, Mrs. Bosio served for many years on the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy. Preparing and executing plans for Assemblies and committees took nearly all of her time, but that’s what she liked—to be kept busy with Bahá’í projects.

Nothing made her happier than to fill her car with Bahá’ís and a lunch basket and head over the autostrade for Genoa, Mantova, Bologna, Milan, or Pisa. It was the bi-monthly trips to Pisa, organizing dinners, meetings, and seminars which laid the foundation for the present Pisa community.

Always, Mrs. Bosio refused to speak at public gatherings. Her talents were directed in contacting people, organizing and presenting the Faith in a dignified and beautiful setting. Dr. Savi explained the probable reason for Mrs. Bosio’s fear of the speaker’s podium:

“She thought—maybe she was told—that her use of the Italian language wasn’t very good. This was not true. She spoke beautifully, with the slightest American touch that gave it charm.”

This writer clearly recalls those firesides in the early sixties when the angular form of Mrs. Bosio rose and greeted every guest with an out-stretched hand. She always said a few, brief words in Italian to open the meeting—her right hand brushing through her light hair in an unconscious and unnecessary apology for her language.

During her fifteen years of service, Mrs. Bosio was usually a member of the Spiritual Assembly of Florence, the community that had been nurtured into life by Marion Little. Says Colonel Giulio Jacoviello, 78 years old, who was the first Bahá’í in Florence:

“The Faith made progress in Florence because of people like Signora Bosio. Never did she stop working. The Faith was more important to her than anything—even her health.”

In 1962, she made the pilgrimage to Haifa. This experience, she always said, gave her strength to go through the difficult days that lay ahead. Always seeking to serve her fellow man, she had an opportunity during the days after the great flood in Florence in November, 1966. She and other Bahá’ís visited families in the devastated areas of Florence, and distributed food, clothing, and medicine sent by Bahá’í communities from many countries. Not content with a single visit, the Bahá’ís saw the families many times and gradually, through actions and words, the meaning of the Faith was made clear to many Florentines.

In 1968, the National Assembly of Italy undertook the organizing of the Bahá’í Mediterranean Conference at Palermo, Sicily. Teresa Taffa, Sohrab Payman, and Maud Bosio were appointed to a committee to plan and supervise arrangements for the three-day conference in August. The committee went to Palermo months in advance to arrange hotels and food, contact officials, equip the auditorium, publish conference literature, and carry out many other tasks. Hardly resting, the friends worked in Palermo and often made trips to the mainland. Inevitably, the strain and weariness began to aggravate Maud Bosio’s physique, which had been weakened by various ailments over the years. She developed phlebitis in her right leg. During a quick trip to Florence only days before the conference, she consulted her physician. He examined the swollen leg, warned her of the danger of a blood clot, and ordered her to go to bed immediately. But Mrs. Bosio insisted on returning to Sicily and she did so despite the protests of family and friends.

The Mediterranean Conference, attended by nearly three thousand Bahá’ís, was a great success. The Faith was publicized throughout Italy and Europe. Following the conference, Mrs. Bosio and a few friends stayed on to attend to a few details, then she returned to Florence, exhausted, but filled with happiness.

On September 8, the night of the Feast of Might, Maud Bosio suffered a heart attack. For three weeks, she lay in a hospital near Faesole. On October 2, 1968, she passed away.

Today, there is a simple marble headstone over the grave of Maud Bosio at cypress-ringed Allori Cemetery on a hill above Florence. No word can describe the motivation for life that coursed through Maud Bosio. Dr. Julio Savi caught a glimpse of it after telling her that it was difficult for him to speak of the Faith to strangers.

“But you must. We must!” she replied. “Bahá’u’lláh has asked us to find the listeners.”
Symbol of Hope for Man

"It befiteth all men, in this Day, to take firm hold on the Most Great Name, and to establish the unity of all mankind. There is no place to flee to, no refuge that any one can seek, except Him."

"Arise before the nations of the earth, and arm thyself with the power of this Most Great Name, and be not of those who tarry."

"Address yourselves to the promotion of the well-being and tranquillity of the children of men. Bend your minds and wills to the education of the peoples and kindreds of the earth, that haply the dissensions that divide it may, through the power of the Most Great Name, be blotted out from its face, and all mankind become the upholders of one Order, and the inhabitants of one City."

Thus Bahá'u'lláh addresses mankind in this Day of God (Note 1). What is this "Most Great Name" or, as it is often called, "The Greatest Name?" Hand of the Cause Mr. Faizi explains (Note 2): "The identity of the Greatest Name, a mystery concealed from time immemorial behind the mystic veil and preserved in the treasure house of the knowledge of God, was to be revealed and manifested to men's eyes at its appointed time in accordance with the Divine Plan, like the other manifold and basic truths of the New Age."

There are many forms of the Greatest Name, both verbal and symbolic. Many Bahá'ís display one form on wall plaques in their homes. This is the invocation Ya Bahá'u'll-Abhá, which means "O Glory of the All-Glorious." It is displayed sparingly and in a dignified setting.

Another form, an emblem believed to have been designed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá (Note 2) and penned by the famed Bahá'í calligrapher Mírkhín-Qalam, is commonly known as the "ringstone symbol" because of its use on Bahá'í rings and other jewelry. It also adorns the Shrine of the Báb. It is made up of the letters "B" and "H" in Oriental script intertwined in such a way as to symbolize the interrelationships among God, His Manifestations, and man.

Part of the symbol comprises three levels that represent the underlying belief that forms the basis of all the religions of God:

The first level is the World of God, the Creator. 

The second is the World of His Manifestations.

The third is the world of man.

The symbol demonstrates the function of the Manifestations by having the three levels joined by a vertical representation of the World of God's Manifestations: The Manifestations thus join the World of the Creator to that of His creation.

The twin five-pointed stars on each side of the central emblem represent the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, the twin Messengers of God for this Age. ★★

It is this symbol that is available to Bahá'ís on rings, pins, brooches and pendants. Worn in this way, it serves many purposes. It is a mark of recognition among Bahá'ís throughout the world. Among friends and acquaintances who are not Bahá'ís, the symbol often becomes a point of discussion and provides opportunities to teach the Faith.

But perhaps most important when we wear it, the symbol of the Greatest Name reminds us of how man can never recognize God and attain His presence without His Manifestations. It keeps before us the twin duties of recognizing God's Messenger for this day and of obeying Him.

Inexpensive enameled, gold-plated Bahá'í identity jewelry is now available to Bahá'ís in most parts of the world.

For those wishing rings that can be worn all the time, solid gold rings are available with the ringstone symbol engraved in the gold, or with ringstones carved with the emblem and inlaid with gold. Also, separate ringstones are available in natural gems of carnelian, onyx and agate, as well as synthetic gemstones representing aquamarine, blue sapphire, amethyst, ruby, topaz, peridot, white sapphire and emerald. These handcrafted gemstones can be set into rings by a competent jeweler.

Information on where to obtain these materials may be obtained from the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A.

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Note 1 - Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pages 203, 28 and 333 - 334.

Note 2 - "Explanation of the Emblem of the Greatest Name" by Hand of the Cause of God 'Abdu'l-Qásim Faizi in Bahá'í News No. 451, October 1968, pages 8-12.
The graceful ringstone symbol at the heart of each piece of enameled jewelry is gold-plated and set into various backgrounds. There are inexpensive rings that can be adjusted to fit nearly any finger, with matching pins, brooches and pendants. These have a cloisonné enamel background in red, green, blue or black. Because they are inexpensive, they are not designed to withstand continuous wear or abrasion.

**How to Order**

Your local Bahá'í librarian or authorized Bahá'í distributor may have this jewelry in stock or he may be able to supply you with prices and ordering information.

If, however, this jewelry is not available in your area, please write to the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A., for information on where it may be obtained.

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Display kit of one of each of the five designs, assorted colors: Product Number 20686.
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COVER PHOTO

The Hand of the Cause of God Ruhíyyih Khánum being greeted by fellow Hands of the Cause, National Spiritual Assembly members and the friends upon her arrival at the St. Louis airport.

PHOTO AND DRAWING CREDITS


POSTAL INFORMATION

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Cablegrams

St. Louis Conference invested with singular significance

27 AUGUST 1974

WITH HIGH HOPES AND HEARTS OVERFLOWING WITH JOY WELCOME CONVOCATION BY CHIEF PROSECUTORS DIVINE PLAN CONFERENCE ST. LOUIS. UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER ITS ATTENDANCE EXTENT ENTHUSIASM DETERMINATION RANK FILE BELIEVERS UNIQUENESS OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED THEM THIS CRUCIAL HOUR FORTUNES THEIR NATION AND MANKIND OPENING STAGE FIVE YEAR PLAN ALL COMBINE INVEST THIS CONFERENCE WITH SINGULAR SIGNIFICANCE ANNALS OF BELOVED FAITH. FERVENTLY PRAYING HOLY SHRINES ABUNDANT BLESSINGS MAY DESCEND SURROUND THIS EPOCHAL CONFERENCE ENABLE IT BECOME VEHICLE RELEASE FRESH SPIRITUAL ENERGIES ENTIRE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY EARLY ATTAINMENT SHINING GOALS FIVE YEAR PLAN PAVE WAY FOR STILL GREATER TRIUMPHS AS WE APPROACH CLOSING DECADE FATE-LADEN RADIANT CENTURY. DO NOT RELEASE THIS CABLE NOW TEXT TO BE READ FIRST BY AMATUL-BAHA.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

South American Counsellors offer collaboration on pioneer goals

AUGUST 23, 1974

WHOLEHEARTEDLY PRAYING COMPLETE SUCCESS YOUR CONFERENCE. OFFERING COLLABORATION ACHIEVEMENT PIONEER GOALS SOUTH AMERICA. DEEPEST LOVE.

CONTINENTAL BOARD OF COUNSELLORS

Greetings from Hawaii

AUGUST 29, 1974

LOVING GREETINGS FRIENDS ASSEMBLED FIRST CONFERENCE FIVE YEAR PLAN. PRAYING OUTSTANDING SUCCESS GLORIOUS OCCASION LAUNCHING NEW PLAN. HAWAII REPRESENTATIVE AYALA ARRIVING FRIDAY AFTERNOON. ALOHA.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY BAHÁ'IS HAWAII

Early victory Plan expected by Indian believers

TO: THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD, NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, CONTINENTAL BOARD OF COUNSELLORS, AUXILIARY BOARD MEMBERS AND ALL THE FLOWERS OF HIS GARDEN GATHERED AT THIS, THE GREATEST COUNCIL MEETING. OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU DURING YOUR GREAT MEETING. THE SPIRIT AND LIGHT THAT IS BEING CREATED FROM ST. LOUIS WILL FILL THE HEAVENLY CONCOURSE WITH JOY. THE FIVE YEAR PLAN WILL BE FULFILLED MANY MONTHS AHEAD OF TIME.

DAN R. YAZZIE, CHAIRMAN,
LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY BAHÁ'IS OF DINNEBITO, ARIZONA.
Victory requires intense commitment

More than 10,000 Baha'is attended the First National Bahá'í Conference of the Five Year Plan in St. Louis August 29-September 1. The conference was the largest gathering of Bahá'ís in the history of the Faith. The decision of the National Spiritual Assembly to conduct this event anticipated by several months the request of The Universal House of Justice that national conferences be held fittingly to launch the new Plan. Preparations for the St. Louis gathering took nearly a full year to complete. For the United States the conference represented the final stage in the phased launching of the Five Year Plan. It was, as the National Assembly said in its annual report, "... the complete call to arms—the mobilization of all detachments of the Army of Light toward the conquest of their assigned objectives."

The Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiyyih Khánúm attended as the representative of The Universal House of Justice. She addressed the friends on two occasions. "This Plan will undoubtedly be of tremendous historical significance," she said at one point, "but just at what point it is coming in the fortunes of mankind we do not yet know. None of us knows what the years ahead may contain in the form of chastisement for mankind, of catastrophe, or world change, paving the way for the establishment of the oneness of mankind and the establishment of the Lesser Peace within this century." During her stay in St. Louis Ruhiyyih Khánúm also met with Mayor John Poelker at his City Hall office. The Mayor proclaimed August 25-September 1 Bahá'í Week in St. Louis and he attended the Saturday morning session personally to welcome the Bahá'ís to the city. The Mayor's proclamation stated that the greatest challenge facing mankind was the recognition of the oneness of mankind.

First National Bahá'í Conference of the Five Year Plan

Five other Hands of the Cause of God attended and each had the opportunity to address brief remarks to the thousands of Bahá'ís assembled there. The Hands present were Abú'l-Qasim Faizi, Collis Featherstone, Dikr'lláh Khádem, John Robarts and William Sears. The four Continental Counsellors for North America, Mr. Lloyd Gardner, Dr. Sarah Pereira, Mrs. Velma Sherrill and Miss Edna True attended, as did many members of the Auxiliary Board.

In its presentation the National Assembly announced the selection of three states visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá—California, Illinois, and New York—for special programs of intensive teaching and consolidation activities. Five cities visited by the Master will also receive special attention. These are San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Washington, D.C. At the time of the conference, pioneering assignments to six countries had been completed, the National Assembly announced. (The International Goals Committee expects to have goals in 13 countries completed by 37 pioneers by early October. It also expects to send out 60 pioneers by Ridván 1975, completing half of the specific preliminary goals assigned to the United States in the new Plan.) "With inflation an increasing problem in all parts of the world, we are hastening to acquire properties in the countries assigned to us," the Secretary of the National Assembly said, "and hope to have those in Bermuda and the Bahamas before the expiry of this coming year." A special two-year plan for youth was announced, as well as a five-year plan for the state of California.

A highlight of the National Assembly's activities in St. Louis was its meeting with representatives of hundreds of the Nations's Local Assemblies. The purpose of this unusual meeting, the first of its kind in the United States, was, according to the National Assembly, "... to establish a closer relationship between the National Assembly and the local administrative bodies, and to evoke a feeling of the direction the Local Assemblies should take during the next five years in order to prosecute successfully the solemn mandate given them by The Universal House of Justice..." Among the
The National Spiritual Assembly decided that the conference must accommodate children in order to get parents involved," she said.

The considerable attention given to publicizing and advertising the events at St. Louis by the National Assembly reflected their importance. In addition to using the large amounts of free radio and television time offered by broadcasters in the city, and to encouraging press coverage of the extensive proceedings, the National Assembly sponsored a paid advertising campaign that used radio, television, and newspapers to proclaim the Faith. The advertising agency that handled the campaign estimated that the materials were seen at least 11 million times during the week.

That meant, the agency estimated, that 80 percent of the 2.5 million people in the metropolitan area read or heard of the Faith an average of six times. Reinforcing this advertising were thousands of posters, handbills, and special invitations distributed by local communities throughout the area. Stories on the Bahá’í Faith and the conference activities were published in local newspapers every day (The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, one of two St. Louis dailies, is among the ten largest papers in the country). A brief story was printed in The New York Times on September 1, the last day of the conference. Several hours of radio and television time were devoted to conversations and news interviews with Bahá’ís.

An exhibition in St. Louis of 23 paintings by the celebrated painter Mark Tobey, a Bahá’í, also contributed to the public’s awareness of the Faith. The exhibition at Washington University’s Steinberg Hall was sponsored jointly by the University and the National Spiritual Assembly. The paintings were loaned by Bahá’ís in different parts of the country. The University reported significant public interest in the exhibition, which ran from August 15 until September 5. This display of Tobey paintings served as a prelude to a larger showing scheduled to go on view in St. Louis in early December. The exhibition at the University received extensive publicity, all of which gave prominence to Mr. Tobey’s association with the Bahá’í Faith.

Communities urged improve Bahá’í life

An appeal from the Hand of the Cause Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum to improve the quality of Bahá’í community life and make it “the talisman that will draw mankind quickly under the shadow of Bahá’ulláh” and “hasten the advent of the Kingdom of God on earth” drew prolonged applause from thousands of Bahá’ís gathered at the opening session of the First National Bahá’í Conference of the Five Year Plan in Kiel Auditorium Thursday evening. Describing the goals of the Five Year Plan given by The Universal House of Justice, Rúhíyyih Khánum urged the friends to concentrate on improving the quality of...
...individual lives and their contribution to the life of their local Baha'i community.

Later, at the Kiel Auditorium, the words of Ruhiyyih Khanum left no doubt that humanity was facing dark, though also glorious, times. "We stand at the threshold of another of those great plans of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Divine Plan," she said. "I sometimes think we make things unnecessarily complicated in this world. The broad outlines of things are always simple. You can have as many details by the time you are finished with a subject as you care to have, but it seems to me the basic truths are simple.

"Really, we Baha'is are experiencing part of a love affair, the love affair begun very, very long ago, when God (according to different traditions and writings) seems to have gotten tired of being by Himself. He wanted someone to love Him, and so He made man. It seems to have been just as simple and just as beautiful as that. That is the whole history of our species, a love affair between God, our Creator, and the soul of man. We came into this world because He wants us to know Him and when we go out, we are drawn ever nearer towards our Creator, if we have developed our spiritual capacity ..."

It is towards this development of our spiritual capacity, she added, that the great teaching plans are borne from the Tablets of the Divine Plan of the Master. "Into this drama comes the Best Beloved, the One to Whom this planet seems to have been introduced by God. This is Bahá'u'lláh's planet. He offered it long, long ago in some mysterious way we do not understand and He will go on for 500,000 years, a period of time that is very dazzling to consider. "We Bahá'ís find ourselves at this tremendous juncture in history, when the Supreme Manifestation has come, when mankind is coming of age. He wants to give mankind a gift at this period of his maturity. This is really what our religion is about and everything Bahá'u'lláh has given us is a key to this period of man's early adulthood, leaving behind the period of its childhood. The way that this revelation of God, the first stage of educating us in our privileges and joys, is beginning, is called the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Baha."

In moving terms, Ruhiyyih Khanum described the importance of the Five Year Plan. "This Plan will undoubtedly be of tremendous historical significance," she asserted, "but just at what point it is coming in the fortunes of mankind we do not yet know. None of us knows what the years ahead may contain in the form of chastisement for mankind, of catastrophe, or world change, paving the way towards the establishment of the oneness of mankind and the establishment of the Lesser Peace within this century.

"Nothing happens haphazardly in the Cause of God. We know there is an impetus from the Concourse on High and that they will assist as the Local Spiritual Assemblies try to implement ways in which community life will improve."

She cited the example of villages in underdeveloped countries, where pioneers encouraged the new believers to meet together at dawn, even if it was only for a few minutes of shared prayer. "The pioneers tell the friends they will find something in their life spiritually from this that will help them through their day's activities with a different spirit. Why do we in the West not do this also? It should not only be done in the villages."

Referring to 16 goals outlined by The Universal House of Justice in a new pamphlet which will soon be available, the Hand of the Cause urged the friends to carry on the teaching and consolidation work simultaneously, to make great efforts towards improving the quality of life within the Baha'i community, to reach out into every stratum of society and never to withdraw loving attention from the friends of the Faith, even those who do not officially enter its ranks. She recalled the painful example of an early Covenant-breaker: who successfully won to his own evil designs many of the friends made by the Master during His visit to this country.

"It is only the words of the Manifestation of God that have the power to
regenerate man," she declared, urging that teaching be expanded as consolidation takes place.

"As the Local Spiritual Assemblies are reinforced and the friends support their decisions, more and more of the believers in each community will be drawn into active service for the Cause of God.

"One of the things that thrilled me in the message of The Universal House of Justice about this Plan was the instruction to begin the nucleus of a joint spiritual life in our communities," she added.

"If we Bahá’ís can wholeheartedly promote the work of the Five Year Plan," she promised, "we will not only accomplish its goals but we will bring much quicker healing to the ills of our society. Let us direct our love towards Bahá’u’lláh, so that we will become able to love His followers with that impersonal, unchanging love that is unaffected even when we see things we do not admire or like. She concluded with words of encouragement, picturing the advent of the Kingdom of God on earth.

St. Louis gathering largest in history

"We will see new believers entering our Faith by troops if we as individual Bahá’ís make an intense commitment to teach the Faith and to live a distinctive Bahá’i life," Glenford Mitchell, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, assured almost 10,000 Bahá’ís in an address at the Friday morning session of the St. Louis Conference.

Recalling the victories of the Nine Year Plan, when American believers exceeded by 2,000 the goal of 3,000 localities set by The Universal House of Justice, Mr. Mitchell called for the same great effort in this current Plan.

"Surely we can strive to have a Bahá’í living in each county of the country," he suggested.

To implement the plan set by The Universal House of Justice in anticipation of great expansion in the numbers of Bahá’ís on the homefront, the National Spiritual Assembly has named California, Illinois and New York as special goal areas, with the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago and New York chosen for concentrated attention. "When we thought of the singular position of Washington, D.C., visited so many times by the Master and not located in any state, we decided to add it to our list of special goal areas," explained the National Assembly Secretary.

Mr. Mitchell also focused attention on world needs facing the American Bahá’í community.

"Pioneer goals for six countries have already been filled and it is believed this number will be raised to 13 by September," he announced. "With inflation an increasing problem in all parts of the world, we are hastening to acquire properties in the countries assigned to us and hope to have those in Bermuda and the Bahamas before the expiry of this coming year."

He mentioned a unique situation in which the Local Spiritual Assembly of Fort Lauderdale had offered teaching assistance in the Bahamas. "The International Goals Committee is encouraging continuation of this successful effort," said Mr. Mitchell, "which will greatly help in building the Local Spiritual Assemblies necessary before the establishment of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahamas, as assigned to us in the Five Year Plan."

Bahá’ís warmly applauded news of a new believer in the Falkland Islands, a dentist, whose work has taken him to goal areas throughout the islands. "The National Assembly had been worried due to the departure from this important goal of two pioneers, but the Faith is greatly strengthened by a local person of stature entering it. Here we have to establish five groups by the end of the Plan."

As well as the special states chosen for concentrated teaching effort, Bahá’í youth throughout the country are receiving a letter from the National Spiritual Assembly giving them a special role in the Five Year Plan. "We are hoping the youth will become transmitters of spiritual medicine to our fellowmen," said Mr. Mitchell, "not channels for the social pathology which now afflicts so much of our society."

"On this fateful occasion of the launching of the Five Year Plan in the continental United States, we turn again with high expectations to the Bahá’í youth for the particular contributions of ‘spiritual energy, zeal and..."
idealism' which they abundantly possess, for without such dynamic qualities the Plan cannot succeed," he declared. Goals for the youth include dispersing at least 100 homefront pioneers, undertaking 500 domestic circuit-teaching trips, sending out 25 international pioneers, raising the number of Baha’i college clubs to 350 and establishing 100 local youth clubs with the sponsorship of Local Spiritual Assemblies.

To the Baha’i community at large, Mr. Mitchell addressed an appeal for each individual, group and Local Spiritual Assembly to engage in regular study of the Teachings. "Each is encouraged to begin such a program now," he said. "The great success we achieved during the Nine Year Plan will remain intact, and we will attain greater success, if we gain more knowledge of God’s purpose for man, and particularly of His immediate purpose."

In addition, he called upon each Local Spiritual Assembly to adopt one or more of the following goals: to raise a neighboring group to Assembly status or open a new locality.

"If you have succeeded in opening a locality, please try to stay at your post," urged Mr. Mitchell. "If you must leave, bring someone in to take your place, or enlist the help of the nearest Local Spiritual Assembly or your District Teaching Committee to retain the light of the Faith in that area. By all means, let us not abandon localities or permit Local Spiritual Assemblies to fall into jeopardy. Our hope is to build communities to at least 15, to prevent the accidental loss of these precious institutions when believers find that they have to move out of a community."

Some of the steps he recommended for newly-formed Local Spiritual Assemblies included bringing the number of adult believers to fifteen, meeting regularly for devotional and deepening meetings, supporting the local and national Baha’i Funds with regularity and observing the Feast on the actual Feast day.

Reaching new believers from diverse backgrounds, such as Armenian, Basque, Spanish-speaking, Indian, Greek, and Chinese, is also a prime goal for the American community, Mr. Mitchell said. "We are forming special committees to reach into these vitally important areas of our community, and hope for full support in those teaching activities from individual Baha’is and communities alike."

Elaborating on the special plan for California, Mr. Mitchell announced the goal of 999 localities, and 95 Local Spiritual Assemblies in the state, as well as opening the remaining six countries which do not yet have Baha’is. In addition, California believers will attempt to incorporate 50 additional Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Communities urged educate children

The Hand of the Cause of God A. Q. Faizi interrupted an extended journey through North America to attend the St. Louis Conference. In his presentations there he repeated a theme he had frequently voiced in Baha’i communities on his route of travel: the education of children. The following are brief excerpts from his talks on education at St. Louis:

We all may forget the greatness and the glory and effectiveness of this conference in the near future, but the children, those susceptible angels of God, will never forget the conference. They will forever remember that they have been in an immense gathering, in rooms as large as football fields. To their imagination, everything is great. They played, learned, made music, sang songs, painted, and had wonderful days when their parents were attending the conference. This is the rock foundation of the Baha’i education given to the children. They will always remember. Even now they are pleading with their mothers and fathers, please take us to all the Baha’i conferences.

Why do we lay so much stress and emphasis on this particular point? Because, in contrast with all other definitions of children given by the rest of the world, Baha’u’llah calls them treasure houses of God given to their parents. In these treasure houses there are specific jewels. This means talents, potentialities, responsibilities and many other things deposited by the hand of God in these little treasure houses. The function of the community of teachers and parents is first to un-
earth this treasure, to discover the jewels which have been deposited there by the hands of Might, polish these jewels, and then to let the whole of humanity benefit from them. That is why this great service rendered (by children's teachers at the conference) will be greatly rewarded by God.

**Dawn prayers said at "Gateway Arch"**

Shortly before dawn on the third day of the St. Louis Conference a caravan of buses began to traverse darkened city streets carrying busload after busload of the friends to Eero Saarinen's other-worldly "Gateway Arch" on the banks of the Mississippi River. As the buses arrived, the Bahá'ís—more than 3,000 of them—walked across the empty parking lots towards the 630-foot tall concrete and steel arch, which St. Louisans consider the entrance to the American West. Two large columns split from the main group as they neared, moving swiftly to surround the arch.

In a moment the program began. One by one speakers raised their voices in praise of God, beseeching His assistance in the work of the Five Year Plan of The Universal House of Justice. With the opening verses of the first Bahá'í chant the red glow of morning filled the gray clouds, slowly giving way, as the dawn prayer-meeting progressed, to the penetrating light of day.

The words of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, of His Holiness the Báb, and of the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, took possession of the listening-hearts, creating such an urge for unity that hands unconsciously reached out to clasp those of another friend of God. That congregation stood motionless when the prayers had ended, afraid seemingly that the spell would be broken and that all would be swept from the beach-head of peacefulness and yearning so gracefully established.

Many gathered around an old Persian believer, whose age, dignity and joy were a magnet drawing others to her. Slight of build but standing firmly on the grassy field, she showed in her face an assurance gained in sixty years of active teaching. To the question, "Are you happy to be here?", she answered:

"I see the Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh. I see His Holiness the Báb. I see the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I see the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. I see the Greatest Holy Leaf. They are all present here. We are in their presence and they bless us." As she moved slowly away, surrounded by her loving relatives, she praised the Lord with a poem of Táhirih.

As the friends returned to their hotels to get ready for the day's first session, they could savor the promise of the Master, "He shall open unto you the doors of His knowledge, fill your hearts with His love, rejoice your spirits by the wafting of His holy fragrances, illumine your faces by the Manifest Light and elevate your names among the people." (Bahá'í World Faith, p. 386)
More then 3,000 Bahá'ís join hands around the "Gateway Arch" at dawn to offer prayers for victories in the Five Year Plan.

From Badasht to St. Louis

an evaluation of the first Bahá'í conference and the largest

by Dhibru'lláh Khádem
The beloved of all hearts, Shoghi Effendi, emphasized that the Conference of Badashn should be the source of inspiration for all Baha'i conferences and that the spirit of that Conference should be reflected in all of them. In Badashn, the site of that historic gathering organized by Baha'u'llah, the clarion-call of the new Order was sounded. Recently in St. Louis more than ten thousand people from every region of America and from many countries in the Baha'i world arrived to participate in the final step of the phased launching of the Five Year Plan in the United States. At the end of four days the believers streamed from that arena ready to strive to establish still farther afield outposts of the new Order. The Conference at Badashn was the first in Baha'i history. St. Louis was the largest. But these two milestone events are related in other interesting and significant ways, some of which will be explored in this article. It begins with an account of the Conference at Badashn and will follow with a discussion of the conference in St. Louis, held August 29-September 1.

The Conference of Badashn

"The Blessed Beauty made elaborate arrangements for Tahiri's journey to Badashn and sent her off with an equipage and retinue. His own party left for that region some days afterward." 1

*The original of this Tablet was sent to Shoghi Effendi by Mr. Khadem. A photocopy, from which this reference is taken, is still in his possession.

**It was in Mashhad that Mullá Husayn received the most glorious honor and gift from the Báb (His green turban) together with the command to unfurl the Black Standard and hasten to Jaziriy-i-Khadra'. It was in Mashhad that Mullá Husayn, in obedience to the Báb's command, later hoisted the Standard and, waving it before him, led two hundred and two of his companions out of that city (they were gradually joined by others). It was this Standard which "was carried aloft all the way from the city of Mashhad to the shrine of Shaykh Tabarsi," "the same standard of which Muhammad, the Prophet of God, had thus spoken: 'Should your eyes behold the Black Standards proceeding from Khurásan, hasten ye towards them, even though ye should have to crawl over the snow, inasmuch as they proclaim the advent of the promised Mihdí, the Vicegerent of God.' " (Nabil, Dawn-Breakers, pp. 324, 351)

When the Conference of Badashn was held at the beginning of the summer 126 years ago, the Báb was a captive in the fortress of Chihriq in the mountains of Adhirbayjan. As He Himself had predicted. He was confined for nine months in the fortress at Mah-Kú, whereupon He was transferred to Chihriq. 2 On His way in captivity the friends had begged Him to flee, but He replied, "The mountains of Adhirbayjan too have their claims." 3 In a Tablet of the Báb, as yet unpublished, 4 He asked how the wayward people could have been tested had He not consented to be confined in those mountains, and how the truth of the saying of the Imam Bāqir, the fifth Imam, ("The things which will happen in Adhirbayjan are necessary for us, nothing can prevent their occurrence." 4) could have been fulfilled.

From His captivity the Báb urged His followers to "hasten to the Land of Khá'," the province of Khurásan, 5 where Quddús and Mullá Husayn had kindled amazing devotion in the hearts of the people of Mashhad (the capital). 6 Many were still on their way there when the historic events of Khurásan ended. On His way back from Khurásan, Quddús, the eighteenth Letter of the Living, whose station was second only to that of the Báb, arrived in the hamlet of Badashn at the hour of dawn. There he encountered a great number of his fellow believers. He resumed his journey to Sháh-Rúd, however, but was informed en route "... that Bahá'u'lláh and Tahiri had, a few days before, left Sháh-Rúd for that hamlet; that a large number of believers had already arrived from Isfahán, Qazvin, and other towns of Persia, and were awaiting to accompany Bahá'u'lláh on His intended journey... " 7 "No sooner had Bahá'u'lláh been informed... of the arrival of Quddús at Sháh-Rúd that He decided to join him. Attended by Mullá Muhammad-i-Mu'allim-i-Núrí, He set out on horseback that same evening for that village, and... returned with Quddús to Badashn the next morning at the hour of sunrise." 8

Upon His arrival in Badashn "Bahá'u'lláh rented three gardens, one of which He assigned exclusively to the use of Quddús, another He set apart for Tahiri... and reserved the third for Himself." 9 The eighty-one disciples who had gathered from various provinces were His guests from the day of their arrival to the day they dispersed. 10 Abdu'l-Bahá shares with us the beauty of the scene and the details of these gardens:

*In Badashn, there was a great open field. Through its...
“The effulgence of Thy face flashed forth and the rays of Thy visage arose on high; 
Then speak the word, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ and ‘Thou art, Thou art’ we will all reply.”
—from a poem by Ṭāhirih

center a stream flowed, and to its right, left, and rear there were three gardens, the envy of Paradise. One of those gardens was assigned to Quddús, but this was kept a secret. Another was set apart for Ṭāhirih, and in a third was raised the pavilion of Bahá'u'lláh. On the field amidst the three gardens, the believers pitched their tents. 9

“In those days the fact that the Báb was the Qá'im had not yet been proclaimed.” 10 Even though the traditions of Islam stated that the promised Qá'im would come with a new Book and new Laws, the believers were not fully aware of the fact that the Revelation of the Báb represented the Dawn of a New Day and that His Teachings would abrogate and repudiate the ancient laws. It was Bahá'u'lláh, with the assistance of Quddús, Who arranged through the memorable gathering at Badasht to make the friends fully aware of these grave realities.

“Evenings, Bahá'u'lláh, Quddús and Ṭāhirih would come together.” 11 According to the ‘Kashfu’l-Ghīā’, a decision had been previously arrived at between Quddús and Ṭāhirih, in accordance with which the latter was to proclaim publicly the independent character of the Revelation of the Báb, and to emphasize the abrogation of the laws and ordinances of the previous Dispensation. Quddús, on the other hand, was expected to oppose her contention and strenuously to reject her views. This arrangement was made for the purpose of mitigating the effects of such a challenging and far-reaching proclamation, and of averting the dangers and perils which such a startling innovation was sure to produce (P. 211).

Bahá'u'lláh appears to have taken a neutral attitude in this controversy, though actually He was the prime mover and the controlling and directing influence throughout the different stages of that memorable episode.” 12

Although Bahá'u'lláh “was the possessor of countless and boundless perfections,” 13 was praised in the Qur'an as the Lord of the Day of Judgment, the Remnant of God, was referred to by Isaiah as “Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace,” 14 through the Divine Wisdom, and because of the immaturity of man, He remained “still behind the veil of glory.” 15 It is not inappropriate to note certain references to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh in the Islámic traditions. In the year 59 (1843, a year before the declaration of the Báb), Qá'im and Qayyúm (the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh), it was prophesied, would both manifest with all the virtues and powers of revelation, and that together Their fame would become known. However, the year 59 belonged to Them as the year prior to Their declarations. Qayyúm (Bahá'u'lláh) would also not declare until after Qá'im (the Báb) was martyred, the traditions said, and He would remain silent for a total of eleven years. 14

This Hidden Treasure (Bahá'u'lláh), Who loved to be known, decided in Badasht to appear with His Most Great Name (Bahá), the Name which had been a concealed mystery and which adorns each of the 114 Surihs of the Qur'an. The inscription “El-Bá, Bahá'u'lláh.” (B means Bahá'u'lláh), in Arabic, adorns the margins of some of the Latin editions of the Qur'án published in Turkey.

The following reference to the name of Bahá'u'lláh and to 'Akka was made over 1300 years ago: “'ERE long God will shine from the face of Bahiyu'l-Abá [the Glory, the Most Glorious] with the name of Bahá, on the Day of Absolute, in the plain of 'Akka.” 17

The writer, when quoting these and similar references to the prime minister of one country was told, “It seems you Bahá'ís have gone to great lengths to add those passages to the Holy Books.” And the reaction of a dignitary in another country was that Bahá'u'lláh must have given Himself that Name because He knew of these references. He didn't stop to think that if Bahá'u'lláh was the only one to have that knowledge then He must have been the Promised One Who was exiled to 'Akka; and that He had not proceeded there by His own Will.

“On each of the twenty-two days of His [Bahá'u'lláh's] sojourn in that hamlet He revealed a Tablet, which was chanted [by Mírzá Sulaymán-i-Núrí] in the presence of the assembled believers. On every believer He conferred a new name, without, however, disclosing the identity of the one who had bestowed it. He Himself was henceforth designated by the name Bahá. Upon the last Letter of the Living was conferred the appellation of Quddús, while Qurratu'l-'Ayn [Solace of the Eyes] was given the title of Ṭáhirih. By these names they were all subsequently addressed by the Báb in the Tablets He revealed for each one of them.” 18 The Tablets read at Badasht may in fact be considered the first Tablets revealed by the pen of Bahá'u'lláh.

All Things Made New

Quddús and Ṭáhirih had a passionate love for Bahá'u'lláh. They could not have failed to recognize Him and know His station. Quddús in responding to the Qur'ánic hymn of glorification and praise, “Holy, holy, the Lord our God [Subhuhun Quddús], the Lord of the angels and the spirit.” 19 intoned for him by a band of enthusiastic admirers, directed their attention instead to Baqiyyatu'lláh, the Remnant of God, Bahá'u'lláh. “The Baqiyyatu'lláh will
be best for you if ye are of those who believe," he said. Táhirih, the pure, "the noblest of her sex in that Dispensation," praised Baha'u'llah in one of her glorious poems:

"The effulgence of Thy face flashed forth and the rays of Thy visage arose on high; Then speak the word, 'Am I not your Lord?' and 'Thou art, Thou art' we will all reply.'"

She also extolled Baha'u'llah in the Conference of Badash with the title of the 'potent King' mentioned in the Qur'an.

"Each day of that memorable gathering witnessed the abrogation of a new law and the repudiation of a long-established tradition." The spirit heightened constantly, until "the clarion-call of the new Order had been sounded." The fixed hour reached, the Great Resurrection made manifest the rise of Qa'im and Quddus in such a manner that those who were watching her were unable to tell to which of the two she was alluding. Immediately after, she declared: 'I am the Word which the QA'im is to utter, the Word which shall put to flight the chiefs and nobles of the earth!'

'\[Read the Surih of the Inevitable,\] said Baha'u'llah; and the reader began: 'When the Day that must come shall have come suddenly . . . Day that shall abase! Day that shall exalt! . . . and thus was the new Dispensation announced and the great Resurrection made manifest. At the start, those who were present fled away, and some forsook their Faith, while some fell a prey to suspicion and doubt, and a number, after wavering, returned to the presence of Baha'u'llah. The Conference of Badash broke up, but the universal Advent had been proclaimed.'"

Surih 56—The Inevitable

When the day that must come shall have come suddenly, . . .
Day that shall abase! Day that shall exalt!
When the earth shall be shaken with a shock, . . .
And they who were foremost on earth—the foremost still [Quddus and Táhirih]. . . .
These are they who shall be brought nigh to God,
In the gardens of delight; . . .
No vain discourse shall they hear therein, nor charge of sin,
But only the cry, 'Peace! Peace!'
And the people of the right hand—oh! how happy shall be the people of the right hand! [believers gathered]
Amid thornless sidrahs. . . .
And in extended shade,
And by flowing waters,
And with abundant fruits, . . .
Praise therefore the name of thy Lord, the Great.

Surih 75—The Resurrection

It needeth not that I swear by the day of the RESURRECTION, . . .
He asketh, 'When this day of Resurrection?'
But when the eye shall be dazzled, . . .
And the sun and the moon shall be together,
[the sun, Muhammad; the moon, 'Ali; 'Ali Muhammad, the name of the Bab]
This verse confirms a well-known tradition addressed to 'Ali by the Prophet Muhammad in the book of Váfi
"There will be one advent for me and two for you, once before Muhammad ('Ali-Muhammad, the name of the Bab) and once after Husayn (Husayn-'Ali the name of Baha'u'llah)."

On that day man shall cry, 'Where is there a place to flee to?' . . .
Bahá is enjoyed fellowship and music in the Boulevard Room of the Jefferson Hotel at the close of each day's conference program.

On that day shall face beam with light. 
Outlooking towards their Lord: . . .

The St. Louis Conference

The First National Bahá'í Conference of the Five Year Plan, which manifested the spirit of the historic Conference of Badasht, opened in St. Louis with an exciting devotional program in praise and thanksgiving to the Author of our glorious Cause, and with a message from the Supreme Body of the Faith, The Universal House of Justice. This conference was the largest ever held in the history of the Faith. Attending were more than ten thousand followers of the Greatest Name, recruited from many nations, tribes, races, and colors of the globe.

The purpose of the conference was to proclaim the Faith to the world, and to discuss the fulfillment of the goals of the Five Year Plan of The Universal House of Justice, launched by that Body through its representatives, the Hands of the Cause of God, as standard bearers, at National Bahá'í Conventions around the world.

The convener of the conference was the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, a divinely-ordained institution, its members the generals of the Army of Life in this country.

The participants at the Conference of Badasht in the cradle of the Faith were the 81 Dawn-Breakers who went to offer up their lives in the path of their Beloved at a time when the call of God had reached only two countries, Persia and 'Iraq. The participants at St. Louis were thousands of the spiritual descendents of the Dawn-Breakers, an envious title conferred upon the Bahá'ís of America by the beloved Shoghi Effendi himself. They came to the conference in the cradle of the Administrative Order to follow the example of their spiritual ancestors in offering their time, their resources, their very lives—to serve and sacrifice for Bahá'u'lláh. They responded to the call of His House of Justice at a time when the love of Bahá'u'lláh is filling the whole world, as the waters cover the sea, and His Message is penetrating all the corners of the planet, to cities and villages whose very names—according the beloved Guardian—are difficult to pronounce.

During the Conference of Badasht, the Báb, the Prophet-Martyr and Herald of Bahá'u'lláh, was a captive in the mountains of Adhirbaiján. He is no longer in captivity. The light of His might and dignity has dazzled His admirers, and His promise addressed to His Blessed Self ("Be patient, O Apple of My eyes. Verily, God has pledged with Him Thy might in all the lands") has been fulfilled. He, exalted be His Name, now sits upon His Throne of dignity. And as a consequence of the astounding labors of the beloved Shoghi Effendi, the Sign of God on earth, the Queen of Carmel (the Shrine of the Báb), in all its glory, with all of its embellishments, has become a Supreme Paradise, one of the wonders of the planet, and the spiritual world center of the Cause of God. The Ark of God (The Universal House of Justice), long prophesied by the Tongue of Power and Glory (Bahá'u'lláh), has sailed on the mountain of Carmel; its guidance is apparent everywhere. It was apparent, for example, at the St. Louis Conference where the friends prepared to exert themselves to teach the Faith, and to vie with one another in winning the goals of the Five Year Plan.

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh was heralded in the Bayán, the Mother Book of the Báb, written while He was a Prisoner at Mah-Kú: "Well is it with him who fixeth his gaze upon the Order of Bahá'u'lláh. . . ." A year later the clarion-call of that new Order was sounded at Badasht.

Today that new Order is firmly established. We have seen the Constitution of the House of Justice published, and the Seat of Legislation, one of the goals of the Five Year Plan assigned to the World Center, is on the verge of construction. According to the beloved Shoghi Effendi, "The Ark of God will be built around the Arc." No wonder that "Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh," and the eyes of every dweller of the earth is each day witnessing the collapse of the present order. Lord, increase my astonishment in Thee!

How earnestly we wish that the beloved Shoghi Effendi, who so often quoted from memory the verse from the Tablet of Carmel, "Ere long will God sail His Ark upon Thee," who urged the believers to pray and to await the fulfillment of the prophecies of that glorious Tablet, and who did not leave us before he brought it into its embryonic form, were present amongst us to witness all these glories, the choice fruits of his strenuous labors.

How ardently we wish that he were with us and that we could hear him melodiously exclaim, with joy and excitement, "Bi-binid fuyūdāt-i-Jamāl-i-Mubārak-rā!" (Behold the bounties of the Blessed Beauty [Bahá'u'lláh]); or to hear his sweet voice echoing along Mount Carmel, reciting one of the poems of Bahá'u'lláh that refers to the growth of the Faith in the West, "O beauty of God, unveil Thyself so that the sun may rise from the West": or to hear him confidently exclaim, "The Cause will become a flame in America." O beloved
To mitigate the effects of the challenging proclamation of the Báb, Quddús and Ţáhirih agreed that she should publicly proclaim the independent character of the Revelation, while he should reject her views.

Shoghi Effendi: “For how long should these torrents of tears stream from my every eyelash! Multitudes are praising Thee with a passionate love, whilst Thou art absent from amongst them.”

At the Conference of Badasht Bahá'u'lláh Himself was present. At the St. Louis Conference His blessings and bounties were apparent. At some of the sessions many cried for joy continually, as if in those sessions they saw reflected the Kingdom from on high. The participants were surrounded by the showers of the abundant bounties of Bahá'u'lláh. They felt in spirit the presence of their Beloveds, Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, as well as the presence of the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Purest Branch, the mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Letters of the Book, the Leaves of Sidrah, the Afnán, the Hands, the martyrs, and all the promoters of the Faith. What a joy! What a bounty!

At the Conference of Badasht a new name was bestowed upon each of the participants. In St. Louis all felt they were numbered among the “chosen” rather than the “called” (Jesus said that many are called but few are chosen) and that the names of all of the believers, as Bahá'u'lláh said, are more known to God than to themselves.

At Badasht “the veils that guarded the sanctity of the ordinances of Islam were sternly rent asunder...”

In St. Louis, the call of peace, goodwill, love, and the oneness of mankind, was raised and proclaimed; the signs of the Kingdom of the Father were apparent; discussions were held on strengthening the foundations of Bahá'u'lláh's Commonwealth, Bahá'í life, etc.; and the call of Yá Bahá'u'lláh! Yá 'Alíyyu'l-A'Lá! was raised to the heavens from the hearts and lips of more than ten thousand believers.

Bahá'u'lláh has shared with us the exalted words He heard in the Siyáh-Chál, the Black Pit in the slums of Tihrán where He was imprisoned: “One night in a dream, these exalted words were heard on every side: ‘Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy pen. Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee, neither be Thou afraid, for Thou art in safety. Ere long ye will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate in the firmament of your country the light of Divine Guidance and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life... 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... Be not concerned with the smallness of your numbers, neither be oppressed by the multitude of an unbelieving world... Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious.”

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Finally, as at the Conference of Badakh, where the believers, invited to befittingly celebrate that great occasion, "the day of festivity and universal rejoicing," arose and embraced each other and with unparalleled enthusiasm left the Conference, while "mountain and valley re-echoed the shouts with which that enthusiastic band," journeying to the arena of martyrdom, "hailed the extinction of the old, and the birth of the new Day," the participants in the gathering at St. Louis determined, with unprecedented joy and excitement, and with the saying "Ya Bahá'u'lláh, Ya 'Alíyyu'lla'h!" raised aloud, to follow the way of their great Exemplar, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They closed the conference by singing the hymn "Look at Me, follow Me, be as I am, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá." The floor and ceiling seemed to vibrate as their voices strained to reach the heavens and penetrate to the Abhá Kingdom. That beautiful hymn brought tears to the eyes. The friends left the conference for the arena of action and sacrifice, many embracing each other as they left. The spirit of that conference prompted many to vigil and raising the call of "Ya Bahá'u'lláh, Ya 'Alíyyu'lla'h!" throughout the West: Nabil's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahá'í Revelation, trans. and ed. Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1932), p. 243. 3. "O, that I could travel." 'Abdu'l-Bahá, crying out from the depths of His soul, gives utterance to His longing, in a memorable passage, in the Tablets of the Divine Plan addressed to the North American believers, "even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and raising the call of "Ya Bahá'u'lláh, Ya 'Alíyyu'lla'h!" 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! '" 

Please God, we may achieve it!

Notes

3. Ibid., p. 236.
4. Ibid., p. 259 (note).
5. Ibid., p. 269.
6. Ibid., p. 292.
7. Ibid.
10. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp. 31-32.
11. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, pp. 200-201.
15. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, A Traveller's Narrative, p. 3.
17. Dala'il'u'l-Irfán, p. 156.
18. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p. 32.
23. Ibid., p. 297.
24. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 201.
26. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 201.
28. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 201.
30. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 201.
31. From the Báb's Commentary on the Súrih of Joseph.
32. Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp. 324-325.
34. Ibid., p. 16.
35. From The Mathnavi by Bahá'u'lláh.
36. From a poem of Shaykh Bahá'í, well-known mathematician, 953 A.H. (circa 1571)-1031 A.H., who discovered the Greatest Name.
39. Ibid., p. 72.
42. Ibid., p. 298.

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A conqueror for St. Helena

The story of the indomitable Catherine Huxtable's heroic efforts to overcome great personal tragedy and pioneer for the Cause of God.

by W. G. Huxtable

Shortly before she died on the island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic Ocean, Catherine Huxtable received a written tribute from a medical specialist, Dr. A.T. Jousse, who was intensively studying the problems of the physically disabled. "Unfortunately, you have been faced with a progressive disorder for which the medical profession has nothing really to offer. That in itself is most discouraging, because each year you look forward to less physical activity and the decline is more rapid than that, due to the simple aging process with which we are all faced.

"I have no doubt, however, that your life has been greatly prolonged by your high motivation, and I quite agree with you that it has been very full. I think your influence has undoubtedly been much greater than that of most humans and much greater than anyone could evaluate . . ."

Catherine felt that most of the credit for her full and successful life should have gone to "Baha'ullah, Whose teachings will give anyone courage and power to fulfill his dreams . . ." Some of the credit she also ascribed to her husband and to her mother, her "generous, long-suffering helper."

Catherine Rudyard (Heward) Huxtable was born January 6, 1932 at Charlwood House, Charlwood, Surrey, England, to Lt. Col. Stephen A. Heward and Mrs. Helen (Bury) Heward. She moved with her parents on their return to Canada in 1939 and received her primary and secondary education at Havergal College and Bishop Strachan School.

When she was eight or nine years old she was observed to be falling frequently, she was unable to run and only climbed stairs slowly, and she tired easily. At the age of ten, muscular dystrophy was diagnosed. During the next few years, her back and legs weakened and later her arms too were affected. Her mother made arrangements for her to continue school using a routine as normal as possible but without gymnasium or outdoor recreation, and with a necessarily restricted social life. She could still walk, but with a poor sense of balance and frequent falling. However, she was able to attend Girl Guide camps during the summer. Those ten-day adventures living closely in a group with other girls and sleeping in tents or under the stars were memorable for her.

Catherine found it very difficult to accept the fact that she would be crippled. She used a wheelchair when she was fifteen but it took two years for her to accept its regular use as the means by which she could have a fuller, more flexible life. After leaving school at the age of seventeen she made a trip to England with her mother and sister. It showed her that life was far from over and she gained confidence when she realized that people treated her normally and seemed to like her.

Although the Heward family was financially comfortable, Catherine wanted to earn her own living in a useful way. She enrolled in a commercial art course but was unable to finish it because her arms were too weak to draw anywhere but at a desk, depriving her of the freedom of movement she felt essential for an artist. Shortly after giving up the art course, she was successful in obtaining work doing beautiful and delicate petit point pictures and jewelry which enabled her to earn small amounts of her own money.

Using the wheelchair, and assisted by her friends, she was able to enjoy a wider social life. She became interested in the ideas of the Unitarian Fellowship and was elected vice-president of its youth group.

She met her husband to be, Clifford Huxtable, at a university dance which she attended in order to listen to the music and to share the company of people enjoying themselves. Both Clifford and Catherine were strongly attracted to each other. Both were seeking meaning and purpose in their lives and they became drawn together to the Baha'i teachings. Catherine had become severely troubled by the prospect of becoming bedridden and found comfort and strength in the Baha'i teachings on the spiritual meaning of tests and difficulties. Clifford and Catherine formally declared their faith in Bahá'u'lláh in April, 1952, in the home of John and Audrey Robarts whose teaching activities had been the initial indirect channel for their introduction to the Bahá'í Faith. They were married on May 7, 1955, in her parents' home where they lived for two years. Catherine added to her accomplishments by serving in the administration of the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith in

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Toronto, when elected to the Local Spiritual Assembly.

In November, 1957, the couple moved to Regina, Saskatchewan, a smaller city on the Canadian prairies, as pioneers. This move initiated an accelerating pace of pioneer service in the face of great obstacles. With the aid of Miss Eileen White who helped with the physical tasks of housekeeping, Clifford and Catherine’s first pioneer move, made despite the well meant remonstrances of some friends and relatives, proved successful. They aided the Regina community to develop on a self-sustaining basis. By the time of their departure it had doubled in number and became strong and united.

With confidence born of accomplishment, and in response to the renewed call for believers to enter the pioneer field, Clifford and Catherine left Regina in September, 1959, arriving on the Gulf Islands, off Canada’s west coast, in October. It was a source of great joy to them to be filling a goal specifically designated by Shoghi Effendi, the last one he chose. Cliff and Catherine were the first Bahá’ís to reside in the Gulf Islands. To move there they stepped onto a higher plane of determination and sacrifice. Catherine encouraged the move even though it meant her husband’s resignation from the security of a professional position in adult education and the outlook for work in the Gulf Islands was not encouraging. Catherine was unable to walk at all even with help, and they had to accept the uncertainty and low pay of unskilled manual labor. Clifford obtained work first making fences on a sheep ranch and then as a deckhand on the ferry boats connecting the islands and the mainland. A year after their arrival he was offered the position of principal of an elementary school and their income became more dependable again. Catherine also worked as a local representative for a firm producing household and children’s goods.

Catherine had a warm and sincere interest in everyone she met. Their home was open to all comers even to the sacrifice of her precarious health which was turned into a blessing, and her household and children’s goods.

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Catherine had a warm and sincere interest in everyone she met. Their home was open to all comers even to the sacrifice of her precarious health which was turned into a blessing, and her household and children’s goods.

Knight of Bahá’u’lláh Elizabeth Stamp was the first Bahá’í pioneer on St. Helena. She stayed at her post throughout the Ten Year Crusade, before returning to the United States for reasons of health. Mrs. Stamp died in Connecticut in 1970.

ment of attraction.

Within two years of their arrival in the Gulf Islands, a resident of the Islands, the first to do so, accepted the Bahá’í Faith in their home. The first public meeting in the Islands was held in May, 1963. The group had grown to nine by December, and Catherine was elected chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the Gulf Islands when that body was formed in April, 1964.

Though it had been assumed that the bearing of children might be unwise and possibly dangerous for Catherine, a son, Gavin Clifford, was born on June 27, 1962.

Having built the nucleus of the Bahá’í community on the Gulf Islands, Clifford and Catherine responded to the call of The Universal House of Justice in the Nine Year Plan, for Canadian pioneers to the island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic Ocean. Again facing the uncertainty of insecurity of income, their goal an isolated speck in the ocean on the opposite hemisphere, they sold their house and possessions and set out with their young child, winter approaching, to cross the continent on the first stage of her final odyssey.

Traveling by automobile, trailing a caravan with special fittings for the wheelchair and equipped for overnight stops, the trio spent three months visiting Bahá’í communities in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. In Montreal they stayed at the Maxwell home, the only Canadian home in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had stayed during his journey to North America. Catherine addressed meetings and a children’s class. This part of the journey, made at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, helped to develop in the Canadian Bahá’í community a heightened awareness of pioneering in preparation for the discharge of that community’s widening international responsibilities, anticipated in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. Their journey included a sojourn with her mother.

From Montreal they flew to Dublin, Ireland, and then to London, meeting and inspiring the friends in both centers. They departed from Southampton on March 29, 1966, on the R.M.M.V. Capetown Castle and arrived on St. Helena on April 9, 1966, living in a hotel and then in part of the ground floor of a town house. Four months later Clifford was appointed to a teaching position in the school system of the British colony. Once again their income became more dependable and the position opened to them a small government-owned house.

They were deeply interested in all the people on the island and made many friends from all walks of life. Although Catherine’s health was continuing to deteriorate, all who knew her were inspired and cheered by her warmth, keen intelligence, wide interests and courage. She continued to maintain a voluminous correspondence showing in her letters a sensitivity to the individualities of each of her correspondents. She continued to direct household affairs and supervised the care of her son, developing a close affectionate relationship with him.

On St. Helena, as had been the case throughout her life, the medical doctors who attended her went out of their way to ensure that she had the best possible care. However, the illness continued to progress and it became increasingly difficult for her to breathe. A machine was sent by friends from the United States in an attempt to help her respiration. After a few weeks of rapid deterioration of her health, she died in the early morning of October 25, 1967.

Her resting place in the hills of St. Helena is marked with a memorial contributed by Canadian friends and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Canada.
In the interest of world unity


by the Bahá'í International Community
The Bahá’í Faith has been closely associated with the non-political activities of the United Nations since the spring of 1947, when the National Assembly of the United States and Canada received accreditation as a non-governmental organization and was permitted henceforward to send observers to U.N. conferences and hearings. A year later the eight existing National Assemblies were recognized collectively as an international non-governmental organization under the title of “Bahá’í International Community.” In 1970 the Bahá’í International Community was granted consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, a 27-member agency charged by the General Assembly with responsibility for all the economic and social activities of the U.N. This recognition fulfilled a goal of the Nine Year Plan and a long-cherished hope of Shoghi Effendi. The result of this new status was that the Bahá’í International Community was able to submit statements and opinions on matters under consideration by the Economic and Social Council.

The Bahá’í International Community has for decades participated in regional and international conferences consulting on the critical problems facing the world community. Last January, for example, Bahá’í representatives attended the 25th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, submitting documents for consideration which described the position of women in Bahá’í communities and suggested ways in which the Bahá’í principles described could help to resolve injustices developing from the widespread inequality between men and women.

Bahá’í communities everywhere yearly demonstrate their concern for the world organization by participating in and sponsoring observances of the special United Nations days. These regular observances began during the lifetime of the Guardian and have become a regular feature of Bahá’í community calendars. Direct participation in U.N. programs gives Bahá’í communities a chance to demonstrate their abiding concern for the unification of the human family and for the establishment of a permanent peace. They also fulfill the Guardian’s instructions that Bahá’ís associate themselves with all U.N. activities that are consonant with Bahá’í principles.

The article which follows, compiled by the Bahá’í International Community, surveys the extent of Bahá’í involvement in these celebrations during 1973.

Alaska: Alaskan Bahá’í communities observed both United Nations Day and Human Rights Day. For UN Day the Haines Bahá’ís erected a display in a local bank and purchased space for newspaper publicity. Spruce Cape put on a slide program and had information on the event published in the local press. Ninna held a public meeting for both occasions. In Matanuska the Bahá’ís took part in a Human Rights Day luncheon sponsored by the Kiwanis Club, and handed out UN posters to the principals of the town’s three schools.

Australia: Bahá’í youth in Sydney formed part of a thousand-voice choir for the annual United Nations Day interfaith prayer service in the town hall. More than 5,000 people attended the service. The program consisted of prayers from the Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Moslem, Jewish, and Bahá’í holy books. The principal speaker at the event was 13-year-old Ruth Dun­can, a Bahá’í from Dubbo. Her subject was “Unity in Diversity.” One other Bahá’í read a Bahá’í prayer during the service. The entire program was filmed and taped by various Australian news services, and interviews with several participants, including Bahá’ís, were broadcast nationwide. One set of tapes were sent to the Queen of England as a memento, and one set to UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.

More than 30 events were planned by Bahá’í communities throughout Australia to celebrate the UN anniversaries. Observances included prayer meetings, picnics, film festivals and dinner parties. In its report to the Bahá’í International Community the Australian National Assembly said that Bahá’ís “responded in a fantastic way to our communications for carrying out United Nations activities.”

Bangladesh: In Dacca a sizable audience gathered to hear Francis Lacoste, chief of the United Nations Mission in Bangladesh, speak at a meeting sponsored by local Bahá’ís. The audience remained despite a cyclone that moved unexpectedly into the area.

Belgium: The Bahá’ís of Brussels co-sponsored a public meeting at the Brussels Sheraton Hotel with the Belgium League for the Defense of the Rights of Man and the Belgian United Nations Association. More than 10,000 invitations were issued for the event; one hundred people attended. The speakers were William Deswarte, vice-president of the League for the Defense of the Rights of Man, and Louis Hezunet, a Bahá’í from the Brussels community.

Bolivia: An exhibition of posters and a slide program on the United Nations were shown in Cochabamba’s Palace of Culture on Human Rights Day. The program was a cooperative venture between the Bahá’ís and the UN Information Center in Bolivia. Generous radio and newspaper coverage carried the story to the public.

Brazil: Bahá’i-initiated activities for both Human Rights Day and United Nations Day made the news in Brazil during 1973. The Bahá’í Institute of Porto Alegre, a primary school with more than 200 registered students, was the only school in an area of more than one-and-a-half million people to schedule an observance of United Nations Day. The program was given expansive coverage by two newspapers and two radio stations. Delegations of teachers and students from nearby schools attended the Institute’s program, which included a panel discus-
Baha'i public meeting was taped and later broadcast over radio three times. For Human Rights Day in Chad the Baha'is placed posters in downtown shop windows, and sponsored a radio program and a display in the university library. For Human Rights Day in Cameroon the Baha'is designed an elaborate display about the United Nations for the windows of a centrally located city shop owned by a local Baha'i. The display attracted the attention of the community newspaper, which published a large feature story on the Baha'i Faith.

Baha'is in Rio de Janeiro were invited by the Civil Servants Union to participate in a panel discussion on United Nations Day. Walther Garcia, the Brazilian National Assembly's United Nations representative, discussed the relationship between the United Nations and the Baha'i Faith. His talk was later published in the union's national newsletter.

The Baha'i community of Santo Andre focused on bringing these events to the attention of educational institutions. Slide programs were shown at schools ranging in enrollment from 150 to 4000 pupils. Nine separate presentations were made during a four-day period. The response was so enthusiastic that the Baha'is were asked to continue providing this service to Santo Andre Schools in subsequent years.

British Honduras: The Baha'is of Belize sponsored a half-hour radio program on Human Rights Day. A representative of the local UN office served as Master of Ceremonies for the broadcast, which reached an estimated 130,000 people. The Baha'i community also sponsored an essay contest in the city's secondary schools.

Cameroon: A UNESCO official addressed a public meeting organized by the Baha'is of Buea to commemorate Human Rights Day. Dr. Mihdi Samandari, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Central and East Africa, was chairman at the meeting, which was attended by approximately 40 people. United Nations and Baha'i pamphlets were distributed. The public meeting was taped and later broadcast over radio three times.

Chad: The only public recognition of United Nations Day in Chad came as the result of a program prepared by the Baha'i community there. The main speaker at the public meeting held at the Baha'i Center at N'djamena, the national capital, was a UNESCO official who discussed the major trends in the development of the world organization.

Dahomey, Togo, and Niger: Baha'is of these three West African countries sponsored a successful public meeting for Human Rights Day at the National Baha'i Center in Cotonou, Dahomey. The Attorney General of Dahomey, Alexandre Durand, a recent participant in the UN-sponsored Conference of Human Rights and the Law in Cairo, shared the platform with Mrs. Leslie Larsen Gottert, a Baha'i. Following their talks the UN film Workshop for Peace was shown.

Local cooperation was excellent: the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) office provided the film, posters and pamphlets which were displayed at the Baha'i Center, as well as transportation for participants in the event, the American Cultural Center loaned chairs, and the projectionist came from the French Cultural Center.

Ecuador: In Quito the Baha'i Club at Catholic University successfully proclaimed United Nations Day on campus. Posters were displayed throughout the university and a display with literature was set up in the main classroom building. More than 1,000 brochures were taken well before 9 A.M. In the evening a well-known economist spoke on behalf of the Baha'is on the subject of foreign trade. The United Nations flag was raised over the campus in the early morning and remained in place throughout the day. A report on activities in Ecuador appeared in Commitment, the official publication for Non-Governmental Organizations.
The UN Day Bahá'í exhibit at Catholic University in Quito, Ecuador.

published by the United Nations Development Program. A Human Rights Day observance at Catholic University had an equally encouraging reception.

Ethiopia: A discussion about the international activities of the United Nations went far into the night after a Human Rights Day program sponsored jointly by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Asmara and the National Assembly of East Africa. The guest speaker for the event was Kingsley D. Dube, senior information officer for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Mr. Dube's public talk dealt with the individual's human rights as embodied in the United Nations Charter. One of the questions for Mr. Dube from the audience: "Why do you mention only the Bahá'í Faith in relation to the United Nations?" As part of his response Mr. Dube said the Bahá'ís were a "like-minded organization."

Finland: Variety was the principal characteristic of Finnish Bahá'í observances of the United Nations anniversaries. Events included talks, films, slide shows, dramatic readings, and a dance performance. They were presented in, among other places, a university student lounge, a hotel ballroom, a coffee house, a theater, and a discotheque. The dance program was organized by Raija Kaeste, the only Bahá'í in her community. She organized a free dance performance by the town's children that illustrated concepts promoted by UNICEF. In Lahti the children received permission from the local government to sponsor a music and dance festival on United Nations Day. Brief talks on the purposes of the UN were presented between entertainment events. On Human Rights Day more than 100 people crowded into a discotheque to hear a presentation by a Bahá'í speaker.

Ghana: Two communities sponsored
United Nations Day observances during 1973. At Cape Coast the National Youth Committee sponsored a lecture at the Aggrey Memorial Secondary School where Dr. Amir Badiei gave a public talk. In Kumasi, the Local Spiritual Assembly sponsored a lecture at the University of Science and Technology. Dr. John Powell, a Baha'i affiliated with the university's Technical Consultant Center, gave the talk.

The Baha'i community was the only religious group invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to serve on an ad hoc committee to prepare the nation's observance of Human Rights Day. Gordon H. Jackson, Vice-Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, was designated to represent the Baha'is. He was subsequently invited to appear on Ghanaian television to explain the relationship between the Baha'i Faith and the United Nations. Mr. Jackson was asked later to be chairman of a symposium on human rights at the Accra Community Center.

Gilbert and Ellice Islands: In anticipation of United Nations Day the National Spiritual Assembly distributed background information materials on the observance to the colony's Director of Information. Printed materials on United Nations work as well as the Baha'i Faith were sent to the King George IV boarding school, to the island Teachers College, and to the Department of Education for distribution to all primary schools.

Iran: A Baha'i-sponsored meeting for Human Rights Day was attended by a large number of Baha'is and non-Baha'is. A display noting some of the major features of the Baha'i Faith and its relationship to the UN was exhibited publicly for a two-week period.

Principality of Monaco: “The celebrations of these two days had as their goal a better understanding of the general aims and activities of the United Nations as well as a presentation of the Baha'i point of view,” said Anne-Marie Dupeyron, Secretary of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Monaco. A Baha'i display on the ground floor of a city office building which had been exhibited for several months was modified to convey United Nations information as the dates for the observances approached. The changes in the display were reported in newspapers, and on radio and television.

Panama: About 100 people attended a Human Rights Day program in Panama City. Following the scheduled United Nations and Baha'i speaker presentations a national dance company performed traditional Panamanian folk dances. A local television station filmed portions of the program, which were on news broadcasts the following day. Articles about the gathering were published in the city's Spanish and English newspapers.

Papua and New Guinea: The only United Nations event in Lae was a meeting sponsored by the Baha'is. The Mayor of Lae and two Catholic priests were among the 40 people who attended.

Paraguay: More than 4,500 people from the town of Villarica (pop. 25,000) attended a special United Nations Day program sponsored by the Baha'i community. Several films about the UN and about the Baha'i Faith were shown and quantities of literature were distributed. A talk focused on the Faith's interest in the principles of unity and cooperation underlying the formation of the world organization.

Spain: Public meetings were held in a number of communities, accompanied by the distribution of United Nations and Baha'i literature. In Barcelona, for example, two Baha'is were interviewed by a local and a national newspaper prior to a public event there. In Palma de Mallorca (Baleares Islands) announcements of a public meeting were carried in five newspapers. One of the leading papers published a full-page interview with Francisco J. Gonzalez Martin, the Baha'i speaker at the event.

Switzerland: The National Assembly estimated that more than 100,000 people were informed of United Nations activities through the publication of more than 40 articles in Swiss newspapers on Human Rights Day. Public meetings were organized by Baha'is in such communities as Basel, Lugano, Binningen, Bienne, and Fribourg. A...
The graceful ringstone symbol at the heart of each piece of enameled jewelry is gold-plated and set into various backgrounds. There are inexpensive rings that can be adjusted to fit nearly any finger, with matching pins, brooches and pendants. These have a cloisonné enamel background in red, green, blue or black. Because they are inexpensive, they are not designed to withstand continuous wear or abrasion.

How to Order

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If, however, this jewelry is not available in your area, please write to the International Baha'i Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A., for information on where it may be obtained.

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COVER PHOTO
Five Auxiliary Board assistants were appointed in Ecuador. They are, from left to right: Luis Navas, Julian Menéndez, Patricia García, Patricia Muñoz, and Hermilio España. They are shown during a public meeting in Otavalo's central square on the last day of the orientation.

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Kenya:

Nairobi conference starts Five Year Plan

An active teaching program in Kenya, marking the launching of the Five Year Plan, is under way. A national conference in Nairobi, in May, blessed with the presence of the Hand of the Cause Rahmatu’llâh Muhájrír, gave more than 80 Baha'ís from all parts of Kenya an opportunity to become familiar with the goals of the Five Year Plan and for each to choose his or her particular area of service. News of the goals given to other countries and of successful teaching efforts around the planet, as well as some insight into the responsibilities for Kenya's particular goals, was given by Dr. Muhájrír.

Prayer, education, the family, the role of women and children, and the administrative order, were all subjects considered by the gathering. Classes on strengthening the Local Spiritual Assemblies were held. Dr. Muhájrír stressed the significance of the construction in Haifa of the building that will house The Universal House of Justice, and urged the friends to extend their service to meet the needs of this critical time.

United Nations World Environment Day also attracted full support from the Baha'ís of Kenya, who sent more than 1,000 invitations to attend a public observance in the Kenya Polytechnic building. Posters, and radio announcements in both Swahili and English on the Voice of Kenya, helped to publicize the meeting. A United Nations official and a member of the local Baha'i community participated in the meeting, which attracted a large audience.

Italy:

Annual summer school held at resort

The 1974 Italian Summer School was held at a seaside resort on the Adriatic coast, September 13-22. More than 300 Bahá'ís from 10 countries attended.

Hundreds attend summer school.

More than 300 participated in the Italian Summer School held September 13-22 at a sea resort on the Adriatic coast, Cesenatico. Counsellor Betty Reed and Auxiliary Board member Mario Piarulli taught classes. In addition, a number of seminars and workshops involved active participation by those attending. Through the planning of the Youth Committee, proclamation weekends carrying the Faith to nearby areas were planned at the school. Shown in the picture are some of those who took part in the sessions.
The summer program was organized into seminars devoted to such themes as parent-child relationships, and obedience and liberty. A coordinator was assigned to lead each seminar and to encourage the friends participating to consult on their subject exhaustively and apply the Bahá'í writings to their discussions.

A project of the Italian Youth Committee during the session was to recruit a team of traveling teachers to visit an area of the country still not opened to the Bahá'í Faith. The team was ready to leave at the close of the summer school.

Latin America:

Hand of the Cause encourages teaching

Reports of increased teaching activity and well-attended deepening classes have flowed into the Bahá'í News editorial office following the extensive travels of the Hand of the Cause, Abu'l-Qásim Faizi in South and Central America. At a teaching conference in Lima, Peru, in July, he encouraged Bahá'ís from Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile to plan immediately their participation in Five Year Plan activities, to involve their youth as much as possible in the teaching and deepening programs, and to retain the Bahá'í perspective “despite the pressures from the outside world.”

“We must all know that the aim of whatever we do is the unity of mankind, the central pivot of the religion of Bahá'u'lláh,” Mr. Faizi said. It is toward that point of unity that we are all marching, he added. Mr. Faizi recalled that the beloved Master gave us the Tablets of the Divine Plan during the First World War, “lest our energies be dispersed in many different directions,” and went on to explain that The Universal House of Justice expects us to focus our energies on winning the goals of the Five Year Plan as the greatest possible help to humanity at this time. He stressed that youth have the time, energy, and desire to do something valuable with their lives, and encouraged everyone at the conference to be steadfast and faithful in Bahá'u'lláh’s Cause.

Before the conference was adjourned
one of the Indian friends offered a farewell song, a typical Peruvian melody, on the “quena,” a type of flute; a Bahá'í from Ecuador said a prayer in Quechua; and all present joined in singing the Greatest Name.

The Bahá'ís gathered in Lima also commemorated the anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb, which fell during the conference period.

In San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador, Mr. Faizi met with Bahá'ís of Central America at a conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors. More than 200 attended, from Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the United States. Beginning immediately after the Feast of Words, the conference provided an opportunity for the Continental Counsellors to meet with Auxiliary Board members, and for members of National Spiritual Assemblies to consult on common goals; it also included workshops on proclamation, mass media, and the education of children.

During June, Mr. Faizi brought joy and inspiration to communities throughout Brazil. He was often accompanied in his travels by Counsellor Leontora Armstrong and Auxiliary Board member Rolf von Czekus. Mr. Faizi's busy schedule included: Recife, Bahia, Salvador, and Lauro de Freitas (where 200 friends turned out for an evening meeting), Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte (scene of crowded meetings for five days), and Sao Paulo (where a 10-day study course averaged an attendance of 40-60 in the afternoons and 60-80 in the evenings, with as many as 150 on the weekend)

Topics for his deepening classes included: “Education of Bahá'í Children,” “Education for Teaching the Faith,” “Love and Marriage,” and consideration of The Hidden Words as a repository of commandments for individual growth and perfection and of spiritual and administrative principles.

Cautioning the youth about the influence of the world today, Mr. Faizi used the analogy of trying to reach a drowning man. “You can reach down with one hand and pull him up, but if you give him two hands he will pull you in. Be careful of your companions and beware of their influence.”
Switzerland:

Swiss summer school holds twelfth session

In a chestnut forest above Lake Maggiore in the Ticino district of southern Switzerland, Bahá'ís from nearly twenty nations gathered during nine days in August for study and fellowship. Sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Switzerland, the twelfth Swiss Summer School fulfilled three objectives: to promote international friendship; to deepen the knowledge of the Teachings in the region between Lake Maggiore and Lake Como, a Five Year Plan goal for Italy and Switzerland; and to spread the vital teaching work. The theme of the school was stated by the Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlschlegel: “It is a law in the Bahá'í Faith to give the Word of God to other men just as we have been given it.”

During the school session nearly two hundred Bahá'ís and guests participated and exchanged ideas in classroom, seminar and round-table discussions, and they supported the public meetings at Locarno. Quick to recognize the news value of the Bahá'í School, Radio Bern and Swiss television conducted live coverage and interviews on several occasions.

Among the teachers at the school were Auxiliary Board member Anna Grossman of Germany, and Nicholas Janus, American pioneer to Belgium. Mrs. Grossman spoke on The Advent of Divine Justice, and Professor Janus attempted to outline the system of universal education brought by the Manifestation of God.

Dr. Mühlschlegel addressed the friends on the second day of the school. He said the path to self-realization is love, worship, and service to God. “We pay homage to God through illuminated actions, which effectively teach our fellow men,” he said.

Dr. and Mrs. Mühlschlegel worked as a team at the school, as did other Bahá'í couples. Ursula Mühlschlegel spoke about the role of every Bahá'í in the local and international spheres, in the Five Year Plan.

Another class of special interest to the friends was the six-hour course on Islam given by Dr. Massoud Berdjis of Germany. In this course, he presented information on the Prophet's life, the Qur'an, and the development of the Islamic faith and civilization. Italy sent two teachers, Agnese Boerio of Turin, and Hassen Avaregan of Rome. Mrs. Boerio spoke on God’s Covenant with man and of man’s responsibilities to God in this day, while Professor Avaregan dealt with 19th-century prophecies and the universal signs of the Manifestation.

Two Swiss pioneers to Zaire, Africa, Otto Jung and J. P. Laperches, contributed impressions of their five years in the field with their families.

United States:

House of Worship chairs reupholstered

A crew of artisans from Gulfport, Mississippi, has been busy reupholstering and refinishing some 1,200 chairs in the auditorium of the House of Worship for more than three months.

Fred Baker and his wife Lola, owners of Baker Interior Decorating Service of Gulfport, read about the proposed repair work in the November, 1973, issue of The American Bahá'í. Mr. Baker has been a furniture builder for 40 years; his wife is an interior decorator.

When their offer of assistance was accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly, the Bakers brought their staff and equipment from Gulfport and set up shop in the basement of the House of
Worship shortly after the St. Louis Conference.

The chairs are removed from the auditorium in sections of 100 to 130, and taken to the basement work area. First the old upholstery is stripped from the frame, and the old finish removed. The necessary repairs are made and the chairs refinished with lacquer.

The chairs, Mrs. Baker said, are soundly constructed of maple and are still better than any that can be bought today at reasonable prices. They are being reupholstered in antique taupe velvet. More than 1,300 yards are required to do the job, now scheduled to be completed in mid-December.

Working with the Bakers are their daughter, Amelia; James Davis, an employee who was not a Baha'i when he arrived in Wilmette, but who declared after less than a week at the House of Worship; and Robert Stoakley of Batavia, Illinois, who introduced the Bakers to the Baha'i Faith 15 years ago when he was an employee of their firm in Mississippi. Volunteers from the Wilmette area have provided assistance as well.

The Bakers have also redecorated rooms and furniture at the Haziratu'l-Quds, and at the Bahá'í property at 121 Linden Avenue. Some of this furniture, which was quite worn, belonged to the Hands of the Cause Amelia Collins and Horace Holley.

Mr. Baker at the House of Worship in Wilmette.

Ecuador:

Auxiliary Board trains assistants in Ecuador

An orientation institute for five newly appointed assistants to Auxiliary Board members was held October 5-12 in Otavalo, Ecuador.

The assistants are appointed at the discretion of the Continental Counsellors in zones where it is felt they are needed. In its letter of 7 October 1973 providing for the appointment of assistants the Universal House of Justice said their aims should be to “activate and encourage Local Spiritual Assem-
Continental Counsellor Raul Pavón congratulates Herminio España on his selection as an assistant to the Auxiliary Board.

The new assistants to the Auxiliary Board attended classes in the mornings and afternoons, were assigned to study volumes of Bahá’í writings independently, cooperated in developing materials for proclamation, and participated in a mass teaching exercise in Otavalo's central square.

A morning class on the Covenant was taught by Auxiliary Board member Patricia Conger, who explored its importance in a week-long series of lectures and extended discussions. A second Auxiliary Board member conducted an afternoon workshop on creating useful and effective visual aids for teaching. Their use in teaching the Faith in Ecuador has grown at the urging of the Counsellors and has produced significant results.

A two-day class on the development of the institution of the Continental Board of Counsellors was part of the curriculum, as was a complimentary course on the work of the Counsellors and the mission of their Auxiliary Board and its newly-appointed assistants. The former was taught by Charles Hornby, a member of the National Assembly, the latter by his wife, Helen.

Every afternoon the group met with National Assembly member Ralph Dexter to discuss the functions and obligations of Local Spiritual Assemblies.

There was time every day after lunch for recreation and sports, and each evening was devoted to fellowship and informal talks with Counsellor Raul Pavón. During the week the assistants recorded a program on the Nineteen-Day Feast for radio broadcast, and at the public proclamation on the last day the visual aids developed in the afternoon workshops were tested. A good crowd appeared for the event.

Auxiliary Board assistants have been assigned for the coastal and highland areas of the country. The assistants for the coastal areas are: Herminio España and Julian Menéndez for the province of Esmeraldas, and Patricia Garcés for the province of Guayas. The assistants for the highland areas are: Patricia Muñoz for the province of Pichincha, and Luis Navas for the province of Azual.

Thailand:

Prime Minister lauds mission of Faith

The World Religion Day celebration in Bangkok, Thailand, on January 20,
1974, was attended by scholars, students, businessmen, government officials, and representatives from many religions.

The ceremony was officially inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister Sukich Nimmahaeminda, who read a letter of greeting from the Prime Minister, Sanya Dharmasakti.

A talk on the Bahá'í Faith was given by the Vice-Chairman of the Spiritual Assembly of Bangkok, Sathien Chaiyasaena. The Bahá'í community sponsored the World Religion Day event.

The proceedings were filmed for local television and broadcast during late evening news programs.

In his message, the Prime Minister assured the gathering of his presence “in spirit,” stressing the importance of a meeting of different religions on a common platform. He praised the Bahá'í community for its initiative in organizing the observance.

“I have known the Bahá'í religion,” he said. “The Bahá'ís intend to bring about unity of different religions, races, and nations. It is a noble thought, but a difficult one.”

Mr. Dharmasakti went on to say:

“At present we are living in an age of chronic crisis. It is not merely a moral breakdown in personal relationships; country after country exhibits confusion over its national goals, while at the international level, the attempt to create a peaceful world society is constantly frustrated.”

The Prime Minister suggested that the solution to current problems could be achieved through harmonious growth and parallel development of science and religion in society.

“From this evolutionary thinking we may presume that, sooner or later, we may learn to regard this earth as a beautiful garden, where each individual, like a flower, has different charm, a peculiar beauty, its own delicious perfume and beautiful color.

“If you meet those of different races and colors, you should not be haughty and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them loving kindness, since this is what Lord Buddha teaches us,” he said. “Think of them as different colored roses growing in the beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them.”

He concluded by again praising the Bahá'í community for its “untiring efforts in creating better understanding among the existing religions in Thailand.”

England:

Bahá'ís active at medieval fair

Bahá'ís from Norwich, Ipswich, Woodbridge, Peterborough, Canterbury, Hammersmith, and Henley took part in the Medieval Barshal Faire, held August 24-26, at Waveney, England. More than 2,000 pamphlets were distributed during the fair and good publicity appeared in the East Anglian daily paper. Bahá'í musicians took part, some of whom are shown in the above photograph. It is estimated that 25,000 persons attended the fair.

Sri Lanka:

National Spiritual Assembly of Sri Lanka

Extensive publicity in two of the local newspapers of Sri Lanka preceded the 1974 National Convention, which was attended by Counsellors Salisa Kermani and Gloria Faizi. Elected to the National Spiritual Assembly were, left to right, standing: M. L. C. Chandrasekera, Vice-Chairman; N. Subramaniam, Assistant Treasurer; R. D. David; K. C. Suwarneraj, Treasurer; and K. G. Chandradasa. From left to right, seated: V. Chitravelu, Secretary; K. Sivappirakasam; B. A. Cadir; and C. P. M. Anwer Cadir, Chairman.
Colombia:

Goals of Plan considered

Counsellor Donald R. Witzel and Auxiliary Board member Cecilia Iguaran participated in a regional conference at Riohacha, La Guajira, Colombia, July 20-21, held to consider Five Year Plan goals. Friends attending the conference are shown gathered at a small monument, which is the foundation stone in front of the National Bahá’í Institute. Similar conferences were held during July in Venezuela, Curacao, and Colombia.

Germany:

Conference considers expansion

Mass teaching, aimed at establishing a Local Spiritual Assembly in Traunreut, was one of the activities stemming from a deepening and teaching conference in Grossbergham, Germany, in June. The week-long conference was attended by the Hand of the Cause Adelbert Mühlenschlegel, Counsellor Erik Blumenthal, and Auxiliary Board members Anna Grossmann, Ursula Mühlenschlegel and D. Katzenstein, as well as Bahá’ís from all parts of Germany. Some of the friends who gathered to consider goals of the Five Year Plan for Germany are shown in the above photograph.

Togo:

Wedding of pioneers draws wide publicity

The wedding of two newly-arrived pioneers, Charles Lerche and Kathy Hampton, attracted widespread attention in Lome, Togo, when it occurred during the International Teaching and Deepening Conference sponsored in July by the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Lome. Counsellor Zekrollah Kazemi and Auxiliary Board members Thelma Khelghati and Bahman Sadezzadeh participated in the conference.

Centered around the theme of “Building Bahá’í Community Life,” the program included lectures, workshops, discussion groups, and question and answer periods, permitting maximum possible participation by the Bahá’ís attending.

More than 300 persons came for the public meeting held on the concluding evening of the conference, although less than 200 were expected. Throughout the weekend, twenty-two persons accepted the Faith, and teaching teams visited other parts of Togo following the conference.

Spain:

Information on Faith aired over television

The first mention of the Bahá’í Faith on Spanish television was made during a special July broadcast about different religious communities active in Spain. The Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly was interviewed, a portion of a Nineteen-Day Feast was shown, and two Bahá’ís quoted a passage from the Writings. One of the Five Year Plan goals given to Spain by The Universal House of Justice was accomplished by this telecast.

Another milestone has been reached in Spain with the successful holding of a three-day children’s institute, sponsored by the National Child Education Committee, September 5-8, with 25 children from all parts of the country attending.
On Sunday afternoon, the closing day of the St. Louis Conference, Kiel Auditorium was brimful—not with the usual sports or rock-and-roll fans, but with soldiers in the Army of God, facing six standard bearers of Bahá'u'lláh's Cause. The Hands of the Cause from the birthplace of the Bahá'í Faith, from the Holy Land and World Center of the Cause, from the continent in the heart of the Pacific, and from the land of the spiritual descendants of the Dawn-Breakers, each in his own words called the friends to deepen in the central truths of our Faith and to perform those deeds which will lead to the victories promised by the Master in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, and by the Guardian in his messages to the American community. Amatu'l-Bahá Ruhiyyih Khánum did not speak at this session with the Hands of the Cause, although her presence blessed the gathering, and the love evinced by the members of this great Institution for one another increased the ardor of the listening soldiers to accomplish their assigned duties. What follows is a brief account of each talk.

The Hands of the Cause from the birthplace of the Bahá'í Faith, from the Holy Land and World Center of the Cause, from the continent in the heart of the Pacific, and from the land of the spiritual descendants of the Dawn-Breakers, each in his own words called the friends to deepen in the central truths of our Faith and to perform those deeds which will lead to the victories promised by the Master in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, and by the Guardian in his messages to the American community. Amatu'l-Bahá Ruhiyyih Khánum did not speak at this session with the Hands of the Cause, although her presence blessed the gathering, and the love evinced by the members of this great Institution for one another increased the ardor of the listening soldiers to accomplish their assigned duties. What follows is a brief account of each talk.

The Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizi

"This morning I had the greatest joy of my life, to go and see some underground activities of this conference. More than 1,000 children . . . are gathered in the rooms of the hotel where most of you live. They are being trained, educated, and kept under the safe custody of volunteer teachers. This shows that the American Bahá'í community is alive, is thriving. . . .

"Abdu'l-Bahá says the greatest form of worship is to educate children. Please, 10,000 people are here and I hope there are 50,000 children in their houses. Educate them, and after ten years you will have a great regiment of teachers, soldiers of Bahá'u'lláh, ready to sacrifice all and everything on the path of this universal Faith.

"The beloved Guardian has encouraged young people to study the history of the first century of every religion. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to know something about the early religions of God, particularly about the first century of their growth, and also about the 100 years that have passed since the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh. If you study properly, and consider the events which took place in the first century of the Christian era, you will be full of hope, aspiration, and certitude for what will surely happen in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. In the first century of Christ only eleven apostles dispersed throughout the world. It is written in the history of those days that one of them reached Rome. When he came to the capital of the Roman Empire he was astounded and felt absolutely hopeless. He saw the gladiators with all their armaments walking in the streets of Rome. He found merchandise coming from all parts of the Roman empire to this great capital . . . He said to himself, 'I am only a Jew who is a subject of the Roman Empire. I am absolutely illiterate. I have no armaments upon me. I am clad in a white cloak and I am here. How can I ever change the ways of these people? How can I ever turn the attention of these people to the kingdom of God? They are immersed in their follies, in their low standards of life, in their despicable habits. Their greatest joy is to see slaves thrown into the mouths of ferocious animals, and they are so excited by seeing such
"The beloved of all hearts, Shoghi Effendi, . . . said many times that all the Bahá’í conferences must reflect the spirit of the Conference of Badasht, which was held in the presence of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá’u’lláh.”

Things that they start to sing and dance. How can I even get these people to say two sentences of the Lord’s prayer?"

"In his dismay and disappointment he started to return whence he came. It is said that on his way home he heard a voice. ‘Quo vadis? Where are you going? Return to your post, which is Rome. Stay there, and you, single-handed, unknown and illiterate, will vanquish the whole of the Roman Empire.’ Dear friends! We are standing at that very same spot where the apostle stood. We are facing a decaying civilization. We are seeing with our own eyes their fallacies, the lowering of their standards and the way in which every day these are diminished in their greatness, importance, and influence throughout the world. Perhaps because of the power which they had in their hands some of us will become disappointed and forget the commandment of our beloved Guardian, who asked, by the pure blood of the martyrs, that we stand firm at our posts, wherever we might be, and promised that ours would be the greatest victory that history would ever record.

"I would like to avail myself of this great opportunity . . . to address myself to the Bahá’ís of America and tell them, ‘I wish you all success. I congratulate every one of you, every family who is responsible for sending these beautiful pioneers throughout the world.’ I have seen them in Europe, in South America, Central America, and everywhere. Hand in hand with the Persian pioneers they are conquering the whole world. They are bringing masses of people under the canopy of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh. They are resuscitating the whole planet and changing the standards of life for the people who are immersed in their material pleasures.

"The greatest philosophers the world has known were living at the time of Christ, yet none recognized Him. The mystery is this, that none of these philosophers ever accepted His Faith, but a handful of unknown, illiterate people accepted Him and because of their sacrifice this Faith spread all over the world. This also is happening today. Illiterate, unknown people praise the beauty of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh and proclaim clearly that this is the only factor that will make the whole of humanity come together. This is what we desire, the unity of all mankind.

"Where is that one Christian disciple now? He is utterly buried in the earth somewhere. But what happened? The whole of the Roman Empire collapsed, brought down by its own excesses.

"Today is the day in which we can establish the foundation of the Kingdom of God on earth. Bahá’u’lláh says that one moment of this Day is equivalent to 100 years in the future. What we can do in one minute today we will not be able in the future to do within one hundred years. One drop of service today will be accepted by Bahá’u’lláh as one ocean, one particle of dust given in the Path of Bahá’u’lláh, will be seen by Him as mountains given to His Faith.

"Please, dear friends, while we are here together, a great love, a great force is generated showing the unity of the whole of the Bahá’í world. We must take this great spirit of the conference wherever we go. We will not sit silent far from the fields of service. If we cannot go directly to the fields of service to teach, let us have a spiritual affiliation with those who are there. Let us sacrifice whatever we have for those people who are serving the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.”

The Hand of the Cause Collis Featherstone

"Each and every one of us in this room has one thing in common. We all gave recognition to Him Who is the Day Spring of God’s Revelation and the Fountain of His Laws. As a result of this, we have all obligated ourselves to a Covenant . . . We have accepted the Faith. Bahá’u’lláh tells us clearly that ‘the first and foremost duty prescribed unto men, next to the recognition of Him Who is the Eternal Truth, is the duty of steadfastness in His Cause.’ How can we attain this? Only through knowledge of God, and recognition of ‘He doeth whatsoever He willeth.’

"This means that every one of us must study the Cause of God. In the course of my travels I have sometimes been very surprised to find that many believers only have one prayer book, and no other books at all. Furthermore, I have been very surprised that even those who are deepened teachers may just have one or two books of the
Love, there is unity. Where there is unity, there are plans, there are actions, there is life, there is the true spirit of the Cause. May all of you diffuse such love that the love of Bahá'u'lláh may cause your areas, wherever you come from, to be infused with a new light. Bahá'u'lláh calls us to teach according to our capacity, and which of us knows his own capacity?"

In closing, Mr. Featherstone said: "Love. This is the essence that makes a Bahá'í community alive. Where there is love, there is unity. Where there is unity, there are plans, there are actions, there is life, there is the true spirit of the Cause. When I was in Haifa with my wife in October, 1953, we had just returned from the New Delhi Conference. The Guardian was very interested to hear of the events of that conference. He asked, "Now, what is the result of the conference?" Being present at St. Louis, at one of the greatest assemblages of Bahá'ís in history, could only prompt one to repeat the Guardian's question, "Now, what is the result of the conference?"

"What is going to be your contribution?", Mr. Featherstone asked. "What are to be your actions? . . . Will you leave this conference and in three weeks time have gotten back in the old routine? Today is the day of sacrifice. The world is in need. And the Bahá'ís no longer have time to sit in a world outside crying for this Cause of God. I can only hope and pray that you will respond with every effort, and in your local communities make offers of service, make contributions to your National Spiritual Assembly, that its life will respond with every effort, and in order to change the whole world; and they did.""

"The time is short for us," Mr. Khádem said. "I think the prayer chanted to open this session, the beautiful prayer of the beloved Shoghi Effendi which has not yet been translated for the West, is a precious contribution to this conference. I wish the beloved Guardian, to whom we are indebted for all the victories, were with us at this conference to say those beautiful words which he often said—"Look, behold! Behold the bounties of Bahá'u'lláh!"

After recounting the events in the Siyáh-Chál in which Bahá'u'lláh heard exalted words assuring Him "We shall render Thee victorious," Mr. Khádem urged the friends to render their thanks to Bahá'u'lláh for all the victories of the Faith, including the conference which they were attending. He recalled that Shoghi Effendi had sent him to the United States with this promise, "I will send you to the West to behold the light and glory, the mysteries of the Faith."

"He made it possible for me to be here today in this conference. Last night I noticed many old believers present, and now I have the bounty to be in..."
"The beloved Guardian encouraged young people to study the history of the first century of every religion . . . . If you study properly, and consider the events which took place in the first century of the Christian era, you will be full of hope, aspiration, and certitude . . . ."

Mr. Robarts urged Bahá’ís to set goals for themselves in this Plan and that they make sustained efforts to accomplish their personal goals. He suggested that daily prayer, deepening in the Writings, and the memorization of as much of the Writings as possible were some of the keys to becoming successful Bahá’ís. Other requirements he mentioned were active participation in the life of the community, regular attendance at Feast and Local Spiritual Assembly meetings, and systematic support of the Fund. To the list he added this final admonishment: "We must love all people. That sometimes requires quite a habit. We have to work at that!"

The Bahá’ís are greatly blessed to receive the guidance they do from The Universal House of Justice, he said. "We had a letter from The Universal House of Justice just two weeks ago in which it said that the entire Bahá’í world seems to have arisen as one man to embrace the Five Year Plan, and we have the highest hopes for victories and developments during its course."

He concluded his presentation by reading this passage from the Five Year Plan message of The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá’ís of the world: "As the old order gives way to the new, the changes which must take place in human affairs are such as to stagger the imagination. This is the opportunity for the hosts of the Lord. Undismayed and undeterred by the wreckage of ‘long-cherished ideals and time-honored institutions’, now being swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines’, the world community of Bahá’ís must surge forward eagerly, and with ever-increasing energy, to build those new, God-given institutions from which will be diffused the light of the holy principles and teachings sent down by God in this day for the salvation of all mankind."
An artist's reconstruction of agricultural work in a prehistoric village.

The Flowering of the Planet

by Guy Murchie

If you look around you in the world, at the countryside, the cities and the highways, you may get the impression that things are going along as usual, that nothing is happening today very different from what happened in times past, although of course most educated people have been taught that mankind changes and evolves slowly from century to century, from age to age. But the world isn't what it seems and I would like to speak of something drastic that is happening here on Earth right now that never happened before and may never happen again. One could call it the flowering of the planet, although "germination" may be a better word than "flowering" because it is more fundamental and perhaps easier to believe since the coming blossoms of Earth have not yet convincingly revealed themselves to many of us. All viable worlds must eventually germinate and flower, moreover, and, to future historians, it could well be that this twentieth century will become known as the century of the Flowering of Earth.

I am referring to this century, and this period in history, because Bahá'u'lláh said in His clear voice that this is the day when all the atoms of the earth will attest to its greatness and that this is the day for which mankind has so long and so patiently been waiting. Prophets of old must have had some age in mind when they spoke, as recorded in the Bible, of "the latter days" and "the time of the end." So why shouldn't we believe Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet of today, when He tells us they meant now, our very own time? I know there are many people in the world not convinced of this, and some are still awaiting "the second coming" which, they suppose, may yet be centuries if not millenia away. And they haven't noticed anything special happening in these so-called "troubulous times" that seem to be just a continuation of the troubulous times of all ages.

But I have some facts I would like to present to you on the subject. My scientific studies and the thirteen years I
On August 25, 1830, the locomotive, Tom Thumb, raced a horse between Relay and Baltimore, Maryland. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has since used locomotive power instead of horse-drawn cars.

have just spent in writing a book about life on this planet may have given me awareness of a few things some of you may have missed. Specifically, I would like to tell you about fifteen evidences of the germination of Earth, which Bahá'u'lláh must have intuitively known would lead to her future flowering. All of them, as you will see, are unique historical events.

1. The first of my fifteen evidences of the germination of Earth is the explosion of man's population in the twentieth century. To put it in perspective, visualize the human species a million years ago as composed of something like 100,000 inquisitive furry creatures living in the most fertile parts of Africa, Asia and perhaps Europe. There was land enough for the average family to occupy an expanse as big as Long Island all by itself. But naturally most of them gravitated into the valleys favored with the best water and game, leaving other regions almost empty. They did not live in villages though (for villages had not been invented) but rather roamed about in small groups hunting meat and gathering vegetables to feed themselves.

After another 990,000 years, which would bring us to 8000 B.C., this species, with its newly evolving brain and growing awareness that it was basically different from other creatures, had multiplied to an estimated three million people and was steadily, if slowly, increasing in numbers, stimulated by such developments as its discovery that cattle, horses and buffalo could be persuaded to plow, the wind to sail a ship, or a river to grind grain —miracles never before seen on planet Earth. And yet man's unprecedented growth in the past few thousand years is as nothing compared with his veritable explosion today. What I am coming to is that our population has suddenly spurted after growing at a leisurely long-range rate of 0.02 percent per year for millions of years. For now we wake up to find it growing at the rate of 2 percent a year or about 1,000 times faster than ever before the nineteenth century!

Of course explosions of population happen among animals too. You must have heard of the lemmings exploding in Scandinavia and swimming in the sea, of locusts having plagues, of blackbirds in Maryland last spring suddenly exceeding the human population of a small town by an alarming thousand times! But the human population change, which directly affects us all, far exceeds in importance anything the animals have ever done, partly because of the extraordinary effects of its by-product in human pollution. These I call the three B's: for babies, bombs and blight. Did you know that cars are multiplying three times as fast as the people who drive them and five times as fast as the roads they move upon? That there is something called mental pollution in publications, books and ideas, a phenomenon we will come to again presently? Of course pollution is so much discussed these days that I hardly need describe it further.

2. So let's move on to my second evidence of germination, which is man's winning of the tournament of evolution which has now for the first time given him clear dominance over all other creatures on Earth. A century ago if you went to Africa you would have been in real danger of being killed by the wild beasts, but today it is the beasts who are in even greater danger of being killed by the humans. Most of the big animals now are under some kind of control in zoos, game preserves, national parks or (in the case of certain fish and whales) international treaties. Even insects and microbes are coming more and more under human control. In many cases, as you know, man's competition has led to the extinction of other species of life in recent centuries or millenia: notably of a dozen kinds of mammoth and mastodon and the woolly rhinoceros, followed by the quagga, the aurochs and such birds as the dodo, the moa, the passenger pigeon, the heath hen and the great auk.

But before that, more than 99.9 percent of all the species that ever lived on Earth had already disappeared (presumably naturally) with only the meagerest fossilized trace left to prove it. For species are not static but come and go and flow like waves on a river. Indeed out of billions of species estimated to have foliated Earth in her five billion years of evolution to date, only a couple of million exist at any one time because each lasts hardly a fleeting million years before it finally branches, withers or in some way loses its identity. Nor are we running out of them since scientists continue to discover new ones: bird species at the rate of one a week, mammals at the rate of one every two weeks, insects and new smaller species by the dozens every day, the overall rate of gain in species exceeding the loss by a good two hundred times. And if you look closely into this bubbling river of evolution, you can see that man is
Since history began to be recorded in 3600 B.C. more than 14,550 wars have been fought, at the rate of one every 140 days. The absurdity of continuing this pattern is so obvious that perhaps the majority of all educated men now favor a world federation.
In the nineteenth century slavery was abolished and virtually disappeared from democratic societies. At the same time women began removing their veils, led by such heroic pioneers as Tahtirih, and they demanded the right to own property rather than be property.

sciousness, the fovea being the part of a retina that is keenly focused on a book when one is reading it. An example of this sudden change in man's mind might be that in the first decade of this century The New York Times published an editorial saying: "The flying machine which will really fly might be evolved by the combined and continuous efforts of mathematicians and mechanics in from one to ten million years." The date was 1903, the very year in which two unknown bicycle mechanics named Wilbur and Orville Wright completed a seemingly harebrained experiment at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, news of which The New York Times did not deem fit to print.

Within a few decades of course things began to look very different and it became evident that any good engineering firm, even in 1903, given a million dollars to research and develop a flying machine, might have done as well as the Wright boys. Some believed better. But the fact is that no one in 1903 had thought flying was worth a million dollars or, for that matter, a thousand, even though in a few decades almost every big corporation and government on Earth would be putting a major portion of its budget into research and development.

Meanwhile, during and after World War I, flying developed at an accelerating pace and knowledge germinated explosively all over the planet while fundamental revolutions occurred in most of the main branches of science. And this sudden pooling of knowledge was measurable statistically as an outburst of information that greatly exceeded the increase in population. Indeed in terms of books, pamphlets, journals, maps, photographs, etc. housed in the world's libraries, the accumulation is already estimated to total something like a billion items and to be growing at the rate of 3 percent per year and therefore rapidly pulling away from the people who are multiplying at only 2 percent.

One of the consequences of the interrelation is that, by the time a baby today finishes college, the amount of information available to him will have quadrupled. Which imposes an unprecedented strain on twentieth century children comprehensible only in light of the volatility of the knowledge now overflowing upon Earth, knowledge that is accumulating so much faster than it is evaporating that a major task of the next century may well be man's taming and harnessing it in the service of his newly germinated world.

7. A major offshoot from the Tree of Knowledge of course is automation, which in one generation has revolutionized the management and technology of the world. At its heart is the computer, whose relation to the earth's explosions in speed and information is obvious in the fact that man now not only doubles his computation rate (a blend of speed, complexity and accuracy) every year but, through electronic miniaturization, annually halves its equipment size and (to some degree) its cost. Thus the mental work of multiplying two 14-digit numbers, which took a trained mathematician with pencil and paper twenty minutes in World War II, can now be done electronically in less than 1/100th of a second and with much less chance of error.

Predicting the future of automatic computation is admittedly difficult and controversial but it is interesting to contemplate the extravagant extrapolation of a leading authority, Martin Minsky of MIT's Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, who predicted in 1970 that in a decade or so "we will have a machine with the general intelligence of an average human being . . . a machine able to read Shakespeare, grease a car, play office politics, tell a joke, have a fight." He added that "at that point the machine will begin to educate itself with fantastic speed. In a few months it will be at genius level" and, not long after, "its powers will be incalculable."

8. The eighth factor of germination is the sudden shift of poverty towards prosperity on Earth. At the beginning of this century only 1 percent of humanity, called the "haves," had an annual income of a few hundred dollars. Today half the world's population averages $2,000 annually and, by the year 2000, presumably the "haves" should reach 90 percent of the world's population. Although a serious problem has so far persisted throughout the worldwide industrial revolution of an "ineradicable" disparity between the wealth of the "haves" and the "have-nots," the overall average wealth has been steadily growing. Thus while the average American has increased his consumption of energy 100-fold in 100 years until he is now using 50 times as much of it as the average Hindu in India, the Hindu has also increased his consumption by at least 5 or 10 times and, when education enables him to
take advantage of his proliferating opportunities, he may well begin to close the gap.

Another aspect of the surging wealth is the abrupt, almost cancerous, growth of cities on this planet that never had a village until a dozen millennia ago, hardly a real town before the fifth century B.C., and as recently as 1800 A.D. only fifty cities with populations as big as 100,000 people. But in the nineteenth century came the ignition point when industry, machines, plumbing, transport, electricity and the telephone really germinated the urban seeds so that by 1970 Earth was rich enough to have more than fifteen hundred cities of over 100,000 and a good hundred between 1,000,000 and 10,000,000. In the United States now, in consequence, country land is being paved over and urbanized at the unheard of rate of 5 square miles a day and it appears that the majority of all humans will be living in cities by 1990.

9. Evidence number nine of germination is that during the past century a great movement to liberate the captive people of Earth has swept the planet and now, for the first time, women are being given equal rights with men almost everywhere and not only slaves but exploited races and minorities of nearly every sort are progressively gaining equal status with other citizens in all but a few totalitarian states.

Slavery is an ancient social perversion that goes back further than history, even into animal and vegetable orders like the ants, but it evidently evolved among humans only with agriculture, villages, property ownership, animal domestication and particularly the invention of war which, after all, is what provided the prisoners who became the first slaves. It reached peaks in the days of Solomon who built his temple with 153,600 slaves (Chronicles II, 2, 17-18) and in Roman times when it was so widespread it necessitated constant raiding into "barbarian" countries and began to be abused with distressing consequences like gladiatorial exhibitions and the revolt of Spartacus, the slave who trained and led an army of 90,000 slaves against Rome. Indeed it seemed such an ingrained aspect of nature that the great philosophers of the day accepted it, including Socrates, Plato (rather reluctantly) and Aristotle. Even Christ is not known to have spoken against it for, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Every man has his own calling; let him keep to it."

In the nineteenth century, however, almost like magic, slavery, which had become big business, especially among seafaring nations, was abolished and virtually disappeared from democratic societies. At the same time enslaved women were removing their veils, led by such heroic pioneers as Tábíríh, the great woman martyr of the early days of our Faith in Persia, and increasingly they demanded the right to own property rather than be property. So not much longer would they rank below pigs socially in New Guinea. Nor would it continue to be possible to buy a wife for $4.00 as was still being done in West Africa when I was there flying cargoes in World War II. Even racial prejudice, notably difficult to purge from peoples' minds after millennia of injustice between races, is steadily diminishing this century, aided by improved education and legislation for human and civil rights throughout much of the world.

10. My tenth evidence of germination is the sudden great increase in literacy and education all over our planet. As a result, more than 60 percent of humanity can now read and write and the proportions of that majority are increasing about one percent a year as the illiterate elderly die. Predictably the change is accompanied by no little struggle, for literacy is not yet every man's dish. When an Arab in Algeria was approached recently about letting his wife join a reading and writing class, he asked in astonishment, "You mean my wife should write letters? To whom?"

Yet somehow, little by little, the new ideas take hold, often aided by radio or movies, and the new teachings are having their subtle but profound effect on evolution, particularly on the mental and cultural evolution they are part of.

11. Standardization, the eleventh factor in germination, is rapidly uniting Earth by permeating all science and all nations. For not only does mankind as a whole already use the twenty-four-hour day, the seven-day week, decimals in mathematics, standard scientific criteria from market scales to atomic energy and common traffic rules in shipping and flying, but soon the metric system will undoubtedly become universal, highway signs similar everywhere and, sooner or later, all countries driving on the right.

12. A universal language that all educated humans can
evolved along with political organization in a parallel,
one every history began to be recorded in 3600
feedback interrelation.
and city states that eventually became nations,
ing events with participants consisting of professional
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Thomas Edison's electric lighting station in New York
City was the first such power plant in the world.
speak and understand is my twelfth factor in this series,
which also seems on its way to becoming a reality on
Earth. Although about fifty artificial languages such as
Esperanto have been devised, which offer the advantages
of phonetic regularity, simplicity, and universality, no
one of them has yet been officially adopted as the world
language because they all bear the heavy initial disadvan-
tage that there is no considerable population speaking
them, no government or large institution promoting them
and no literature to give them a tradition. So we are left
with the natural evolutionary process of the roughly 4,000
known ancient tongues which fortunately are slowly
filtering and amalgamating toward fewer and more uni-
versal modern languages with large vocabularies and li-
teratures such as English, German, Spanish, French,
Mandarin Chinese, Hindustani, Russian, Hebrew and
Arabic.

Of these, English in the last century or two seems to
have moved to the forefront as the one with the best chance
of becoming a truly universal tongue, most of all in the last
few decades. And today more than 60 percent of all
scientific papers are published in English, work on simp-
fying it is being done, and it is the standard language of
airports all over Earth.

13. My thirteenth evidence is the movement toward a
world government which, although appropriately un-
lucky, has become such an obviously essential step in
Earth's present development that it must be considered
one of the factors in planetary germination even though it
hasn't yet happened. Indeed should man's narrow
nationalism or heedlessness continue to block the estab-
lishment of any sort of world political federation for
many decades more, humanity's very survival will be
increasingly threatened!

In the evolution of the many millenia just past, starting
with families and clans that slowly combined into villages
and city states that eventually became nations, federa-
tions, empires and superpowers, the custom known as war
evolved along with political organization in a parallel,
feedback interrelation. Of the 14,550 wars fought since
history began to be recorded in 3600 B.C. at the rate of
one every 140 days, however, they were relatively local
until this century, indeed generally conducted like sport-
ing events with participants consisting of professional
soldiers following traditional rules and led by individual
heroes. And it is only now that suddenly something enti-
tirely new has emerged with the advent of nuclear
weapons and intercontinental missiles which makes war
not only all-out but so impersonal and instantaneously
lethal on such a scale that the "victor" must almost surely
be destroyed along with the "vanquished," not to mention
all large cities and possibly half of mankind vaporized in a
day.

How Earth will become federated or otherwise united
under a world government strong enough to disarm the
nations and guarantee peace and order is not yet clear, but
the absurdity of continuing the present international anar-
chy is so obvious that perhaps the majority of all educated
people already favor some form of world federation, in-
cluding the sacrifice of national sovereignty essential to
making it work, so it has a chance of finally coming into
existence without too catastrophic a birth struggle.

14. The fourteenth factor of germination is the rise of
the human spirit which must be swiftly, if invisibly,
evolving—along with man's more obvious material and
mental progress—and must, Bahá'u'lláh tells us, soon
unite all people in a common bond of empathy that will
bring such harmony and peace as was never before known
on Earth.

This of course is not a scientific statement, nor is it
provable nor (I presume) even believable to most people.
Yet it is at the heart of the germination of the planet and
must be, in some sense, measurable. I mean that it deals
with a profound question, that seems to disturb many
serious thinkers: is our world getting better or worse? Are
we passengers on Earth evolving as we should? Or are
corruption and pollution (with its 3 B's) overtaking us as
we slide hopelessly down the drain?

The answer is not easy. At the very least, it calls for
spiritual comparison between life on Earth today and life
as it was on Earth a hundred or a hundred-thousand years
ago—and it is a comparison bound to be controversial,
both because no one lives long enough to gain first-hand
perspective over such spans of time and because spiritual
things are so utterly intangible and elusive.

Nevertheless one can look at Stone Age life on Earth
today which may be comparable to the pre-Eden days
when man was a hunter and knew nothing of farming, his

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The earth’s Tree of Knowledge has burst into bloom in this century and Earth can never again be the same. It is estimated that a billion items are stored in the world’s libraries, and the accumulation grows at the rate of three percent per year.

morality presumably on the level of the increasingly clever beast he had found himself to be and whose sense of right and wrong, if it could be called that, depended, as with other animals, on his instinctive urges to hunt, kill, eat, mate and defend the territory he regarded as his. Then as man settled into tribal and village life with all it involved in common defense measures, laws of property, adaptability to authority (including gods, devils and chiefs), inevitably disputes became louder and more frequent, leading to more laws that resulted in more violations as crimes became sins—and the evolution of virtue slowly advanced, significantly changing the killing of a rival from a noble deed to a shameful murder.

Of course it took a long time with innumerable ups and downs and inspirations and errors. The Dark Ages and the Middle Ages came and went with their interminable killings, often in the name of piety as when Bishop Peter Arbuez burned 40,000 “heretics” at the stake and was canonized as a saint for it.

But perhaps observation of a typical city scene would be enough to show the spiritual temper of the times—so let me say that a poor old man who fell down in the street in 1750 was likely to be left there unaided and, when Horace Walpole saw it happen outside White’s coffee house in London that year, he recorded that the customers inside placed bets on whether the fellow were dead or not. And, when a passerby suggested he should be bled (standard first-aid treatment of the day), they loudly protested that this would interfere with the fairness of the betting.

At the same time, any well-dressed stranger, particularly if foreign-looking, was liable to be jeered as a “French dog,” have dead cats or worse thrown at him and, if he retaliated, he might well be mobbed and killed. And taunting victims in the pillory, staring at the inmates of “mad houses,” or baiting animals, were favorite pastimes, only recently replaced by going to ball games or watching TV.

By such glimpses of history we can measure in a feeble way the unfolding of spirit through the centuries—noting that in enlightened England there remained 223 offenses punishable by death in 1817, the year of Bahá’u’lláh’s birth, while the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded in 1824, something that a historian was to call the first consciously organized action taken by any species of life on Earth solely for the benefit of another.

By the time Bahá’u’lláh had lived His life, however, and established the Bahá’í Faith as the first truly global religion on Earth, the concomitant germination was well under way, and the twentieth century unreeled its wonders. And since World War II, while the membership of most of man’s religious organizations has been growing about twice as fast as his population, the speed of the Bahá’í Faith to virtually every corner of every country has exceeded all the others.

15. The final evidence of germination on my list is the very profound but hard-to-detect transcendence of the organism man into the superorganism mankind. This also involves the consciousness of mankind which is swiftly unfurling a new dimension as Earth becomes aware of herself for the first time, one might say turning (on a world scale) self-conscious!

It could be usefully compared, I think, to a fish in a school or a bird in a flock engaged in mass maneuvering. For such a fish or bird inevitably loses his individuality and independence and, to some degree, becomes a “cell” in a greater “body”. He must also, in effect, submerge his “self” beyond the equivalent of an ant or bee in order to resurface collectively as an anthill or a beehive. And this means, in the case of man, that he not only transcends individually, each in his own mind and soul, from finitude toward Infinitude, but he also transcends collectively from men and women to mankind while Earth herself (whose consciousness is primarily the mind of man) must ultimately transcend (beyond space-time-self) into what may be described as the divine essence of the Universe.

October, 1974 / BAHÁ’I NEWS
A Glimpse of the World Center

by Gregory Dahl

Mr. Dahl worked at the World Center temporarily during the Third International Convention in 1973. This article presents his personal impressions of that sojourn in Haifa. Ed.

For most of us who have had the rare and inestimable privilege of working in Haifa for The Universal House of Justice—God's supreme and infallible House of Justice—the experience is so precious and personal that it defies description. As a temporary helper in Haifa I found myself briefly in a new and almost unbelievable world where belief was realized in action and where service became my overriding concern.

After arriving in Haifa I was greeted by a member of The Universal House of Justice, who introduced me to most of the other staff, and explained some of what I had been called to the World Center to do. It was as though a new mail clerk for General Motors was being personally greeted by a member of the Board of Directors and made to feel welcome, wanted, and properly oriented to the tasks ahead. My head reeled; I could hardly believe what was happening.

But there was no time for trying to grasp the spiritual significance of the place, the institution, or my own contribution. Unlike a pilgrim, I was there to work, to be of service to the Supreme Institution. Approximately three simultaneous full-time jobs were given me in my first hour, and I was immediately plunged headlong into my tasks.

After some three days of hard work, I was talking with the staff member who does printing for The Universal House of Justice in a refurbished garage next to the Master's former home. He said that I should speak to one of the members of the House of Justice to request some materials I needed. Not aware of their schedule, I asked whether it would be all right to call then. He said to call the next morning as the person I sought would be in a meeting. At first I thought
of a committee meeting, or a meeting of one of the departments (the House has approximately ten departments to handle many of its affairs). Then, looking across the street, I saw the second story windows of the oval room where The Universal House of Justice meets, and it struck me that the House was in session at that moment, perhaps discussing an issue that would vitally affect the very destiny of mankind. One cannot really conceive the power and majesty of such an institution; and I certainly had not yet had time to even think about it. I would have felt very scared and out of place had I not known that since the House of Justice had asked me to be in Haifa, that was exactly where I ought to be.

This is the most important lesson I gleaned from the World Center: that we as Bahá'ís must combine in our affairs justice with love, obedience with open communication.

Never when meeting or working with a member of the House of Justice did I sense from him a trace of the feelings of self-importance or pomposity that we frequently encounter elsewhere, and that we unconsciously use as measures of the people we meet, and as guides to determine our own behavior towards them. I could always tell a Senator from a Congressman on Capitol Hill by his demeanor, and I adjusted my own behavior accordingly; but in Haifa these accustomed cues are absent. The Hands of the Cause, members of the House of Justice, and World Center staff associate together in apparent equality. I was not constantly made to feel conscious of my position; rather, as everyone else, I had to define my own position and then occupy it, unassisted by a rigidly enforced social structure. In other words, one has to decide for oneself how it is appropriate to act towards—let us say—a Hand of the Cause. These individuals, more important to the future of mankind than any corporation president, bear themselves so humbly and are so accessible that one must be ever-so-conscious not to impose upon their kindness. I soon began to understand the predicament of the early believers who, coming close to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, wished only to please Him, while He in turn thought of nothing but serving the servants of God.

One evening two other temporary workers and I were invited for supper to the home of one of the members of the House of Justice. Arriving on foot a few minutes late, we found our host waiting for us in the street to make sure we did not lose our way. Before long we were seated for the meal, and were served by our host and hostess. How contrary to the ways of the world that a humble temporary helper, without a special virtue, would find himself waited on at table by a member of The Universal House of Justice. The members of the House of Justice seem always conscious of the fact that as individuals they are not invested with authority; that authority rests with the Institution. This fact they convey arrestingly through their bearing and their example.

Though the members of the House of Justice individually display the greatest kindness, consideration, and friendliness, that is not to say that the World Center operates on love alone. Rúhíyyih Khánum has likened mercy and justice to the flesh and the bones of the body respectively; the bones are very much in evidence in Haifa. When I received instructions from The Universal House of Justice, I knew that task was exactly what I should be performing, and that its accomplishment was the highest service I could perform for the Cause at that moment. What greater happiness than this?

However, if I had a question concerning just what it was I was supposed to do, or a suggestion about how it should be done, the channels of communications were open. Virtually every member of the 60-odd World Center staff is supervised directly, often daily, by a member of the House of Justice. And one can always telephone if necessary. The feeling is one of fellowship and mutual assistance, certainly not of dictatorial authority. Only in this way can a system of perfect obedience truly function, while drawing out all the talents and warm feelings of the individual.

Then there was the incredible courtesy. In the great rush of activity before the third International Convention everyone was very busy, of course, and some were hard pressed to finish their assigned tasks on schedule. In discharging my own tasks I often came into contact with the staff, and in virtually every instance I was treated calmly, with patience, and cooperation. What a difference such a happy, cooperative, and spiritual atmosphere makes in pressure-filled times. The effect is that the pressure evaporates and all that is left is happy exhaustion at the end of each day, and the knowledge that one has been of service. True Bahá'í administration is very different from the efficiency-driven, competitive system we commonly borrow from the world around us.

Interestingly enough, the tremendous efficiency of the World Center is something one cannot help but marvel at. I am no expert in the subject, but compared with the production in government offices I am familiar with, I would say output per person in Haifa was at least twice as high (and productive output per person probably several times higher).

In Haifa one is, of course, continually reminded by the presence of the Shrines and gardens of the importance of prayer and of developing a constant spiritual attitude. From the office where I worked I had only to lean out the window and look up the steps of Mount Carmel to gaze on the magnificent Queen of Carmel, the Shrine of the Báb. If we in other parts of the world could carry with us such a spiritual vision to call upon when needed (perhaps in the form of memories of our pilgrimage, of a summer school, or of some other precious event), how different our daily lives and service could be.

When I speak of my experiences with friends they often say Haifa must be like heaven, impossible for us to relate to our everyday lives. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Although none of us can be 'Abdu'l-Bahá, our only hope is to follow His example, and we must not be discouraged by how difficult it is to follow that example. While our national and local centers will never have the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, the magnificent gardens designed by Shoghi Effendi, the presence of many Hands of the Cause, the fair and gentle climate of the Holy Land so much appreciated by the Master, or the presence of The Universal House of Justice, we can continue to create in them the spirit of courtesy, loving service, obedience, accessibility, humbleness, and happiness in the privilege of service to the Divine Threshold. What greater blessing than this?
Baha'i Heritage Series Note Cards

Several history-making places at the Baha'i World Centre have been illustrated in quill and dry-brush drawings by Dr. David S. Ruhe. Eight of these superb illustrations have been reproduced in sepia in a new series of note cards.

Eight cards and envelopes come in a convenient portfolio. An assortment of special-occasion inserts is included so that you can quickly make the note cards into greeting cards if you wish.

There are two assortments, each one with two each of four different views:

Assortment A (Product Number 20685) shows Mount Carmel and the Shrine of the Bab, the Most Great Prison, the Mansion of Mazra'ih and the Great Pines at Bahji.

Assortment B (Product Number 20684) shows the Land Gate of 'Akká, the House at Ridván Garden, the House of 'Abbúd and Mount Carmel.

These note cards make fine gifts and can also be used for attractive invitations. Of course, they are excellent for correspondence. They are tasteful teaching devices designed so that they can also be used for pre-Baha'i's.

How to Order

Your Baha'i Community Librarian or authorized Baha'i distributor may have these note card portfolios in stock or may be able to supply you with prices and ordering information. If they are not available in your area, please write to the International Baha'i Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A., for information on where they may be obtained.
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COVER PHOTO

Foundation Hall as it appeared in the early years of construction.

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Japan:

Japan organizes for victories in teaching

The first National Spiritual Assembly of Japan was elected at Ridván, 1974. The Hand of the Cause William Sears witnessed the event as the representative of The Universal House of Justice. He arrived in Japan on April 19 and remained in the country until April 30.

In his many meetings with the friends he emphasized that Japan, having elected its own National Assembly, would have to play an increasingly important role in the administrative work in Asia. Japan was formerly under the jurisdiction of the National Assembly of Northeast Asia.

Upon his arrival in Tokyo Mr. Sears was met by Continental Counsellor Rúhú'lláh Mumtází. He began visiting Baha’í communities almost immediately, answering many questions about the Baha’í administrative system and the individual’s responsibility to support it. On April 21 Mr. Sears and his wife Marguerite celebrated the Ridván Feast with the friends in Tokyo, and afterwards gave a talk to about 40 believers in the National Hazíratútu’l-Quds.

The next day Mr. Sears met with the friends in the Kansai area. He attended the dedication of the Hazíratu’l-Quds in Amagasaki, and spoke of the importance of this institution and the ancillary departments which would someday spring up around it.

On April 24 the Sears traveled south to meet with friends in Hiroshima and then to Ube to spend an evening with believers there. One youngster at the high school in Ube declared after Mr. Sears’ visit.

The National Convention was held between April 26-29. The Hand of the Cause gave several inspiring talks, stressing always the need to achieve the goals of the Five Year Plan. In one of his major presentations he explained the differing roles of the institutions of the Continental Counsellors and the National Assemblies. He said close cooperation between them was of vital importance, and he encouraged the friends to appreciate the significance of having their own National Spiritual Assembly.

From Japan Mr. Sears flew to Korea, arriving in Seoul on the afternoon of April 30. He met with the National Spiritual Assembly of Korea to discuss the progress of the Cause in the region, and also with the Baha’is in the capital city. On this Korean journey, Mr. and Mrs. Sears were accompanied by Auxiliary Board member Chul-min Suh.

Chile:

Traveler contacts dwindling Alacalufes

The Chilean National Assembly recently appointed a Bahá’í teacher from the southern province of Magallanes to introduce the Faith to the dwindling band of Alacalufe Indians living in Puerto Edén, a small village of 250 inhabitants on Wellington Island in the Patagonian Canals. The Alacalufes that remain—not more than 25—are fishermen and traders; some survive by working in Puerto Edén’s rudimentary clam cannery. The assignment to reach the Alacalufes was given by The Uni-
1. Approaching Puerto Edén after the 40-hour trip by boat from Punta Arenas. 2. Homes along the shoreline of Wellington Island, located in the remote Patagonian Canal region of southwestern Chile. 3. Native crafts.

1. Approaching Puerto Edén after the 40-hour trip by boat from Punta Arenas.
2. Homes along the shoreline of Wellington Island, located in the remote Patagonian Canal region of southwestern Chile.
3. Native crafts.

versal House of Justice in Chile's Five Year Plan.

The Bahá'í teacher, Robert Siegel, of Punta Arenas, spent 15 days in Puerto Edén from June 15-30. The first Bahá'í contact with the Alacalufes was in Punta Arenas (more than 500 miles south of Puerto Edén) with the daughter of an Indian family studying in the city. The trip from Punta Arenas by boat took 40 hours: sailing south through the strait of Magellan, then north into the Patagonian Canals and to Puerto Edén.

The boat docked in the small port at six in the morning. Mr. Siegel was informed that a Mr. Achacaz—the father of the girl living in Punta Arenas—had come aboard to meet him.

“He was dressed in a jacket with yellow rubber overalls that strapped around his neck,” Mr. Siegel recalled. “I told him of speaking with his daughter and that I had a letter and medicine from her to him. He was a simple, humble man, but a contrast to passivity. That is, he was firm and forceful in his speech, and dynamic in his generosity. Yet all of these strong qualities seemed to be balanced somehow by his great respect, humility, and kindness of stature.”

Going ashore as the dawn light began to brighten the surrounding countryside, the visitor could see in the distance ranges of snow-capped mountains emerging from the gloom. In the harbor a score of small boats had pulled alongside the aging cargo ship to unload burlap sacks of crabs and other shellfish and to take on in turn quantities of potatoes and other essential consumer items. The land around the town was hilly, and about 50 houses were visible from the port. Mr. Siegel was able to rent a room at the local schoolhouse for his two-week stay.

The Achacaz family soon became the first Alacalufe Bahá'ís in Puerto Edén. Mr. Siegel described his visit to their home in this way:

“As I entered the Achacaz home I was courteously received and sat near a hot wood-burning stove which greatly pleased me. The house was rustic, but had the signs of a home and most of all, the kindness of a family. I told them of my purpose there in a simple way. . . . The mother, father and daughter became the first Alacalufe Bahá'ís.

By the end of Mr. Siegel's visit to Puerto Edén six adults and three youth had enrolled in the Faith.
United States:

State teaching plan launched in Illinois

More than 500 Baha'is were present at the House of Worship in Wilmette, November 23, for the launching of a five-year plan for Illinois.

Illinois is one of the three states visited by 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1912 that has been selected by the National Assembly for intensive teaching and consolidation programs during the remainder of the Five Year Plan. The other states are California and New York.

The plan for California was launched by the National Assembly in Santa Cruz on July 13. The plan for New York will be launched in Ithaca on January 11.

The National Spiritual Assembly, which was present in Wilmette for its regular monthly meeting, participated in the November 23 ceremony.

Among the honored guests were the Hands of the Cause of God Dhikru'llah Khadem and William Sears, Continental Counsellors Edna True and Sarah Pereira, and Auxiliary Board members Javidukht Khadem and Thelma Jackson.

Mr. Khadem, the keynote speaker, recalled in his address the great moments in the development of the Faith in America, beginning with the declaration of the first believer Thornton Chase, whom he called "the Mullá Husayn of the West."

The Hand of the Cause urged the friends to surrender their lives to the Cause of God, saying that attachment to the things of this world could profit them in no way. Bahá'u'lláh would give them the necessary courage to win great victories for the Faith, he said.

In its plan for the state, the National Assembly put forward eleven basic tasks for Illinois Bahá'ís to accomplish, called upon every individual Bahá'í to strive earnestly to attract at least one person to the Faith each year, and assured the believers that the entire American community could be influenced through the accomplishment of the heroic deeds to which they were called.

"Such days as these will never come again," William Sears said during his very brief presentation. "Arise courageously. Do all you can for the prosecution of your noble duty."

In its message to the believers in Illinois the National Assembly noted that the House of Worship was an "ever-present symbol of the special blessings and potentialities of the people who have become its proud custodians."

The message listed other distinctions Illinois has won over the years. Among them: the transcendent position of Chicago as the first place in America where the Name of Bahá'u'lláh was publicly mentioned, the repeated inclusion of that city in the itinerary which the Center of the Covenant, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, followed during His epic journey to the West, His laying of the foundation stone of the sacred structure which would become, in Shoghi Effendi's words, the "ordained Source from which rays of spiritual guidance will radiate."

"To these honors," the National Assembly continued, "must now be added the selection of your state for a special endeavor in consonance with the high expectations outlined in the Master's Divine Plan and with the particular goal to 'develop intensive teaching and consolidation plans in at least 3 states chosen from among those visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, designed to attract great numbers to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh thereby initiating a process leading to..."
1. The Hand of the Cause of God Dhikru'llah Khâdem officially represented the institution of the Hands of the Cause at the launching of the plan.

2. Mr. Sears was able to attend the launching of the plan while en route to Canada, where he and Mrs. Sears plan to reside. The launching provided an opportunity for Illinois residents to meet members of the Regional Teaching Committee. On the right in this photo is Xylur Stoakely, a Regional Teaching Committee member.

3. The entry into the Faith by troops alluded to by the Master...

Among the specific goals of the Illinois plan are to raise the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside to 400 (currently Bahá'ís reside in 280 localities); to open the Faith to all counties where Bahá'ís do not at this time reside (approximately 50 counties are in this category); to maintain existing Local Assemblies and ensure that at least 15 adults live in each Bahá'í community; to raise the number of Spiritual Assemblies to 99 (there are 43 today); and to increase the number of incorporated Assemblies to 40 (from the current 20).

In addition the plan requires that each community expand its teaching work among at least one of the minority groups mentioned in the Five Year Plan: American Indian, Armenian, Chinese, Greek, and Spanish-speaking.

The use of radio and television for broadcasts aimed at proclamation of the Faith to greater numbers of listeners on a regular basis was encouraged, as was an increase in the use of the press to expand the public's knowledge of the Faith.

Other goals enumerated in the plan were: encourage and organize regular Bahá'í activities and classes for adults, youth, and children; organize regular classes to educate Bahá'í children in the teachings of the Faith; foster and encourage youth activities, including firesides, study classes, teaching institutes, local youth clubs, college clubs, circuit teaching, and pioneering; strive toward universal participation in support of the Bahá'í Funds.

All of these tasks, the National Assembly said, are merely mileposts in a journey toward the "entry into the Faith by troops" called for in the Five Year Plan of The Universal House of Justice. Its attainment, it added, "depends principally upon the response of each believer in Illinois, who must be constantly teaching, constantly studying the Holy Texts and their authentic interpretations, constantly exercising the discipline of enlightened souls whose thoughts and deeds are guided by the standards of Bahá'u'lláh."

A new Regional Teaching Committee, organized to supervise the execution of the plan for Illinois, was introduced to the believers. The National
Memorial for Mrs. Barney held at French summer school

The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery and Mrs. Giachery attended the French Bahá'í Summer School, held August 24 to September 1 at Carry-le-Rouet, on the shores of the Mediterranean. Highlighting the summer session was a moving commemoration for Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney, who died in Paris shortly before the school opened.

The National Spiritual Assembly of France met at the summer school and consulted with the assembled friends on many aspects of the Five Year Plan and the International Conference to be held in Paris in 1976. Dr. and Mrs. Giachery are shown seated in the second row, third and fourth from the left.

Assembly also announced the establishment of a Regional Information Committee to take charge of all dealings with the media in Chicago and to help communities throughout the state with their information problems.

Hawaii:

Float wins prize in annual Island parade

The Hawaiian Bahá'í community float entered in the Aloha Week Parade won second Prize in the Schools and Churches category. The parade is held annually in mid-October and is part of the Aloha Week celebrations. This year's parade theme was: Makahiki (the time after the harvest when the ancient Hawaiians relaxed and gave thanks for their blessings). The Bahá'í float showed a Hawaiian warrior blowing a conch shell to the mountains, announcing the call to unity and peace. In addition to having the words "Bahá'í Faith" fashioned in flowers, the float also had the Hawaiian phrase, "Kakea O Lokahi A Maluhia," which means The Call of Unity and Peace. Members of the Hawaiian Bahá'í community designed and built the float. A project of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands, the float was made from the many flowers of the islands and was seen on television throughout the islands. The parade was also videotaped for showing over Japanese television and other U.S. television stations. A special feature program on the building of the Bahá'í float was broadcast by a local television station. The float, shown below, was manned by Bahá'ís who represented ancient Hawaiians making flower leis, making poi (a Hawaiian food), and fishing.
The Silent Teacher
by Bruce Whitmore

Application of the panels of concrete ornamentation to the gallery level of the House of Worship in Wilmette, 1938.
In many Tablets over a period of years 'Abdu'l-Bahá made an effort to dispel the misconceptions that had developed in the community about the proposed Temple. It was a physical building, He said. There would be only one in the beginning with many to follow in the future, and it would be built in Chicago where the idea had originated. He also attempted to broaden the vision of the believers and inspire in them a realization of the great importance—greater than anyone had yet imagined—of erecting the House of Worship. He said in one Tablet: Verily the founding of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkär will mark the inception of the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the evident standard waving in the center of that great continent of America. Its building is the most important of all things. This is the spiritual foundation; for that reason it is the most important of all foundations; from this spiritual foundation will come forth all manner of advancement and progress in the world of humanity. Today the establishment of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkär is of paramount importance. It is an expression of the elevation of the Word of God. When the Mashriqu'l-Adhkär with its accessories, is established in the world, aside from its religious or spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization.

Inaugurating a Worldwide Venture

Before the formation of the League of Nations—the first international attempt to establish the political machinery for the maintenance of global peace—the Bahá'í community was furiously laboring to construct an architectural symbol of unity that would help guide mankind to an acceptance of the spiritual foundations of lasting peace. That great effort received support not only from America, but also from nearly every other community in the Bahá'í world. Approximately one-sixth of all contributions during the early years came from countries other than the United States and Canada. Contributions arrived from India, Persia, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Russia, Egypt, Germany, France, England, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and many other places throughout the world.
“Verily the founding of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár will mark the inception of the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the evident standard waving in the center of that great continent of America. . . .”

Hawaiian Islands, Ireland, Italy, South Africa, New Zealand, Brazil, Mauritius, and the Isle of Pines. 9

A widow in the Orient who baked and sold bread for a living, earning barely enough to support herself, sold an earring she had worn since childhood and gave the money to the Temple Fund. “See! The good God in His bounty gives us all something we can spare,” she said. Believers in Poona, India, sold their jewelry and other valuables and contributed the money to the Temple Fund. A poor shopkeeper who owned no finery eagerly yielded the mat on which he slept so that he could have the honor of giving. A New England spinster who supported herself by knitting mittens contributed one half of all of the money that she earned. 9

In the United States, a variety of individual and collective efforts were organized to raise funds for the construction project. The first contribution was for $103.00, the proceeds of a concert given by a group of Chicago Bahá’ís on December 6, 1904. 10 Other fund-raising ventures included a widow’s quilt fund, community “blessing boxes,” the private sale of Bahá’í hymnals, and “economy meals.” 11 A number of groups, such as the “Temple Builders Fellowship,” were established to not only raise money, but, in the terminology of the Fellowship, to help individuals internalize divine principles through social interaction. 12 Many American believers donated their precious belongings, and one woman even postponed needed dental care to be financially able to make a contribution. 13 So interested were the members of the “Bahá’í Fellowship of San Quentin” in making some contribution to the Temple Fund that they printed prayer cards and sold them to their fellow prisoners to raise money. 14

**Genesis of Bahá’í Administration**

The Temple project was “the bulwark of Bahá’í administration” during its formative period in America. 15 The work of construction generated the cooperation, discipline, harmony, determination, and knowledge that supported the Guardian’s painstaking efforts to establish the Bahá’í Administrative Order.

In the early months of 1907, after Mother True’s return from ‘Akká, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá continually emphasized to visiting Western believers the importance of making a beginning on the Temple. His encouragement and solicitude rekindled the enthusiasm of the travelers, and as they returned to their communities they transmitted the Master’s sense of urgency. By summer’s end the degree of interest in America was so high that Chicago’s House of Spirituality invited Bahá’ís from across the country to assemble to discuss the matter further. 16 This handful of believers, in the words of the Guardian, “. . . arose, despite the smallness of their numbers and their limited resources to initiate an enterprise which must rank as the greatest single contribution which the Bahá’í community in America, and indeed of the West, have yet made to the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.” 17

Representatives from many communities met on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, and appointed a committee to locate a Temple site. At the conclusion of its investigation of sites the committee voted unanimously to recommend to the House of Spirituality, which had been given complete authority to supervise the project, the selection of a fourteen-lot Grosse Point property in the village of Wilmette as the site for the Temple. The Grosse Point promontory on the south shore of Lake Michigan was once the site of a village of Potawatomi Indians. It is even said that one of the first recorded interracial marriages in America took place there: that of Antoine Ouilmette, the first white settler in the region, and Archange, a Potawatomi woman. 18

The House of Spirituality accepted the proposal and purchased the first two of the fourteen lots. Mother True then wrote to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá suggesting that the administrative framework for the project be broadened to include believers from throughout the United States and Canada. The Master agreed. In June, 1908, He wrote saying such an action would establish harmony within the American Bahá’í community. He pointed out that women were to be included in the administrative system, a decision that was to have a major impact on the development of the Cause in America. 19

A second national convention for March 22-23, 1909, was scheduled by the House of Spirituality. Thirty-nine delegates representing thirty-six communities attended and formed a permanent national organization, the Bahá’í Temple Unity. A constitution was written and adopted, and an Executive Board consisting of three women and six men was elected. Although the authority of the Executive Board was at first somewhat limited, the first national administrative agency of the Faith, a harbinger of the future National Spiritual Assembly, had been established. 20 On the same day, in Haifa, after sixty years of danger and delay, the precious remains of the Bab were
entombed in His Shrine on Mt. Carmel by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, completing a task that had been assigned to Him by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. 21

Though the Executive Board was initially concerned only with matters pertaining to the construction of the House of Worship, the scope of its activities were quickly broadened. As the annual conventions of the Bahá'í Temple Unity became the forum for consultations on teaching experiences, publication efforts, social activities within communities, and other concerns, the actions of the Executive Board reflected the increasing activity.

The number of sub-committees also expanded rapidly. By 1915 there were 11 committees, these among them: Publication Commission, Temple Treasury, Architecture and Designs, Ways and Means, and Teaching. There was even a committee to develop "moving pictures" to record the phases of the Temple's construction. The influence of the Executive Board gradually encompassed even independent publishing efforts such as Star of The West, Reality, The Prompter, and the Bahá'í Publishing Society of Chicago. 22 In the midst of this significant administrative development the work of the Temple inched forward, with what must have seemed excruciating slowness punctuated only occasionally by moments of drama and excitement.

The Executive Board was always punctual with mortgage payments because its every action had to demonstrate the uncompromising integrity of the Cause. When payment was due on one occasion, however, sufficient funds were not immediately available. The three members of the Temple Treasury committee were very troubled and they agreed that the only appropriate action was to go personally to the Northern Trust Bank of Evanston, with which their financial affairs were transacted, and explain their embarrassing predicament. When they arrived they learned that their meeting with an account representative had been unavoidably delayed. While they sat in the lobby waiting, they repeated the Remover of Difficulties. A cashier from the international transactions section noticed Mother True, the Board's financial secretary, sitting in the lobby and walked over to inform her that the bank had just received a draft from 'Abdu'l-Bahá sent on behalf of a group of Persian Bahá'ís. With that money it was possible to make the payment on time. 23

Shortly after the Ascension of the Master, the first National Spiritual Assembly was elected in the United States, in keeping with the provisions of His Will and Testament. 24 Its formation may not have been so quickly possible had a strong institutional foundation not been laboriously established already, through the efforts of the Bahá'í Temple Unity to make construction of the House of Worship a reality.

In Search of a Design

As 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ideas of the general requirements for the construction of the Temple were developed and published, many Bahá'ís attempted to create an architectural design for the edifice. The newly elected Executive Board issued a general invitation in 1909 for designs to be submitted. It soon had many to consider. Public interest in the project mounted as exceptional designs were exhibited in art schools, universities, and prominent galleries. One display of nine sketches, each suggesting a different architectural style, was shown at the National Museum of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. 25

A Bahá'í intensely involved in the effort to develop a suitable design was Louis Bourgeois, a French-Canadian who received architectural training at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. At the urging of Roy Wilhelm, an East Coast coffee merchant who served for many years as Treasurer of the Executive Board and later as a member of the National Spiritual Assembly itself, Louis Bourgeois became involved in this work as early as the summer of 1909. For eight consecutive years he worked on a number of potential designs, but was never satisfied with any of...
“Nothing short of direct and constant interaction between the spiritual forces emanating from this House of Worship . . . and the energies consciously displayed by those who administer its affairs . . . can possibly provide the necessary agency capable of removing the ills that have so long and so grievously afflicted humanity . . .”

them. Finally in 1917 he envisioned a structure of incomparable beauty in which Grecian, Egyptian, Romanesque, Gothic, Arabic, and Byzantine styles would be harmonized in an edifice of timeless elegance. After several weeks of futile attempts to render the drawings, he realized he could not convey the striking design in this medium. He decided instead to execute his idea in plaster, an art form with which he had no experience. The next three years he spent in creating his model. His family lived close to poverty through World War I, so the only way he could get the money to purchase plaster for his model was to sell roses grown in his own back yard.

Early in 1920 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked the friends that a selection of the Temple design be made during that year's convention. Seven of the more beautiful designs submitted over the years were presented by the Executive Board to the convention. The response of the forty-nine delegates was unanimous: Louis Bourgeois' "Temple of Light." 26

The Bourgeois model was placed on public display in New York, where many architects and engineers came to see it. Mr. H. Van Buren Magonigle, President of the Architectural League, said Louis Bourgeois " . . . has conceived a Temple of Light in which structure, as usually understood, is to be concealed, visible support eliminated as far as possible, and the whole fabric to take on the airy substance of a dream . . ." 27 Newspapers and magazines throughout the world praised its beauty. The New York Times wrote, "Americans will have to pause and study it long enough to find that an artist has wrought into this building the conception of a Religious League of Nations." The Christian Register said, "Wonderful as the architectural design of the Temple is, those most concerned in its erection see in the universal service it will render mankind its supreme importance. The Bahá’í Message is primarily a Message of Unity. It recognizes the divine elements which underlie all great world religions." The Times and Mail, printed in Tokyo, Japan, reported, "A new creation of transcendent beauty has dawned upon the horizon of the architectural world . . . It is a temple of peace, whose broad portals of welcome and encouragement to devotees of any religion and all religions shall be always open. . . . Beside its spiritual appeal the famed beauties of the Taj Mahal grow strangely pale." 28

Public interest was so intense when the model was moved to the Art Institute in Chicago after several weeks in New York, that 34,000 people viewed it during its first week on display. 29 Years later smaller models were cast and exhibited at dozens of state and county fairs, libraries, book stores, flower shops, and other locations, as well as at the New York and San Francisco World's Fairs and the Toronto Exhibition. 30

The building of the Temple has probably attracted more public attention over a longer period of time than any other single undertaking in the history of the Faith. The presence of the Temple has also been a source of inspiration to artists of many kinds, who have then used their painting, sculpture, music, and poetry to proclaim the Bahá’í message. The Temple choir, for example, because of its blending of diverse peoples, became a visible expression of the unifying force within the Faith from the time of its formation four years before the work on Foundation Hall got under way.

The poem which follows is not only typical of the many which celebrated the construction of the Temple, but is also interesting because of the response to its author from Louis Bourgeois:

Bell of the Temple
Bell of the Temple of Love and Unity,
From realms above your clarion tones now ring;
Calling aloud to all humanity,
Awake! Arise! and with the angels sing;
Glory to God and His Eternal Plan,
Come to the Temple of the Brotherhood of man!

Bell of the Temple of Peace enduring,
Softly thy tender tones fall on the air;
Calling the hearts of men to Love's true union,
Calling to worship in God's Temple fair.
Glory to God and His Eternal Plan,
Come to the Temple of the Brotherhood of man!

Bell of the Temple unseen Reality,
Yet thy clear tones by inner ear is heard;
Bell of the Temple of wonderous Beauty,
Founded upon God's Manifested WORD!
Glory to God and His Eternal Plan,
Come to the Temple of the Brotherhood of man. 31

Louise R. Waite

Greatly pleased with the poem, Louis Bourgeois penned this revealing passage:

. . . Twelve years ago when I built my home wherein this Temple model and design were made I made a flower garden, and the form of this garden was a great bell. Many asked me why the garden was a bell? This bell, I told them, was the greatest musical instrument we have; it is the conveyer of sound to the greatest
distance. It conveys our sorrows and our joys... and as the world was in distress I hung out this great bell. Now it has happened that this Temple coming from the realm of Baha is in the form of a bell. It is the Great Bell, calling to America. Will they hear it?

The letter, dated September 23, 1920, closed with these observations:

... We are preparing all the work for starting (the building of Foundation Hall) early in spring. Tomorrow will be a historical day in Chicago, and in the Baha’i world. At 11 A.M. we start the boring to reach the rock on which the pillars of the dome will be supported. Many Baha’is will be there, newspaper reporters, etc....

The Beginning

The rock shelf at Grosse Point lay one hundred twenty feet below the surface. Nine cylindrical, timber-lined caissons, each six feet in diameter, were sunk through earth, sand, quicksand, and water, until they rested on the shelf below. When firmly in place the caissons were filled with concrete.

In the early summer of 1921 construction began on Foundation Hall. It was completed in the late fall of 1922. This tar-covered circular structure, two hundred feet in diameter, placed unceremoniously at the center of the Wilmette property, gave almost no clue of the majestic building that twice during the early years of his ministry the Guardian wrote. The Master was so moved by the gift that, with His own hands, He placed it in the Shrine of Baha’u’llah, where it remained until the Guardian sent it to America.

This “crowning gift,” a Persian carpet of incomparable beauty, “is of the purest silk, patterned as a rose garden and bordered with heavy twisted cord of real gold,” the Guardian wrote. Shortly after World War I a Baha’i had purchased it from the most celebrated weaver in Persia and then spent several weeks in wearisome travel to transport it to Haifa. The Master was so moved by the gift that, with His own hands, He placed it in the Shrine of Baha’u’llah, where it remained until the Guardian sent it to America.

The “Most Precious Ornament”

The first article in the first issue of Baha’i News (December, 1924) was about the House of Worship. For the next nine years the only photographs published in the newsletter were those showing progress in construction.

A second enterprise, closely associated with work on the Temple, soon began to receive serious attention from the community. That enterprise was the first teaching plan ever launched in America, entitled “A Plan of Unified Action to Spread the Baha’i Cause Throughout the United States and Canada.” Only one of its three central provisions established a tangible goal: the call for $400,000 to raise the superstructure of the edifice. The National Spiritual Assembly said:

The culmination of the ‘Plan of Unified Action’ is the construction of the exquisite Bourgeois Temple design at Wilmette, in the heart of this continent, the supreme visible symbol and proof that a new spirit has been revealed to humanity in this age.

When the plan ended three years later, in December, 1928, the fund-raising goal had not been reached. The friends were still wide of the mark. The situation did not improve in the months that followed, as the world slipped into the Great Depression. Then, in December, 1929, the Baha’i News printed a letter from Shoghi Effendi:

Moved by an impulse that I could not resist, I have felt impelled to forego what may be regarded as the most valuable and sacred possession in the Holy Land for the furthering of that noble enterprise which you have set your hearts to achieve... this precious ornament of the Tomb of Baha’u’llah has been already shipped to your shores, with our fondest hope that the proceeds from its sale may at once ennable and reinforce the unnumbered offerings of the American believers already accumulated on the altar of Baha’i sacrifice.

This “crowning gift,” a Persian carpet of incomparable beauty, “is of the purest silk, patterned as a rose garden and bordered with heavy twisted cord of real gold,” the Guardian wrote. Shortly after World War I a Baha’i had purchased it from the most celebrated weaver in Persia and then spent several weeks in wearisome travel to transport it to Haifa. The Master was so moved by the gift that, with His own hands, He placed it in the Shrine of Baha’u’llah, where it remained until the Guardian sent it to America.

The impact on the American believers must

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have been great because in just four months the Bahá’í News published this headline: "Temple Construction Fund Completed." Nearly $300,000 had been contributed in that short span of time. The friends had cause for joy, as indicated by another cablegram from Shoghi Effendi:

America's sustained, glorious sacrifice will assuredly endow rising edifice with such spiritual potencies as shall excite wonder, admiration all peoples. Befittingly inaugurate resumption Temple construction. Consecrated carpet need neither be sold nor returned. Dedicated as permanent ornament first Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of the West.

The “Evident Standard” Is Raised
The superstructure rose with incredible swiftness, requiring for completion less than seven months of labor. The workers seemed to sense the importance of the project and were inspired to execute their skills with great proficiency, enthusiasm, and dedication. Only once did tragedy seem to strike. A spectacular fire started on January 15, 1931, when gale-force winds ripped loose a section of canvas lashed to the inside of the dome framework. A heating unit used to dry freshly poured concrete was overturned, igniting the massive wood scaffolding. As section after section was engulfed in flames and collapsed, huge crates containing the glass for the dome tumbled to the floor more than one hundred feet below and shattered. The mishap caused only minimal damage to the structure and the loss of property was recovered through insurance. But once more the Temple attracted major attention as articles and pictures of the fire appeared in papers throughout the country.

The superstructure was officially completed on May 1, 1931. Nineteen years had elapsed since that first of May when a great circular tent had been pitched on the site and the friends had gathered to witness the dedication of the first House of Worship in the West. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had emerged from the tent, gazed about and located a stone that had been left on the property by Nettie Tobin and two companions some months earlier. He chose that stone to be the permanent marker of the dedication ceremony. 'Abdu'l-Bahá turned the first earth on behalf of all the peoples of the world. At the conclusion of the ceremony, He set "the stone which the builders refused" into place and declared, "The Temple is already built!"

Another twenty-two years would pass before the superstructure was fully adorned. Several types of terra cotta
Regarding the House of Worship in the United States, Shoghi Effendi has written that it represents "... the crowning achievement of the Administrative Order ... in the first Bahá'í century."

and artificial stone, as well as different metals, had been considered for use in construction; but the material finally selected had not yet been developed when Foundation Hall was erected. It was a mixture of crushed quartz and white concrete, which proved to have the plasticity needed to form the intricate, lace-like designs, and a durability greater than that of stone.

The ornamentation that was produced from this material is of incomparable beauty. The symbolism of the exquisite tracery is far more subtle, far more complex than a casual look might at first suggest. The majesty of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation, the glorification of the Báb, the fulfillment of the prophecies of past religions, the harmony underlying all religions, the joy of the dawning of the golden age, and even the expectation of future Manifestations, are all conveyed throughout the marvelous concrete tapestries woven by Louis Bourgeois.43

The complicated process of creating the various sections was begun by transferring the outlines of Louis Bourgeois' original drawings, some of which reached lengths of 109 feet, to great slabs of modeling clay. Sculptors meticulously chiseled the patterns in the hard clay. Three additional phases of design transfer were required before the final plaster molds were fashioned. Perfect alignment of the sections was insured by an elaborate system in which segments were mounted on a wooden replica of a portion of the Temple's steel dome and measured for accuracy. The concrete and quartz mixture was then poured into the molds and, after a period of curing, final cleaning, and preparation, the completed sections were shipped by rail to Wilmette. The exterior of the dome alone required 387 sections.44

Shoghi Effendi continually encouraged the believers to make greater efforts to complete the House of Worship construction. He longed to see the dome set in place by the opening of the Century of Progress Exhibition in 1933, so that the thousands of visitors arriving in Chicago could gaze upon its beauty. When finished, he said, it would "stand as a flaming beacon and a symbol of hope amidst the gloom of a despairing world ..."45 When the goal was not attained, the Guardian lovingly wrote:

Appeal hard pressed American believers heed this, my last passionate entreaty, not to suffer slightest interruption in Temple construction to dim the magnificence of their epoch making enterprise. The fair name of our beloved Faith is at stake. Its American stalwart defenders will once again vindicate its triumphant glory. I promise one year's respite upon successful conclusion first stage of the ornamentation of our glorious Temple.46

Once again he masterfully ignited the hearts of the American believers. When the dome was finished they did not want a year's respite and sought his permission to begin work immediately on the clerestory. He responded:

Heartily welcome proposal. Additional sacrifices entailed clerestory ornamentation will add further laurels to crown already won (by) American believers and hasten fulfillment long cherished expectations.47

When the clerestory was completed, he cabled:

Overjoyed epochmaking achievement. Intense gratitude. Ardently supplicating still mightier evidences American believers' exemplary stewardship Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.48

Indeed the evidences became greater when the exterior was completed seventeen months before the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb, the goal set by Shoghi Effendi himself.

An indication of the significance Shoghi Effendi placed on the erection of the Temple can be gleaned from a statistical report he prepared for the centenary celebration. "A World Survey-The Baha'i Faith 1844-1944" lists forty-three historically important events which occurred in the first century of growth. Four of the forty-three events involve the Mother Temple of the West.

The great Jubilee Celebration, the observance of the 100th anniversary of the Announcement to Bahá'u'lláh of His Mission was made the goal for completion of the building's interior ornamentation and its dedication to public use. On May 2, 1953, Amatu'l-Baha Rúhíyyih Khánum, the golden apex of the dome glistening far above her head, radiantly proclaimed:

On behalf of the Guardian of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, I have the great honour of dedicating this first )ashriqu'l-Adhkar of the Western World to public worship ... I greet and welcome you on behalf of the Guardian of our Faith within these walls. ...49

The "Silent Teacher"

Work on the Temple had an influence upon the teaching activity in America from its earliest days. Thus when the Ten Year
The *Times and Mail*, printed in Tokyo, Japan, reported, "A new creation of transcendent beauty has dawned upon the horizon of the architectural world. . . . It is a temple of peace, whose broad portals of welcome and encouragement to devotees of any religion and all religions shall be always open. . . . Beside its spiritual appeal the famed beauties of the Taj Mahal grow strangely pale."

Crusade was unveiled in Chicago at the time of the Temple's dedication, an unprecedented campaign of teaching was initiated, which in time dramatically increased the strength and prestige of the Faith, not only in the United States, but throughout the world. During the Crusade National Spiritual Assemblies increased from 12 to 56; 131 new countries were opened; literature was translated into an additional 220 languages; Temples were built in Africa, Australasia, and Europe; the Shrine of the Báb was completed and the International Archives building was erected; the first dependency of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the United States, the Bahá’í Home, was raised; and, at the conclusion of this global enterprise in 1963, the majestic, awe-inspiring institution that is the House of Worship will continue to herald the glorious achievements and spiritual influence of the headway in establishing truly God-centered enterprises in portions of a letter, "The Spiritual Significance of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár."

As we draw farther away from this “early stage of apprenticeship in Bahá’í living” and make greater headway in establishing truly God-centered Bahá’í communities, the House of Worship will continue to herald the glorious achievements and spiritual influence of the Cause to greater and greater numbers of people. The real purpose of all Bahá’í Temples and their satellite institutions, however, will become clearer in the future. Their great role has been powerfully explained by Shoghi Effendi in portions of a letter, “The Spiritual Significance of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár’:

... the central edifice of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, round which in the fulness 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. . . .

But however inspiring the conception of Bahá’í worship... 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... 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 centering 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 centering 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. . . . 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.

Regarding the House of Worship in the United States, Shoghi Effendi has written that it represents “the noblest of the exploits which have immortalized the services of the American Bahá’í community to the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh” and “... the crowning achievement of the Administrative Order ... in the first Bahá’í century.”

“Neither the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the Bahá’í world, reared in the city of Ishqábád, nor any House of Worship to be raised in succeeding centuries, can claim to possess the vast, the immeasurable potentialities with which this Mother Temple of the West established in the very heart of so enviable a continent, has been endowed,” the Guardian said.

6. Ibid., p. 61.
8. True, "Brief History," Bahá'í Year Book, p. 58.
23. Author's interview with Continental Counsellor Edna True and Mrs. Arna True Perron.
26. Ibid., p. 33 and McDaniel, Spell of the Temple, pp. 21-34.
29. Ibid., p. 145.

Ornamental panels were applied to the interior in 1950. When the auditorium was completed, the steps were cast on the floor and moved outside for installation.
42. McDaniel, *Spell of the Temple*, pp. 15-17 and author’s interviews with Counsellor Edna True, Sophie Loeding, and Wyatt Cooper.

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Foundation Hall as it appeared in the early years of construction.
Out of a Handful of Dust
A brief history of American Bahá’í youth and their forerunners.

by Philip Christensen
Research by Sherman Waite

On Naw-Rúz 1974, The Universal House of Justice released the Five Year Plan to 115 National Spiritual Assemblies. Its challenging goals include a special mandate for Bahá’í youth throughout the world:

The vast reservoir of spiritual energy, zeal and idealism resident in Bahá’í youth, which so effectively contributed to the success of the Nine Year Plan, must be directed and lavishly spent for the proclamation, teaching, and consolidation of the Cause. Spiritual Assemblies are urged to provide consultation and the offer of guidance to Bahá’í youth who seek to plan their lives in such a way as to be of utmost service to the Cause of God.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States responded swiftly to this goal. It immediately appointed a National Bahá’í Youth Committee for the first time in more than a decade, assigning it a budget and a permanent staff in Wilmette. Included on this Committee are the Secretaries of three of the agencies most directly involved in proclamation, teaching, and consolidation, the National Teaching Committee, the International Goals Committee, and the National Education Committee. Their appointment helps assure the participation of youth in the major work of the Faith. Next, a Two Year Youth Program was devised and announced at the historic conference held in St. Louis, Missouri. This Program assigns to American Bahá’í youth a special role in the Five Year Plan, including specific objectives which must be won by September 1, 1976.

In its introduction to the Two Year Youth Program, the National Spiritual Assembly writes:

...we turn again with high expectations to the Bahá’í youth for the particular contributions of ‘spiritual energy, zeal and idealism’ which they abundantly possess, for without such dynamic qualities the Plan cannot succeed.1 (Italics added)

Why is the active participation of Bahá’í youth necessary to the success of the Five Year Plan? Why did The Universal House of Justice, for the first time in history, make this a special goal in a global teaching plan? At a time when most young people are alienated from themselves and from society, confused about the course of world events, and concerned about their own future, young Bahá’ís are expected to work in harmony with their fellow believers of all ages to fuel the ever-advancing Cause of God in its progress from strength to strength, and to lay one more part of the foundation for the Kingdom of God on earth. How can they do it?

The answer shines clearly in the history of their Faith. Here is clear evidence that the Power of God lies waiting to assist any believer, however young, who arise to serve the Lord of the Age. Here, also, is repeated proof that Bahá’í youth have, from the earliest days of this era, seized this power and attained the station of heroic sacrifice. It was to “... arouse the friends to greater self-sacrifice and a more determined way of teaching”2 that the Guardian devoted so much time early in his career to the translation of The Dawn-Breakers, and urged youth in particular to study its lessons.

The role of youth in the early history of the Cause is so significant that it can be traced back beyond the Declaration of the Báb to the very roots of His Dispensation, which lie in the days of Shaykh Ahmad-i-Ahsa’i. Even before the dawn of the nineteenth century, this gentle scholar began to prepare his countrymen for the advent of a new and independent Revelation. After his death, his position as leader, teacher, and reformer was assumed by his chief disciple, Siyyid Kázím-i-Rashí, who was only twenty-four years old. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains in A Traveller’s Narrative that this luminary of Divine
“... we turn again with high expectations to the Baha’i youth for the particular contributions of “spiritual energy, zeal and idealism” which they abundantly possess, for without such dynamic qualities the Plan cannot succeed.”

guidance was only twelve when he was instructed in a dream to enroll amongst the disciples of Shaykh Ahmad, which he did immediately.

Siyyid Kāzim also chose to confer leadership upon one of his own young disciples. This was Mullá Ḥusayn-i-Bushrú’í, who successfully undertook the mission of gaining the friendship and sympathy of one of the most formidable ecclesiastical dignitaries in Persia. Siyyid Kāzim spoke so highly of the attainments, ability, and character of this youth that a few suspected Mullá Ḥusayn himself of being the Promised One for Whom they were waiting.

After the death of his master it was this same youth who urged his fellow disciples to immediately begin their search for the Object of their quest. Finding only unworthy fear and evasiveness in those students, Mullá Ḥusayn set out with only two companions on his momentous quest. After forty days of prayer and fasting he began a journey which eventually led him to the gates of Shiráz. Within the walls of that glorious city, a few hours before sunset on May 22, 1844, he met a noble Youth Who invited the young seeker to His home for an evening of ecstatic conversation. Before daybreak Mullá Ḥusayn had heard the Báb’s Declaration and had recognized Him as the Promised One.

Thus the Báb’s first believer, the first Letter of the Living, the Bábút-Báb (the gate of the Gate) was a youth. His own words testify to the impact of the Báb’s Declaration:

This Revelation, so suddenly and impetuously thrust upon me, came as a thunderbolt which, for a time, seemed to have numbed my faculties. I was blinded by its dazzling splendour and overwhelmed by its crushing force. Excitement, joy, awe, and wonder stirred the depths of my soul. Predominant among these emotions was a sense of gladness and strength which seemed to have transfigured me. ... I felt possessed of such courage and power that were the world, all its peoples and its potentates, to rise against me, I would, alone and undaunted, withstand their onslaught. The universe seemed but a handful of dust in my grasp.

According to Bahá’u'lláh’s own testimony in the Kitáb-i-Iqán, Mullá Ḥusayn was the one “... but for whom God would not have been established upon the seat of His mercy, nor ascended the throne of eternal glory.”

Seventeen other seekers had to recognize the Báb before He would publicly declare His Mission. The last of these Letters of the Living was Quddús. He was only twenty-two at the time, yet his wisdom had made him the most esteemed disciple of Siyyid Kāzim. Arriving in Shiráz one evening, disheveled and travel-stained, he caught a glimpse of the Báb returning to His home. Quddús instantly accepted the Messenger of God, crying to the startled Mullá Ḥusayn:

Why seek you to hide Him from me? I can recognize Him by His gait. I confidently testify that none besides Him, whether in the East or in the West, can claim to be the Truth. None other can manifest the power and majesty that radiate from His holy person.

Though Quddús was the youngest Letter of the Living, Shoghi Effendi has said that he was first in rank among them.

Immediately preceding Quddús in recognizing the Primal Point was Táhirih (the Pure One), who had been surnamed Qurratú’l-‘Ayn (Solace of the Eyes) by Siyyid Kāzim, her teacher. She was less than thirty years of age when, as a result of the appearance of the Báb to her in a dream, she arose in His service. Doubly persecuted for her Faith, which aroused the hatred of the fanatical and the powerful in Persia, and for her sex, which was a liability in that era, she rose to great heights of erudition and heroism. The Guardian describes her as a woman “... of distinguished birth, of bewitching charm, of captivating eloquence, indomitable in spirit, unorthodox in her views, audacious in her acts....” Though she never met the Báb, her exquisite poetry extolled His beauty, her powerful translations helped promulgate His message, her fearless teachings hastened the spread of His Cause, and her shining example shed imperishable luster on His Faith.

All three of these youthful leaders, each prepared by Siyyid Kāzim to recognize the Báb, joyfully accepted the station of martyrdom after rendering great services to their Lord. Mullá Ḥusayn and Quddús, the first and last Letters of the Living, offered up their lives at the Fort of Shaykh Tabarsi as part of a band of “three hundred and thirteen untrained, unequipped yet God-intoxicated students” whose “heinous betrayal” and wholesale slaughter at the hands of professional soldiers and a frenzied mob generated “... the very seeds which, in a later age, were to blossom into world-wide administrative institutions, and which must, in the fullness of time, yield their golden fruit in the shape of world-redeeming, earth-encircling Order.”

In the forest of Mázindarán no less than half of the Letters of the Living were martyred. Táhirih was executed in 1852, but not before she had played her leading role along with Quddús, under “the controlling and directing influence” of Bahá’u’lláh Himself, at the celebrated Conference of Badash four years earlier. The call she raised as she
appeared before her bewildered companions without her veil, ("The Trumpet is sounding! The great Trump is blown! The universal Advent is now proclaimed!") became "... the death-knell of the twelve hundred year old law of Islam." Inspired by the shining example of such heroes, other youth joined the swelling ranks of Bábís. Their spiritual energy, zeal, and idealism helped sustain the expansion of the Cause in the face of relentless persecution. Many young believers were called to join the twenty thousand stalwart souls who tasted the bittersweet joy of martyrdom. One father, rather than renounce his faith, preferred to see the throats of his two young sons slit upon his own breast. The elder of the two, a boy of fourteen who was already covered with blood, adamantly demanded his right to taste the bittersweet joy of martyrdom, rather than an enemy.

"When I came into the world of material comfort and religious holiness as neither Hijáz nor Shiráz can hope to rival." In Tihrán, MULLá HUSayn’s inquiries soon led him to a young Nobleman, twenty-eight years old, Whose exalted character immediately attracted his heart. To this Figure, Whose given name was Mirzá HUSayn ‘Ali Núrí, the Primal Point (the Báb) sent a special scroll. Immediately upon reading it Mirzá HUSayn ‘Ali embraced the Báb Faith, and soon after left on His first journey to promote the Revelation. Later, at the Conference of Badasht, He revealed His new name: Bahá’u’lláh, the Glory of God.

"The Bab had sent MULLá HUSayn on a special mission to several cities, including Tihrán, promising to "direct your steps to that city which enshrines a Mystery of such transcendent holiness as neither Hijáz nor Shiráz can hope to rival." In Tihrán, MULLá HUSayn’s inquiries soon led him to a young Nobleman, twenty-eight years old, Whose exalted character immediately attracted his heart. To this Figure, Whose given name was Mirzá HUSayn ‘Ali Núrí, the Primal Point (the Báb) sent a special scroll. Immediately upon reading it Mirzá HUSayn ‘Ali embraced the Báb Faith, and soon after left on His first journey to promote the Revelation. Later, at the Conference of Badasht, He revealed His new name: Bahá’u’lláh, the Glory of God.

Such was the power of this new Believer that after the martyrdom of the Báb, He soon became the unofficial leader of the Bábí community. In 1853, while chained in the rank darkness of the Siyáh-Cháhl of Tihrán, the Most Great Spirit—in the form of a Maiden—revealed itself to Bahá’u’lláh. Publicly declaring His Mission as the Promised One in 1853, on the eve of His departure from Baghdád (where He had been exiled after release from four months’ imprisonment in Tihrán), the “One Whom God Shalt Make Manifest” attracted followers in ever-increasing numbers.

Many were from countries never opened to the Faith of the Báb. The youth among these Bahá’s continued to distinguish themselves on the field of sacrifice and martyrdom. One example was the twelve-year-old Rúydu’l-lláh, son of the renowned teacher and poet, Varqá. After watching a brutal jailer thrust a dagger into his father’s belly and cut him to pieces, he was ordered to recant his faith. Because of his blunt refusal, he was strangled with a rope. An eleven-year-old boy was pitilessly thrashed, stabbed with pen knives and tortured to death, and a newly converted youth of eighteen years named HUSayn was denounced by his own father and torn to pieces before the eyes of his mother.

Yet many of these martyrs were actually part of modern history. For example, the youth just mentioned—HUSayn—was murdered in the early 1900’s, at a time when, in the West, automobiles traveled the roads and powered aircraft flew the skies. During a wave of persecution in Persia in 1955 young believers were abducted, beaten,
Twelve-year-old Ruḥu'llāh shared imprisonment and martyrdom with his father, Vargā, a renowned poet and Bahā'ī teacher, shown here on the left. 

raped, and murdered. In 1962 a Moroccan court sentenced six believers to death or life imprisonment for their Faith (an edict which was eventually countermanded). Three of these prisoners were between the ages of 22 and 24. 

Thus the heroism of the youthful dawn-breakers is not as far removed in time as one might at first suspect. Neither were their characters and capacities as unusual as their glorious deeds seem to suggest. For the most part they were ordinary young men and women, heir to the limitations of mortal beings, who were transformed by their love for the Manifestation of God and aided by the Power of the Almighty. 

Nowhere in the chronicles of the Heroic Age is there a better illustration of this fact than in the story of Aqā Buzurg of Khurāsān. His father was a devoted believer who had survived the slaughter at Fort Shaykh Tabarsi. Yet the young man himself had shown no interest in the Faith. Some accounts even describe him as a delinquent who was publicly denounced by his father. But this lowly soul met the historian Nabil in the city of Nisbapur, and was converted. He decided to seek the presence of Bahā'u'llāh. 

In 1869 Aqā Buzurg arrived at the prison city of 'Akkā, disguised as an Arab. He handed his written declaration of faith to 'Abdu'l-Bahā, who greeted him warmly and took him to the barracks cell. There he attained the Goal of his desire. Twice he conversed privately with Bahā'u'llāh, Who gave him a new name: Badi' (Wonderful). 

For more than two years after writing His Tablet to the Shah, the Blessed Beauty had been waiting for a devoted soul to arise and carry it to the ruler of Persia. The reborn Badi' ended His waiting. Ḥāfiẓ Shāh Muḥammad Amin, Bahā'u'llāh's Trustee, brought the youth a small case and the Tablet, and has left this account of their meeting:

... we left the town and walked up Mount Carmel where I handed him the case. He took it into his hands, kissed it, and knelt with his forehead to the ground; he also took the sealed envelope, walked twenty to thirty paces away from me, sat down facing 'Akkā, read it, and again knelt with his forehead to the ground. The rays of ecstasy and the signs of gladness and joy appeared on his face....

I mentioned that we had better go to Haifa, in order that, as instructed, I might give him some money. He declined to go with me, but suggested that I could go alone and bring it to him. 

When I returned, in spite of much searching, I could not find him. He had gone....

The illustrious youth had already left on his mission to Tīhrān, knowing full well the fate that awaited him. After four months of travel, alone and on foot, over dangerous terrain, he arrived in the capital where he patiently spent three days in prayer and fasting. Finally, he met the Shah proceeding on a hunting expedition. While the local populace cowered on the ground in fear of the Monarch, Badi' calmly and respectfully approached him, calling out, "O King! I have come to thee from Sheba with a weighty message." The Shah, dispatching the Tablet to his divines (who were never able to draft an adequate reply), ordered the arrest of this bold youth. He was brutally tortured for three successive days. His jailers branded him, beat his head to a pulp with the butt of a rifle, threw his
body into a pit, and heaped earth and stones upon it. So amazed were they at his endurance that they commissioned a photograph of him sitting calmly in front of the brazier containing the hot bars of iron which were used to scorch his flesh, his neck unbowed by the weight of a heavy chain. The date was July, 1870. Badi’ was seventeen years old.

Referring to the transformation of the rebellious Aqa Buzurg into the heroic Badi’, Bahá’u’lláh says, “We took a handful of dust, mixed it with the waters of might and power and breathed into it the spirit of assurance.” He explained that the station of this youth was so great that no Tablet could carry its weight nor any pen describe its glory. Single and alone, He attests, Badi’ could have conquered all that was in heaven and on earth. For three years the Blessed Beauty wrote of this hero in such terms, characterizing those references as the ‘salt of My Tablets.’

Just one month before the martyrdom of Badi’ one of Bahá’u’lláh’s own sons also chose the path of sacrifice. This was the pious Mirzá Mihdí, the Purest Branch. He was only twenty-two when, one evening while pacing the roof of his prison rapt in his devotions, he fell through a skylight onto a wooden crate below. Within twenty-four hours he had left this world. His dying supplication to a grieving Father was that his life might be accepted as a ransom for those who were prevented from attaining the presence of their Beloved.

Mirzá Mihdí’s brother was of course, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Designated by His Father the Center and Pivot of His Covenant, the Mystery of God, the perfect Exemplar of His Teachings, the unerring Interpreter of His Word, and the Most Great Branch, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was born on the very night of the Báb’s declaration. As a child He sat on the lap of Khánum and “registered the thrilling significance of the stirring challenge which that indomitable heroine had addressed to her fellow-disciple, the erudite and far-famed Vahid.” After the terrible shock of seeing His Father brutalized by His confinement in the Siyáh-Chál, He shared such persecution and privation that He once confided to Nábil that He felt Himself to have grown old, though still but a child of tender years. As a boy He recognized the full glory of Bahá’u’lláh’s still unannounced station, and was active in teaching the Faith to scholars and dignitaries.

Even then the Blessed Beauty, and consequently His followers, referred to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as “the Master.” While still a young man He served His Father in countless ways, representing Him in public, defending the Cause, transcribing Tablets, guarding the interests of the believers, supervising the construction of the Shrine of the Báb, and preserving the early history of the Faith. As He grew older his responsibilities and sacrifices increased. After the Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh, He assumed leadership of the Báb’s Faith under the provisions of His Father’s Will and Testament.

In 1912, a few years after being released—through the force of the “Young Turk” Revolution—from forty years’ imprisonment, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá came Himself to North America to ignite the flame of faith on that continent. His illuminating words and exemplary deeds laid the foundation for future youth work in the United States.
Don Rufino Fuentes, a Mayan Bahá'í, at the ruins of Uxmal.

Bahá'í Proclamation and Deepening Film

Step by Step

An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator — what have these people in common? They're Bahá'ís and they appear in a new Bahá'í film, *Paso a Paso*, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled *Step by Step* in English, depicts the growth of the Bahá'í Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Unified by their common belief in Bahá'u'lláh and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Bahá'í administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Bahá'í House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, *El Alba* and *The Dedication*. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

How to Get the Film

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Bahá'í distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify *Step by Step*, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or *Paso a Paso*, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
The Bahá'í attitude towards material suffering

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

In your letter of 11 September you say that the questions of how to help the Third World or the poor who are suffering under calamities are much discussed in your community and you wish to know whether to create a special fund for such needs, to ask for special contributions from time to time, or whether there are other ways in which you could help.

It is understandable that Bahá'ís who witness the miserable conditions under which so many human beings have to live, or who hear of a sudden disaster that has struck a certain area of the world, are moved to do something practical to ameliorate those conditions and to help their suffering fellow-mortals.

There are many ways in which help can be rendered. Every Bahá'í has the duty to acquire a trade or profession through which he will earn that wherewith he can support himself and his family; in the choice of such work he can seek those activities which are of benefit to his fellow-men and not merely those which promote his personal interests, still less those whose effects are actually harmful.

There are also the situations in which an individual Bahá'í or a Spiritual Assembly is confronted with an urgent need which neither justice nor compassion could allow to go unheeded and unhelped. How many are the stories told of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in such situations, when He would even take off a garment He was wearing and give it to a shivering man in rags.

But in our concern for such immediate obvious calls upon our succor we must not allow ourselves to forget the continuing, appalling burden of suffering under which millions of human beings are always groaning—a burden which they have borne for century upon century and which it is the mission of Bahá'u'lláh to lift at last. The principal cause of this suffering, which one can witness wherever one turns, is the corruption of human morals and the prevalence of prejudice, suspicion, hatred, untrustworthiness, selfishness and tyranny among men. It is not merely material well-being that people need. The very desperate need is to know how to live their lives—they need to know who they are, to what purpose they exist, and how they should act towards another; and, once they know the answers to these questions they need to be helped to gradually apply these answers to every-day behavior. It is to the solution of this basic problem of mankind that the greater part of all our energy and resources should be directed. There are mighty agencies in this world, governments, foundations, institutions of many kinds with tremendous financial resources which are working to improve the material lot of human beings. Anything we Bahá'ís could add to such resources in the way of special funds or contributions would be a negligible drop in the ocean. However, alone among men we have the divinely-given remedy for the real ills of mankind; no one else is doing or can do this most important work, and if we divert our energy and our funds into fields in which others are already doing more than we can hope to do, we shall be delaying the diffusion of the Divine Message which is the most important task of all.

Because of such an attitude, as also because of our refusal to become involved in politics, Bahá'ís are often accused of holding aloof from the "real problems" of their fellow-men. But when we hear this accusation let us not forget that those who make it are usually idealistic materialists to whom material good is the only "real" good, whereas we know that the working of the material world is merely a reflection of spiritual conditions and until the spiritual conditions can be changed there can be no lasting change for the better in material affairs.

We should also remember that most people have no clear concept of the sort of world they wish to build, nor how to go about building it. Even those who are concerned to improve conditions are therefore reduced to combating every apparent evil that takes their attention. Willingness to fight against evils, whether in the form of conditions or embodied in evil men, has thus become for most people the touchstone by which they judge a person's moral worth. Bahá'ís, on the other hand, know the goal they are working towards and know what they must do, step by step, to attain it. Their whole energy is directed towards the building of the good, a good which has such a positive strength that in the face of it the multitude of evils—which are in essence negative—will fade away and be no more. To enter into the quixotic tournament of demolishing one by one the evils in the world is, to a Bahá'í, a vain waste of time and effort. His whole life is directed towards proclaiming the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, reviving the spiritual life of his fellow-men, uniting them in a divinely-created World Order, and then, as that Order grows in strength and influence, he will see the power of that Message transforming the whole of human society and progressively solving the problems and removing the injustices which have so long bedevilled the world.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

The Universal House of Justice.

November 19, 1974
Universal House of Justice
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Editorial

Progress report to subscribers

A new format for Bahá'í News has been in the making since August 1973. In a general reorganization of the Bahá'í information system in the United States at that time the magazine was assigned for production to the National Bahá'í Information Office, along with such other publications as The American Bahá'í and National Bahá'í Review.

Those who have subscribed to Bahá'í News during this period of transition have witnessed certain modifications in the traditional format of the magazine—improvements, we feel—and have perhaps been aware of others that should have been made.

An effort has been undertaken to extend the scope of the magazine's coverage of events and to present more effectively that news which has been available. Much of the information printed arrives by mail from points around the globe; unfortunately, there is often a considerable lag between the time the event occurs and the time a report is submitted to Bahá'í News. Needless to say, many significant activities around the world go completely unreported. What we do receive we organize as best we can for a palatable presentation. We have tried of late to anticipate certain news activities by requesting information well in advance. The result has been a discernible increase in special news reports.

This work is far from completed. Efforts to improve the quality of news content will continue well into the future. The United States National Spiritual Assembly recently asked Continental Counsellors in different regions to recommend individuals to serve as reporters for the publication. A modest increase in the size of our editorial staff is also contemplated. A steady improvement in the quality of the magazine itself will serve as a continuing incentive to the friends around the world to make more information available.

With this issue we take still another step in the process of alteration. A new nameplate for the publication has been adopted; the familiar globe design used for many years to designate the international newsletter has been retired in favor of a simpler, unembellished design. The change will give greater flexibility in the preparation of covers, and indicates further progress in the publication's transformation from newsletter to magazine. For the first time also we use four-color printing in this issue. That is to mark the 50th anniversary of the magazine's first publication in December, 1924, as well as to symbolize the desire of the staff to make of it the foremost Bahá'í journal in the world.

Most importantly perhaps, we are also moving to eliminate delays in production, handling, and mailing, all of which presently cause much inconvenience to our subscribers. In recent months there has been more interest among Bahá'í writers and artists in submitting materials to the magazine for publication. For the first time we are beginning to have a sustained flow of copy from which to select and design forthcoming editions. The magazine has also moved to acquire a modest amount of typesetting equipment, to give the staff more leverage in meeting rigorous printing deadlines. The subscriber maintenance system has also undergone major reorganization. For the first time our subscriber lists have been computerized to permit orderly processing of new subscriptions and periodic renewals. This new system, coupled with the limited use of direct mail promotion, has already resulted in substantial increases in subscribers. Naturally, the larger the base of subscribers the better able the magazine will be to upgrade its service.

The process of developing the potential of Bahá'í News is long and complicated. The changes, we assume, will make Bahá'í News more informative and useful to its readers. At any point along the way, consequently, we welcome your observations about these changes. The staff regrets the inconveniences that new production arrangements have caused, but hopes to have these under control soon.

The editors
By Beth McKenty

_O Son of Man! Magnify My Cause that I may reveal unto thee the mysteries of My greatness and shine upon thee with the light of eternity._

For fifty years, while the news media has carried headlines of wars and disintegration, Bahá’í News has been a vehicle for reports and news of a powerful integrating process—the building of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. The first words of its first issue (December 1924) were those of the Hidden Word shown above. The staff, for that issue, was one Bahá’í, Horace Holley, later given the rank of Hand of the Cause by the beloved Guardian. At that time he was secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada.

From his office at 169 Christopher Street, in New York, he produced and distributed the four-page news bulletin, called Bahá’í News Letter. The symbol of the Greatest Name appeared on the nameplate of that first edition. The contents of Volume I, Number 1, included a statement from Shoghi Effendi; a letter and financial statement from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada; reports of national committees, and two columns of national and international news of the Faith.

The seeds of its future growth lay in that first issue. Helping the Bahá’ís maintain a close tie with the institutions of their Faith, providing current news of teaching and consolidation activities around the globe, and reporting on historical events of interest to the friends have remained its mission ever since.

A brief survey of issues from the past fifty years will uncover the illustrious names of our heroes and heroines, and illumine a chronicle of deeds that has broadcast the fame of the Cause far and wide.

It was only three years after the Ascension of the Master that the first issue of Bahá’í News appeared with this statement from the beloved Guardian:

_The time is indeed ripe for the manifold activities, wherein the servants and handmaidens of Bahá’u’lláh are so devoutly and earnestly engaged, to be harmonized and conducted with unity, cooperation and efficiency, that the effect of such a combined and systematized effort, through which an All-Powerful Spirit is steadily pouring, may transcend every other achievement of the past, however glorious it has been, and may stand, now that, to the eyes of the outside world the glorious Person of the Master is no more, a convincing testimony of the potency of His everliving Spirit._

The second issue in January 1925, published less than five years after the unveiling of the Tablets of the Divine Plan in New York, carried this report about the international teaching work:

_A letter from Clara and Hyde Dunn brings the good news that the work in Australia is progressing very rapidly. Melbourne and Perth have their Bahá’í Assemblies, as well as Auckland, New Zealand, and new Assemblies are about to be formed in Adelaide and Sydney, Australia._

The tremendous contribution which Martha Root has been making to the promotion of the Cause in China, Australia and South Africa is a subject which would require many pages to do it justice. We hope to devote an early number of the News Letter to a full account of her activities.

Severals years later, in a special May 1932 Convention issue, Louis Gregory, posthumously named a Hand of the Cause, wrote:

_The Convention is always a time of festival and spiritual refreshment among the followers of the faith and they are assisted by the Unseen Powers to convey these favors to others. Each occasion has its distinct features which are woven into the history and progress of the Cause. . . . The most striking feature of this Convention was its light, contrasted with the world’s gloom. . . . The Convention was reminded of the cosmic range of Bahá’í activity by messages, by letter or wire, from various cities at home and abroad . . . indicating the oneness of spirit which invites distant friends, by sending loving greetings._

In January 1942 Bahá’í News reported the completion of the sixth and seventh main story faces of the Temple and published a cable of appreciation from Shoghi Effendi. News from Hawaii, site of the Pearl Harbor bombing, was given, assuring the safety of the friends on Maui and the island of Hawaii. There followed in the edition two elaborate maps showing teaching plans for North America, together with a portion of the Master’s Divine Plan. A letter from the Guardian, regarding the duty and responsibility of Bahá’ís in a time of national crisis, was reprinted. It said in
part:

There are many . . . 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.6

A special issue reporting on the 36th annual Convention was published in 1944, the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of the Báb. This stirring event was movingly observed with a devotional program whose readers included Louis Gregory, Olivia Kelsey, Honor Kempton, Mary McClennen and Albert Windust. A cablegram dated May 25, 1944 from the Guardian arrived on the last day of the Convention, containing momentous news:

I am overjoyed by the auspicious opening of the Centennial Convention. The dearly-beloved American Bahá'í community was remembered during the historic night of the glorious Declaration at the Báb's Holy Shrine. Announce to the friends the joyful tidings that the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of the Mission of the martyred Herald of the Faith was signalized by historic decision to complete the structure of His sepulcher erected by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the site chosen by Bahá'u'lláh. The recently designed model of the dome has been unveiled in the presence of assembled believers. Praying for early removal of obstacles to the consummation of the stupendous Plan conceived by the Founder of the Faith and the hopes cherished by the Center of His Covenant.6

Nine years later, again Convention time, the tasks facing the friends are even greater than those that had faced earlier gatherings of American Bahá'ís. News of the launching of the Ten Year Crusade for the spiritual conquest of the planet was carried in the May 1953 Bahá'í News, together with a picture of ten Hands of the Cause who had attended the First Intercontinental Bahá'í Teaching Conference in Uganda some months earlier. In his message, "Launching the World-Embracing Spiritual Crusade," the Guardian wrote:

Bahá'u'lláh's army of light is standing on the threshold of the Holy Year. Let them, as they enter it, vow with one voice, one heart, one soul, never to turn back in the entire course of the fateful decade ahead until each and every one will have contributed his share in laying on a world-wide scale an unassailable administrative foundation for Bahá'u'lláh's Christ-promised Kingdom on earth, swelling thereby the chorus of universal jubilation wherein earth and heaven will join as prophesied by Daniel, echoed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; 'on that day will the faithful rejoice with exceeding gladness.'7

The Guardian referred to 1953 as a "fivefold historic occasion," marking as it did the dedication for public worship of the holiest Masjīdi-‘Ādhirr of the Bahá'í world; convocation of the Second Intercontinental Teaching Conference of the Holy Year; the Anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván; the holding of the Forty-Fifth American Bahá'í Convention, and the launching of the epochal, global spiritual Crusade.8 The first Italo-Swiss convention was also held in April of that year, in Florence, Italy, with eighteen delegates and a total of 48 Bahá'ís attending.

Subsequent issues, not surprisingly, were filled with reports of departing pioneers and letters from pioneers at their posts. The January 1954 Bahá'í News carried the historic photograph of five members of the National Spiritual Assembly standing in front of the House of Worship prior to leaving for their pioneering posts. They were: William Kenneth Christian, Mamie Seto, Elsie Austin, the Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker, and Matthew Bullock. The very next issue begins with a message from the Guardian lamenting the passing of Dorothy Baker:

Hearts grieved lamentable, untimely passing Dorothy Baker, distinguished Hand Cause, eloquent exponent of its teachings, indefatigable supporter of its institutions, valiant defender its precepts . . . .9

The mysterious assistance given to pioneers is evidenced in one small paragraph in this same issue:

Miss Virginia Breaks, pioneer in Truk, Eastern Caroline Islands, a United States Trust Territory, reports, in a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, that
while visiting at the home of the District Anthropologist in Yap, the anthropologist's wife and Miss Breaks heard a Bahá'í broadcast. This was a radio interview with Mr. Faizi [the Hand of the Cause A.Q. Faizi] of Bahrein, broadcasting from Australia, some 2,500 miles away.10

Desire to participate in the Crusade crossed all barriers of age and health. In April 1954 in a report from the American National Teaching Committee, the following letter from a volunteer born in 1878 is quoted:

Area desired—"anywhere you want to send me." When can you leave?—"at once." Any health problems?—"Doctors say a nervous heart, but I would say perfect health."

She adds, parenthetically, "Do have broken knee and hip and am on crutches."

In December 1957 a tragic headline appeared:

Shoghi Effendi, Beloved of all Hearts, Sacred Trust Given Believers By Master, Passed Away (From) Sudden Heart Attack in Sleep.

Beneath that terrible headline were printed the messages from the Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, containing the sorrowful details of the event. In reviewing the accomplishments of the thirty-six year Guardianship, the National Assembly made this plea:

Honorable is the sorrow caused by the passing of a loved one, when that sorrow purifies the heart and confirms within it the supreme love—the love of God, and the resolute will to serve Him.12

The next six years see issues filled with articles on goals attained under the guidance of the Hands of the Cause, the Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. In February 1958 we find a picture of a monument in Sofia, Bulgaria, erected at the grave of Marion Jack by the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada. Before his passing, the Guardian had asked that this be done for Marion Jack, who died at her post in 1954. The details:

Loved by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Marion Jack won also the deep gratitude and admiration of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, for her steadfastness at her goal in Sofia, Bulgaria, where she now lies buried.

During World War II, in her elderly years [she was born in 1866] she suffered great privation. She was without heat, lacked clothing, food, and adequate shelter. She was bombed, lost all of her possessions, and was evacuated to the country, later returning, still valiant and on foot, to carry on her teaching work in Sofia.13

In June 1962 the Message from the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'í World tells of the formation of eleven new National Spiritual Assemblies, with Finland added to the original ten goal countries. One year later we have the report of the election of The Universal House of Justice, together with other historic highlights of the Great Jubilee celebration in London's Royal Albert Hall.

A year of respite was followed by the launching of the Nine Year Plan, aimed at raising the number of National Spiritual Assemblies in the world to 108, nine times the number that had existed at the launching of the Ten Year Crusade in 1954. Many stories concerned the efforts to increase the numbers of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the goal countries, and to elect new National Assemblies, pillars of The Universal House of Justice. Continental and oceanic conferences witnessed thousands of Bahá'ís gathering in Kampala, Reykjavik, Rose Hill, La Paz, Sapporo, and Wilmette, with Hands of the Cause present at each conference. The Hand of the Cause Tarázú'lláh Samandari brought his own unique memories of the Blessed Perfection, Bahá'u'lláh, to share with those gathered in Chicago to honor the momentous Proclamation to the Kings.

As the Nine Year Plan drew to a close, the record of the enrollment of new tribes in the Faith continued, with news of the first believers amongst the Paez Indians, of Colombia. The travels of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in the Far East were described by the Bahá'í International News Service, including her visit to Daidanaw, a village of 2,000 people, of whom 1,800 are Bahá'ís.

Today, at the start of the Five Year Plan, the words of the beloved Guardian's 50-year-old directive to Bahá'í News remain fresh and filled with ideas for the expansion and increased effectiveness of this publication in helping win the teaching victories of the Faith:

News Letter
The News Letter which you have lately initiated fulfills a very vital function and has been started admirably well. I would urge you to enlarge its scope, as much as your resources permit, that in time it may devote a special section to every phase of your activities, administrative, devotional, humanitarian, financial, educational and otherwise. That it may attain its object it must combine the essential qualities of accuracy, reliability, thoroughness, dignity and wisdom. It should become a great factor in promoting understanding, providing information on Bahá'í activity, both local and foreign, in stimulating interest, in combating evil influences, and in upholding and safeguarding the institutions of the Cause. It should be made as representative as possible, should be replete with news, up-to-date in its information, and should arouse the keenest interest among believers and admirers alike in every corner of the globe. I cherish great hopes for its immediate future, and I trust you will devote your special attention to its development, and by devising well-conceived and worldwide measures transform this News Letter into what I hope will become the foremost Bahá'í Journal of the world.

2. Bahá'í News, no. 1, December, 1924, p. 3.
3. Ibid., no. 2, January, 1925, p. 4.
5. Ibid., no. 150, January, 1940, p. 8.
6. Ibid., no. 168, May, 1944, p. 3.
10. Ibid., p. 4.
11. Ibid., no. 278, April, 1954, p. 9.
12. Ibid., no. 322, December, 1957, p. 3.
13. Ibid., no. 324, February, 1958, p. 6.
A note about the first Bahá’í News editor

In 1940 Sophie Loeding was invited by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States to become the first full-time employee of the Secretariat. From that time until the Hand of the Cause Horace Holley was called to Haifa in 1959 to join the Hands of the Cause stationed there she served as his secretary. Until the beloved Guardian sent an instruction that no one except the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly should be present at its deliberations, she attended Assembly meetings to keep full stenographic records for the minutes. Later, recording equipment was introduced and she then transcribed the minutes from this equipment.

The first issue of Bahá’í News, published in December, 1924, was the work almost solely of Mr. Holley. To recall and appreciate his unique record in serving the American Bahá’í community, Miss Loeding was asked to write her brief impressions of the man for this issue. Miss Loeding has been a Bahá’í since her parents, when she was still a very young girl, enrolled in the Faith in Chicago in 1898. She served at the National Center from 1940 until her retirement in 1968, and still assists in special projects. Ed.

Horace Holley was born in Torrington, Connecticut, in 1887. As an adult he made his home in New York City and after his election to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada he served there as its Secretary. He moved to Wilmette in 1938 when the National Center was established there. In 1951 he was appointed a Hand of the Cause by the beloved Guardian, and in late 1959 he was called to Haifa where he served as a Hand of the Cause in the Holy Land until his death in 1960.

Those associated with Mr. Holley at the National Center during his tenure as Secretary (1938-1959) knew him as a highly intellectual man, greatly gifted in the literary field, the author of many articles and books about the Faith, and the compiler of many of the writings of Bahá’u’lláh, Abdu’l-Bahá, and the Guardian for the deepening and guidance of the friends. He was also a poet and among his works was a published book of verse which unfortunately is no longer available.

Horace Holley

Those who worked with him knew him as a kind man, generous and thoughtful of others, never showing impatience, never demanding but always getting from us the utmost in cooperation and service. He was a great reader and student, had a phenomenal memory and a keenly analytical mind. As Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly for a period of many years he was called upon, as the Cause spread, to deal with an ever-increasing correspondence ranging over a wide spectrum of subjects.

His letters were well reasoned, concise, and always conveyed the exact meaning he had in mind. He had a voluminous correspondence with the beloved Guardian, who expressed admiration and appreciation for his services and gave him many literary tasks to perform. Perhaps the most outstanding was that of arranging in legally acceptable form Shoghi Effendi’s instructions regarding the structure and organization of the Administrative Order of Bahá’u’lláh: The American Declaration of Trust of the National Spiritual Assembly and the By-laws of a Local Spiritual Assembly. After Mr. Holley — in conjunction with Mountford Mills, a Bahá’í lawyer — completed this important task the material was submitted to the beloved Guardian, who approved it and designated it the pattern to be followed by all National Bahá’í communities in the world. The achievement of this immensely important task assigned to him by the Guardian will no doubt stand over the years as the crowning point of a distinguished career.

The range of information stored in Horace Holley’s memory was wide indeed, and factual. He knew the literature of the Faith and of related subjects as few others did, and could call upon this knowledge at will when necessary. He was a fluent and scholarly speaker, both in extemporaneous discourses and with carefully prepared material. He never used a written text to give presentations. Once when asked if in preparing his addresses he wrote out the text, he said: “I make myself a skeleton and dress the skeleton as I go along.” The “dressed skeleton” was always a thorough presentation of the subject, the “dress” being taken from the vast fund of information stored in his phenomenal memory.

His many gifts made Horace Holley a natural channel for furthering the work of the Cause, not only in the United States, but abroad as well; the clarity of his thinking, his broad vision and ability to convey, through both the written and the spoken word, the fundamental teachings of the Faith and their application to our daily lives, made him an unforgettable figure in the annals of the Faith.

Contemporary, friend, and co-worker of well-remembered believers like May Maxwell and Siegfried Schopflocher of Canada, Mountford Mills, Roy Wilhelm, John Bosch, George Latimer, Nellie French, Corinne True, Amelia Collins, Helen S. Goodall, Ella Cooper and many other great souls who responded to the call of Bahá’u’lláh, Mr. Holley was one of those who did the “spade work” for the magnificent edifice the young Bahá’í of today and tomorrow will ultimately erect.

To have had the opportunity to serve as his secretary was a great privilege and a great learning opportunity. He had a keen sense of humor, was wise, unselfish, clear thinking; a ready tool forged for use by the beloved Guardian, to whom he was faithful, loyal and obedient.

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Australia

New Ḥazíratu’l-Quds dedicated in Sydney

The National Spiritual Assembly recently advised that its offices have been moved “to the new building in the Temple gardens which is the first building of the national Ḥazíratu’l-Quds complex to be completed.” A special dedication ceremony for the new center was held on Sunday, October 20, 1974. During the weekend of the dedication the Continental Board of Counsellors in that zone sponsored a conference in Sydney.

A cable sent by The Universal House of Justice to be read at the dedication ceremony read:

“Warm greetings friends Australia on occasion celebration hundred fifty-fifth anniversary birth blessed Báb chosen as day dedication new national Ḥazíratu’l-Quds Sydney forty years after establishment your National Spiritual Assembly. Supplicating Ancient Beauty further blessings bestowals enrich strengthen and sustain growing vibrant Baha’i community your continent.

Ecuador

Members Saraguro tribe enrolled in Ecuador

The National Spiritual Assembly has reported the recent enrollment of fourteen Indian believers of the Saraguro tribe in the province of Loja. “This is a very significant achievement,” the report stated, “because this group has remained intact in tradition, customs, garb, and it retains a strong sense of identity.” First enrollments among the Saraguro tribe were reported by the National Assembly in January 1969.

Guam

Newspaper reports on Hand of Cause

During the recent visit to Guam of the Hand of the Cause H. Collis Featherstone, a photograph appeared in the Pacific Daily News showing Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone being welcomed to Guam by Governor Camacho. Accompanying the photograph was a splendid article which stated, in part:

“H. Collis Featherstone of Adelaide, Australia, a leading figure of the Baha’i Faith, is visiting Guam after spending a few days with the Baha’i communities at Majuro and Ebeye in the Marshalls and at Ponape and Truk in the Eastern Carolines.

“Featherstone is one of the Baha’is designated ‘Hand of the Cause of God.’ This title was conferred upon him by the late Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Baha’i Faith, in 1957.

“Although he is, by profession, an engineer, in recent years Featherstone has devoted his time primarily to visiting and assisting Baha’is throughout the world. . . . Earlier this month, he participated in a U.S. Baha’i Conference at St. Louis, Mo., attended by some 10,000 members.

“Several special events have been planned during Featherstone’s visit to Guam, including a public fireside-type meeting. . . . Tuesday the visitors go to Saipan to meet with Baha’is of that community . . .”

Iceland

First conference held Arctic, sub-Arctic region

The first conference of the Arctic and sub-Arctic region of Europe, held in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, on August 11-18, 1974, attracted a total attendance of 43 friends from Iceland, Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom and Faroes. Present were Betty Reed of the European
Board of Counsellors, Auxiliary Board member Svana Einarsdottir, and members of the National Assemblies of Iceland, Denmark, Norway and the United Kingdom. Also in attendance was Knight of Baha'u'llah Eskil Ljungberg who opened the Faroes Islands to the Faith in July 1953, in the opening phase of the Ten Year Crusade.

"The conference was seen as an historic one," Mrs. Reed reported, "in that it was the first to which participants had come in order to discuss the whole area of the European Arctic and sub-Arctic stretching from Finland in the west to Greenland in the east, from Svalbard in the extreme north to the Scottish islands in the south." Commenting that the whole region achieved a heightened sense of identity and common purpose, Mrs. Reed continued: "Many of the friends are in difficult, lonely or slow-moving places in this region; those who were at the conference felt drawn together in mutual love and support, and drew strength from that. All were confident that that spirit would spread throughout the entire region. The friends living in remote places who had not been able to attend the conference were remembered, and a copy of the conference photograph, carrying a loving message and signed by the conference participants, was sent to fifteen different places . . ."

It was noted that Iceland has emerged as a "spiritual power-house" in the region and it is confidently expected that the Icelandic believers' role in pioneering, traveling teaching, and their example of community development will beneficially influence the entire north. "Iceland is the only country in Europe that has planned and systematically carried out, year by year, a program of proclamation (now in its fourth year) that has taken the Faith throughout the entire country, north, south, east and west," Mrs. Reed observed. The National Spiritual Assembly of Iceland was formed at Ridván, 1972.

"Joyously announce friends gathered Faroes initiate process extension, consolidation Faith Arctic, sub-Arctic Europe," the friends cabled the World Center. "Wonderful spirit cooperation. Humbly request prayers success, awareness responsibility historic conference."

Kenya

World Center visitor takes part in meeting

Following her appearance, as a representative of the International Teaching Center, at the conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors for the southern Africa zone, held in Salisbury, Rhodesia, August 23-25, Florence Mayberry visited Kenya where she met with the Central and East African Counsellors. On the following day, September 1, she addressed a general meeting of the friends at the Bahá'í Center in Nairobi.

Word was sent on short notice throughout Kenya that a visitor from the World Center would speak. Pioneers came in from 400 miles distant; African believers, despite transportation difficulties, from 100 miles away. Approximately 80 friends attended in all. A number who were unable to attend came to the airport to bid farewell to their guest. Mrs. Mayberry spoke of the World Center, the development of the International Teaching Center, the destiny of Africa as envisioned by the beloved Guardian, the release of our God-given potentialities, and the glorious station of Baha'u'llah.

Among those attending were several new blind believers. As a result of the teaching activity of a pioneer who settled in Kenya nine months ago, approximately fifteen blind individuals from a school near the pioneer's home have recently entered the Faith.

Mexico

Counsellors join in ecumenical lectures

The National Spiritual Assembly was recently invited to participate in one of a series of lectures on the subject "The Man of Today and His Attitude Towards Religion," organized by the Center for Ecumenical Studies, the University Cultural Center, and the University Parish. The Spiritual Assembly requested the participation of the members of the Continental Board of Counsellors residing in Mexico, Carmen de Burafato and Paul Lucas. One hundred people, the majority of whom were not Bahá'ís, attended the Bahá'í lecture which concluded with a lively question and answer period.

Mrs. de Burafato and Mr. Lucas were then invited to participate, with representatives of other religions in the lecture series, in a televised interview broadcast nationally on Channel 2, Mexican television. "We achieved in this way a simple proclamation in the university field on a national level," the National Assembly commented.

The Bahá'ís were represented at an evening of "Ecumenical Fellowship" held at the University Cultural Center at the conclusion of the lecture series. "There was a cordial atmosphere and many questions were asked about the Faith," the Bahá'í observer reported.

The sponsors of the program plan to publish an ecumenical magazine in which a résumé of the talks will appear, and in successive editions articles will be published about the different religions taken from the books of each religion.

Rhodesia

Counsellors' conference conducted in Salisbury

The conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa, held in Salisbury, Rhodesia, August 23-25, succeeded in its purpose of lifting the hearts of the participants, quickening their spirit of unity, expanding their vision of service to the Cause and intensifying their resolve to triumphantly accomplish every goal of the Five Year Plan.

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In attendance were Florence Mayberry, representing the International Teaching Center; the three area Counsellors; all ten members of the Auxiliary Board of the zone; and representatives of most National Spiritual Assemblies in southern Africa. At its very beginning the conference reached a high level of spirit which was maintained throughout the entire proceedings. The meetings provided the participants with an opportunity to discuss questions of mutual interest and concern. Some of the topics discussed were: Women, Children and Youth Activities; Inter-Assembly Cooperation in Achieving Five Year Plan Goals; and Creating a Distinctive Bahá'í Community. The contribution to the discussion by all participants was perceptive and a lively exchange of ideas took place.

Some of the highlights of the conference, drawn from Mrs. Mayberry’s report, are as follows:

“In one community a Bahá’í Women’s Club has been organized to meet the need for social activity and shared learning. The club meets once, sometimes twice, a week but the women are so enthused they would like to meet every day. Sessions are open to Bahá’ís as well as their friends; they visit, learn about the Faith, sew, cook and eat together. They do crafts including knitting jerseys for their families from scrap yarns. From discarded mealie bags they create useful and beautiful domestic articles such as aprons, curtains and pillows. A sewing machine has been procured for the use of the club members. Children are made welcome, as well. In women’s clubs, the women can be encouraged to develop classes for children. Already some African women are conducting such classes. One class started with 30 children and now has 80 attending. Another woman misunderstood the request that she teach a weekly children’s class and had one every day for 40 children; this class has now expanded into the teaching of reading, rest, she began to teach them Bahá’í prayers and some school subjects. This has continued and in addition she teaches a children’s class once a week. Thus the Faith and her readiness to serve it fulfilled her heart’s desire.

“Another activity is well developed in Swaziland. The Youth Committee meets every day and has formed clubs in schools. The members call on the sick in hospitals, distribute literature, reactivate fellow youth and have offered to undertake circuit teaching in other countries to stimulate the youth to teach.

“Family conferences, designed to involve all family members, are successful. These conferences have special classes for parents, and separate children’s and youth classes. Classes are held in the morning and all groups have lunch together. Often there is a program in which the children’s accomplishments are displayed.

“The idea of early morning community prayers has been enthusiastically received and already a number of communities are meeting for this purpose. On the surface, the morning prayer meetings seemed to be a simple goal but the idea has proved to be one of the most profoundly stirring and moving goals of the entire Five Year Plan. One believer commented, ‘At first when we started early prayers, we were discouraged. Few came, but we continued. Now more and more are joining in.’

“The story was told of one area where a group of Bahá’ís was walking to a village to teach. One of the friends pointed to his land as they passed it and said, ‘One day you will see what a fine house I will build on this land.’ A 17-year-old girl in the group, a dedicated and excellent teacher, asked: ‘Is that part of the Five Year Plan?’ The man, his devotion quickened, gave his land to the National Spiritual Assembly.

“‘There is such a beautiful spirit in this room tonight,’ commented one of the friends as the conference concluded. Said another: ‘The spirit is here.’

“A beautifully-worded letter of appreciation, signed by all those present at the conference, was sent to The Universal House of Justice. The letter commented on the unsurpassed ‘multinational and inter-Assembly unity and solidarity within the Bahá’í community of Southern Africa,’ the ‘spirit of sincerity and love,’ and concluded: ‘With renewed hearts and re-freshed vigor, we consolidate our dedication to the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh and consecrate ourselves to the united accomplishment of the goals of the Five Year Plan.’”

Following the conference, Mrs. Mayberry proceeded to Kenya where she met with the Continental Board of Counsellors for the Central and East African zone, and addressed a general meeting of the believers in Nairobi.

Seychelles

Official news bulletin tells of Bahá’í meetings

The attendance of representatives of the National Spiritual Assembly of Seychelles at the conference sponsored by the Continental Board of Counsellors in Southern Africa, held in Salisbury, Rhodesia, August 23-25, 1974, was the subject of a lengthy, front-page news item in the Seychelles Government News Bulletin. The full text of the article which appeared under the headline, “Bahá’í Delegates Leaving for Conference,” was later broadcast on Radio Seychelles in both Creole and English. The article was objective and accurate. The National Assembly commented: “The publicity given to the conference in Salisbury both on the radio and the press in Seychelles has caused tremendous interest in non-Bahá’í circles and the news has received very favorable reaction in official and unofficial quarters.”

Spain

Faith included rare religious broadcast

A further report has been received about the first mention of the Bahá’í Faith on television in Spain: “A nationwide television program was broadcast on July 26 featuring different religious communities existing in Spain. Among the few chosen for the program was the Bahá’í Faith. The four-minute report included an interview with the National Assembly Secretary and showed part of a Nineteen Day Feast at the National Center. “Día Prometido” (Promised Day), a recording Bahá’í musical duo, were also shown reciting a long quotation from the Writings with their own musical background. A recording of the whole program was made. This was the first time Spanish television ever mentioned the Bahá’í Faith. Curiously enough, they did so on their own initiative—after The Universal House of Justice had given Spain this goal as one of the goals of the Five Year Plan.”
Abdu'l-Bahá: Last month in America

By Allan L. Ward

'Abdu'l-Bahá was in America for 239 days, from April 11 until December 5, 1912. By early November, He had traveled from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean and back, attracting the attention of the public, arousing the interest of the press, teaching the Faith according to the level of receptivity of His listeners, deepening the believers in the new Revelation in its history. Teachings and service, opening to all who would perceive a glimpse of that spiritual world and the pathway to that existence for which the Báb had sacrificed His life, for which Bahá'u'lláh had suffered, and for which 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own 68 years had been spent in conditions that astounded the understanding ones. He now had 25 days remaining in America.
Back, at last, in New York, 'Abdu'l-Bahá rented the same house as before on Riverside Drive near the Hudson River; Mahmúd noted, on November 11, "The owner of the house and his relatives had entered the group of the sincere ones."

From November 12 until December 5, 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed in New York and could be said to have conducted a month-long deepening class on every aspect of the Faith. Although invitations to speak poured in, He now refused most of them, for He preferred instead to visit the homes of the friends or to have them come to His house. Day and night, in this last face-to-face effort, He prepared them, as part of the army of God, for the things they must do, for the sacrifices they must make, for the spirituality they must attain, for the lessons they must learn, for the total integration and oneness they must achieve, and for the service they would be called upon to render to their fellow men in the path of Bahá'u'lláh.

To know the events of these days fully would be to know the weaving in and out of each human experience, as each person emerged from all his past experiences, entered 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence, and went again into the world. To see how the fabric of the new World Order was being woven, in that rented house on Riverside Drive, those thousands of threads, including their effects on other lives, would have to be followed endlessly.

On November 12, Mahmúd recorded that the newspapers were filled with accounts of the war between the Balkan States and Turkey. He added, "The people looked upon us with eyes full of prejudice whenever they saw us in the market in Persian gowns. We were even refused accommodation in large hotels as they thought we were Turks."

On the same day he recorded that 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as before, was invited to the homes of many socially prominent New Yorkers. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá refused, saying, "I have work with the poor and not with the rich. I love all with heart and soul yet I am not here to visit the homes of the rich." When Andrew Carnegie implored Him to come, however, He did bestow upon Him the honor of His presence. On November 19 the New York Times, in an article entitled "Prophet Blesses Morgan," reported:

J. Pierpont Morgan was written down yesterday as one who had done "considerable philanthropy" when his library in East Thirty-sixth Street was visited by Abdul Baha, the Persian prophet. After the patriarch had wandered through the treasure rooms, He paused before the album long enough to write a blessing on the financier and thereto append his autograph. Beneath the Persian script his companion, Dr. Ameen Fareed, wrote this translation:

O, Thou Generous Lord, verily this famous personage had done considerable philanthropy, render him great and dear in Thy Kingdom, make him happy and joyous in both worlds, and confirm him in serving the Oneness, the world of humanity, and submerge him in the sea of Thy favors.

One of the few speaking invitations 'Abdu'l-Bahá accepted was on November 15, to address the Divine Knowledge Club, comprised mostly of women, the leader of whom claimed clairvoyance and sat with her eyes closed most of the time to receive inspiration. On the way home, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "Behold: what superstition and vain thoughts are yet prevalent in America!"

On November 19, Mahmúd noted, "A number of school children gathered near the Beloved saying, 'Who is this person who looks like Christ?' Miss Juliet Thompson spoke to them outside the house about the Beloved Cause and the life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They asked to interview Him and they were invited to come."

The days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit were passing quickly. A farewell banquet was planned on November 24 at the Great Northern Hotel, that several hundred attended. The banquet hall was regal with festoons, banners, and flowers, the crystal glistening beneath the lights. The Master spoke of the oneness of mankind to the white Bahá'ís, the only friends the racially segregated hotel had permitted to enter. The next night, at the Kinney home, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the white friends personally served the black friends whom the hotel management had vehemently excluded the night before, and at that gathering 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "Today you have shown the Commandments of the Blessed Beauty in your actions and have acted according to the teachings of the Supreme Pen."

The New York Tribune, on November 24, in an article headed "Abdul Baha Going Away," noted:

Abdul Baha, Abbas Effendi, the Persian prophet and center of the Bahá'í movement, received assurances of unwavering loyalty last night from members of the Bahá'í assembly of New York City, who gathered at a farewell dinner in his honor at the Great Northern Hotel. The oriental savant is to leave this country this week, presumably on the steamship Mauretania, though none of his followers would venture to make a definite date, as Abdul Baha, they said, made his plans from day to day.

The hour of the farewell dinner was unusually late. At precisely 9:40 o'clock Abdul Baha appeared, a venerable figure, with a long gray beard and a Persian cloak and white turban, walking slowly to his place of honor.

. . . He was received with a silent greeting by the three hundred members of the assembly, who rose at his approach.

On November 25, the crowds kept coming to see Him. Mahmúd noted, "As the multitude grew, He could not conveniently see them individually so He came downstairs to apologize for not being able to see them." On November 26, the New York Tribune reported:

Mrs. Mary Stokes MacNutt, President of Minerva, and Mr. MacNutt were a happy pair yesterday, for they got Abdul Baha, of Persia, to speak at the
The first home in America visited by the Master, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, was that of Soffia Kinney (shown here). He was the conductor of a large vocal ensemble in New York at the time he entered the Bahá’í Faith and his services include composing a great deal of the early music used by Bahá’ís.

On Wednesday, November 27, during His discourses throughout the day, He told His listeners, “Their [the Manifestations’] only motive was the education of blessed souls and sanctified spirits who became the teachers of the divine education and the promoters of the Great Guidance and the Supreme Favor. The people of Bahá must endeavor day and night to enforce this noble purpose. They must put forth their energy to educate themselves and other sanctified souls.”

On November 28, Thanksgiving Day, Mahmúd commented: “During these last days of His stay in America, there was always an influx of friends in His Presence. They came to offer supplications, to turn to the eternal Face, to look upon the Dawning Place of the Divine Covenant, and to cling to His Mantle of Favor. Every moment the cries of the lovers increased and the fire of love in the breasts glowed more. There was not a moment’s rest for the Holy Being. He was either delivering an address to a public meeting or talking to a friend in His private chamber. The Holy Tongue was imparting joy to the sad, hope to the hopeless, and a flame to the dormant while He guided strugglers to the Right Path.”

On Friday, November 29, He moved to the Emnery home. In an evening meeting at the Kinneys’, He spoke with the friends about their offers of money. He said, “Distribute it among the poor from Me. It will be as if I have given it to them. The most acceptable offering to Me is the unity among friends, service to the Cause of God, diffusing the Divine Fragrances, and acting upon the admonitions of the Beauty of Abba.”

The friends kept trying to give Him money, supplicating by letter and in person, asking the Persians to intercede. Finally, on November 30, some devised a plan for clinging to His mantle until He would accept it. He called in others and said to them all: “I am pleased with your services and I am grateful for all you have done for Me. . . . Now you have brought presents for the members of My family. They are acceptable, but the best of all presents is the love of God which remains preserved in the treasuries of hearts. Material presents remain for a time but this lasts forever. These presents require chests and shelves for safekeeping while this is preserved in the repositories of the minds and hearts and remains eternal and immortal forever in the divine worlds. I shall, therefore, convey to them your love which is the most precious of all gifts. No one uses diamond rings in our home and no one wants rubies. That house is free from all these things.”

“I, however, accept your presents but I leave them in your safe keeping with the request that you will kindly sell them and send the proceeds to the funds for the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár . . . .”

On Sunday, December 1, one of the subjects ‘Abdu’l-Bahá discussed was universal peace: “This question of peace in the religion of Bahá’u’lláh is a positive command and religious obligation. It is not the resolution of a congress or the edict of a parliament of a nation or a country so that it can be considered as permeated with selfish desires and be subject to amendments. It is a positive divine command and is, thus, certain to come to pass. As opposition to Christ is considered a sin in the terminology of that religion, the rejection of peace has the same status in the religion of Bahá’u’lláh.”

It was on Monday, December 2—the day the newspapers announced Sarah Bernhardt’s arrival in New York to start a vaudeville tour—that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá summed up His admonitions to the Bahá’ís by saying: “In brief, let each one of you be as a lamp shining forth with the light of the virtues of the world of humanity. Be trustworthy, sincere, affectionate and replete with chastity. Be illumined, be spiritual, be divine, be glorious, be quickened of God, be a Bahá’í.”

Mahmúd noted on December 3: “Today a spirit of sadness came over the lovers of the Peerless Beauty as preparations were made for His leaving.” Two large meetings were held, one in the afternoon at the home of Mrs. Krug, and the other at the home of Mrs. Kinney.

On December 4, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá continued to talk with the streams of visitors. That night He addressed the Theosophical Society of New York.

Finally, Thursday, December 5, the day of departure from America, came. Two hundred thirty-nine days had passed while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá traveled across the North American continent, communicating to the hearts, opening spiritual eyes and ears and minds, with little rest, in train cars, assembly halls, homes, hotels, embassies, parks, streets, and sanctuaries. He had cut across the forms and fetters of social class, race, and color. He had uplifted, praised, and encouraged every sign of spiritual development shown by each soul.

In His autumn years that recalled a spring when there had been no classroom but the prison cell and the home of exile and no teacher but His Father, He had amazed experts in a variety of fields with His sagacity and wisdom. The Teachings of the perfect Instructor Bahá’u’lláh were reflected in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the perfect Pil, the kind and simple, the saintly, the single-minded, laughing, majestic mystery of a Man, Who had been appointed by that same Instructor as the pivot of the Covenant of God with all the earth. A thousand or thousands of years of spiritual potential for the planet had been channeled into that single human form. He performed in each small action the seed-planting for a millennium.

The Exemplar, the Master, the Servant was now to leave the shores of America and return to the Threshold of the Holy Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh to serve His remaining years on earth. All the future, all the coming ages, all the children yet unborn would be dependent on the spiritual
threads He had woven during His journeys across this and other lands. Not one breath would be drawn in the future centuries, not one word spoken or deed performed in that earth-wide, centuries-long tapestry of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, whose strands would not ultimately reach back to the Divine Loom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Center of the Covenant.

The friends were already looking back, as they would increasingly in the future, on the rich store of experiences that had been woven together and were recounting their memories and recalling the interviews, articles, and new stories that had packed the eight and one-half months.

They could recall some of the friends, in the infancy of their development, had been apprehensive about His coming to America, which had caused Mohammed Yazdi to write these prophetic words from Egypt in 1911 to the American Bahá'ís:

Some people have expressed anxieties and fears because of Abdul-Baha's possible visit to America; they think that the newspapers will write sensational articles and ridicule the Cause. Such people are very shortsighted. They have not realized deeply, nor superficially, the force of Abdul-Baha's presence. Neither have they dreamed of the magnetic influence of his Highness. . . . He is a man whose very appearance will solve all the perplexed anxieties of the visionaries of disaster. . . . Should we be afraid to receive the One who is the source of all our inspiration and all our light? . . . Future historians will record the coming of Abdul-Baha to America as a great and momentous event. Broaden your vision and look into the future, when the nations of America shall celebrate, from one end of the continent to the other, the anniversary of the day when Abdul-Baha set foot upon "the land of the brave and the free." . . . He does not want your houses and palaces, but your hearts. Prepare your hearts, purify your hearts, cleanse your hearts, that he may find a place therein!²²

The American friends had also been concerned about 'Abdu'l-Bahá's monetary well-being and recalled: "When the Bahá'ís of this country received word of his intended visit, the sum of eighteen thousand dollars was subscribed toward the expense of his journey. He was notified of this action and a part of the money forwarded to him by cable. He cabled in answer that the funds contributed by his friends could not be accepted, returned the money and instructed them to give their offering to the poor."²³

They could recall the praise and honor heaped on 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the touching and humorous episodes recorded in the articles printed about Him, such as the one that appeared on April 21, in the magazine section of the New York Times. The reporter, after covering in detail her extensive interview with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, related what happened after she and the translator left His room:

In a minute the door had closed and the reporter stepped from Palestine to the conventional hotel sitting room. The interpreter was beside her.
"Is he not a kind man?" he asked, all his face aglow with affection for his master. "He is the kindest man in the world."
"Indeed, yes."
"You travel with him?"
"Yes, I interpret for him. . . ."
An American Bahá'í came up. His fashion of putting his devotion was somewhat in contrast to the Oriental way of speaking that had prevailed in the apartment, but it bore witness to the love the master inspires.
"For that man," he said, "I'd jump head first from a fifteenth-story window."
So it is with everybody who had come in contact with Abdul Baha. . . .
"I used to wash my hands after shaking hands with a Christian," said a Mohammedan Bahá'í.  "Now I want to shake hands with all the world."²⁴

They could recall the letters to the editors about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, such as the one appearing in the New York City Globe on April 22:

Abdul Baha Abbas, now in New York to spread his gospel of peace, is found in Gertrude Atherton's new novel, "Julie France and Her Times," which the Macmillan Company has just published. The heroine of Mrs. Atherton's story . . . goes to Persia. "Even a little of the wisdom of the east," as she explains, "must widen our vision and prove an everlasting antidote to the modern spirit of unrest." She goes to Acca. And what took her to Acca?
"I went to see Abdul Baha Abbas and investigate the new religion. . . ."²⁵

The friends could recall the magazine articles introducing information about the Faith and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. One appeared in the April 27 issue of The Survey magazine:

Wherever a Bahá'í center has been formed, there has been a new spirit and a new impetus to progress. Thirty years ago a book called the Mysterious Forces of Civilization, by a Bahá'í Philosopher,²⁶ had a commanding influence in educating toward constitutional government in Persia. . . . Bahá'ís do not label as theirs the schools and hospitals they establish. But they are back of or within every progressive movement. . . Their influence goes far because they become one with their surroundings and have no missionary label. . . .

. . . Scientists and men of affairs who have met him [Abdu'l-Bahá] marvel at his wisdom and common-sense knowledge of world conditions, questioning how he can meet them on their own level when he has been a political prisoner for forty years.²⁷

They could remember how often the newspapers reported the superficial instead of the deep spiritual message, as in the May 14 article (picked up from a New York paper) in the Chicago Record-Herald headed "'All Right,' Nation's Slogan":

Abdul Baha, Persian prophet of world peace, said today he had found the keynote expression of American optimism.
"It is those two words, 'all right,' " he said. Everywhere I go," the Persian went on, "I hear those two magical words—words which I have never heard used by any other nation in any other country. With you Americans it is always 'all right.'"
"If I ask a bellboy at the hotel to do something, he responds, 'all right.' If I inquire as to the health of a person I have met here, he answers, 'all right.'"
"When the conductor wants the train to start, he shouts, 'all right.'"
"Everything is 'all right' in the United States. I believe the expression typically reflects the optimism of this great country.²⁸"

Many small instances would be remembered and retold by those who witnessed them. William Copeland Dodge recalled, for example, this glimpse: "The homes of many of the believers were also visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Among them was the residence of my mother and father at 261 West 139th St., New York City, and my home, 1043 East 16th Street, Flatbush, Brooklyn. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had luncheon with us. We had placed a large,
comfortable chair at the table for Him, but He sat in a smaller chair. Another example of humility!"29

Some people could not recall the specific things that went on in His presence but could remember the impact of His presence, as did Lucy Jane Marshall, who said of one meeting in California: "If He spoke or if anyone else was there, I do not recall; but O, in quiet times, the power of His presence, the peace in His face and His steadfast eyes are with me still."30

Some of the friends could recall their desire after once meeting with Him to follow wherever He went. Mrs. Bertha Rohr Clark remembered: "At the Kinney home there were between three and four hundred souls waiting to receive His blessing. He came to each one of us and took our hands and to me He gave a beautiful simmon, my first one."

Mrs. Hazel Tomlinson remembered: "... at His home, He asked to see me. When I went to Him, Ella Bailey was there also...

"... While we were sitting there a bride and groom came in dressed in all their finery. She was white and he was colored. They knelt at Abdul-Baha's feet and He blessed them and put a candy in each mouth, saying as He did so, 'The East and the West.

"Then when we rose to go Abdul-Baha gave my sister (Kathryn Frankland) a banana and to me He gave a beautiful persimmon, my first one. It was delicious. Ever since then I have eaten many of them.

"I remember at one time in His home on California street... There were a number of people around Him and a few reporters. He had given these reporters some very lovely roses with very long stems. They looked as if they didn't know what to do with them.

"Did we not always learn a lesson when with the Master? Even for a very few minutes while with Him. We scarcely knew how very important these minutes were to us and the whole world in general...

One evening He told us of the terrible Black pit where Baha'u'llah was confined for four months... He was sitting on a low davenport. He said, 'I was a child of eight,' and He wept. He continued—'They had taken me to see Baha'u'llah when He would come out of this awful pit for a little fresh air and water. He was chained with

convicts and murderers and His clothes were worn so thin and ragged, and He said, 'Why is this child here, take him away,' and they took me away.' And the Master still wept and we all wept with Him. Then He continued: 'In all your Feasts and all your Meetings speak of Baha'u'llah and all His sufferings.'32

The threads that He had woven would be traced and followed through the fabric of the World Order for the whole of a Dispensation.

And so it was, on December 5, 1912, on the 239th day after His arrival in America, 'Abdu'l-Baha stood on the ship, Celtic, and looked at the friends, on whose actions, together with the actions of their fellow-believers, in large part hung the fate of the world. He said to them:

"This is my last meeting with you, for now I am on the ship ready to sail away. These are my final words of exhortation. I have repeatedly summoned you to the cause of the unity of the world of humanity...

"The earth is one nativity, one home, and all mankind are the children of one father... The obstacle to human happiness is racial or religious prejudice, the competitive struggle for existence and inhumanity toward each other.

"Your eyes have been illumined, your ears are attentive, your hearts knowing.

"... As to you—your efforts must be lofty. Exert yourselves with heart and soul so that perchance through your efforts the light of Universal Peace may shine.

"... Consider how the prophets who have been sent... have exhorted mankind to unity and love... Consider the heedlessness of the world... Notwithstanding the heavenly commandments to love one another, they are still shedding each other's blood.

"Your duty is of another kind, for you are informed of the mysteries of God. Your eyes are illumined, your ears are quickened with hearing. You must therefore look toward each other and then toward mankind with the utmost love and kindness. You have no excuse to bring before God if you fail to live according to his command, for you are informed of that which constitutes the good-pleasure of God... It is my hope that you may become successful in this high calling... And unto this I call you, praying to God to strengthen and bless you."33
Out of a handful of dust

Part II

by Philip Christensen
Research by Sherman Waite

Youth

'Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival in New York City on April 11, 1912, marked the beginning of a nine-month journey which spanned more than 5,000 miles. The seeds of heroism, transported from the land of the dawn-breakers and already planted by early teachers in receptive hearts, were nurtured by the Master during that epic journey, yielding a harvest of dedicated Bahá'ís—including youth—whose services illumined the early years of the Cause in North America.

Except for his talks to large gatherings on the campuses of major universities—Columbia, Howard, New York, and Stanford—'Abdu'l-Bahá saw the Bahá'í youth of that day in large gatherings of believers. At that time there were no youth committees or youth conferences. Indeed, there was only a handful of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the United States. The Bahá'í community was embryonic—a few large groups numbering in the hundreds in places such as New York, Chicago, and Kenosha, Wisconsin, a scattering of believers across the rest of a vast land, and tens of thousands of cities and towns as yet untouched by the rays of the Dawning Sun. Nonetheless, some Bahá'í youth were already rising to heights of sacrificial service that reflected the dedication of their long-suffering brethren in the East.

Consider, for instance, the story of Fred Mortensen. He was reared in the slums, where he learned to be tough, dishonest, and hateful. He had been a fugitive for four years, having walked out of jail while awaiting trial. Then one day he encountered a young man being arrested. While trying to take him away from the policeman Fred noticed a couple of detectives approaching and hastened to escape them. With bullets whizzing around his head he leaped over a thirty-five foot wall, breaking his leg in the process. There he was discovered by a Bahá'í teacher who defended him, cared for his injuries, and told him of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Fred Mortensen often compared this to the story which Bahá'u'lláh relates in The Seven Valleys about the lover who vaulted a wall into a garden to escape the watchman, thereby discovering his beloved after long years of separation,

Out of wrath, the guard had led him who was athirst in love's desert to the sea of his loved one, and lit up the dark night of absence with the light of reunion. He had driven one who was
"Abdu'l-Bahá appeared to this newly ignited youth in a dream, and Fred resolved to seek His presence at Green Acre. He had only one way to get to Maine with his low finances: as a hobo. Starting from Cleveland (where he was attending a printers’ conference), he rode the rods to Buffalo, then for nine long hours through the night to Boston. He arrived in Portsmouth on top of a passenger train, then took a boat and a streetcar to Green Acre. He arrived at the Sarah Farmer Inn, tired, travel-soiled, but happy.

Early the next morning the word was sent: ‘Abdu'l-Bahá wishes to see Mr. Mortensen.’ The Master warmly welcomed the somewhat baffled youth, thrice asked him whether he was happy, and demanded to know the details of his journey. A year later, in a Tablet, ‘Abdu'l-Bahá told him:

That trip of thine from Minneapolis to Green Acre will never be forgotten. Its mention will be recorded eternally in books and works of history. Therefore, be thou happy that, praise be to God, thou hast an illumined heart, a living spirit, and art vivified with merciful breath."}

Agnes Alexander and Martha Root in Japan.

The Master, upon first hearing the story, kissed Fred on both cheeks, gave him much fruit, and kissed the dirty hat which he wore. At the end of His stay at Green Acre He took Fred Mortensen with Him to Malden, Massachusetts, for an entire week. That meeting, and another brief one which followed a few weeks later, firmly set Fred Mortensen’s feet on the path of service to the Cause and obedience to the Covenant. He lived to be a dedicated delinquent. Like Badi’, his story testifies to the transforming power of Bahá’u’lláh. He wrote:

‘Thus the Word of God gave me a new birth, made me a living soul, a revivified spirit. I am positive that nothing else upon the earth could have changed my character as it has been changed. I am indeed a new being, changed by the power of the Holy Spirit... I have been resurrected and made live in the Kingdom of Al Abhá.’

But Fred Mortensen was not the first western youth to be so transformed. The services of Bahá’í youth in America actually began with the first mention of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation to the World’s Parliament of Religion in 1893. A young woman of twenty-two, drawn to Chicago by the inner promptings of her searching heart, saw His Name in a newspaper article. In 1894, after investigating His Teachings, she enrolled in the new Faith. Her name was Lua Getsinger. So great were her services that ‘Abdu'l-Bahá called her the “Herald of the Covenant” and Shoghi Effendi referred to her as the “mother-teacher of the American Bahá’í community.”

Another young American who arose at that time was May Bolles. At the age of eleven she dreamed of an earth covered with mystic symbols of which she could read only a "B" and an "H", and of a Figure who beckoned to her from across the Mediterranean Sea. In 1898, at the age of twenty-eight, she met Lua Getsinger and was attracted by the hidden fire she saw in that soul. May Bolles joined her teacher in the first party of Americans to attain the Master’s presence. When she met Him, she found the Figure from her dream. Later she married William Sutherland Maxwell, and continued her exemplary teaching. A dedicated servant to the end, she passed away in 1940 at her pioneering post in Argentina. Shoghi Effendi said that she had "laid down her life in such a spirit of consecration and self-sacrifice" and had "truly merited the crown of martyrdom."}

The Master’s visit to North America enkindled many youth with the same fire that burned in the souls of the dawn-breakers. One youth who arose in the early part of this century was Dorothy Baker. She was the granddaughter of Mother Betty Beecher, who took her to see ‘Abdu'l-Bahá in New York City when she was fourteen years old. A painfully shy girl, she was at first extremely nervous. Gradually she relaxed under the calming influence of His love. Although she left without speaking and could never remember the words addressed to her, from that time she considered herself a Bahá’í. A few days after the visit she wrote to the Center of the Covenant, saying that she wished to serve the Cause. He sent her a Tablet promising His prayers that God would grant her desire.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá told Mother Beecher, “... your granddaughter is My own daughter. You must train her for Me.” Dorothy Baker’s lifelong service ended in an airplane crash on her way back to the United States from a teaching trip in India in 1954. Three years prior to her death, she had been appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi. Her abilities to reach minority peoples and youth with the Message of Bahá’u’lláh helped win great victories for the Faith which she had embraced at such a young age.

Another young woman who accepted the Bahá’í Faith in the early part of this century also went on to become a Hand of the Cause. She was Agnes Alexander. She discovered the new Revelation while in Rome and traveled all the way to Paris to study under the nearest Bahá’í teacher, May Bolles. In 1913 she asked the Master for permission to visit Haifa. He replied, “It is best that thou goest directly to Japan and while there be engaged in spreading the fragrances of God.” She left immediately for Tokyo and began to teach the waiting souls there as soon as she arrived. So resplendent was her example that she is one of only three teachers, all women, mentioned by name in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explained that through the efforts of this youthful pioneer:

... a number of souls have reached the shore of the sea of faith! Consider ye, what happiness, what joy is this! I declare by the Lord of Hosts that this respected daughter founded an empire, that empire would not have been so great! For this
sovereignty is eternal sovereignty and this glory is everlasting glory.\textsuperscript{25}

In the Holy Land at the same time, a young member of the Holy Family was becoming well known among the Eastern friends for his devotion and service to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. His name was Shoghi Effendi, and he was the Master’s grandson. He was carefully trained by his Grandfather and educated in Western schools. While still a college student at Oxford, he was called back to Haifa by the news of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s passing. There he received the shattering announcement that he was the Guardian of the Faith, chosen successor of the Center of the Covenant. At that time Shoghi Effendi was only 24 years old.

For more than a decade the young Guardian labored to erect a foundation for the administrative institutions whose seeds had been generated by the martyrs of the Heroic Age. No youth committees could exist, for example, without the Spiritual Assemblies which he had first to form and train. The individual heroism which had characterized the growth of the Faith to that time now had to be placed in the setting of a true Bahá’í community guided by a God-given Administrative Order. The task was so arduous that it frequently threatened to destroy Shoghi Effendi’s health.

The American Bahá’í youth had already demonstrated their right to be called “spiritual descendants of the dawn-breakers.” Now they were required to help build Bahá’í communities and to train themselves to serve Bahá’í institutions. They did not fail in this work.

One of the most successful of the early youth groups which resulted was located in Montreal, where May Bolles Maxwell was residing. It began in 1927 with a study class which soon attracted both Bahá’ís and seekers. It was called the “Youth Group for Independent Investigation of Truth.” The program’s success rested on two pillars. One was the Montreal Assembly, which offered the necessary loving trust and genuine understanding. The other was adherence to the Guardian’s own admonition, in a special letter to the youth of that community, to study the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instead of relying too heavily on individual interpretations.

In 1933 a new era began for American Bahá’í youth. In that year the National Spiritual Assembly appointed the first National Bahá’í Youth Committee. Thus young believers were formally incorporated into the Administrative Order so painstakingly con-structured under the Guardian’s direction. This special youth agency was a token of their growing importance to the Faith. Its goal was described in this way:

At various times in the past few years, the National Spiritual Assembly has attempted to inaugurate some type of action among younger believers, but never with any great success. At last, however, a mechanism has been evolved which it is hoped will perpetuate itself and stimulate growth.\textsuperscript{26}

Shoghi Effendi was excited by this development. In the first letter to the National Youth Committee written on his behalf in August, 1933, he stressed two themes. One was the imperative need to deepen in the Teachings. The other was that the Committee:

\ldots should not confine your activities to the national sphere but should strive to create under the supervision of your National Spiritual Assembly an international body of active Bahá’í men and women who, conscious of their manifold and sacred responsibilities, will unanimously arise to spread the Holy Word.\textsuperscript{27}

Responding to this mandate, the Youth Committee established

\textbf{Youth gathered at second and third National Bahá’í Youth Conferences.}
and love of the great heroes of our Faith.28

These international activities were educational experiences in their own right. But the Guardian had told the youth to deepen, and the Youth Committee felt impelled to develop a wide variety of responses to this challenge. Local study groups were established for young believers, following the pattern so successfully developed in Montreal. In 1937-38 a nationwide series of “intensive study days” was begun. One deepening tool, however, eclipsed all others in its effectiveness and popularity: the Bahá’í summer school.

When the National Youth Committee was first appointed in 1933, a new emphasis was placed on developing specialized courses of study for youth at these schools. The program at Green Acre the next year included three youthful teachers. One of these was Mary Maxwell (now Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum), who taught a class on The Dawn-Breakers. Another was David Hoffman (now a member of The Universal House of Justice), who discussed proposed solutions of economic problems. In 1935 the Louhelen youth program was directed by Dorothy Baker, whose great services to young Bahá’ís everywhere had already won her their love and admiration. Who knows how well the youth of this period understood the magnitude of their privilege as they listened to teachers such as Horace Holley, Fred Schopflocher, Dorothy Baker, Glenn Shook, Stanwood Cobb, and Marion Holley?

Complementing the summer schools were the early youth conferences. They began in the 1930’s as special youth dinners at each National Bahá’í Convention. By 1940 local and regional youth conferences began to occur in all parts of the United States, and the National Youth Committee soon took on the responsibility of coordinating them. The idea of a national youth conference was not voiced until 1951, however, when a special meeting during the National Convention was proposed to establish youth goals for the Jubilee Year of 1953 (the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Bahá’í Revelation).

Indeed, during most of the twenty years between 1933 and 1953 the only regular youth activity that was truly national in scope was the Committee’s bulletin, Bahá’í Youth. This grew from an occasional newsletter in the mid-thirties into a regular publication, supervised by a special subcommittee, which included reports of activities, excerpts from the Writings, essays on many topics, and even an Esperanto page. Otherwise, much of the work was still done by individuals and most activities were held in a few local communities.

At Ridván of 1953 Shoghi Effendi announced to the excited but somewhat overwhelmed Bahá’ís of the world the goals of the Ten Year Crusade. It was this campaign that was destined to open the aloft by the Hands of the Cause, would safely lead the community through the dangerous years between the untimely passing of the planet to the Message of Bahá’u’lláh, prepare the foundation for The Universal House of Justice, and serve as a beacon which, held Guardian and the first election of The Universal House of Justice. It marked another turning point in the history of American Bahá’í youth.

It is possible to divide that history into four stages: 1893-1921, 1921-1933, 1933-1953, and 1953 to the present time. The initial stage began with the first mention of the Cause in North America and the enrollment of figures such as Lua Getsinger. Highlighted by the visit of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to North America, its stories chiefly revolve around the heroism and service of spiritually reborn youth. The second stage began with the passing of the Master. Under the leadership and patient guidance of the youthful Shoghi Effendi the Bahá’í community slowly grew in size and sophistication. While continuing their individual services, youth began to prepare themselves for future contributions to the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh.

The appointment of the first National Youth Committee in 1933 marks the beginning of the third chapter in this history. The Administrative Order had begun to function in earnest and the importance of the Bahá’í community was becoming clearer to believers of all ages. There was even a Local Spiritual Assembly in Flint, Michigan, during the mid-1930’s which consisted entirely of youth between the ages of 21 and 25. Yet this transition was by no means instantaneous. For a time there was even a question about the eligibility of youth to be functioning community members. In 1936 the National Spiritual Assembly was still explaining that young people had the responsibility to declare their interest in the Cause and the right to participate in elements of the Administration such as Feasts and committees.

What has marked the fourth stage in the history of American Bahá’í youth, beginning with the inauguration of the Ten Year Crusade in 1953, is their complete incorporation into the life of the community at all levels. There are many stories of exemplary individuals from this period to be told by future historians, but their services are inexorably interwoven with the Administrative Order of Bahá’u’lláh. Several factors help account for this evolu-
tion: the World Crusade itself, which opened the eyes of all Bahá’ís to the planet-embracing scope of the Revelation and the truly international dimensions of the Tablets of the Divine Plan; the ever-increasing sophistication of the administrative institutions so laboriously erected under the guidance of the Guardian; the development of a corps of young Bahá’ís trained in the principles underlying those agencies and deepened in the Teachings; the continued growth in the number of Bahá’í youth, which made available greater human and material resources; and an ever-increasing pitch of excitement, activity, and dedication.

New activities in harmony with this trend appeared soon after 1953. For example, in the 1950’s the National Youth Committee began to coordinate local youth conferences into a series of meetings in various parts of the country which culminated in a national gathering each year at the Annual Bahá’í Convention in Wilmette. And in 1968, midway through the Nine Year Plan, the first national youth conference was held independently of any other Bahá’í event. It drew about 500 participants from all over the country. Six years later, the third national Bahá’í youth conference brought 4,000 dedicated souls to Oklahoma City.

One innovation which emerged during this period was the Bahá’í College Club. It had roots in the work of such figures as

Some of the American youth in the Ten Year Crusade

Martha Root, who, in the early 1930’s, spoke at more than 400 colleges and universities during an eleven-month cross-country teaching trip. Soon after, in 1937, the first Bahá’í Club officially recognized by a university administration was formed at the University of Illinois. It was not until 1955, however, that the Youth Committee organized the Bahá’í College Bureau to supervise campus teaching. In 1960 about 25 college clubs were operating under a model constitution approved three years earlier by the National Spiritual Assembly. By the end of the Nine Year Plan the total was well over 300. Bahá’í high school clubs were also established. They, too, began in 1937, when the Peoria, Illinois, Bahá’í is founded a “Charm, Culture and Character Club” for 60 high school girls as a method of indirect teaching.

The National Youth Committee was very active in the arena of deepening during the Ten Year Crusade. It developed compilations, wrote deepening outlines, sponsored special institutes and retreats, and continued to support the work of the summer schools. But it was in the realm of teaching that new trails were blazed. Prior to 1953, the primary emphasis of the Committee had not been on proclamation. The Guardian had directed youth to concentrate on internationalism and deepening, and this they did with exemplary dedication. In 1953, however, young Bahá’ís were assigned a role in the spiritual conquest of the planet. The Youth Committee responded by organizing teaching circuits, sponsoring a Speakers’ Bureau, and increasing the intensity of work on college campuses.

So successful was university teaching that, in 1960, the National Youth Committee was replaced entirely by its own offspring, the Bahá’í College Bureau. Local communities were promoting and supporting youth activities as a matter of course, and the emphasis at the national level had clearly shifted to campus-related work. As the administrative structure at the National Bahá’í Center evolved in response to the challenges of the Nine Year Plan, the Bahá’í College Bureau became the Office of Youth and Student Activities. It was supervised by the National Teaching Committee, the chief auxiliary arm of the National Spiritual Assembly, and served a wider range of youth—students and non-students alike—as the goal of proclaiming the Message of Bahá’u’lláh to all strata of society was increasingly realized.

Innovative teaching methods continued to be developed to meet the needs of a changing society. In the mid-1960’s, for example, the Youth Office began to organize summer youth projects. These were designed to spread the Bahá’í Faith to designated areas of the country, often emphasizing deeds over words. They were most successful. So, too, were the road shows—groups of Bahá’í youth who taught the Faith through music—which began to develop during the last few years of the Nine Year Plan. The success of these approaches was demonstrated by the rapidly increasing number of youth declarations during that period. In 1953 about 60 new Bahá’í youth were welcomed. In 1967 more than eleven times that number joined the Cause. And two years later, the total enrollments of youth for one year had rocketed to 1,800.

At the beginning of the Nine Year Plan, the National Spiritual Assembly, perceiving increased momentum in American Bahá’í youth activity, wrote: “That the Bahá’í Faith in America could soon become a youth-invigorated movement is most suggestive and heartening.” By 1968, with this hope already a reality, it could take the historic step of assigning specific goals to Bahá’í youth. At the first national youth conference of the Nine Year Plan the youth made such a recommendation. The National Assembly, which was present at that session, was so excited by the possibility that it did not even wait to return to its council chambers for consultation. Meeting on the lawn in front of the national Hazíratu’l-Quds, it approved a Five Year Youth Program, and returned to announce it to 500 cheering Bahá’ís. The Two Year Youth Program which is now challenging youth is built solidly on the foundation of success laid during those five years between 1968 and 1973.

And what of the future? The Universal House of Justice, in the very first paragraph of the Five Year Plan, explains:

A span of eighteen years separates us from the centenary of Bahá’u’lláh’s Ascension and the unveiling of His Almighty Covenant. The fortunes of humanity in that period no man can foretell. We can, however, confidently predict that the Cause of God, impelled by the mighty forces of life within it, must go on from strength to strength, increasing in size and developing greater and greater powers for the accomplishment of God’s purpose on earth.

The glorious history of youth in the Bahá’í era, as it has so far developed, can leave no doubt about the contributions which they can, must, and will make to that evolution from strength to strength. Their spiritual zeal, energy, and idealism has already left a lasting mark on the development of the Cause of God, and thus on the course of human history. The Báb was a Youth.
Baha'u'llah Himself was but twenty-eight years old when he embraced His Forerunner's Cause. 'Abdu'l-Baha began His services while still young, and Shoghi Effendi was not yet twenty-five when he assumed the reins of authority. Even Siyyid Kaziim was a young man when he succeeded Shaykh Ahmad in the days before the Báb's Declaration.

In such footsteps followed the youthful heroes and heroines of the Heroic Age. Mullá Husayn, Quddús, Tahirih, the youthful Letters of the Living; Anís who suffered martyrdom with the Báb; youths such as Rúhú'llah and Badi', who joyously offered up their lives for their Faith; Mirzá Mihdí, the Purest Branch, who died so that others might gain the bounty of his Father's presence; these are only the most exemplary from the hosts of God-intoxicated youth among the dawn-breakers. Their legacy was preserved in America by figures such as Lua Getsinger, May Bolles, Dorothy Baker, Agnes Alexander, and Fred Mortensen, who, though young in years, gave mature, dedicated, sacrificial service to the Cause of God and the American Bahá'í community. And finally, there are the hosts of as yet unsung heroes who have offered themselves in living martyrdom to the development of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the cradle of His Administrative Order.

If the Bahá'í youth of today are to become worthy of this heritage, if they are to successfully play their crucial role in winning the goals of the Five Year Plan, they must follow in such footsteps. With blazing hearts, enlightened minds, and sanctified characters they must dedicate themselves to the service of God. Let them, like Badi', be handfuls of dust, mixed with the waters of might and power, filled with the spirit of assurance, and transformed into a new race of men. Let their prayers echo this poem from the pen of the twelve-year-old martyr, Rúhú'llah:

From the cup of divine bounty give me to drink
And rid me of sin and weakness;
For though my sins be great indeed,
The mercy of my Lord is greater still.

Welcome to thee, Sáqi (Cupbearer) of the divine banquet!
Come thou, refresh my soul and make
Me worthy of being sacrificed
In the path of the Beloved. 31


Through the varied patterned lace

As I look into each different face,
I am exalted.
I am exalted to recognize His Grace
shimmering through the varied patterned lace.

There is this Good in every man
whether Russian or French, Italian
or American
and glowing so in you,
O, Ibo, Yoruba, Zulu, Congolese, Fan.

I look at you and feel it flooding me.
Divinity must win the win the race. It will not be halted.
We are all small sons of one clan.
I am exalted.

Margaret Esse Danner

December, 1974 / BAHA'I NEWS 21
Don Rufino Fuentes, a Mayan Bahá'í, at the ruins of Uxmal.

**Bahá'í Proclamation and Deepening Film**

**Step by Step**

An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator – what have these people in common? They're Bahá'ís and they appear in a new Bahá'í film, *Paso a Paso*, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled *Step by Step* in English, depicts the growth of the Bahá'í Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama.

Unified by their common belief in Bahá'u'lláh and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Bahá'í administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Bahá'í House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, *El Alba* and *The Dedication*. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

**How to Get the Film**

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Bahá'í distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify *Step by Step*, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or *Paso a Paso*, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
Birthplace of the Guardian in 'Akká
Baha'í News

No. 526  For Baha'is only

Baha'i Year 131  January 1975

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JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION LENGTHY DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS RESULTING ACQUISITION BY PURCHASE HOLY HOUSE CENTER COVENANT ABDUL BABA BIRTHPLACE BELOVED GUARDIAN SHOGHI EFFENDI. HISTORIC PROPERTY ADJACENT BARRACKS MOST GREAT PRISON COM- PRISES LAND AREA APPROXIMATING SEVEN THOUSAND SQUARE METERS 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 CENTER WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES FUNDS PERMIT. OFFER HUMBLE THANKSGIVING BAHAI- ULLAH THIS GREAT BLESSING.

JANUARY 9, 1975

Functions of Continental Pioneering Committees outlined

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Baha’i Friends,

In view of the ever-increasing number of pioneers and traveling teachers now arising from various countries to serve the Cause of God in widely scattered lands throughout all continents the Universal House of Justice has considered ways of deriving maximum benefit from the services of these devoted believers, coordinating their efforts and anticipating the needs of the future.

The Continental Boards of Counsellors will soon be approaching you about the need for pioneers and traveling teachers for the period ending Ridvan 1976.

The functions of the Continental Pioneer Committees have been reviewed and developed in a way that will enable them to operate in closer collaboration with the Continental Boards of Counsellors and the National Spiritual Assemblies of their areas.

A copy of the statement outlining the functions of the Continental Pioneer Committees as now revised is attached for your information. As you will note, the members of these Committees will henceforth be appointed by the Universal House of Justice. Nothing in the functions now assigned to the Continental Pioneer Committees in any way detracts from the primary responsibility of National Spiritual Assemblies to foster and promote pioneering and traveling teaching.

It is our hope and prayer that as the Five Year Plan unfolds evidences of closer ties of cooperation among the various institutions of the Faith will be increasingly witnessed in every land.

With loving Baha’i greetings,

The Universal House of Justice

July 22, 1974

Functions of Continental Pioneer Committees (July 1974)

I. The members of Continental Pioneer Committees will henceforth be appointed by the Universal House of Justice, which will also be responsible for providing the operating expenses of the Committees.

II. The work of the Continental Pioneer Committees is primarily executive, i.e. it calls for prompt action rather than consultation. Each Committee, as a body, should agree upon general lines of policy, within which the Secretary or other members authorized by it should thereafter operate. Problems arising outside the agreed framework should be resolved by the full Committee in consultation or, if necessary, referred to the Universal House of Justice.

III. Continental Pioneer Committees are responsible directly to the Universal House of Justice. They fall into a different category from national committees and should maintain close and direct collaboration with the Continental Boards of Counsellors in their areas. This close collaboration is designed to prevent duplication of efforts and to ensure the flow of accurate information; examples of how it will be applied are given below.

IV. The responsibilities of the Continental Pioneer Committees cover three inter-related areas: information, pioneering and travel teaching. They complement, but in no way replace the functions and responsibilities of Continental Boards of Counsellors and National Spiritual Assemblies.

A. Information. Each Continental Pioneer Committee is responsible to compile and supply information as follows:

1) To keep a current list of pioneers from abroad residing in each country in its area, as well as a list of unfilled pioneer needs under the quotas assigned by the Universal House of Justice.

2) To keep a file of information on the types of jobs and work opportunities which may be open to prospective pioneers in each country in its area, and on facilities for study at universities etc.
Universal House of Justice Message

(3) To keep a file of information on local conditions in each country, such as language, standard of living, climate, etc. as well as data vital for entry and settlement, such as visa requirements and government regulations.

(4) To keep a file of information on the kind of pioneer most suitable for each country in its area, on the kinds of pioneers which are acceptable if the most suitable are not obtainable, and on types of pioneers which are definitely not suitable (e.g. for reasons of nationality etc.).

(5) To keep a similar file on the kind of traveling teacher most needed, etc.

(6) Pertinent information from the above files should be made freely available, whenever it can be helpful, to interested Boards of Counsellors, National Spiritual Assemblies, prospective pioneers and traveling teachers.

(7) Regular exchange of information between the Continental Boards of Counsellors and the Continental Pioneer Committees in any area will not only assist the Counsellors in their work but will provide the Committees with a more complete picture of the situation in the continent on the basis of which recommendations can be made to believers who offer to pioneer.

(8) Monthly reports on the status of pioneering goals, the progress of international travel teaching projects etc. should be sent to the Universal House of Justice by the Committee.

B. Pioneering: A large proportion of pioneering takes place in fulfillment of the quotas assigned by the Universal House of Justice, and most of these quotas should be filled through consultation and action directly between the supplying and receiving National Spiritual Assemblies or their respective national committees. In such cases the Continental Pioneering Committees will be brought into the matter merely so that they may receive information about the pioneer moves to make their statistical information complete. Likewise, a number of individual pioneers will arrange their moves in direct consultation with the receiving National Spiritual Assembly—again, the Continental Pioneer Committee merely needs to be informed. However, beyond this generality of cases there are many instances and ways in which the Continental Pioneer Committees can be of help, as, for example:

(1) A Continental Pioneer Committee receives an offer to pioneer from a believer who has no specific country in mind. It would then:

a) Evaluate the offer, considering the believer’s age, health, dependants, financial situation, language abilities, job possibilities etc., consulting, if necessary his home National Spiritual Assembly.

b) Consider whether the offer could fill a quota assignment. If so, the Committee should immediately inform the National Spiritual Assemblies involved. If financial assistance is needed the National Assembly responsible for sending a pioneer may be willing to provide it for the believer who has offered rather than send a pioneer from its own country.

c) If there is no specific quota that the pioneer is able or willing to fill the Committee should put him in touch with one or more National Spiritual Assemblies for whose areas he would seem to be both suited and needed, providing him at the same time with whatever useful information it can muster.

d) In all cases the Continental Pioneer Committee should seek the views and recommendations of the appropriate Counsellors whenever it feels this would assist in deciding what to recommend to the pioneer or National Spiritual Assembly.

(2) Requests for assistance from the International Deputization Fund will normally be made directly to the Universal House of Justice by the National Spiritual Assembly primarily responsible for a pioneering project. However, whenever a Continental Pioneering Committee learns that a pioneer is in financial difficulties because of a breakdown of communications with or between National Spiritual Assemblies, it should offer its assistance, referring if possible to the National Assembly concerned, and, if necessary, applying directly to the Universal House of Justice for a budget or allocation from the Deputization Fund.

(3) In general each Continental Pioneer Committee should be alert to the pioneering projects proposed for and under way in its area, and should offer its assistance to National Spiritual Assemblies should this seem to be needed to ensure prompt and efficient implementation of the projects.

(4) Beyond the quotas assigned by the Universal House of Justice pioneer needs frequently arise, such as the need to immediately fill a post left vacant. Such needs, far from having to be referred to the Universal House of Justice, can be met on the spot by a request from a National Spiritual Assembly to the Continental Pioneer Committee and/or through consultation between the Committee and the Counsellors.

C. Travel Teaching: As in the case of pioneering, many international travel teaching projects can be arranged directly between National Assemblies or between individual believers and National or Local Spiritual Assemblies. Information about such projects should, however, be shared as quickly as possible with the Continental Pioneer Committee. Other prospective teachers will make their offers to one or more Continental Pioneer Committees. For such projects each Committee should help in the following ways:
(1) It would be useful if each Continental Pioneer Committee would work out in advance circuits of various lengths covering areas where teachers are needed so that it can suggest such a circuit to a prospective traveling teacher. In working out such circuits attention will have to be paid to travel facilities including the best length of time to spend between connections.

(2) In general no Continental Pioneer Committee should send a traveling teacher into a country without obtaining the prior agreement of the National Spiritual Assembly to the project. In the case of major projects such agreement will no doubt have to be sought in each instance, but inasmuch as offers of travel teaching are not infrequently made with little time to spare for making arrangements it would be useful if each Continental Pioneer Committee would work out with the National Spiritual Assemblies in its area procedures whereby advantage can be taken of such offers.

(3) Information about a traveling teacher which should be provided to the receiving National Assembly should include the type of teaching service he is best qualified to render (e.g. public meetings, firesides, deepening classes etc.), language facility, and whether or not he will need hospitality in the areas to which he will travel. Information about the teacher which would be useful in drafting publicity releases could also be included.

(4) It is hoped that traveling teaching projects will be carried out, for the most part, without assistance from the International Deputation Fund. If projects which are considered to be of special benefit to the Faith cannot be wholly financed by the individuals themselves, through personal deputization, or by the National Spiritual Assemblies offering or receiving such services, the Continental Pioneer Committee may recommend the Universal House of Justice to provide assistance from the International Deputation Fund.

(5) Every Continental Pioneering Committee is given the authority to expend for traveling teaching projects up to a maximum of $500 in any one Gregorian month, without reference to the Universal House of Justice. This money should be accounted for in the usual way through the Committee's Account Current with the Finance Department of the Universal House of Justice.

(6) It should be made clear to all international traveling teachers that they are under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly of the country in which they are traveling, and they must be obedient to the instructions of that National Assembly.

(7) In arranging circuits for traveling teachers the Continental Pioneer Committee will rely greatly on up-to-date information provided to it by the Continental Board of Counsellors, and the Committee should not hesitate to refer to the Counsellors for their advice on individual offers.

(8) Any reports that the Continental Pioneer Committee receives from traveling teachers should be shared promptly with the appropriate Boards of Counsellors which will, if they consider it wise, share them with the National Spiritual Assemblies concerned. If such reports are of particular interest they should also be shared with the Universal House of Justice for its information and for possible use in the “Bahá’í International News Service”.

Five new National Assemblies to form at Riḍván

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We are glad to announce that preparations are being made for the forthcoming Riḍván by the friends in several countries in West Africa and one in the Near East to form in accordance with the provisions of the Five Year Plan, their new National Spiritual Assemblies. In Western Africa, the National Spiritual Assembly of Dahomey, Togo and Niger will divide into three separate national communities for each of the three countries which presently compose the region, with their seats in Cotonou, Lomé and Niamey respectively, while the National Spiritual Assemblies of West Africa and of Upper West Africa will each split into two units, the former into Liberia and Guinea, with its seat in Monrovia, and Sierra Leone, with its seat in Freetown, and the latter into the Gambia, with its seat in Banjul, and a new National Spiritual Assembly with the name of Upper West Africa comprising Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands, with its seat in Dakar. In the Near East the National Spiritual Assembly of Jordan will be formed, with its seat in ‘Ammán. These developments on the national level will result in a net increase next Riḍván of five National Spiritual Assemblies, but in view of the inability of the friends in Indonesia to maintain national administrative activities, the total number of National Spiritual Assemblies will thus be raised throughout the world to 119.

Of the five new National Spiritual Assemblies, four will have their seats in Western Africa. Three more National Spiritual Assemblies are scheduled to be formed in this area in the course of the Plan. The mighty potentialities for growth and expansion in the western regions of Africa are such as to justify a corresponding development of the institution of the Continental Boards of Counsellors in that vast and promising area. The decision has been taken, therefore, after consultation with the International Teaching Center, 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. The zone of Northern Africa will comprise Egypt,
Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Spanish Sahara. The zone of Western Africa will consist of Mauritania, Senegal, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verde Islands, Guinea, Mali, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger, Ghana, Togo, Dahomey, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

Because of the creation of a new Board 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 Board members increased. We decided, therefore, that the Board for Northern Africa will consist of Mr. Muhammad Kebdani, already serving as a Counsellor, Mr. Muhammad Mustafá, and Mr. ‘Imád Śābirán. The Board for Western Africa will consist of Mr. Husayn Ardikání (Trustee), Mr. Friday Ékpe, Mr. Dhikrù’l-láh Kážimí, 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, allocated according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Auxiliary Board Members for Protection</th>
<th>Auxiliary Board Members for Propagation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central and East Africa</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We pray at the Holy Shrines that these decisions, which reflect the growth of our beloved Faith in Africa, will pave the way for speedier progress, wider expansion and greater consolidation, as the friends of that mighty continent forge ahead in their efforts to promote and protect the precious Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.

With loving Bahá’i greetings,
The Universal House of Justice

January 6, 1975

Worldwide pioneering goals increased by 376

To the Bahá’ís of the World

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

The striking progress made during the first eight months of the Five Year Plan and the urgent needs of the work as disclosed in a survey made by the International Teaching Center impel us to raise anew the call for pioneers made at Rídvan, increasing the number from 557 to 933. The details of the allocations are now being sent to your National Spiritual Assemblies for immediate action.

The eager response of the friends to the initial call has already resulted in 279 pioneers settled or in process of becoming so. The remainder are urged to arise as quickly as possible before the confusion and chaos which are engulfing the old order disrupt transportation and communications and cause doors which are now open to be closed in our faces. It is our ardent hope that most, if not all, of the 933 posts will be filled by the midway point of the Five Year Plan, which coincides with the Anniversary of the Birth of the Báb, on 20th October 1976.

We renew our plea to individual believers, as well as to National and Local Spiritual Assemblies, to give generous support to the International Deputization Fund, which will not only be an essential factor in the speedy settlement of this urgently needed army of pioneers, but will also stimulate and assist the flow of travelling teachers, whose labors will provide strong reinforcement to the work of the followers of Bahá’u’lláh in all parts of the world.

Our prayers for your guidance and confirmation are offered at the Sacred Threshold. May Bahá’u’lláh inspire those who arise and guide their feet in the path of His service.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,
The Universal House of Justice

January 13, 1975
Hand of Cause embarks on journey along Amazon

At a recent gathering held in her honor, the Hand of the Cause Amatu’l-Bahá Rūḥiyīyah Khánum bade farewell to her fellow Hands of the Cause, The Universal House of Justice and other friends serving at the World Center. The Hand of the Cause will shortly begin a prolonged visit to the Amazon basin area of South America.

“The purpose of my trip,” Rūḥiyīyah Khánum said, “is to visit and make a documentary film of as many Indian and Bush Negro tribes as possible along the Orinoco river in the Venezuelan Province of Amazonas, in Surinam, and later in the upper reaches of the Amazon River in Peru. I feel very strongly that in order to achieve the teaching goals of the Five Year Plan of The Universal House of Justice . . . indeed to fulfill the goals of the Divine Plan given to us by the Center of the Covenant, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, . . . a far greater awareness is required throughout the Bahá’í world of what pioneering involves, how infinitely precious and challenging our present opportunities are in the teaching field, and how urgent our task is at this time in human history.

“Two-thirds of the people on the planet are villagers,” Amatu’l-Bahá Rūḥiyīyah Khánum reminded the friends, “and one-third are illiterate. It is this vast majority of the human race, still relatively unspoiled by the evils of a materialistic and ‘cancerous civilization’ which the Guardian so strongly condemned in his writings towards the end of his life, that need to be enrolled under the Banner of Bahá’u’lláh before it is too late.”

The Hand of the Cause explained that it is not her purpose to visit Bahá’í centers or make a teaching tour at this time. The expedition will comprise seven people, four of whom are professional photographers. Mr. Mas’úd Khamsi, a member of the South American Continental Board of Counsellors, will also accompany her, as will a woman doctor or nurse.

“It is my hope,” said Amatu’l-Bahá, “that this undertaking, in conjunction with my book, A Manual for Pioneers, published by the National Spiritual Assembly of India, will help pave the way for a vast expansion in teaching activity throughout the world and that many of the friends, seeing these efforts, will take heart and say to themselves: ‘If she can do it, we can do it!’”

Panama:

Film attracts seekers in Las Tablas

The city of Las Tablas, Panama, has been opened to the Faith through the efforts of a small but devoted teaching team.

A week before a meeting was scheduled to be held in Las Tablas, three believers drove to the small city on the Azuero peninsula to obtain permission to hold a meeting and show the film of the dedication of the Mother Temple of Latin America. Two days before the event, one of the friends journeyed to Las Tablas to arrange for 12 spot radio announcements, to distribute posters, and to book hotel accommodations. In the afternoon of the day the meeting was to be held, 500 invitations were distributed. Each of the team members, before departing for Las Tablas, met with friends at the Hazíratu’l-Quds for prayers.

Dr. Muhájír visits Peru

In early January the Hand of the Cause Rahmatu’lláh Muhájír visited Peru for five days. During that time he visited the summer school in Chaclacayo, spoke at public meetings in Lima, Trujillo and Chiclayo and guided the friends in the opening of the village of Monsefu. Among the Bahá’ís who greeted Dr. Muhájír upon his arrival in Lima (pictured above) were Continental Counsellors Peter McLaren (second from right) and Mas’úd Khamsi (taking the photograph).

At the evening meeting attended mostly by young people the film was shown and then an introductory talk on the Faith was given. After the first audience left more people came; eventually it was necessary to show the film three times. After the third showing to a primarily adult audience, several of the men asked penetrating questions on such topics as the education of children, the equality of men and women, and life after death.

A member of the fire department of Las Tablas accepted the Faith and enrolled as a Bahá’í. A follow-up meeting, about three weeks later, was addressed by Continental Counsellor for Central America Alfred Osborne.

Swaziland:

Women’s Year discussed at reception

In preparation for Women’s Year, as 1975 has been designated by the United Nations, the Bahá’í women of Swaziland held a tea at the Bahá’í Center, which was attended by several Princesses, the wife of the Prime Minister, some of the wives of government ministers and other officials.
as well as the wife of the American Chargé d'Affaires and the wife of the editor of the Swaziland Times. The Women's and Children's Committee gave a presentation of some of the Bahá'í Teachings. The Swazi women in particular were deeply impressed and interested in what the Bahá'ís have to offer the children.

The Secretary of the National Assembly gave a short talk on the history and relationship of the Bahá'í Faith to the United Nations nongovernmental organization.

The National Assembly of Swaziland and Mozambique also reported that the Public Relations Committee sponsored a booth at the Swaziland Trade Fair at which approximately 500 pieces of literature were distributed. Slides of Bahá'í Holy Places and groups of Bahá'ís were projected constantly, prompting many questions. These activities, together with Bahá'í quotations inserted weekly in the Times and the presence of the Bahá'í Institute buildings on the main road between the two largest centers in the country, Mbabane and Manzini, have resulted in the Faith becoming well known in Swaziland.

Windward Islands:

Circuit teacher visits St. Michael

The first public meeting at the new Hazíratu'l-Quds in Flint Hall, St. Michael, Barbados, witnessed a large audience gathered to hear American travel-teacher Zylpha O. Mapp. Extensive publicity prior to the meeting, which was held at the end of August, helped to attract many non-Bahá'ís. The building was a gift to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Windward Islands from the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly.

Part of a week-long travel teaching visit to Barbados by Mrs. Mapp, the meeting included a slide program on East Africa with the audience joining in singing and refreshments at the close of the program.

Deepening classes and radio and newspaper interviews filled the remainder of Mrs. Mapp's visit to Barbados, and follow-up plans were formulated prior to her departure from the island.

St. Martin press praises Bahá'ís

The recent Bahá'í conference held on the island of St. Martin was the subject of articles in the island press, the St. Martin Star and the Windward Islands Opinion. The latter carried a three-column article which stated, in part:

"This coming weekend, 8th to 10th November, will be a most important one for St. Martin, and for the ever-growing Bahá'í community... for the first time ever, a Bahá'í Teaching Conference will be held here which will be attended by Bahá'ís from many parts of the world... The management of the hotel, realizing the importance of this event, have made over the entire facilities of the hotel to the Bahá'ís and their guests for the weekend. . . one of the highlights will be the teaching of Bahá'í music and songs by Terry Madison, a well-known television star in her own right in the U.S.A. She is a dedicated Bahá'í and can be seen talking to a panel of local Bahá'ís on TV 3 West Indies Television on Friday evening. . . . The Bahá'ís are level-headed, spiritual human beings walking the spiritual path with practical feet. . . . come and meet these Bahá'ís; they will be happy to tell you more about this wonderful Faith which is sweeping away old dogmas and false beliefs and clearing a spiritual path for mankind to love and understand God . . ."

Cameroon Republic:

Book displays proclaim Faith

A number of Bahá'í book exhibitions were recently the vehicle for proclaiming the Faith in the Cameroon Republic. The first exhibition was held at the University in Yaounde, followed by others in various colleges and schools. Radio announcements, handbills, posters, and invitations were used to call public attention to the exhibitions.

In Buea, the Bahá'ís used an attractive classroom in the Pan-African Institute for the display. Radio Buea not only announced the event several times without charge, but also sent an interviewer who asked interesting questions and allowed
ample time for answers. A public meeting held on the last evening was well attended.

A half-hour radio program based on the interview was broadcast in full on two occasions and an edited version was broadcast once. Many favorable comments were made by those who visited the exhibition or heard the broadcast.

An important aspect of this activity was the wholehearted cooperation of nearly every member of the Buea community, including the children, who made display material and helped distribute handbills.

India:

Gathering honors Baha'i poet

On November 9, 1974, at Gannaur, a township in the northern province of Uttar Pradesh, a large conference of poets was held. They had gathered from throughout India to observe the first anniversary of the death of a "very learned and widely respected" Baha'i, Jenabe Abr Ahsan Gannauri, who was himself a poet. The organizers of the conference, aware of the poet's belief in the Baha'i Faith, wrote to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and asked that representatives be sent.

Poems and speeches honoring the late poet were read as well as Baha'i prayers and Tablets in various languages. The event provided an excellent opportunity to teach the Faith to the assembled Muslims and Hindus, many of whom had learned of the Faith through the activities of the Baha'i poet. Several questions were asked of the Baha'is and literature was distributed to those who requested it. As the Baha'is were boarding the train to leave Gannaur they were surrounded by a crowd of eager enquirers. The discussion which ensued lasted for more than an hour, and at its close many promised to investigate further.

Australia:

Magazine resumes publication

_Herald of the South_, a publication of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Australia, is now available to Baha'is around the world on a subscription basis. The magazine is published quarterly—in January, April, July, and October—at a subscription price of $5.00 U.S., $3.00 Australian, or £2.00 English per year.

_Herald of the South_ is not a new magazine. It was first published in 1925, later suspended operations, and eventually resumed publication at Ridyán 1974, the date of the launching of the Five Year Plan.

Among the articles in the Ridyán 1974 issue were the following: "A New Race of Men," by Colin Duncan; "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," by Peter Khan; "May our Hearts be Joined in Peace," a poem by Mansel Morris; and "Kabu of the Purari," a fascinating story about the growth of the Faith in New Guinea, by David Podger. The magazine's 32 pages included numerous drawings and cartoons.

If you would like to subscribe, send $5.00 U.S., $3.00 Australian or £2.00 English to: The Subscriptions Department, P.O Box 125, Broadway Queensland, 4000, Australia. _Herald of the South_ will be mailed to you four times yearly via surface mail.

New Hebrides:

Conference participation unprecedented

The first teaching conference of the Five Year Plan to be held in New Hebrides took place at the Baha'i Center in Port Vila from October 31-November 3, 1974. Approximately 70 adults and 30 Baha'i children attended from various areas throughout the region. Nine of the ten existing Local Spiritual Assemblies in the territory of the South West Pacific were represented. Never before had so many friends from so many parts of the area gathered together for such a long period. The conference was greatly enriched by the participation of Counsellor Suhayl 'Aláí and Auxiliary Board member Alick Soalo. The proceedings were translated into English, French, and Pidgin.

Representatives of each Spiritual Assembly presented short talks on the progress achieved toward fulfilling the phased first-year goals of the Five Year Plan. Be-
Gambia, Senegal, Mauritania:

Mr. Olinga supports mass teaching efforts

Visits by the Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga to Gambia, Mauretania and Senegal in September and October provided the opportunity for many deepening classes with the friends and mass teaching efforts which included the enrollment of the first Bahá'í women in Rosso, Mauretania. This achievement was accompanied by the offer of local Bahá'ís to teach along the Senegal River in the Rosso area, with the goal of establishing nine Local Spiritual Assemblies before Ridvan.

During his stay in Banjul, Gambia, Mr. Olinga, together with Auxiliary Board member Al-Salihi, visited the Bahá'í properties in Latrikunda Sabiji and Lamin. He also showed slides at a public meeting, prior to leaving for Dakar, where he attended several meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Venezuela:

First proclamation aided by radio

The Bahá'ís of San Felipe, in the state of Yaracuy, Venezuela recently organized the first proclamation activity ever in their town located some 120 miles west of the Venezuelan capital of Caracas.

The proclamation was presented in two parts. The first program was held October 31 in the auditorium of the local chapter of the Venezuelan Association of Newspaper Reporters. Dr. Weldon Woodard, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, spoke about “A New World Plan.”

The second part of the proclamation, an exhibition in the town square, took place two days later.

The local radio station in San Felipe provided extraordinary publicity for the events when the general manager, Julio Cesar Hernández, wrote and broadcast a precise introduction to the Faith based on Bahá'í literature he had received.

Youth team tours cities

For the first time in Venezuela a team of youth toured four of the country’s principal cities to teach the Faith. They travelled in a small bus, stopping in Barquisimeto, Puerto Cabello, Valencia, and Maracay to conduct proclamation activities. The group included young people from six cities in Venezuela. They were accompanied on their journey by Mr. and Mrs. Pedro Chavier. It was the first time any of them had undertaken such a mission.

In some cities they were not allowed to speak of the Faith publicly, but were allowed to erect a display on the oneness of mankind. They also handed out paper flowers with quotations from the Bahá'í writings attached to the wire stems. In some of the cities they were allowed to
speak of the Faith and to hand out pamphlets. In every city they were interviewed for radio and also received coverage from the newspapers.

Conference in Guajira language

The third All-Guajira Conference was held in Caucharaychon, Venezuela between November 30-December 1, to review with Indian believers the goals of the Five Year Plan. The conference—the first ever conducted entirely in the Guajira language—was sponsored by the Continental Counsellors and the Venezuelan National Assembly. Approximately 50 Guajiro Bahá'ís attended. An additional two dozen friends from other parts of the country were also present.

The friends assembled on the evening of November 29 for dancing and festivities before beginning their deliberations on the Plan on the following morning. To the beat of Guajiro drums they danced the Chicha Maya, a traditional regional dance.

The conference was chaired by Auxiliary Board member Cecilia Yuquan. The entire consultation was conducted in the Guajira language. Fourteen of the friends volunteered for extension teaching work: ten of them for a period of one week, four for two weeks. One believer volunteered to teach in the distant Colombian Guajira during January.

Each day began with an early morning prayer meeting, which was to encourage local communities to begin this routine in their own communities. An extended consultation on the establishment of women's classes, as well as on the relationship between Bahá'í teaching and their status in Guajira life, was conducted by the friends.

Within two weeks of the conference ten new localities had been opened in the Guajira region; 155 people were enrolled. Five of the ten communities will soon elect Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Honduras:

Hurricane Fifi prevents conference on Plan

The National Spiritual Assembly of Honduras reported that four of the five conferences called to launch the Five Year Plan were successfully held last year "stimulating enthusiasm for fulfilling all the goals of the Plan." The fifth conference, to have been held in the northern city of San Pedro Sula, was cancelled because of the notorious hurricane Fifi which ravaged that part of the country, leaving 10,000 dead in its wake.

The National Assembly reported that many Bahá'í families lost all their possessions, but that no deaths were reported among the Bahá'ís. A little more than 48 hours before the hurricane struck the Bahá'í pioneers had gathered for an annual two-day conference, but they dispersed just before the storm broke. The resident pioneers were rescued by helicopter from waist-deep water after two days, during which they had taken refuge in a house built on pillars. The dispersed pioneers sent boxes of sandwiches in waterproof wrappings which were distributed to the victims of the disaster remaining in the devastated region.
The following information is a summary of activities carried out by Bahá'í communities throughout the world in observance of UN Day and Human Rights Day 1973. This condensation is intended to provide a variety of suggestions and ideas that may be useful to Bahá'í communities wishing to celebrate these UN events for the first time, as well as communities which have had experience in these activities and are, perhaps, looking for fresh approaches to these occasions.

We have selected from the overall report of Bahá'í-UN activities, examples of various classifications of programs—for example, public meetings, exhibits, international dinners, radio programs, etc.—and have tried to choose, also, observances carried out by communities of varying sizes and conditions, to demonstrate that every community—whatever its circumstances—can celebrate UN Day and Human Rights Day.

Public Meetings. A number of Bahá'í communities chose to sponsor public meetings, in many instances drawing on their local UN office—the office of the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Information Center, or offices of the United Nations Specialized Agencies—for speakers. For example, the main speaker in Chad was an expert from the UNESCO office; the Local Spiritual Assembly of Asmara, Ethiopia, had as guest speaker the Senior Information Officer of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; Panama had a speaker from the local office of the UNDP; in Belize, a UNDP Resident Representative acted as Master of Ceremonies at the Human Rights Day observance, while representatives of the United Nations, posted in Belize—one from UNDP, one from the UN Office of Technical Cooperation, a Regional Representative for the United Nations Industrial Development Organiza-
tion, and a UNDP engineer—served as panelists at the UN Day celebration. In Bangladesh, Ambassador Francis Lacoste, Chief of Mission, United Nations Operation in Bangladesh, spoke at a Human Rights Day program. In Honolulu, Hawaii, a panel discussion featured a professor of the University of Hawaii who has served as consultant for the World Health Organization, and Mauritius sponsored a program for UN Day with UNDP Resident Representative John Birt as the main speaker, and for their Human Rights Day program, Mr. T. Sunkur, a member of the UNESCO Club, gave a talk. One Local Spiritual Assembly in Sweden worked closely with the UN office in Sweden and featured a UN speaker at their UN Day program. An unexpected feature of the UN Day observance in Tonga was the presence of representatives of the World Health Organization who unofficially formed a panel to answer questions from the floor; and the Bahá’ís of Buea, Cameroon, had a public meeting with a representative of UNESCO as speaker. At this meeting, Mihdi Samandari, a member of the Board of Counsellors for Central and East Africa, was Chairman. The program was taped and played over the radio three times, reaching large audiences.

An interesting approach to a public meeting was tried by the Bahá’ís of Alice Springs, Australia, where an open-air public meeting was held by candle light; and members of the Newtown Group of Australia—at their public meeting held in cooperation with the United Nations Association—showed their appreciation of the evening’s performers by presenting each one with a single rose set in a glass with the inscription ‘‘in the garden of thy heart, plant naught but the rose of love’—Bahá’u’lláh.’’ In Palma de Mallorca (Baleares Islands) a public talk, which was announced in five newspapers,
was followed by a full-page interview of
the speaker; and in Valencia, Spain, a pub­lic meeting provided an opportunity to dis­tribute 1,000 UN and Bahá’í pamphlets.

Cooperation with other organiza­tions. There are times, too, when coopera­tion with other organizations in planning and executing UN activities is valuable and successful. One Bahá’í community in Sweden co-sponsored an event with the United Nations Association, and in four other instances, communities participated in activities organized by the local UNA. In Belgium, the Bahá’í community of Brussels sponsored a Human Rights Day meeting in cooperation with the Belgium League for the Defense of the Rights of Man . . . and many events in Australia were co-sponsored by Bahá’ís in cooperation with UNA. Especially successful this year was a UNA Inter-Faith Youth Service held in Hobart Town Hall in which eight Tasmanian Bahá’í youth—a mixture of boys and girls, and including an aboriginal girl and a Laotian boy—participated, reading “Words of Wisdom” and a prayer for unity. The youth speaker at the service was also a Bahá’í, and the Secretary of the Assembly reported that Bahá’í participation in this service increased the level of prestige of the Faith in Hobart and established good relations with the Tasmanian director, who assured the Bahá’ís of his assistance and support should they wish to organize future UN activities. A similar function was held in Sydney, Australia, where a 13-year-old Bahá’í read a prayer for mankind, and another 13-year-old girl was the principal speaker, giving a 10-minute address entitled “Unity in Di­versity.” Both of these events were given support by the Bahá’í community through posters, literature in schools, invitations, two large paid ads and one free ad. The Ghana Bahá’í community was the only religious group to be invited to serve on an Ad-Hoc Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the observance of Human Rights Day. The Vice-Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly rep­resented the Bahá’ís, and he was later asked to appear on a nationwide TV pro­gram to explain the relationship between the United Nations and the Bahá’ís, and, in addition, he was asked to be Chairman for a symposium on human rights at the Accra Community Center.

Exhibits. Bahá’í-sponsored exhibits were very popular as a way of observing UN Day and Human Rights Day in 1973. One that was particularly successful was executed by the Bahá’í Club at the Catholic University in Quito, Ecuador, where hundreds of people viewed the display of UN posters and pamphlets in the main hall of the “Pedagogia” building, and over 1,000 pieces of literature were given out by 9:00 A.M. Posters were used as a means of announcing the event. Later, this observance was written up in Commit­ment, the official publication of UNDP for non-governmental organizations. In Brazil, a Bahá’í devoted the windows of her fashion store to a display of materials prepared by the United Nations on unity and world peace, and the related principles of the Bahá’í Faith. This drew publicity in the form of a large feature story in a newspaper. A continuing exhibit—from October 1 to the end of February—was arranged by the Bahá’ís of Mon­aco on the ground floor of a building with windows which could be viewed by passers-by. The display was set for UN Day, and innovations which were made for Human Rights Day became the source for newspaper, radio and TV publicity. The Bahá’ís of Iran had an exhibit which ran two weeks, to educate people about the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith, the aims of the United Nations, and human rights. Later, a film was produced, using the colorful exhibit as a focal point for explaining the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith, particularly as they relate to human rights. A UN display was set up for UN Day by the Bahá’ís of Hilo, Hawaii, in a large shopping center, and in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, two exhibits were displayed at a store in the center of the town and at the Bahá’í Center. In Laos, the Bahá’ís made a display of UN posters which they used as a background for their Human Rights Day meeting, which was held in Luang, Prebang, the royal capital. It was the first UN program organized by a Bahá’í community in Laos. It drew an audience of students, teachers, and members of a hos­pital staff. In Kiel, Germany, for Human Rights Day, the Bahá’ís set up a booth in the market place, where they distributed UN and Bahá’í pamphlets to passers-by and engaged in friendly discussions. In the Dominican Republic, the Bahá’ís made use of their Center to feature an exhibit of UN posters on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Prominent people from local and na­tional communities. In many instances, prominent people from local and national communities participated in the Bahá’í-UN activities. For example, the Attorney-General of Dahomey shared the platform with a Bahá’í speaker at a public meeting, Brussels, Belgium, co-sponsored a program featuring William Deswarte, Vice-President of the Belgium League for the Defense of Human Rights. A high school principal and six of his students contributed to the success of a UN Day program sponsored by the Bahá’ís of Tonga, and in Lae, Papua, New Guinea, the Mayor of Lae was among the 40 guests attending a UN Day function held in a private Bahá’í home. This was the only observance held in Lae for UN Day. In Lower Hutt, New Zealand, the Mayor graciously signed a proclamation for UN Day and offered to serve as Chairman for the Bahá’í public meeting. Also, in New Zealand, Bahá’í contact with the Mayoress of Ngaruawahia, a town in which the majority of the people are Maori, resulted in a UN Day observance, the first ever or­ganized in that town. A Bahá’í community in Canada was successful in achieving a UN Day proclamation from the Mayor of the town—and he called upon citizens to assist the UN in its efforts on behalf of all mankind. A Human Rights Day meeting sponsored by three Local Spiritual Assemblies in Australia had as its Chair­man the Mayoress of Fort Adelaide.

Belize, British Honduras; Pinheiro, Brazil; and Newton, Australia, utilized Bahá’í-sponsored essay contests for high school students, to create interest in the United Nations. Prizes were awarded; a book was given in Newton along with a check; a set of pens was the first prize in Pinheiro, and hand-lettered certificates were given to the runner-up winners; and in Belize, prizes were donated by mer­chants.

Newspaper publicity. In some Bahá’í communities, newspaper publicity did an excellent job of substituting for an actual event. Through extensive mailings of UN materials to libraries, clubs, schools and colleges, radio stations, etc., several communities in Spain heard of the Faith and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, some of them for the first time. The National Spiritual Assembly of Tonga observed Human Rights Day in a unique way. It bought a full page in the national newspaper, the Chronicle, and had printed “A Bahá’í Declaration of Human Obliga­tions and Rights” in addition to a commen­tary on the United Nations, with reference to the Bahá’í International Community Office in New York City and to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Tonga and the Cook Islands. There was much comment about this page, and the
President of the State Church later spoke favorably about it on radio.

Before United Nations Day, the Baha’i National Spiritual Assembly of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands sent a long letter to the Director of Information, in charge of all news. The letter called attention to World Development Day and to the United Nations teams of experts who contribute so much to the Colony’s progress, and explained briefly the relationship of the Baha’i world to the UN. Included were UN and Baha’i pamphlets, information sheets, and posters. These materials were also widely distributed to schools. Further, the National Assembly sent to a young Ellice woman who is the director of a new radio program on women, UN pamphlets and Baha’i materials and offered suggestions of people to be interviewed, who could lead discussions on the subject of the equality of men and women. . . . In Trier, Germany, a UN leaflet on World Development Information Day was distributed to all schools and to teachers at the university. As a result, the Ministry of Education instructed all high schools to discuss UN World Development Day in their classes. The newspapers in Trier announced this activity and later carried an article.

Radio programs. Radio programs were the source of much publicity for the observance of UN Day and Human Rights Day by Baha’i communities. For Human Rights Day, the Baha’is of Belize sponsored a half-hour radio program with outstanding personalities discussing human rights in relation to education, law, youth, religion and women. Since this is the only radio station in the country, the program, planned by the Baha’i community in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program office—the UNDP Resident Representative acted as Master of Ceremonies—reached some 130,000 people. Radio was used effectively for both United Nations Day and Human Rights Day by the Baha’is of Seychelles. A script was prepared by them for United Nations Day, and it was broadcast on Radio Seychelles. For Human Rights Day, a talk in French was recorded for Radio Seychelles, and along with this was read the Message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the occasion. This public service was received with great appreciation. In one area of Canada, a call-in radio show was held and received good response from listeners. Other Canadian communities made a concentrated effort to gain maximum usage of talk-shows or other radio shows available. To the great joy and delight of the Baha’is of New Caledonia, they were successful in arranging to have both a Baha’i and a Melanesian non-Baha’i interviewed on the radio and on TV. In addition, as a direct result of contact which the Baha’is made with the newspaper La France Australe, the front page carried an editorial on human rights.

Sydney, Australia, blessed with a Baha’i House of Worship, organized services at the Temple for United Nations Day and Human Rights Day. Among the guests were dignitaries, councillors, UN personnel and inquirers.

Panel discussions and seminars. Panel discussions and seminars were organized by several communities. In Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at the Syndicate for Civil Servants, a Baha’i was invited to join a panel of speakers for UN Day. After the talks the Baha’is showed slides, and arranged an exhibit of United Nations posters. The President of the Syndicate requested a copy of the talk given by the Baha’i on the relationship of the UN and the Baha’i Faith, and it was then printed by the Syndicate and distributed to its members. The Baha’is of Belize received first-page newspaper coverage and first place on the radio news as a result of an interesting round-table discussion which was held at the Baha’i Center for United Nations Day. The Baha’i community of Nelson, New Zealand, sponsored a United Nations Day seminar which included a workshop program.

Films were used extensively throughout the Baha’i communities this year, sometimes as a main attraction, other times in addition to a speaker. The film recently produced by the United Nations Development Program, “One and a Half Dreams,” was especially popular, and in one instance, as a result of a showing by a Baha’i community, the local TV station decided to show it also.

Social affairs. Many Baha’i communities chose to have social affairs to celebrate UN Day and Human Rights Day, demonstrating the Baha’i belief in unity, through pot-luck dinners, progressive dinners, international dinners, teas and receptions—and there were children’s parties too, with games, dancing and singing. At least on one occasion a public meeting was followed by a dance group, performing colorful folk dances (Panama). This produced a festive atmosphere, and some of the audience joined in the dancing.

In Porto Alegre, Brazil, the Baha’i Institute of Porto Alegre, a primary school with over 200 registered children, was the only school in the area of one-and-a-half million people to observe United Nations Day. Delegations of teachers and students from other schools attended. The main auditorium was decorated with UN posters, Baha’i posters and work of the children. A panel discussed the various UN agencies.

Slide presentations. There were communities which used slide presentations to show the work of the United Nations. The Baha’i community of Santo Andre, Brazil, presented programs at the city’s largest educational institution with 4,000 students. The presentation consisted of two sets of slides, one of the United Nations and the other on the United Nations Development Program. The program was given nine times, and it was so well received that the Baha’is were asked to repeat it during 1974.

Finland’s United Nations programs were distinguished by the places they chose for their programs. They included a university students’ lounge, a hotel, a coffee house, a theater, and a “disco.” In one town, the only Baha’i arranged with the local theater for a dance where children performed to show UNICEF ideas.

A large number of communities drew on their local UN offices for all kinds of assistance—pamphlets, posters, film strips, speakers, films—and in Dahomey, the UNDP office loaned the Baha’is a truck and drivers to transport the chairs on loan for the occasion from an American cultural center.

UN Day was celebrated by the Baha’is of N’djamen, Chad, with the full support and assistance of the United Nations office. It was the only public recognition in Chad of this special day, which was reported as “a dignified gathering of young and old of many nationalities.” The UN Information Center in Bolivia cooperated fully with the Baha’is of Cochabamba, Bolivia, providing UN material on loan for a Baha’i-sponsored exhibit on the United Nations for Human Rights Day.

A representative from the UN Information Center in Pakistan and the Deputy Commissioner of Abbottabad participated in the UN Day observance held in Abbottabad and expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the Baha’is to observe and publicize United Nations efforts in protecting human rights everywhere.

Reports received from Baha’i communities all over the world speak clearly of the excellent cooperation generally received from United Nations offices.
For eleven days last November delegates from 130 nations met in Rome to discuss a global food shortage that threatened the welfare of millions, particularly in Bangladesh, India, and the African nations of the sub-Sahara. The immediate task before the 1,250 delegates as they began their work November 5 was to find ways to quickly bring more food to the afflicted regions. In the judgement of UN experts there were 32 nations among those classified as so poor and so short of food that crop failures and the high prices of grain, fertilizer, and petroleum threatened them with bankruptcy and their people with starvation. Conditions in many of these countries were so precarious that any disruption in the supply of food would cause widespread loss of life. It was conservatively estimated that almost 400 million people suffered from malnutrition, and, in the absence of determined international support, many thousands could perish.

United Nations sources estimated that as a result of floods, drought, and fertilizer shortages, an additional 7 to 11 million tons of grain would have to be distributed to hungry nations over the next year to prevent disasters. Pledges for significant amounts of aid were received from some of the grain-exporting nations over the next year although totals fell well below the projected needs. (The UN Secretary-General said $5 billion in aid would be required to rescue the world's starving nations; about half that amount had been offered before the conference got under way.)

What the nations did agree to in Rome was to extend and strengthen the machinery for additional international agricultural cooperation. They agreed to fund a series of long-range development programs designed to improve the agricultural productivity of the poorer nations. And they agreed—on November 15, the last day of their meeting—to establish a new international agency, the World Food Council, to coordinate the work of all UN agencies now dealing with food. The council will maintain a secretariat in Rome, but will report directly to the UN in New York.

Among the new programs given to the council to coordinate: an international agricultural development fund for the poorer nations; a fertilizer and pesticide aid program; and an international irrigation, drainage, and flood control program. The council will make an effort to improve the quality of agricultural research and training in the developing nations and will seek to find more effective methods for disseminating information to farmers.

There were many proposals heard in Rome calling for a strengthening of international ties to meet the deepening food crisis. One example was a proposal for a "mutual survival pack between the developing and developed nations," made by Richard Gardner, a Columbia University law professor. According to his statement the nations should agree to limit the sovereignty of all nations for the well-being of mankind. "We need to strike a great transcontinental bargain in which access to energy and other raw materials which industrialized countries need is traded for other kinds of access that developing countries need," he said. A similar theme was expressed by Mostafa Tolba, Executive Director of the UN Environmental Program. In his presentation to the delegates, he said strategies to solve the world food problem would have to be developed with an awareness in mind of the web of interdependence existing between this set of problems and other major sets of problems facing humanity. "It is
Conference operation discussed in Rome

not in any one of them, but in the interaction among them, that the future of mankind will be decided and shaped," he said.

Some of the statements made about the food situation revealed a certain pessimism about mankind's immediate future. A panel of distinguished citizens and scientists headed by sociologist Barbara Ward presented findings to the conference in which the present food situation was termed "more serious than any that has been faced since the end of World War II." They concluded that the favorable agricultural conditions of the past two decades had been dangerously reversed: food prices had trebled in an uncontrolled market, the cost of fuels and fertilizers necessary for production had increased fourfold in recent years, and the world was left with reserve supplies of food sufficient for only one month. These negative changes have occurred in a world whose population increases by 70 million people each year, the panel noted. Those most threatened by starvation are the poor in poverty-stricken nations, they said. In this group are to be found one of every five people on earth. To these sobering statistics a French statesman added a gloomy observation; "The world is unhappy; it is unhappy because it doesn't know where it is going, and because it senses that if it knew, it would discover that it was heading for disaster."

To meet the food demands of a growing population, to achieve improvements in the living standards of the world's most underprivileged people, and to build up adequate reserve stocks as security against disaster, a program of agricultural expansion on a scale never before contemplated must now be set in motion, UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim said in an address to the delegates. The best estimates are that production will have to double by the end of the century merely to provide the present level of nutrition to an expanded world population, he said. To improve nutritional standards production will have to more than double. "It is quite possible that if the current food situation fails to improve, or should worsen, other sacrifices may have to be demanded from the richer countries," Mr. Waldheim said. "The great differences in the consumption habits between rich and poor societies raise deep moral problems at the best of times; they become indefensible in times of penury and shortage when, moreover, as at the present time, a direct connection between high consumption on the one hand and low food availability on the other is a demonstrable part of the problem."

He said it was difficult to review the sequence of events leading to the current food crisis without feeling "a sense of dismay at the lack of foresight and sense of common interest which has been shown by individuals, governments, and by the international community." While there were some who voiced warnings in time, few listened, Mr. Waldheim said. "The record is one of priorities that certainly appear questionable now, of nonchalance in the examination of available statistics on the supply and demand of food, and of reluctance to abandon established courses in order to take early remedial action."

In addition to the 1,250 delegates representing the world's governments, there were representatives on hand from 47 UN agencies, and from 300 non-governmental organizations. The Baha'i International Community, a non-governmental organization with consultative status before the Economic and Social Council, was represented by Ezzat Zahrani, Manuela Fanti, and Linda Youssefian Marshall. Marco Kappenberger, also a Baha'i, attended as the correspondent for a Samoan news...
paper. The Bahá’í statement to the conference was printed in English, French, and Spanish, and more than 4,000 copies were distributed. In addition, Mr. Zahrai took 600 copies of a Bahá’í pamphlet — One World, One People — A Bahá’í View — to distribute among delegates and participants.

The Bahá’í Faith, as we surprisingly and happily realized, was well-known, very respected,” Miss Fanti wrote. “People who did not know it when we came to explain were astonished and pleased to be informed of this new kind of religion, so deeply involved in the present problems.”

Mr. Zahrai wrote: “We were pleased to see that our statement was widely distributed among the delegates, and taking into account that it was one of the early official documents put out by the NGO, it did have its desired impact before the conference became practically drowned with papers. A caption of our statement was published in Pan, the official conference publication, under the title, ‘Bahá’í View.’ ”

National and International Programs of Action
Bahá’í International Community Statement

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 23 and 24 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

In the view of the Bahá’í International Community, effective medium and long-range plans for solving the world food problem must rest on a conviction, by the individual and society, of the organic oneness of humanity, and a commitment to education and work that will be of service to the whole-being of the family and of the community.

Third, granting equal opportunities, rights, and privileges to men and women will allow development and use of the full potentialities of every person. This education in the spiritual equality of all human beings implies also the abolition of all other kinds of inequality, discrimination, and prejudice, such as those based on religion, race, class, and nationality.

Fourth, we have found that unless the harmony of science and religion is clearly understood and established in individual and social consciousness, it is not easy to uproot outmoded customs and traditions that prevent the ready acceptance of valuable advances in science and technology.

Countries at crisis level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average Daily Caloric Intake Per Person</th>
<th>1974 Projected Overall Deficit (in millions of dollars)</th>
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<tr>
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*In the United States the average daily caloric intake is 3,200. The recommended minimum daily caloric intake is 2,700. In some countries above, regional disparities and wastage may mean that substantial portions of the population are below the figure shown.

Source: FAO and the U.N.

**Not available
From homeland to homeland: 
Swiss pioneer Anna Kunz

by Margaret Kunz Ruhe

Anna Kunz, the eldest of ten children of the Reverend Adolph Bolliger, a prominent clergyman of the Reformed Church, was born in the parsonage in Ober Enfelden, Aargau, Switzerland on July 13, 1889. Soon the Reverend Bolliger was named professor of theology at the University of Basel and in time became its president; thus it was in Basel that Anna spent her school years. Under the guidance of her conscientious and serious parents she received excellent spiritual and moral training which served as the foundation of her character throughout her life. After graduating from high school, she longed to enter the university, but her father insisted that she study in a home economics seminary in Berne, on whose faculty she later became a teacher.

At 24 years of age she married Jakob Kunz, a distinguished Swiss physicist, who was a research scientist at the University of Illinois in Urbana. Thus she moved far away from her homeland, across the Atlantic Ocean, to the new world. Instantly she fell in love with America and loved to tell stories of the fantastic kindness showered upon her as a bride in the midwestern university town of Urbana, which became her home for 35 years. The hospitality, openness, and magnanimity of the Americans overwhelmed her. Despite her conservative, traditionalist Swiss background, she gradually learned a new life style. Her two daughters, Annamarie Kunz Honnold and Margaret Kunz Ruhe, were born and raised in Urbana. Dr. Kunz won acclaim as the inventor of the first photo-electric cell, the Kunz cell, and collaborated on the first sound-on-film experiments with Professor J. T. Tykociner; he also measured the light of the solar corona during periods of eclipses, and taught relativity as propounded by his colleague Albert Einstein.

Dr. and Mrs. Kunz, active members of the Methodist Church, were of a serious religious bent. One day Dr. Kunz, who was possessed of a deeply searching mind, said to Anna, “Let’s go and hear Albert Vail speak on a new philosophy . . . something about a Baha’i Faith.” So they went, along with their good friends Edwin and Annie Mattoon. They soon found themselves regular students in a class on the Baha’i Faith given by Albert Vail, a Unitarian minister, and an eloquent, inspired teacher of comparative religions. Mrs. Kunz recognized Baha’u’llah as the Manifestation of God for this day almost at once. During this period (1914-1915) she became an enthusiastic Bahá’í. The exact date is not known, since in those early days no one signed a membership card. Through her enrollment she became one of the founders of the Urbana Bahá’í Community, a community which served as the seed-bed for the growth of many devoted teachers of the Faith, among them Allen McDaniel, Genevieve Coy, Flora Hottes, and Beatrice Ashton.

As a young woman, Mrs. Kunz was somewhat frail and delicate. At times she suffered from severe headaches. As a newcomer to the United States she was determined to master English, a task she found trying and time-consuming. Despite ill health, timidity, the burdens of caring for small children, and the emotional strain that resulted from life in a new culture, she quickly showed signs of leadership, administrative ability, firmness, and steadfastness in the Faith. She studied the Writings assiduously, and resolved to live her life according to the Teachings. A beauty of spirit radiated from her, which was felt by those around her.

In 1921, when her husband took his sabbatical leave from the university, Dr. and Mrs. Kunz sailed to Europe, then on to Egypt, and ultimately to Haifa for pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines, where Dr. Lutfu’l-Hakim met them and guided them to the various Holy Places. At Tiberias they attained the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; this was the pinnacle of Mrs. Kunz’s life. She adored ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; he became her Exemplar and her Master. In an article in the Star of the West in September 1922, she wrote:

“Abdul Bahá’s family keeps open house all the time . . . They live a life of great simplicity; their life is a reflection of
Abdul Baha’s life. Their thoughts are with him always; they love him with a deep abiding love; they serve in his footsteps and for his sake serve all mankind. Many a precious lesson was taught to me while in this household. Often I was surprised to see that, in spite of their restricted life, these women uphold a truly broad attitude towards life in general; they know no narrowness; they are all-inclusive and therefore heavenly.”

She wrote of meeting ‘Abdu’l-Baha on March 27, 1921, in a hotel at Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee, where He used to go for rest and a change of air. “It was a bright and luminous Easter morning when the Master called us into his room. . . . Though I feared to approach him, after his loving words of welcome this fear vanished. . . . we sat before our Master, in a little room, with only the most necessary furnishings, on top of the hotel, with a view of that blessed lake. His look seems to go into one’s very heart. Yes, he knows his children and their need. As I think of him now, I always love to think, first of his great simplicity, his marvelous humility which knows of no self-existence, and last . . . of his boundless love. To us his outward appearance seemed similar to that of the old Hebrew Prophets, his humility, his simplicity and love were like the Christ. This boundless love conquered the hearts at once. Abdul Baha talked to us with a ringing, piercing voice which will forever sound in my ears.”

On Monday, March 28, ‘Abdu’l-Baha was given a photograph of the Kunz children and He gazed at it for a long while. His face lighted up and he said: “They have bright faces. They will be real Baha’is because they will have a Baha’i education. They will become good Baha’is.” Later, He revealed a wonderful prayer for them which is recorded in Star of the West.

On Monday afternoon, March 28, He spoke these words: “This lake is very blessed. His holiness Christ and the other prophets walked along its shore and were in communion with God all the time and spreading the divine teachings. Now, praise be to God that you reached this land safely and we met another on the shore of this same lake! You will receive great results from this visit afterwards. You will become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity. You will release the hearts of the people from the intense darkness of different prejudices, so that each soul may love all the people of the world, without distinction. Just like a shepherd who is affectionate to all his sheep, without preference or distinction, you should be affectionate to all. You should not look at their shortcomings. Consider that they are all created by God who loves them all.”

Mrs. Kunz returned to Urbana with renewed zeal. She served for many years on the Spiritual Assembly of Urbana, much of the time as chairman. She also served on many committees, and was for many years a delegate to the National Bahá’í Convention. Through her attendance at these annual meetings in Wilmette, she became well acquainted with the Bahá’ís of America. Each year during convention Corinne True invited her to lunch; how Mrs. Kunz loved those small intimate gatherings in the True home, where there was time to speak of the spiritual realities of the Faith. The friends respected her knowledge of the Teachings, her wisdom, and common sense. At times she became fiery in defense of her opinions. Occasionally she served as speaker for a particular event, but on the whole she preferred to find other opportunities for service. At age 50 she took up typing, to increase her ability to serve her beloved Faith.

Mrs. Kunz, a strong personality, demanded the highest standards of performance from herself and from those around her. She raised her two daughters to be Bahá’ís. They were trained by a strong disciplinarian who knew only one path and would have no deviation from that path. Her admonition, repeated frequently to her daughters, was: “Have the courage to be different.” Anna Kunz was family-oriented, the integrity and warmth of the family circle was vitally important to her. Throughout her life she remained close to her daughters and their families, adored her five grand-children, and was proud of her distinguished sons-in-law, (John O. Honnold, a professor of law, and eventually a member of the legal staff of the United Nations in New York, and David S. Ruhe, a professor of medicine, and subsequent member of The Universal House of Justice).

The Kunz home was a haven of peace, restfulness, beauty, and hospitality for all who came there. Dr. Kunz entertained Rabindranath Tagore and other philosophers and scientists. Not only were Bahá’í classes and meetings held in the home, but also a steady stream of Bahá’í teachers spent the night there: Carl Scheffler, Philip Marangella, Albert Windust, Sarah Walrath, Fannie Knobloch, Louis Gregory, Zia Bagdadi, Corinne True, Allen McDaniel, Horace Holley, and Dorothy Baker. Dr. Kunz relished the company of attorney Louis Gregory who was a frequent visitor, and Dr. Bagdadi, a dynamic and brilliant man who was willing to engage in long philosophic discussions in which Dr. Kunz delighted. Maintaining these many Bahá’í activities in the Kunz home was not always easy, as Dr. Kunz felt his wife was too involved with the Faith. Sometimes she accompanied him to church, and she did everything in her power to make his life peaceful and happy.

Mrs. Kunz was thoughtful of people in small and large ways; she took time to listen to them and was perceptive of their inner needs and aspirations. She often said, “Think of others and forget yourself.” She liked to remember others with flowers, home-baked cookies, small gifts. At age 43 she learned to drive a car, and one of her services was to drive around Urbana gathering the friends for the meetings.

In the personal and intimate details of her life she was a complete Bahá’í: cleanliness, neatness, frugality, and meticulousness were her hallmark. Her house was polished and clean; her person was immaculate. Her spirit, humble and pure, knew the power of prayer. Her prayer book was always at her side; she prayed many times each day and loved to share the prayers with her family and friends. “May we have a prayer together?” she would often say.

After the death of her husband Mrs. Kunz was free to pioneer. She offered her services to the beloved Guardian. In July, 1947 at the age of 58, she left New York to return to Switzerland, thus beginning a new phase of her life as a pioneer for the Faith. She settled in Berne, one of the goal cities of the Second Seven Year Plan, where Shoghi Effendi wrote her as follows:

“I welcome your arrival in Europe and particularly in Switzerland where, I feel, your work will be of the utmost value. You will surely be blessed and sustained in your historic task, and I look forward to the day when through your exertion and those of your devoted collaborators the first Spiritual Assembly will be established in that land. Persevere in your magnificent mission.” She worked tirelessly towards the establishment of the Spiritual Assembly of Berne. After this goal was accomplished, she returned to Urbana in 1949, feeling that she was needed there. Shoghi Effendi wrote her as follows:

“The services you have rendered the Faith are truly remarkable and deserve the highest praise. I feel truly proud of your
achievements, and am grateful for the spirit that so powerfully animates you in the service of our glorious Faith. I will pray ardently on your behalf, that the beloved may abundantly reward you for your accomplishments, to enable you, in the years to come, to enrich the splendid record of your services to His Faith and its institutions.”

The pioneering spirit had taken hold, and when news reached her in Urbana of the urgent needs in Switzerland, Mrs. Kunz felt restless and torn. She wanted to be near her children and her grandchildren; this was her personal longing and wish. What should she do? She wrote to Shoghi Effendi seeking his advice. For a long time there was no reply. She was relieved. Then came the stunning message: “proceed as quickly as possible to Switzerland.” She was crushed. In October 1952, however, she valiantly set forth once again, this time settling in Zurich, a goal city. In the spring of 1953 she was elected a member of the newly formed Italo-Swiss National Spiritual Assembly, and to her consternation she was elected Secretary of this historic 12th National Assembly, a post which she held for nine years. (Now she understood why in mid-life she had taken up typing). At the request of Shoghi Effendi she moved back to Berne, although she would personally have preferred to remain in her splendid apartment in Zurich. At Ridván 1962 the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland was formed and Anna Kunz was again elected Secretary. She continued to serve on the Swiss National Assembly until she neared her 80th year. After being reelected in 1969 she asked to be excused from service because of age, and because her health was slowly failing.

Teaching the Faith in Switzerland was not easy—the people were highly conservative, tightly bound by traditions and customs of church and ancestry—and sometimes she became discouraged. When one of Anna’s old school friends embraced the Faith, she was overjoyed. She urged other pioneers to come to Switzerland. They came because she encouraged them. But the natural beauties—the mountains, lakes, glaciers, and charming villages—were a reward for those who arose. Anna prayed fervently and studied the Writings daily, and was able to impart hope and assurance to those who worked with her. “Whereas formerly they were as moths, they became as royal falcons...” The breaths of the Holy Spirit confirmed her again and again. She was a reed from which the pith of self had been blown. Among her favorite selections from the Writings were these words which she quoted repeatedly:

“There is a power in this Cause—a mysterious power—far, far away from the ken of men and angels: that invisible power is the cause of all these outward activities. It moves the hearts. It rends the mountains. It administers the complicated affairs of the Cause. It inspires the friends. It dashes into a thousand pieces all the forces of opposition. It creates new spiritual worlds. This is the mystery of the Kingdom of Abba.”

In 1957 she flew to London (her first airplane journey) to attend the funeral of Shoghi Effendi. Like many others she had always harbored a desire to be in his presence, but alas, she had waited too long. His sudden passing was a terrible blow. In 1963, 42 years after attaining the 80th year, her spirit was ever radiant and bright. She gave up her cherished apartment, and moved to a nursing home in the suburbs of Berne, where she died peacefully in her sleep on August 10, 1973. The Universal House of Justice called: “Deeply grieved passing Anna Kunz steadfast distinguished handmaid Bahá’u’lláh her associations beloved Master devoted pioneering services Europe over extended period unforgettable...” She lies buried in the Schosschalden Cemetery in Berne, her pioneer post, where she remained until the end.

Countless messages were received from the friends throughout Europe and America who loved and respected her, and were heartbroken to learn of her passing. Again and again she was characterized as a “noble woman”, “a magnificent lady”, “a true Bahá’í in word and deed.” The National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland wrote the following: “The wonderful and fruitful services rendered by our highly esteemed Bahá’í sister to the Swiss Bahá’í Community as a Bahá’í teacher and member of our National Spiritual Assembly will never be forgotten. Her absolute dedication to our beloved Cause, her humbleness and loving kindness were an example to all of us...” Services were held in Berne, Rome, Urbana, Wilmette, at the Bahá’í Cabin at Teaneck, and in Langenhain, Germany (more than 30 young Swiss Bahá’ís journeyed by bus to Langenhain to pay their last respects). Prayers were said for her in Ireland, in Peru, in the Solomon Islands, at the Shrines in Haifa and ‘Akka.

The Hand of the Cause Ugo Giachery, who served with her on the Italo-Swiss National Assembly, wrote the following remembrance to the Universal House of Justice: “Once more in the course of this year we must offer you our deepest condolences for the loss of a much loved and distinguished collaborator: Mrs. Anna Kunz, whose services in this continent shall be remembered for many decades to come. Having come to Switzerland during the Second Seven Year Plan, she was elected to the Italo-Swiss National Assembly at its formation on Ridván, 1953, becoming its Secretary until the election of an independent Swiss National Spiritual Assembly. The writer was also a member of the Italo-Swiss National Spiritual Assembly for the same length of time, and had the opportunity and privilege to work side by side with her and appreciate her sterling qualities, her deep love for the Cause and the high sense of responsibility in discharging the duties of the 12th National Assembly of the Bahá’í World. Her kind and loving attitude towards everybody, her wise and humane approach to so many novel problems, made of Mrs. Kunz one of the very best national Secretaries in Europe. We mourn her loss, but pray that her noble soul may reap the reward due to those who labored so faithfully for the Cause of God.”

Anna Kunz served the Faith with distinction, dedication, and dignity for almost 60 years. She lived her life with firmness, humility, orderliness, and spirituality. She inspired her family and friends with hope and faith, and “lived the life” as delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

“Grant then, O my God, that Thy servant may consort with Thy chosen ones, Thy saints and Thy Messengers, in heavenly places that the pen cannot tell nor the tongue recount.”

Bahá’u’lláh

JANUARY, 1975 / BAHÁ’I NEWS 19
In Memoriam

India Haggarty

One of the small group of Bahá'ís who had the blessing of several meetings with the Master became ill at her home in Carmel, California, last August and shortly afterwards passed away in a private nursing home. India Haggarty was from a distinguished Virginia family, the Marshalls, and was born in Alexandria. When she arrived in Haifa in 1920, as a member of the group of pilgrims accompanying Dr. and Mrs. Florian Krug, she was overjoyed to hear the Master praise her mother and offer her His blessing. “My mother was a deep-dyed fundamentalist,” Mrs. Haggarty often recalled, “a church woman who helped people whenever she could. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said to me, ‘Do you know that your mother is a very good woman? It is through her that you are here.’” Mrs. Haggarty is survived by a sister, Inez Green, who lives in Carmel and is active in Bahá'í activities.

The experience of meeting Mrs. Haggarty in February, in her home, was an unforgettable one. The grace and beauty of another time and another way of life were evident everywhere. Having come from a family that had appreciated and collected art for generations, her California home was filled with many beautiful possessions. These were, however, merely a setting for the beauty of her ardent belief, obviously deepened and polished by years of experience and learning in the path of the Master.

Let us hear the story of those special days in 1920, her pilgrimage days, in her own words.

“Pilgrimages, I understand, vary a great deal. If you are a very spiritual person you may experience a very spiritual reaction. Our pilgrimage was one which I think must have been different from any one before it. We were not all Bahá’ís and one of our party was a deep Catholic. It was only two years after the First World War, which had devastated Europe and the Holy Land. Haifa had been besieged and for years no one had made a pilgrimage.

“Mrs. Krug wanted to take an entourage to the Holy Land. My sister, Inez, came and another sister who never became a Bahá’í. Mrs. [Grace] Ober was there, en route to Persia. Fugita was also there, and Dr. Pease, the husband of my sister.

“We started in March, and in those days it took nearly two weeks to cross the Atlantic. We had illness on the way, the flu, and one of my sisters was very sick in Naples. We couldn’t get a visa to get into Egypt. Everything was a turmoil. Many ships had been destroyed by the war, and coal for a time was $105 a ton. The world was chaotic.

Some of the men had to go to Rome to bring those visas back to us. Finally, we landed in Alexandria but, once there, couldn’t get a visa to go on to Haifa.

“At last Mrs. Krug came in one morning and said, ‘We will go to the Palace. We will go to General Allenby and tell him who we are, friends of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.’ I was so unsophisticated, so on fire with the Faith, I’d have done anything to get to Him. When we got to the palace Mrs. Krug said, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has given us permission to land in Haifa and we would like our passports to be made. Will you tell the General that we are here?’ He said, ‘You realize that every port is closed. Someone has tried to assassinate the General!’ She said, ‘Do you recall that the General is a friend of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá? Do you know what he said when he took Haifa and released ‘Abdu’l-Bahá from the siege?’

Here Mrs. Haggarty’s face was wreathed in smiles as she recalled that moment. “The official was a big man, decorated with buttons and braid. He said, ‘I will try to get the message through. And I will let you know tomorrow. But no one can get out before they catch the assassin.’ When he didn’t call the next morning, Mrs. Krug went back to the Palace. The official explained apologetically that it was impossible to issue visas. At that moment another man came into the office and said: ‘His Excellency (General Allenby) says he has cabled Haifa to permit 13 Americans to land without any visas. You are to take a ship tomorrow morning but on your word of honor you are to tell no one that you are going to Haifa.’

“When we landed that day at Haifa it seemed that the whole harbor was filled with little vessels, some with friends carrying the Greatest Name. It was so wonderful and so thrilling, we were swept off our feet. That night the grandsons of the Master told us that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had said the night before at dinner, laughing heartily, ‘Mrs. Krug with one stick has defeated the whole British army!’

“After we landed, we walked up the mountain. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was standing in the middle of the road, in front of the pilgrim house, checking on the unloading of a camel caravan. He had on a white robe. It was a picture out of the Bible. He shook hands with us, was very informal, and we went into the pilgrim house.”

Mrs. Haggarty said: “‘Abdu’l-Bahá received a feeling of affection and respect from the non-Bahá’ís as much as from the Bahá’ís. They never stared at Him directly, nor spoke unless they were asked to say something. No one interrupted Him. Even those who were not Bahá’ís showed deep respect. You would never dream of sitting when He was standing, although He was most informal and loving with us.”

Recalling the Persian pilgrims—all men, who were unaccustomed to seeing women moving about freely in the streets without veils—she said that one day one of the older men had someone translate for him, “We are your brothers. We love you.” They always bowed with their hands to their heart.

“We responded, ‘We love you too.’

“The next day he said, ‘It makes us happy to see you here from the West. It is fulfillment of prophecy. We were told that when belief in Bahá’u’lláh spread to the West, the West would come back and help
us in the East.

"Then one day, it was the birthday of my sister, Mary Pease. The translator said, "This is your real birthday. Your first birthday. I am giving you my only earthly possession. I took it from the hands of my father, as he lay beheaded, a martyr." And he handed large amber prayer beads to her. "They are something to think on, to meditate on." My sister was reluctant to accept it but he insisted.

"My sister had to accept it but she went back to the pilgrim house and wept bitterly." Mrs. Haggarty remembered an occasion, much later, in Los Angeles when these beads were loaned to her in order that all the friends could share them at a special meeting. "While Mary never became a Bahá'í, she realized that this was something that was very precious.

And so the memories flowed, fresh and clear over the more than fifty years since their occurrence. So much was said, but perhaps to close this tribute to Mrs. Haggarty, it would be right to quote from a letter (written laboriously since arthritis crippled her hands) she sent at Naw-Rúz to a younger friend. In it she said:

"Perhaps your ultimate happiness will be in service to others. There are many forms of sickness and suffering—you can be that nurse and the healing will reflect in your life. My daily prayers for peace of mind and serenity surround you . . . . I shall try to forget my pain and multiple afflictions and feel like Martha Root who always walked with Bahá'u'lláh by her side. Try it too! Let's keep step together as we enter this New Year. Oh, how blessed we are to know this Day!"

**Passing of three Latin American pioneers**

Word has been received recently of the passing of three distinguished pioneers, Louise Jackson, Betty Becker and Seymour Malkin, who had long served at their posts in South American countries.

After a long illness, Louise Jackson died October 3 in Methodist Hospital, La Paz, Bolivia, and is buried in an American cemetery there. In a letter written in February to the International Goals Committee, Louise described her happiness in attending the Summer School in Lima, Peru, this January, and said: "There was a definite feeling of unity, harmony and good spiritual fellowship. One felt that we were really building a world order, and here it was in its very primary infancy . . . ." She spoke also of assisting in a 40-day mass teaching campaign in Cuzco following the Summer School. Commenting on her activities this year in Bolivia, she added: "Well, for one thing, I am trying to keep up a steady correspondence with all of the pioneers. There is a deepening class or investigation class on Saturday afternoon at four o'clock, where there is a minimum of two and usually about fifteen people present. On Thursdays I have one and sometimes two discussion classes in English. The people who attend have a vocabulary of 1,000 words and we use the Ladder Series, discussing one book every week. After they have passed the 1,000-word vocabulary book we go to 2,000 words, then to 3,000 and so on." In such manner, Louise served the Faith to the end of her life.

Following twenty years' pioneering service in Anchorage, Alaska, Betty Becker arrived in Chile in 1959. Although hampered by failing eyesight resulting in blindness and by declining health leading to ultimate bed-confinement for over a year-and-a-half, following a stroke in March 1973, Betty remained mentally alert, in good spirits, actively serving the Faith through prayer and sacrifice to the last day of her life.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Chile, in reporting the death of this pioneer, wrote this tribute:

"Throughout her illness, Betty received excellent personal nursing care in the home of an auxiliary nurse, but deprived herself of all extras in order to be able to donate more money to a special fund for the purchase of a local Haẓrat'u'l-Quds, badly needed by the Bahá'ís of Punta Arenas, a house which had been Punta Arenas' dream for many years. Almost single-handedly, she was able to contribute the money for the downpayment and partial furnishing of a local Haẓrat'u'l-Quds, the deed of which was placed in her hands for a few moments, three days before her passing. It was as though she had been waiting to see the fruition of her dream before ascending to the Abhá Kingdom. She was 87 years old.

"We, the Bahá'ís of Chile, feel new spiritual strength as we labor for Bahá'u'lláh, undoubtedly due to Betty Becker's noble example of detachment and sacrifice."

Years of active service as a pioneer, homefront teacher and member of the Auxiliary Board for the Protection of the Faith mark the Bahá'í life of Seymour Malkin. Born in 1923 of Rumanian and Russian parentage, he was enrolled as a Bahá'í by the Local Spiritual Assembly of Los Angeles in February 1955, immediately moving to a goal city near Los Angeles. In two years he pioneered to Mexico, where he met his future wife, Margot Miessler, at Rívdán that year at the National Convention of the Bahá'ís of Central America, in Guatemala City. They were married later that year in Honduras and spent their wedding trip teaching the Faith on the Island of Juan Fernandez, off the coast of Chile. They moved the following Rívdán to Campina, Brazil, returning briefly to the United States but responding affirmatively to a request of the Hands of the Cause to settle in Chile prior to the Jubilee in 1963. Although this meant foregoing their hope of attending the London gathering, the Malkins were blessed with witnessing the beginning of mass teaching in Chile and the entrance into the Faith of the first Mapuche Indians. It was at this time that Seymour was named to the Auxiliary Board. After living in the United States between 1964 and 1970, Seymour again agreed wholeheartedly to a request from the International Goals Committee to pioneer to Brazil, helping to form the first Local Spiritual Assembly of Santo Amaro the following year.

The father of three children, Jesma Layli, Edmund Jacob, and Vali, Seymour had the joy of presenting his daughter, Jesma, as a declared Bahá'í at the last Feast of his lifetime. On the occasion of the celebration of the birthday of the Báb, each Bahá'í present from the communities of São Paulo and the Campinas area was asked to represent one spiritual quality, the one assigned to Seymour being "elegance" and to Margot, "courage."

After enjoying fully the evening and a brief time at home with his family following the celebration, Seymour told those around him "I'm going" and passed into the next world at 2 AM. Forty-five cars of friends escorted his body to Morumbi Cemetery, in São Paulo, where fellow Bahá'í's Francisco Domingo and Nurollah Soltani are buried.

Anyone having personal remembrances of Seymour Malkin is requested to contact his family at Rua Nova York 382, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

JANUARY, 1975 / BAHÁ'Í NEWS 21
An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator — what have these people in common? They’re Baha’is and they appear in a new Baha’i film, Paso a Paso, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled Step by Step in English, depicts the growth of the Baha’i Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Unified by their common belief in Baha’u’llah and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Baha’u’llah is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Baha’i administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Baha’i House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, El Alba and The Dedication. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

How to Get the Film

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Baha’i distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Baha’i Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify Step by Step, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or Paso a Paso, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
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Cover photographs: First row (left to right): the Greatest Holy Leaf Bahá'íyyih Khánum; the Hand of the Cause Martha Root; Mother Teacher of the West, Lua Getsinger; second row: the Hand of the Cause Keith Ransom-Kehler; Sírátih Khánum, Lady Blomfield; the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander; third row: the Hands of the Cause Dorothy Baker and Amatu'l Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum. Photos from National Bahá'í Archives, Wilmette, Illinois and Bahá'í News.
Land near Guardian’s resting place purchased

ANNOUNCE PURCHASE STRIP LAND GREAT NORTHERN LONDON CEMETERY FACING BELOVED GUARDIANS RESTING PLACE ENSURING PROTECTION SACRED PLOT. PRAYERS GRATITUDE OFFERED DIVINE THRESHOLD

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

Reports on teaching

Dear Friends,

I have just recently returned to India from visiting in the States. Upon my return I found that the local community has been making very great strides in the teaching of the Cause. I felt that a couple of these incidents and programs may be of interest to the world Bahá’í community, therefore I am passing them on to you.

As mentioned in the Five Year Plan from The Universal House of Justice for India — great emphasis is being placed on the teaching of women and children. A few months ago a program was initiated by the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Panchgani for teaching women and the results have been rewarding. Enclosed is a photograph and a report of one of the latest gatherings of the Teaching Institutes for our local Bahá’í women and in this photograph are Bahá’ís from Harijan (the untouchables) background, Hindu-Brahmins, Zoroastrians, Muslims, Buddhists and so on. (See page 11)

Correspondence Course: The first year of the Five Year Plan a small Correspondence Committee was formed to reach the Marathi-speaking people. Marathi is the language spoken by the people of the state of Maharashtra. The results have been overwhelmingly rewarding and a case in point is reported below.

The Bahá’ís of Panchgani put on a proclamation in the city of Kolhapur which is eight hours journey by bus. During this proclamation a villager happened to be visiting in the city from his village Shirdon, and he came to visit our book display and booth. He asked many questions, and was extremely interested and signed up for the correspondence course. During the months he was very faithful in completing his correspondence course and wanted to declare his belief in Bahá’u’lláh. The Correspondence Committee asked him to come to Kolhapur to meet with the Bahá’ís there and sign the declaration card. However, he wrote back stating that it would not be possible for him to do so as he lived in a village which was quite far from Kolhapur. During a recent visit to that area our teaching team went to the village Shirdon and asked to meet Mr. Vasantkutti. The people in the village said that he was from the Harijan class (untouchables) and he lived on the other side of the village. The team went to that area and found Mr. Vasantkutti and they were indeed specially rewarded for their efforts. He was excited and happy to see them and told how he had been teaching the Faith in the village and he presented the declaration cards of nine persons. He then took them to a special room which he had prepared for the nine Bahá’ís to gather for prayers and readings. This was the first personal contact that any one made with these Bahá’ís. After a brief deepening session on forming of the Local Spiritual Assembly, the team returned to Panchgani. The next day the Correspondence Committee received a letter from Mr. Vasantkutti stating that they had elected the Chairman, Secretary and had pledged 50 paisa per person for each month for the Bahá’í Fund (approximately 6 cents each).

I feel this is a good example of teaching through correspondence, which is probably the most effective means in reaching the masses of people in a developing country.

With loving Bahá’í greetings.

Ray Johnson
New Era High School
Panchgani, Maharashtra

Expressed appreciation

Dear Bahá’í friends,

This just to let you know how much I enjoy receiving the Bahá’í News, and to express my gratitude for it. Many times when I have been feeling rather despondent, it has given me a great lift to read one of the articles on the life of an immortal and exemplary Bahá’í. I also find the words of the Hands of the Cause which are often reported in the Bahá’í News to be very edifying, urging us on, at all times, in the service of the Faith.

There is much spiritual nourishment to be had from your publication, and I value it a great deal. I very much appreciate as well the consistently high standard of English that you maintain.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,

Charles Fitzsimmons
St. Bartholomew, French West Indies

FEBRUARY, 1975 / BAHÁ’Í NEWS
Around the World

Peru:

**Travelling institute fosters consolidation**

The National Spiritual Assembly of Peru has undertaken to consolidate believers in remote areas of the country through deepening institutes held in their own communities. Teams of four or five people, which include seasoned teachers and one or two believers from the nearest active community, are sent for periods of up to one week to infrequently visited localities to provide instruction in the basic teachings of the Faith and discuss the elementary requirements of Bahá’í community life.

The first site for one of these deepening sessions, called a Travelling Institute by the National Assembly, was Quilhuay, a village of 25 families, almost invisible in the vastness of the Andes south of Huancayo, Peru. There have been Bahá’ís in Quilhuay for 25 years, and in recent years a Spiritual Assembly has been elected each Ridván with the assistance of the friends in Huancayo. But there has been little other organized Bahá’í activity in Quilhuay to speak of.

The first team, led by Continental Counsellor Raúl Pavón, travelled over rough, single-lane roads, and arrived in Quilhuay with sleeping bags, camp stove, dishes, food, projector, tape recorder, lanterns, books, charts, and other teaching materials. Arrangements had been made a week earlier for the group to stay in one of the three public buildings in town — an unoccupied jail. It was, like all the other buildings, windowless and constructed of adobe, with a hard-packed dirt floor. As is the custom in the area, the walls at their base and extending about two feet upwards, were of double thickness, forming a natural bench around the building’s interior perimeter. This bench was the only place for visitors to sit; there was no furniture whatever in the room. An abandoned wheelbarrow served as the group’s pantry and storage cabinet. A small mountain stream about 100 feet from the jail — not always very clear — was their only source of water.

The program called for a general session each night lasting about one-half hour, followed by separate classes for the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly, for women, children, and youth. The youth discussed ways of teaching interested
adults in the community how to read.

"Because the community was small and the homes widely separated in the surrounding mountains, the friends gathered in the local school for only four of the nights," a report from the consolidation team said. "Great interest was exhibited in the general meetings where slides and film strips about Bahá'í history, principles of the Faith, Bahá'í communities around the world, and the role of Bahá'í women, were shown with battery-powered projectors. The friends were especially pleased to see pictures of other Peruvian Bahá'ís and their Quechua brothers and sisters of Bolivia and Ecuador."

Separate classes were held for the Local Spiritual Assembly where officers were elected and plans were made to raise a Ḥázíratu'l-Quds on one of the sites offered by two of the members.

"Children and their mothers met in another group so that the mothers might observe the teaching of prayers, songs, and stories illustrating Bahá'í principles and spiritual qualities. Many of the boys and girls translated to Quechua as some of the women spoke no Spanish. The children particularly enjoyed the paper craft projects related to the lessons on the Messengers of God and the unity of mankind. An effort was made to use as many native materials as possible, such as long thorns to fasten paper lanterns and pinwheels and twigs for the hanging mobiles.

"Very quickly outstanding personalities emerged, such as ten-year-old Máximo, who was the first one to arrive, on the dot, for every class and trip and also accompanied the group to other villages; the chairman of the Local Spiritual Assembly, whose father was the first chairman, many years ago; Teodora, the only woman on the Assembly, who carried a heavy suitcase on her back and loaded more of the gear on her horse when we left, so we would have to make only one trip up the mountain.

"We climbed over the mountain ridges to reach three neighboring villages where slides were shown and the Message of Bahá'u'lláh was given to groups of from 40 to 100 people. During the day, team members were welcomed most graciously by the teachers in the one or two-room schools and were allowed to teach songs and prayers to the children. (Also the other villages each had a store where rolls and soft drinks could be purchased!)

Everywhere the question was asked again and again, "When are you coming back?" Plans are being made to return on teaching trips and then with an institute as the new areas gain Assembly status. Benefitting from this initial experience, detailed plans are being written to aid other teams. Little items like forgotten salt, or the discovery that the Primus type stove and the two lanterns require three different kinds of fuel, can be major distractions. More important are precise lesson plans and carefully selected and prepared audio-visual materials, however.

Are we going back? We certainly hope so.

Greenland:

Haẓíratu'l-Quds in capital city acquired

On September 13, 1974, negotiations were concluded by the National Assembly of Denmark for the purchase of a building...
to serve as the Hazíratu’l-Quds of Godthaab, Greenland. Acquisition of the two-story wooden structure located in the center of Godthaab signified the attainment of Five Year Plan goals for both the Danish and Canadian communities. The Canadian Baha’i’s provided financial assistance.

The Baha’i group of Godthaab, which was responsible for investigating prospective buildings, will use only two rooms on the main floor for Baha’i gatherings; other rooms will be leased to a family. The National Spiritual Assembly of Denmark said the purchase of the building in Godthaab early in the Plan was important because of the increased facility for teaching and consolidation that it affords.

Lesotho:

Anniversary first declaration celebrated

It was in 1945 that Beth and Fred Laws came to Basutoland, now Lesotho, as Baha’i pioneers under the Guardian’s Ten Year Crusade that was to carry the Message of Baha’u’llah throughout the world. There were no paved roads in the entire country. On a good road between Maseru, the capital, and Tyatayeneng, a distance of twenty miles, it took two hours to make the journey. Most parts of the country were accessible only by horseback.

One Sunday as the Laws were driving to Teyatayeneng — called Ty by those who know it — they passed a spacious, tree-circled compound. It was unusual for Lesotho, because the country is barren and mountainous. Something prompted them to stop and visit. The eldest son of the chief had seen the strange license plates (he later learned they came from the United States) several times in Maseru, and he was curious about the travelers. There were few cars in Lesotho at the time; even now one can recognize most cars and their owners. The chief’s son went out to the road and invited the Laws into his father’s compound, Seqonoka.

Chief Mohapi had planted all the trees himself and had long had a vision of the importance of man’s investment in the future. Even as he planted trees so that his children could enjoy their shade, he would plant the spiritual seeds of the future growth of the Cause of God in his native land. With this roadside encounter began a relationship that lead to the declaration as Baha’is of Chief Chadwick Mohapi and his wife, Mary, and a number of their children, including the eldest son, Salai, and another son, Theodore, who was chief in a remote mountain area.

Presently the Laws were invited by Chief Mohapi to live at Seqonoka in what became known as “The Baha’i Ron­doval.” Seqonoka literally became the heart of Baha’i activity in Lesotho. From this small but auspicious beginning there was raised an independent pillar of the Universal House of Justice in 1971. The Mohapis travelled extensively in Lesotho and neighboring countries teaching of the Cause of God. Many of the early pioneers accompanied them: William and Marguerite Sears, John and Val Allen, and Dale Allen, to mention a few.

Nearly 100 Bahá’ís commemorated the anniversary of the establishment of the Faith in Lesotho.

Some of the guests enjoying the special feast which had required several days to prepare.
The twentieth anniversary celebration of these first enrollments of Bahá'ís in Lesotho was planned for December 12, 1974. But the will of God was that it should be otherwise. A few days before, Theodore Mohapi died, and that very day was chosen for his funeral. Seven Bahá'ís participated in the interment service; approximately 350 people attended. Many people commented on the beauty, simplicity and power of the prayers, and responded warmly to a brief explanation of the Faith requested by the family.

The Seqonoka feast and anniversary celebration was rescheduled for January 13, 1975. Two sheep were purchased and prepared with all the trimmings: boiled cabbage, beet root salad, a maize and bean mix, and potatoes — a real feast. Preparations took several days. The day of the feast was a grand success, however. The Bahá'í youth had repaired the road before Theodore's funeral, so access to Seqonoka was made easier. The principal chief of the district, Chief Leshoburo Majara, (one of nine in all of Lesotho) was present at the feast. He welcomed the 100 Bahá'ís and their friends, and invited them to visit his village for another feast soon.

Andrew Mofokeng, one of the early pioneers to Lesotho, spoke of the history of the Faith in Lesotho, Thabo Seheri, Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly, spoke on behalf of the Assembly. Auxiliary Board member Shanta Basin, gave a brief inspirational talk. Bothata Pokane, another early pioneer and member of the National Assembly when Lesotho was part of the Regional National

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Switzerland:

Counsellor Reed teaches at deepening institute

Participants in the deepening institute for French-speaking believers held in Charney, Switzerland, September 28 and 29. Counsellor Betty Reed (third from left, second row) conducted several classes at this institute as well as another for German-speaking believers on the following weekend.

Rwanda:

Series of deepening institutes held

Among the goals of the National Spiritual Assembly of Rwanda for the year 1975 was the organization of a series of eight deepening institutes. Over 150 Bahá'ís from all the Local Spiritual Assemblies in Rwanda (there are 47) participated in these week-long conferences which included classes on prayer, Bahá'í history, prophecy and administration. Zahereh Taesed (standing, at the left) was the instructor for the classes. This photo was taken during the fourth institute in the series.
Assembly which included Swaziland, spoke of his many associations with Seqonoka.

Dwight Allen spoke of the future promise of growth of the Faith in Lesotho. Salai Mohapi told of how he had first met the Laws and told the Bahá’ís that they would always be welcome at Seqonoka, and that they should consider it as their home. The original rondoval had been taken down to allow the construction of a much larger house where the growing number of Bahá’ís could meet.

A framed picture of the Shrine of the Bab was presented to Chief Mohapi, and he addressed the feast saying, “If you wish to extol me, extol my Faith.” It was a warm and wonderful occasion, memorable in the annals of the Bahá’í Faith in Lesotho.

India:

Consolidation program tested in village

The Continental Board of Counsellors of the South Central Asia zone and the National Spiritual Assembly of India, in consultation with travelling teacher Jenabe Caldwell, have undertaken what is described as a “six-month massive consolidation and teaching program” designed to implement in the villages, four objectives of the Five Year Plan: (1) the holding of morning prayer meetings; (2) increased participation by women in Bahá’í activities; (3) the holding of consistent deepening classes; and (4) universal participation in contributing to the Fund.

A report of a pilot plan — a field test conducted in the village of Rarua in Gwalior — has been received, from which the following highlights are drawn:

It was agreed that a Counsellor, a member of the National Assembly, Mr. Caldwell and one or two teachers should visit a village Spiritual Assembly to get first hand information about what type of program would be most effective. . . . the village was selected after prayers and consultation with the State Teaching Committee.

On our arrival in the village a meeting of the Spiritual Assembly was called and the purpose of our visit was explained. . . . the Assembly’s cooperation was enlisted and in consultation a program was arranged for this village which has about 100 Bahá’ís — in other words, one-tenth of the population is Bahá’í and almost everyone else knows the Greatest Name.

Prayers were held the first morning attended by the Spiritual Assembly and a few other friends. Then, as per the decision of the Spiritual Assembly, all the believers, including ourselves, went around the village inviting the Bahá’ís to join us for morning prayers, to attend a Bahá’í study class and an evening deepening program. Spontaneously the village friends had seized up their musical instruments and sang the Greatest Name and Bahá’í songs which created much enthusiasm and excitement throughout the village.

We learned that some of the Bahá’ís knew prayers by heart and two very recently enrolled youth recited the Tablet of Ahmad. In the beginning the women were shy about coming out of their houses because of age-old traditions and customs, but encouraged by their menfolk, on the second day a number of them attended the meeting. Most of them knew the Greatest Name and its significance; actually, this was taught to them by their children. They also joined in the singing of Bahá’í songs and promised that more women would gather the next day.

Approximately 18 friends attended a study class on Hidden Words each afternoon, conducted by Mr. Caldwell. The purpose was to attempt to understand the meaning of each verse in the book — we found that the study of the Holy Writings has a great spiritual impact on the friends.

We discussed the purpose and nature of the Fund and the significance of contributing — our five-day visit had some result in that when we were leaving nine of the friends spontaneously and individually gave their contribution to the National Fund.

In consultation with the Spiritual Assembly, the community adopted the goal of teaching and consolidating the Faith in five neighboring villages — volunteers agreed to visit these villages in a group and some of the women who had relatives in the villages offered to teach them the Faith when they visited.

Bangladesh:

Believers commemorate Birth of Bahá’u’lláh

More than 100 Bahá’ís and their guests gathered at the day-long celebration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Bahá’u’lláh in Dacca on November 12, 1974.
One beneficial effect of the program was the dedicated effort to which the friends pledged to demonstrate the principle of the oneness of mankind, the abolition of prejudice and the removal of caste barriers.

The report concluded:

From this field experiment we found that if more emphasis is placed on prayer and the spiritual aspects of the Faith, it is easier to deepen the village friends and strengthen the Local Assemblies. If a trained teaching team stays for a period of five to seven days in a village the community will be strengthened to a greater extent.

Canada:

Dukhobor leader recalls kindness of Baha'is

The Baha'is of Slocan Valley in the Kootenay Lake region of British Columbia recently enlisted the aid of a Baha'i from Bellevue, Washington in the United States, in their efforts to establish the Faith among the Russian Dukhobor settlement in Canada.

Alla Dakserhof, age 76, was born in Russia and not only speaks Russian fluently but is a dynamic public speaker. She took a week off from her busy schedule of teaching music in Washington to fly to the Kootenay area to join an intensive proclamation effort among the Russian-speaking Dukhobors.

The Dukhobors ('spirit wrestlers') are a Russian peasant religious sect first formed in the 18th century in Russia where they were intermittently persecuted for their rejection of external authority. A majority (about 20,000) now live in Canada where they settled about the turn of the century. One group of Dukhobors known as the Sons of Freedom is centered in the Kootenay area.

A report of Mrs. Dakserhof's visit states:

Within a week Mrs. Dakserhof spoke at five public meetings which were well attended by Dukhobors. She was also interviewed on radio and television. Of all the public meetings sponsored by the Slocan Valley Baha'is in the Kootenay area during the summer months, the one held in Russian in Drestova, British Columbia during Alla Dakserhof's visit was perhaps the most dramatic and exciting. The leader of the Sons of Freedom was approached to inquire about holding a meeting so Mrs. Dakserhof could speak to the Dukhobors about the Faith. They were quite receptive, set a date and made all arrangements for the meeting, including invitations to their people.

On the scheduled date we arrived at the home of the leader, Stephen Sorokin, who speaks no English. Mrs. Dakserhof and Mr. Sorokin conversed in Russian. He told her that when he was a young man, during a time of famine when there was a great shortage of food and many people were starving, he had left Russia to enter Persia. While he was in Persia the Baha'is took care of him and fed him; he said that they fed him even while he was in prison.

About 90 Dukhobors assembled at the meeting, the men on one side, the women on the other. Upon our arrival they all stood up and began to sing. Mrs. Dakserhof spoke for about 30 minutes. She also read from Hidden Words in Russian and said a prayer. During a pause in her talk the Dukhobors would break out into song, as if in applause; it seemed a spontaneous response to what she was saying to them. It was a very intense experience and seemed to touch everyone there.

We were invited into a Dukhobor home for an banquet of Russian food — one young Dukhobor woman translated one of the Russian songs for us — it spoke of "brothers uniting" and "the dawning of a new era". The Sons of Freedom Dukhobors have a definite spiritual orientation to life. Mrs. Dakserhof suggested that more Russian-speaking Baha'i teachers be sent to the Kootenay area.

Teaching Committee launches book campaign

Inspired to proclaim and teach the Faith through an effective public distribution and sale of Baha'i books, the Comitee de'Enseignement (French Teaching Committee) officially launched the French translation of Thief in the Night (Voleur Dans la Nuit) by the Hand of the Cause William Sears at the Third International Book Fair in Quebec.

For several months before the campaign the committee ran a series of seminars on Baha'i answers to Bible questions as an assistance in preparing the friends for firesides and discussions with persons attracted by the campaign. The book itself was announced throughout the Quebec area by attractive posters and simultaneously the book was displayed in three bookstores in Rimouski.

As Mr. Sears was unable to come to Quebec, Dr. Howard Garey, Professor at Yale University and a member of the editorial committee of World Order magazine, gave a public press conference. Mr. Garey presented the essential elements of the book with enormous success.
A member of the committee related an experience at the book fair: "I even sold one copy of the book to a priest from my native parish whom I had not seen for ten years."

Bolivia:

An invitation to join teaching project

A one-year international teaching project launched by the National Assembly of Bolivia in January will focus during the period of its unfoldment on strengthening Local Spiritual Assemblies in the landlocked Andean country, on creating child education programs, and on fostering "Bahá’í homes" among the nation’s believers.

The Bolivian National Assembly has invited Bahá’ís from every country to take leave of their jobs or studies until the end of the project at Ridván 1976, to come to Bolivia, the first South American country to experience mass enrollment, and to assist in winning the goals of the Five Year Plan.

According to the National Assembly the practical teaching and administrative experience the volunteers will acquire will encourage many of them to settle in a permanent pioneering post. The National Assembly will also welcome volunteers who can contribute shorter periods to the project, but it suggests that three months is the minimum time which will permit participants to reap some practical benefits from their training.

The estimated cost for participating in the teaching project for the full year is approximately U.S. $3,000. About $2,100 will cover living expenses; the remainder will be consumed in travel. This estimate was made with life in rural areas in mind. The costs could as much as double if volunteers decided to spend their time in Bolivia’s cities, where the prices of necessities are much higher. Knowledge of Spanish, Quechua, or Aymara would be helpful, but it is not essential for participation.

This special teaching and consolidation project has received the support of the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America and of the Auxiliary Boards of Bolivia. The Hand of the Cause Rahmatu’lláh Muhájír during his recent visit to Bolivia offered valuable suggestions for conducting the project.
The first mass acceptance of the Faith among the country's Indian people took place 19 years ago. The great majority of believers in the country today are from the Quechua and Aymara tribes. There are now more than 750 Spiritual Assemblies in Bolivia, and Bahá'ís in more than 4,000 localities.

"This rapid growth in such a short period of time gives some indication of the immense possibilities for further growth and development," the National Spiritual Assembly wrote. "However, a continuing lack of sufficient numbers of Bahá'í teachers and administrators is presently threatening to interrupt the steady advance of the teaching work now in operation."

Bahá'ís interested in participating in this project are invited to write to their respective National Spiritual Assemblies.

**United States:**

**United Nations University discussed**

Edward Weidner, Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay, and the American member of the international council charged with developing the structure of the United Nations University, was the speaker at the United Nations World Development Information Day program sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of Green Bay.

His theme was: "Problem oriented education." Approximately 60 people attended the lecture. The introductory remarks by a member of the Assembly included a brief explanation of the principal characteristics of the Faith.

Dr. Weidner described the nascent UN University as a "new direction in education, distinguished by its cross-cultural cooperation in facing problems now and in the future." The university will "help achieve the goal of one world and world peace," Dr. Weidner said, acknowledging that a "new concern for world peace" was discernible in the country.

The UN University was authorized by the General Assembly in 1973. A council of 24 educators was appointed to organize the new international university, the purpose of which will be to assign groups of scholars to research major international development projects. Dr. Weidner was appointed to the university council by UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.
National Bahá'í communities in many parts of the world are developing plans for participation in International Women’s Year 1975, proclaimed by the United Nations, and supported by the Bahá’í International Community.

“We have during International Women’s Year an excellent opportunity to cooperate with the United Nations in promoting the equality of men and women, the participation of women in the total development effort, and the contribution of women to friendly relations among states and to world peace,” said the Bahá’í International Community in a recent statement to National Spiritual Assemblies.”

The year has three main themes: equality, development, and peace. Each corresponds with a principal aim of the United Nations Charter — the establishment of universal human rights, the full economic and social development of all peoples, and the attainment of world peace.

The Bahá’í International Community provided some advice to National Assemblies on possible activities during this special year.

“Certainly contacts with other organizations, many of which are inviting participation by all interested groups and individuals, can provide excellent opportunities to make the Bahá’í point of view known,” the Bahá’í International Community said. “Men and women, including prominent and responsible government officials, will often respond very favorably if the Bahá’í teachings are presented in a way that relates to their pattern of thinking and offers new ways of looking at the problems of our world. A proclamation of the Faith through the principle of the equality of men and women in its broadest sense should attract such thoughtful people, who, while deeply interested in the subject, have no comprehensive or spiritual viewpoint, and are indeed often frustrated in their efforts to implement the principles set out so clearly by the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.”

For its part the Bahá’í International Community provided National Communities around the world with such working materials as a compilation of quotations from the Bahá’í writings on the equality of men and women, United Nations posters in English, Spanish, and French with appropriate messages for the year, and copies of United Nations publications providing information about worldwide activities in support of International Women’s Year.

“Not only can your Bahá’í community join the rest of the Bahá’í World in strengthening the ties of the Bahá’í International Community with the United Nations,” the Bahá’í International Community wrote the National Assemblies, “but in addition, International Women’s Year can provide opportunities for the deepening and consolidation of Bahá’í communities, in this case in the principle of the equality of men and women, as well as in the proclaiming and teaching the Faith to people at all levels. It will further give your Bahá’í community an opportunity to reach, at local and national levels, as mentioned by The Universal House of Justice in its supplementary Goals Message for the Five Year Plan, prominent citizens and members of government. The possibilities for increased recognition, prestige and influence of the Faith are therefore most challenging.”

Below are some reports of events that have reached Bahá’í News from several countries. Additional reports of International Women’s Year activities will be published as they are made available for publication.

National Assembly calls for day of prayer

In Australia, the first day of International Women’s Year—January 1, 1975—was declared a national day of prayer for Bahá’ís, by the National Spiritual Assembly.

The Bahá’í House of Worship in Sydney was open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Bahá’ís and the public were invited to spend a portion of that day in offering prayers for the advent of world peace.

“Bahá’ís believe there is an essential relationship between the recognition of the equal status of women with men and world peace,” the National Assembly said in its public release. “In the Bahá’í writings it is stated that women ‘will be the greatest factor in establishing universal peace and international arbitration. Assuredly women will abolish warfare among mankind.’”

New materials to aid proclamation efforts

A year-long campaign to publicize the Bahá’í teachings on the role of women in society has been approved by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.

The National Teaching Committee has urged the entire community to plan major proclamation efforts in March, June, September, and December. The themes for these events will be Women and Education, Women in Family and Society, Women and Peace, and Women in Development, respectively.

The June proclamation will coincide with an international UN conference on women in Mexico City. The Bahá’í International Community will participate in this gathering.

Press materials for Women’s Year will soon be made available by the National Information Office. Stories on the progress of International Women’s Year in the Bahá’í community will appear periodically in The American Bahá’í, as will suggestions for conducting of proclamation activities. Scripts for radio spots will also be available.

A new pamphlet, Women: Attaining Their Birthright, by Constance Conrader, has been issued by the Publishing Trust, and will be useful in distributing to seek-
ers.

Other materials from the Publishing Trust will include a deepening program on women, a filmstrip about the role of women in Bahá’í history, and posters on themes related to women’s year.

The National Education Committee will develop classes for summer and winter schools on the role of women outlined in the Bahá’í writings.

The emphasis on Women’s Year is consistent with the Bahá’í principle of the equality of men and women and also with the Faith’s support of United Nations activities, said John Berry, the Committee’s Secretary.

Mr. Berry referred to the following quotation from the Guardian as important to consider during this year’s proclamations:

“If presented properly the position of women in the Bahá’í teachings will surely attract much attention, for it is not only legal but also spiritual and educational. Our ideals are so high and at the same time so practicable that all other views will fall short if compared to them.” Dawn of a New Day, page 30.

Local communities to hold study classes

A day of deepening for women was held in the ʿHaṣīratu’l-Quds of Panchgani, India, on December 15, 1974, sponsored by the city’s Local Spiritual Assembly. Thirty-seven women, more than half of them Marathi-speaking, attended, contributing to the fulfillment of India’s Five Year Plan goals — the holding of regular classes for women in every community. The women attending came from such backgrounds as Hajiran (untouchables), Hindu-Brahmin, Zoroastrian, Muslim, and Buddhist.

The deepening project was coordinated by Rezwan Mobedzadeh, who spoke in both Marathi and Persian. Prayers in several languages were recited, and selections from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Paris Talks were read.

Three separate classes were held, one in English, one in Marathi, and one in Persian. The class for English-speaking women was led by Jane Grover, and discussed quotations from the Bahá’í writings about the need for women to teach the Cause. The Persian group, led by S. Akhtar Khavari, engaged in a similar discussion. The Marathi-speaking women under the direction of V. Farahmand, explored the role of women in the education and guidance of children, and discussed the importance of academic training for both girls and boys.

By the end of the day each group had decided that regular classes for women focusing on their role in society were desirable. A recommendation was also made by each class that periodic social and cultural events for the women of the Panchgani community should be scheduled.

References on the Role of women

Bahá’u’lláh, Synopsis and Codification of the Laws and Ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas: pp. 15, 16-no. 8, p. 36-no. 3; p. 38-no. 4; pp. 39-40.


Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Divine Art of Living: Pages 110, 111.


Shoghi Effendi, Bahá’í Administration: Pages 144, 145, 187-196.


Rúhíyyih Rabbani, The Priceless Pearl: Pages 303, 304, 309, 310, 328, 382, 383.


Marathi, Persian, and English-speaking Bahá’í women attended deepening classes at the Panchgani ʿHaṣīratu’l-Quds sponsored by the Local Assembly.
Bahamas Ḥażíratu‘l-Quds acquired

Negotiations for the acquisition of a building which is considered a landmark by Bahamian citizens were completed in Nassau at the end of January, during a visit by Glenford Mitchell, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’í of the United States. The structure, built by a former prime minister of the country, will serve as the National Ḥażíratu‘l-Quds of the Bahamas.

Ideally located in the heart of downtown Nassau, the building is situated on a spacious lot which also includes a number of smaller buildings. It is well-landscaped and attractive, with a covered archway leading along the side of the building from the front to the back area.

The visit of Mr. Mitchell also provided an opportunity for extensive proclamation of the Faith, with a half-hour program taped by Carl Bethel, program director of the government-owned radio station, WZNS, and an hour-long visit with Leon Turnquest, editor of the Nassau Guardian.

Above: A front view of the newly-acquired building in downtown Nassau which will serve as the Ḥażíratu‘l-Quds of the Bahamas when the National Spiritual Assembly is formed. Far left: One of several auxiliary structures on the property which can be adapted for use by the Bahá’í community. Left: Bahamian Bahá’ís remove for sale signs after negotiations for the acquisition of the property were completed by Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States.
There was an evening meeting at which Mr. Mitchell addressed Bahá'ís of the Nassau area. Considerable time was spent consulting with the Teaching Committee of the Bahamas about laying the groundwork for the establishment of a National Spiritual Assembly in their country, a goal of the Five Year Plan. The members of the Teaching Committee of the Bahamas are Robert Hutchcraft, Charles Thompson, Robert Leonard and Beryl McSweeny.

Accompanying pictures show the impressive landscaping and spacious lot of the newly-purchased building. It is anticipated that it will meet the needs of the Bahamian Bahá'í community for some time after the election of its National Spiritual Assembly, and through its fortunate location in the heart of Nassau act as a stimulant in attracting interested persons to the Bahá'í Faith.
Photo Essay

New Canadian Ḥażīratu’l-Quds

The new Ḥażīratu’l-Quds of Canada, a $500,000 building of concrete, glass and steel designed by an award-winning firm of Canadian architects, Fairfield and Dubois, is the first building to have been constructed on the 17½-acre property purchased by the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly. Imaginative use of glass permits those working in the building to see the beautiful trees of many varieties planted by the previous owner of the land. Planning of the building included expansion needs projected for the next five years.

In 1957, in response to the National Assembly’s request for advice regarding the purchase of a 3½-acre lot as a site for Canada’s future Temple, the Guardian encouraged the Assembly to buy it, stating, however, that it should consider exchanging the land in the future if it were not large enough to meet the Assembly’s needs. Ten years later this land had so increased in value that it was sold for ten times its purchase price, providing four-fifths of the amount needed to buy the 17½-acre tract of land located in a choice portion of the northern approach to Toronto. Triangular in shape, the building is surrounded on two sides by a golf-course and on the third by a conservation area. The accompanying pictures show exterior and interior views, including some of the high-ceilinged, open-spaced working areas of the secretariat.
Excerpts from pamphlets, statements, and information presented by the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations during 1973 and 1974 as a contribution to the work of that world organization.

Cooperation of the Bahá'í International Community with the United Nations in the field of human rights

For over one hundred years Bahá'ís have striven for the elimination of all prejudice and discrimination and have sought to bring about the unity of mankind, world peace, and world order.

As part of this commitment the Bahá'í International Community, in its consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and its affiliation with the Office of Public Information, has cooperated wholeheartedly with the United Nations programs in the field of human rights. The Bahá'í world community has promoted awareness and understanding of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the numerous instruments which the United Nations has brought into existence for the protection of the rights of all peoples.

Annual worldwide observances of Human Rights Day; human rights conferences, seminars, and awards; programs and publications for special anniversaries of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — all are expressions of Bahá'í cooperation. In addition the Bahá'í International Community works closely with the UN Commission on Human Rights and the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and has taken part in varied United Nations seminars on human rights.


On a new standard of justice

The cornerstone of human rights — justice — is a central concern of the Bahá'í Faith. Bahá'í communities around the world live by the conviction that justice is the expression of love and unity in the life of society; and Bahá'ís have accepted Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of their faith, as the standard of justice for our age and the source of divine law.

A new world could only be built, Bahá'u'lláh taught, by a new race of men and women; a world order and a world civilization could only be established by people whose actions reflected values of love, unity, and justice that applied equally to all races, creeds, nationalities, and classes.

The world is ready for this new oneness — for the obligations and rights that will make it possible; and Bahá'u'lláh has provided the source of power for this total and lasting unity of all peoples on earth.

Although humanity is only beginning its planetary stage of evolution, Bahá'í communities can today be found in 335 countries and significant territories — 141 of which are independent nations. More than 1,600 tribes and ethnic groups are represented in such communities. In this unity in diversity the Bahá'í world already offers evidence of the change that is taking place in human beings who find their standards for obligation and rights in the Bahá'í writings and laws.

(From "Divine Law: Source of Human Rights — A Bahá'í View.")
On the elimination of the crime of genocide

It is the conviction of the Bahá'í International Community that national and international laws and conventions are indeed essential and necessary for the protection of the world community, and that the implementation of these instruments has a certain effect on the actions of men and nations. However, if the crime of genocide is to be eliminated entirely as a threat to mankind's peace and security — and the diversity of humanity is to be protected and preserved — then a more fundamental change is required in the attitudes, feelings and understanding of the diverse peoples of the world toward each other, so that differences of race, religion and nationality will cease to cause separation, and a climate of loving friendship and fellowship can be established.

In the view of the Bahá'í International Community, this universal change in human behavior involves the control of the physical or material side of human beings (characterized by the desire for self gratification) by the higher or spiritual nature of man, which, when properly nurtured and educated, is capable of developing qualities of compassion, understanding, justice, fair-mindedness, kindness, courtesy, etc., and has the potential for self-sacrifice in the interest of all mankind. When individual human beings come to understand that this power of spiritual growth is an endowment given to every member of the human race and that they are called upon to respond to a divine summons to train this aspect of the self, a consciousness of oneness will supersede the emphasis formerly placed on differences of race, religion and nationality which have so long divided mankind. Under the guidance of divine teachings, which reestablish and expand the truth of past religious experiences to the present needs of humanity, mankind — which has already traversed the stages of family unity, tribal solidarity, unity of the city-state and, more recently, national unity — will enter a new phase, the culmination of its development on the planet, in which the oneness and wholeness of the human race will be realized.

It is a Bahá'í belief that we are now engaged in the struggle to attain this new order which will free mankind from its present state of conflict and dissonance in which prejudices of race, religion and nation play a major role, and usher in a new era of peace and human solidarity based on divine justice in which the rights and well-being of all members of the human race are protected. Bahá'ís feel that the attainment of world unity is inevitable because “man can withstand anything except that which is divinely intended and indicated for the age and its requirements.” The vision of world unity which Bahá'ís are striving to implement is based on the social and spiritual principles found in the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Who over a hundred years ago revealed the spiritual laws which Bahá'ís recognize as the foundation of a new era of peace and brotherhood prophesied and promised in all of the world’s revealed religions.

As may be seen, the Bahá'í International Community seeks to do its share in eliminating the crime of genocide by building communities which are based on the principles of the oneness of mankind, the oneness of religion, loyalty to government, the abolition of war and the creation of a world civilization. The gradual realization of these principles throughout the planet, the Bahá'í International Community maintains, will bring about the moral and spiritual transformation necessary for the full development of the earth’s human and natural resources, when the “world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers.” Only then, in the Bahá'í view, will the world be finally freed from the crime of genocide as a threat to the survival of the human race.

(From information submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to a “Study on the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” undertaken by the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.)
On the rights of minorities

The Bahá'í International Community ... is multi-racial, multi-national, and multi-lingual. Over 1,600 tribes and ethnic groups, for instance, are included in the Bahá'í world community. ... Bahá'ís regard all people as invaluable members of society whose talents and unique contributions, as individuals and/or groups — whether in the minority or the majority — are equally important factors in building a new world.

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.

The Bahá'í teachings extol the uniqueness and variety of race, culture, and language that exists in the family of man and regard this diversity as its manifest beauty — not unlike a flower garden where, though all are flowers, the individual characteristics of shape and color combine to produce harmony and beauty. ... Bahá'ís regard their individual culture, heritage, and mother-tongue with pride and admiration, but at the same time are conscious of their existence in a pluralistic and diversified world in which other peoples, cultures, languages and heritages coexist.


Since the Bahá'í world community has brought together most of the minority elements which are to be found today, such as those of race, nationality, religion, and class, some observations on the attitudes and practices existing within this community are, we feel, appropriate. ...

It is the attitude of Bahá'ís that religion is intended to bring harmony and unity among people and that religious prejudice, along with economic and national prejudices, have been the cause of war and strife, destroying the structure of world order. Bahá'ís are admonished to associate with all people in a spirit of love and fellowship, are warned that religion must not become the cause of dissension.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá’í Faith, forbids His followers even to argue about religion, placing emphasis on the acquisition of virtuous deeds and the use of a “kindly tongue” in attracting people to the true religious spirit which has been expressed by the founders of all the religions of the world. In regard to religion, Bahá'ís themselves do not proselytize and they offer no special inducements, such as material rewards, in order to attract people to their Faith. They observe the principle of the right and responsibility of each person to an unfettered search for truth, membership being granted only as the individual attains conviction and makes personal declaration of his faith.

Differences in national background do not become in the Bahá'í community a source of antagonism or separation. Loyalty to family, tribe and nation is recognized as important, but does not become an obstacle to an allegiance to the whole of mankind. World citizenship is natural to Bahá'ís, and is possible within the Bahá'í community itself because of the dedication of its members to the principle that humanity is an organic whole — that all parts are essential and play a vital role in enriching the beauty of the whole. The concept of the progressive nature of religion and the gradual unfoldment of a divine plan destined to bring about a world commonwealth and world civilization enables Bahá'ís to strive to abolish prejudices in themselves and in their communities which might threaten or delay the achievement of this goal.

Although there is a great cultural diversity in Bahá’í communities, the commitment of Bahá'ís is to “unity in diversity” and the education which Bahá'í experience in close association with each other in the Bahá'í administrative order — where this diversity is always present — lead to an appreciation for the contributions which the variety of backgrounds can make, and which strengthen and enhance the beauty of the whole community.

A few quotations from the Bahá’í Writings will serve to illustrate the Bahá’í view on racial minorities:

Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness.

God is no respecter of persons on account of either color or race. All colors are acceptable to Him, be they white, black or yellow.

Color is not important: the heart is all-important.

To discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority, is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, has written quite explicitly on the relationship of minorities within the Bahá’í community. He urged that every organized community, enlisted under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh, should feel it to be its first and inescapable obligation to nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority belonging to any faith, race, class, or nation within it.

As people having a common language also often see themselves as belonging to a separate group, and the Sub-Commission is concerned with the problems of linguistic minorities, the point should be made that the Bahá’í teachings emphasize the importance of a universal, auxiliary language to be learned in addition to one’s mother tongue in order to promote understanding and harmony among people. Although Bahá'ís do not promote any one universal language, they teach this principle, and in the future expect to see it realized.

In the Bahá'í view, the entire question of minorities is one of gradually approaching the consciousness of world unity. It involves a spiritual awakening of the peoples of the world to the realization that, first of all, the attainment of even their own happiness is dependent upon the realization of a like condition for all others in the human family. Beyond this change in attitude, and fundamentally underlying it, there must be a conscious recognition of our human dependence upon one God and a desire to become educated to values and teachings which today can alone rescue man from his pursuit of selfish interests and the oppression of his fellow man.

Limited unity, such as that of lineage, of color, of language, of partisan political factions, and of nationality, can have no universal outcome in an age which demands the solving of human problems on a
global scale. The Bahá’í world community, oriented to new standards of life in every aspect, is attempting to put into practice the Teachings and Principles of Bahá’u’lláh, which it recognizes as the source of spiritual education for humanity and the guidance for the well-being and happiness of all members of the human race.

From information submitted by the Bahá’í International Community to a “Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,” undertaken by the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.)

On the rights of indigenous populations

Fundamental policy

Indigenous people in many countries and territories have become a part of the Bahá’í community, sometimes in great numbers. Their attraction to the Bahá’í Faith and its teachings would indicate, in itself, their desire to enter the mainstream of life in association with people of very different backgrounds. . . . Because of the Bahá’í belief in the unity of mankind, all people are recognized as valued members of society and play an equally important part in building world order. The talents and unique contribution of every individual and group is welcomed. . . . Our experience in making contact with indigenous peoples has confirmed the fact that they are often, as a group, quite cut off from the non-indigenous population. In many countries physical obstacles such as lack of roads and means of transportation as well as poor climatic conditions make access to indigenous people difficult. Because of their belief in the organic unity of mankind and that all members of the human family have the right to learn of their Faith, and to become, if they so choose, a part of this world community, Bahá’ís make every effort possible to overcome the difficulties that stand in the way of contact with all people. The welcome and warm response of the indigenous people in many places has confirmed the fact that they are desirous of close association with others who accept and express loving concern for them.

Education

Bahá’ís believe that the recognition that all people have an important contribution to make and that men must be educated to the appreciation of the special and unique qualities of every human being in every group is vital if progress is to be made in this area (of education). We also believe that the emphasis on the spiritual worth of the human being must become the foundation for the appreciation of the creative expression of each individual. In the Bahá’í view, the lack of understanding of the nature of man, the spiritual goals of life, and the resulting concern only with material production has created in many people a sense of inequality. There is, at the same time, a lack of appreciation of the contribution of indigenous and other disadvantaged peoples in the world. The attitudes taught in the Bahá’í Faith correct the perspective on the nature of man and result in constructive understanding of the true value and worth of all human beings.

The teachings of the Bahá’í Faith, as they change the attitudes and beliefs of people create the desire for an understanding of the dominant culture of a country by indigenous peoples as well as an appreciation by indigenous peoples of their own potentialities. Bahá’ís, believing in all revealed religious truth of past ages as an unfoldment of one divine plan, have respect for the customs and traditions relating to these religions and cultures. They desire to preserve the cultural elements that contribute to the well-being of man. An effort is made to acquaint people with their own history and its importance in the overall pattern of man’s history on earth.

Information on educational establishments and institutions

In some countries where indigenous people have become Bahá’ís and especially in rural areas where an entire village or town may become Bahá’í, schools have been established . . . and literacy as well as more inclusive and general educational programs have been developed. . . . Bahá’í schools in any area of the world are open to all, regardless of religious, racial or national background, on a first-come, first-served basis. In some communities, the school would be the result not of plans formulated outside the local group, but the natural outcome of new attitudes toward learning and the desire to progress in all ways. Often these schools represent the cooperation of many Bahá’ís representing both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and include the contribution of peoples of totally unlike cultures.

Language

Bahá’ís are translating, as quickly as possible, the Bahá’í literature into the many languages. There are over 1,600 tribes and ethnic groups represented in the Bahá’í community, and Bahá’í literature has already been translated into 571 different languages, many of which are languages and dialects of indigenous people. One principle in the Bahá’í teachings relates to the adoption of a universal auxiliary language; that is, in the future, one language will be chosen by the peoples of the world and taught to all people as an auxiliary to their mother tongue in order to further promote unity and understanding.

Culture and cultural, social and legal institutions

There is no restriction on marriage in Bahá’í communities between indigenous and non-indigenous people. Race, nationality, former religion, class, etc., are not considered a basis for determining marriage, and “mixed” unions are considered natural. Prejudice against marriages between indigenous and non-indigenous people or against their offspring is not acceptable according to the Bahá’í Teachings. . . . The education which Bahá’ís recognize as essential in the elimination of prejudice is spiritual in nature; for it is the recognition of divine law, and obedience to it, that gradually roots out prejudice in the human mind.

Religious rights and practices

Bahá’ís are forbidden to proselytize, or to offer material reward, to induce people to change their religious belief. The principle of the independent search for truth—the fact that each man is responsible for his own choices in this regard—prevents the conversion of people against their own will. Bahá’ís attempt to teach their Faith through deeds and words. If others are attracted and interested, Bahá’ís continue their efforts to teach. The principle of the oneness and unity of all revealed religions found in the Bahá’í writings makes divisiveness because of religion impossible, for it is the Bahá’í belief that religion is intended to create unity and understanding between people. It is the lack of understanding of this principle that has created division and intolerance and caused people to become alienated from each other.

(From information submitted by the Bahá’í International Community for a “Study of the Problem of

On the rights of the family

As to the role of the family in a rapidly changing world, we must realize that the great forces of change are impelling us towards a single world society; it is in this context that the importance of the family must be considered. . . . Among the rights of children, in addition to the admirable amenities provided by many countries according to their capacity, including normal education, we feel the most imperative is instruction in human and spiritual virtues, with realization of and respect for the latent divine nature of man, so that free from all prejudice, they may grow up in turn to form their own families in the service of each other and of mankind. . . . Equality of rights, status and opportunities for women and men is recognized in the Bahá'í Faith as a divine law, but the education of girls as a divine law, but the education of girls should, or must, exercise the same abilities as boys. The principle of equality in rights does not necessarily imply that men and women should, or must, exercise the same functions. There are differences between men and women in qualities and powers: mental alertness, intuition and the spiritual qualities of love and service are qualities in which women are strong. There is need for greater emphasis on these qualities and a better balance between spiritual and material powers if humanity is to progress. However, "the fact that there is not equality in functions between the sexes should not infer that either sex is inherently superior or inferior to the other, or that they are unequal in their rights."

Because women by nature are more inclined to peace, and find it more difficult than men to sanction war, as they participate in human affairs, gaining the right to vote and exercise this right, their voice will naturally influence humanity towards peace. The Bahá'í writings make clear that "when all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed. Equality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it."

Every person should be educated to the realization of the organic oneness of mankind. Since it is a Bahá'í conviction that the good of any part is dependent upon the good of the whole, as long as women are held in an inferior position and do not attain equality with men, men too will be unable to "achieve the greatness which might be theirs." This principle operates in all areas, whether in relationship to race, class, or national differences in the world. As is true of the family — in which all the rights and prerogatives of each and every member must be preserved, while at the same time sustaining the unity of the family — the well-being of humanity is dependent on an equitable and just relationship between nations and the orientation of national governments towards the whole of mankind.

(From a statement submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to the Twenty-Fifth session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, on "Suggestions and Proposals for International Women's Year," January 11, 1974.)

On the rights of youth

In the Bahá'í view the source of human rights is Divine Law. Human rights are God-given rights and youth have the same, if not more, responsibility as all members of the human race to contribute towards the erection of the banner of human rights and the construction of a world where 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 extention 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
The first step in this direction is the arousal of the consciousness of youth to the oneness of mankind. Before unity and agreement are firmly established among the peoples of the world, we are convinced, nothing can be widely nor thoroughly affected. Thus youth must, through a process of self-enlightenment, instill themselves with a new global perspective and a new set of values—a set of values permeated by love, truthfulness, kindness, sincerity, and justice whose behavioral expression is the implementation of the principles of human rights. Such a new world can only be built by a new race of men and women.

(From a statement presented by the Baha’i International Community to the United Nations Seminar on “Youth and Human Rights,” San Remo, Italy, August 28 - September 10, 1973.)

On social and economic justice for all peoples

From a Baha’i perspective, the moral and spiritual standards needed today to resolve the interlocking economic and social problems of our planet can rest on one foundation only: the consciousness in each individual of the organic oneness of humanity. We are not only citizens of our native land, but beyond that, of the whole world. We are part of the ecosystem; but an ecosystem both inner and outer; and it is from the inner world that come the all-encompassing values and attitudes which provide us with understanding, will, and power to raise the spiritual and physical quality of life of all peoples.

This conviction by the individual and society of the essential unity of the human race is the only viable standard today for social and economic justice. On it must depend the successful solution of the population problem — as of the problems of environment, poverty, disease, unemployment, etc. It means briefly

to consider the welfare of the community as one’s own . . . to regard humanity as a single individual, and one’s own self as a member of that corporeal form, and to know of a certainty that if pain or injury afflicts any member of that body, it must inevitably result in suffering for all the rest.

In this process, Baha’i communities around the world are making a steady contribution. Comprising a cross-section of humanity distributed over 335 countries and territories, these communities live by the teachings, principles and laws of the Baha’i Faith. Through the systematic abolition of all forms of prejudice; the adoption of equal opportunities, rights and privileges for men and women; an understanding of the essential unity and harmony of science and religion; an unfettered search for truth; the high regard for the mind and its formal training through universal compulsory education; the obligation to engage in a trade or a profession useful to society; and the understanding that work done in the spirit of service to one’s fellowmen is, like prayer and meditation, worship — these Baha’i communities and their members are constantly striving to effect changes in the individual and social consciousness that will hasten the coming of universal peace and the establishment of a world civilization.

Don Rufino Fuentes, a Mayan Bahá'í, at the ruins of Uxmal.

Bahá'í Proclamation and Deepening Film

Step by Step

An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator — what have these people in common? They’re Bahá’ís and they appear in a new Bahá’í film, Paso a Paso, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled Step by Step in English, depicts the growth of the Bahá’í Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Unified by their common belief in Bahá'u'lláh and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Bahá’í administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Bahá’í House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, El Alba and The Dedication. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

How to Get the Film

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Bahá’í distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Bahá’í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify Step by Step, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or Paso a Paso, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
Effective May 1 the subscription prices for Bahá'í News, World Order, and Child's Way will be increased to cover higher production costs for paper stock, printing, and other services.

"We regret that it has been necessary to raise the subscription prices of the periodicals," said William Geissler, Secretary of the National Information Committee, "but the costs of all materials and production services have increased significantly over the past two years and there is no sign that the trend is abating." For example a new increase in the price of postage is soon to go into effect.

"The Bahá’í periodicals have attempted to keep the subscription prices down," Mr. Geissler said. "The last price adjustment was approximately four years ago. During that time the National Assembly has heavily subsidized the publication of periodicals. The increases will help to make the publications more self-sufficient," he said.

After May 1 a one-year subscription to Bahá'í News will cost US $8; two years US $15.

A one-year subscription to World Order, a quarterly magazine, will cost US $6; two years US $11.

A one-year subscription to Child's Way, a Bahá'í magazine for children, will cost US $5; two years US $9.50.

Bahá'í News is published monthly for circulation among Bahá'ís only by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í's of the United States, as a news organ reporting current activities of the Bahá'í world community. Manuscripts submitted should be typewritten and double spaced throughout; any footnotes should appear at the end. The contributor should keep a carbon copy. Send materials to: Bahá'í News Editorial Office, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091, U.S.A.

Change of address should be reported directly to Office of Membership and Records, National Bahá'í Center, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091, U.S.A.

Subscription rates: one year, US $6.00; two years, US $12.00

Second class postage paid at Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

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The House of 'Abdu'Iláh Páshá: 

Prison home of the Master, birthplace of the Guardian

Bahá'í International News Service

Some of the most poignant, dramatic and historically significant events of the Heroic Age of our Faith are associated with this house, which derives its name from the Governor of 'Akka who built it and used it as his official residence during his term of office, from 1820 to 1832. It stands just inside the north-western corner of the sea wall of 'Akka, in the close neighborhood of the citadel where Baha'u'llah was confined. The main building is L-shaped, facing south and east on it outer prospects. The structure, though chiefly on two storeys, is irregular and on the inside angle has balconies, uncovered stairways, a bath house and a well. The entire property comprises large courtyards and is bounded on the west, or seaward side by a wall, which turns due east at its southern angle and continues towards the heart of 'Akka, forming after a few yards, the wall of a narrow street; at the eastern terminus of this wall, and within the property, is an imposing house which was occupied by that Governor of 'Akka whose incumbency coincided with 'Abdu'l-Bahá's residence in the main building, and whose northern windows permitted him to maintain a constant surveillance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's activities. Beyond this house is a small mosque. The eastern boundary of the property is a row of houses giving directly, on its western aspect, to the courtyard and offering many additional vantage points for observing the Master. A similar row of houses extends from the north-eastern corner along the northern boundary until they terminate at the longitudinal wing of the main building which, at this point, projects northwards into several conjoined buildings, making a large irregular outcrop on the northern boundary. The western end of the northern boundary is a short stretch of wall completing the enclosure at the north-western corner of the west wall. Large stables, coach houses and store rooms line the southern boundary.

In this house, fifty lunar years after the Bab'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 honors, 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. Shoghi Effendi, in God Passes By, testifies to the conditions of His life at that time:

... Even His numerous friends and admirers refrained, during the most turbulent days of this period, from calling upon Him, for fear of being implicated and of incurring the suspicion of the authorities. On certain days and nights, when the outlook was at its darkest, the house in which He was living, and which had for many years been a focus of activity, was completely deserted. Spies, secretly and openly, kept watch around it, observing His every movement and restricting the freedom of His family ... Yet during these troublous times, and from this house He directed the construction of the Bab'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 Bab's holy House in Shiráz and for the erection of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of the world in the city of 'Ishqábád. Again the Guardian is our reference for the Master's ceaseless activity at that time:

... Eye witnesses have testified that, during that agitated and perilous period of His life, they had known Him to pen, with His own Hand, no less than ninety Tablets in a single day, and to pass many a night, from dusk to dawn,
alone in His bed-chamber engaged in a correspondence which the pressure of His manifold responsibilities had prevented Him from attending to in the day-time.

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 Wilayat 'Umdat, 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 to which, as testified by Shoghi Effendi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá “in stirring terms proclaimed the immeasurable greatness of the Revelation of the Báb, sounded the warnings foreshadowing the turmoil which its enemies, both far and near, would let loose upon the world, and prophesied, in moving language, the ascendancy which the torch-bearer of the Covenant would ultimately achieve over them.”

During the twelve years of His residence in this house, 'Abdu'l-Bahá demonstrated the true nobility of His divine nature, overcame hatred with love, pursued without rest against ever-mounting opposition, the direction of His Father's Cause, maintained in the face of fanaticism, jealousy and bitterness His unceasing care of the poor and sick and overcame, with unruffled equanimity, the severest crisis of His life. The Guardian's words testify to these things:

... At His table, in those days, whenever there was a still in the storm raging about Him, there would gather pilgrims, friends and inquirers from most of the afore-mentioned countries, representative of the Christian, the Muslim, the Jewish, the Zoroastrian, the Hindu and Buddhist faiths. To the needy throbbing His doors and filling the courtyard of His house every Friday morning, in spite of the perils that environed Him, He would distribute alms with His own hands, with a regularity and generosity that won Him the title of 'Father of the Poor'. Nothing in those tempestuous days could shake His confidence, nothing would be allowed to interfere with His ministrations to the destitute, the orphan, the sick, and the downtrodden, nothing could prevent Him from calling in person upon those who were either incapacitated, or ashamed to solicit His aid...

So imperturbable was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's equanimity that, while rumors were being bruited about that He might be cast into the sea, or exiled to Fizán in Tripolitania, or hanged on the gallows, He, to the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits when the storm had blown over, He would bid His faithful gardener, 'Ismá'il Aqá, pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him.”

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.
When Bahá'u'lláh ascended, in 1892, the Mansion at Bahjí remained in the occupancy of the arch-breaker of the Covenant, the Master's half-brother Muhammad-'Ali, and members of that branch of Bahá'u'lláh's family. 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the members of His family, including His illustrious sister the Greatest Holy Leaf, remained in the House of 'Abbúd, which continued to be 'Abdu'l-Bahá's official residence. In the course of the fifth year after Bahá'u'lláh's passing the marriage of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's two eldest daughters took place and it quickly became apparent that the portion of the House of 'Abbúd available for occupation was woefully inadequate to the enlarged family. With characteristic vigor 'Abdu'l-Bahá took action and in the months preceding the birth of Shoghi Effendi arranged to rent the main building, and subsequently the subsidiary wings, of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá's house and He established it as His official residence. Thus it came about that, in 1897, Shoghi Effendi was born in the same house (in an upper room of the wing facing south) that witnessed events of such vital importance to the Faith and the future of mankind. The Guardian's childhood and upbringing in that house are referred to by Amátu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum in The Priceless Pearl:

"It may sound disrespectful to say the Guardian was a mischievous child, but he himself told me he was the acknowledged ringleader of all the other children. Bubbling with high spirits, enthusiasm and daring, full of laughter and wit, the small boy led the way in many pranks; whenever something was afoot, behind it would be found Shoghi Effendi! This boundless energy was often a source of anxiety as he would rush madly up and down the long flight of high steps to the upper story of the house, to the consternation of the pilgrims below, waiting to meet the Master. His exuberance was irresistible and was in the child the same force that was to make the man such an uniring and unflinching commander-in-chief of the forces of Bahá'u'lláh, leading them to victory after victory, indeed, to the spiritual conquest of the entire globe. We have a very reliable witness to this characteristic of the Guardian, 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, Who wrote on a used envelope a short sentence to please His little grandson: "Shoghi Effendi is a wise man — but he runs about very much!"

"In those days of Shoghi Effendi's childhood it was the custom to rise about dawn and spend the first hour of the day in the Master's room, where prayers were said and the family all had breakfast with Him. The children sat on the floor, their legs folded under them, their arms folded across their breasts, in great respect; when asked they would chant for 'Abdu'l-Bahá; there was no shouting or unseemly conduct. Breakfast consisted of tea, brewed on the bubbling Russian brass samovar and served in little crystal glasses, very hot and very sweet, pure wheat bread and goats' milk cheese."

It was to this house that that historic first groups 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. Some of them have left memorable descriptions of their experiences with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His household in that home. Ella Goodall Cooper, one of the very earliest American believers, records the following:

"One day . . . I had joined the ladies of the Family in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf for early morning tea, the beloved Master was sitting in His favorite corner of the divan where, through the window on His right, He could look over the ramparts and see the blue Mediterranean beyond. He was busy writing Tablets, and the quiet peace of the room was broken only by the bubble of the samovar, where one of the young maidservants, sitting on the floor before it, was brewing tea."

Thornton Chase, the first American believer, records in his memoir In Galilee:

"We did not know we had reached our destination until we saw a Persian gentleman, and then another and another, step out at the entrance and smile at us. We alighted and they conducted us through the arched, red brick entrance to an open court, across it to a long flight of stone steps, broken and ancient, leading to the highest story and into a small walled court open to the sky, where was the upper chamber assigned to us, which adjoined the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The buildings are all of stone, whitewashed and plastered, and it bears the aspect of a prison.

"Our windows looked out over the garden and tent of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the sea side of the house. That garden is bounded on one side by the house of the Governor, which overlooks it, and on another by the inner wall of fortification. A few feet beyond that is the outer wall upon the sea, and between these two are the guns and soldiers constantly on guard. A sentry house stands at one corner of the wall and garden, from which the sentry can see the grounds and the tent where 'Abdu'l-Bahá meets transient visitors and the officials who often call on him. Thus all his acts outside of the house itself are visible to the Governor from his windows and to the men on guard. Perhaps that is one reason why the officials so often become his friends. No one, with humanity, justice, or mercy in his heart, could watch 'Abdu'l-Bahá long without admiring and loving him for the beautiful qualities constantly displayed."

Mary Hanford Ford published an account of her pilgrimage to this house in Star of the West, vol. XXIV:

"The little room in which I stayed and in which the significant conversations with 'Abdu'l-Bahá took place, was of the simplest description. The floor was covered with matting, the narrow iron bed and the iron wash stand with larger and smaller holes for bowl and pitcher were of that vermin proof description with which I had become familiar. Everything was scrupulously clean, and there was an abundant supply of sparkling water for bathing and drinking. A wide window looked over the huge town wall upon the blue Mediterranean and before this stretched a divan upon which 'Abdu'l-Bahá sat when He came to see me."

The palpable victory which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had wrested form the persecution, intrigue, hatred, vilification even, directed against Him during His twelve years in the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, was signally apparent when, upon His release from incarceration in 1908, He moved to His new residence in Haifa. That time the future Guardian was a boy of eleven, but his appointment, although a carefully guarded secret, had already been made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the part of His Will and Testament revealed in that house.

As we contemplate the extraordinary focussing of powerful forces and events upon this house, we eagerly anticipate the day when it will be restored and made ready for pilgrims, who may inhale from its atmosphere, its grounds and sacred walls, the fragrances of a glorious past.
World Center:

New publications in English available

The Department of Publishing at the World Center has announced publication of “Analysis of the Five Year International Teaching Plan” which is now ready for shipment. The slim booklet contains 104 pages, thread sewn in sections, and has a paper cover.

It is now available to National Spiritual Assemblies and their Publishing Trusts. Individuals and Local Spiritual Assemblies are directed to purchase books from the National Spiritual Assemblies or Publishing Trusts.

A Manual for Pioneers, by Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum; Baha'i Publishing Trust of India, 228 pages.

The wide travels of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum uniquely qualify her to write this book which, in addition to being precisely what its title implies - a "manual" for pioneers — is a useful handbook for Baha'i teachers everywhere, on the homefront and abroad.

Of particular interest to pioneers already in the field and those arising to play their part in the Five Year Plan will be those chapters of the volume which cover such topics as: Where to Pioneer; What do you do When You Get There; Culture Shock; Tribal and Local Customs; Reflections on Behavior; Visas; Sanitary Facilities; Some Common Illnesses and Hazards; Health Hints; Bachelor’s Corner; and Some Basic Recipes.

“This manual represents the personal experience and random observations of the author,” Amatu’l-Bahá states in the foreword. “In the course of my travels in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Indian Ocean islands I have met a great number of pioneers and learned to admire their consecration and fortitude in the face of many difficulties and problems . . . I longed to be able in some way to help them, to lighten their load and cheer them up and perhaps through suggestions make their road a little smoother and assist them to a better understanding of their task and some of the peoples they will live with and teach . . .”

The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh: Baghdad 1853-1863, by Adib Taherzadeh; George Ronald, Oxford, 384 pages, with illustrations.

The first of a four-volume survey of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, by Adib Taherzadeh, is now available. The volume just published focuses on the Tablets revealed between the years 1853-1863 and in addition to descriptions of a great number of Tablets, many of which are unknown in the West, the book includes fascinating material concerning events in the lives of Bahá'u'lláh and His companions.

Mr. Taherzadeh is well qualified for the monumental project he has undertaken. A graduate of Tíhrán University, he now lives in the Republic of Ireland where he serves as chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Japan Will Turn Ablaze! (Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Letters of Shoghi Effendi, and Historical Notes about Japan); Baha'i Publishing Trust of Japan, 90 pages, with illustrations.

As suggested by the sub-title, this is a compilation consisting chiefly of the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to early believers in...
Around the World

Including the Hand of the Cause Agnes Alexander, Mr. Kanichi Yamamoto, the first Japanese believer, and Mr. Saichiro Fujita; and the letters of Shoghi Effendi to individuals and to administrative institutions in Japan.

International Bahá’í Community:

UN seminar inspires TV series on Faith

Participants from more than thirty countries gathered in Ottawa, Canada, September 4-17, 1974, to participate in the United Nations seminar on “Women’s participation in development and elimination of sex discrimination.” The Ottawa seminar was the first interregional seminar to be held on the subject which, according to a press release from the UN Office of Public Information, is a topic “the importance of which has been emphasized in the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and the International Conference on Human Rights (Tihrán, 1968).”

Carol Bowie, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Canada, and Judy Gibson, represented the Bahá’í International Community and had many opportunities to bring the Faith to the attention of delegates and observers.

In their report the Bahá’í observers commented that they noted “how very close in principle many of the delegates are to the Bahá’í Teachings. Over and over from Third World countries’ representatives came the concept that without the full contribution of their women to society, the development of their countries would be crippled, that education was crucial if this integration were to take place and that what was essential was a shift in the status of women and their role, whatever the ultimate definition(s) of that role.”

Aware of the potential for publicity afforded by this event to the Faith and International Women’s Year, Mrs. Bowie approached the newspaper office and the cable TV studio in the city of Cornwall. The TV studio, not have a scheduled program with an interview format on which she could appear, offered Mrs. Bowie a TV show of her own. “The result was,” she reported, “a 15-week series of 30-minute shows called ‘Our World’ on which I am invited to freely discuss the Faith, the UN, or any subject I wish... at present only three programs in the series have been taped, the first dealing with the seminar, the second a slide program about the Faith, and the third with another Bahá’í... the program will have as its opening scene each week a poster of the Shrine of the Báb with the quotation ‘The earth is one country and mankind its citizens.’”

International Audio-Visual Center:

Three new postcards now available

Three new postcards suitable for teaching and deepening Bahá’ís are available from the International Bahá’í Audio-Visual Center. These cards are particularly suitable for consolidation among believers in new communities.

The first card is a full-color aerial photo of the Bahá’í House of Worship in Panama. It shows hundreds of people walking around and entering the graceful, white-domed structure overlooking the capital of this Central American republic. The caption is printed in Spanish and English.

The second card, also in color, is an aerial photo of Ḍá’ka, where Bahá’u’lláh spent more than nine years as a prisoner. Bahá’u’lláh called this city “the Most Great Prison,” and said, “From this Prison His light was shed abroad; His fame conquered the world, and the proclamation of His glory reached the East and the West.” The House of Abdu’l-Bahá, where the Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed, can be seen clearly in the postcard. Cards are available without words or with a caption in English, Spanish or French.

An architect’s rendering of the future seat of The Universal House of Justice on Mount Carmel is the theme of the third card. The construction of this building is one of the goals of the Five Year Plan, and represents an important step in the unfoldment of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. The caption is in English, Spanish, and French.

Although of particular interest to Bahá’ís, these cards are also excellent teaching aids. Their attractiveness and portability make them well suited for carrying in pocket or purse for spontaneous firesides.

Your local Bahá’í librarian or authorized Bahá’í distributor may have these cards in stock or may be able to supply information about prices and ordering.

Brazil: Summer school launches teaching project

As many as 200 people attended Brazil’s first national summer school of the Five Year Plan in Jandira, a small city near São Paulo, January 19-26. Continental Counsellor Raúl Pavón, who has moved to Brazil to help with preparations for the 1976 international conference in Bahia, attended the summer school. When classes were completed two teams of six people, mainly youth, left from Jandira to proclaim the Faith in two goal cities in the northern part of the state.
If these cards are not available in your area, please write to the International Baha'i Audio-Visual Center, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, New York 14564, for information on where they may be obtained.

Argentina:

Women's Congress recalls May Maxwell

The first regional Baha'i Women's Congress of the Five Year Plan was held in Cordoba, January 18-19, 1975. The 19 women who attended enthusiastically responded to the congress the purpose of which was to provide an opportunity for deepening and for discussion of the increasing role women must play in winning the congress, offering hospitality and a luncheon. An informal meeting attracted approximately 40 believers and their friends.

As Argentina is the resting place of May Maxwell, the congress was appropriately opened with a study of her life which created a sense of her presence during the gatherings.

The program consisted of the following themes: The Participation of Baha'i Women in Community Activities; The Importance of Deepening in the Cause; Education of Children; and The Woman and Her Family.

Other women's congresses will be held in the Buenos Aires region in March and will include a group visit to the resting place of May Maxwell.

Canada:

Bilingual arts festival impresses community

The Spiritual Assembly of Aylmer, Quebec recently presented a public bilingual program of music and dance (including ballet) under the title "Unity Festival". The selections, presented by Baha'is, a number of whom had professional training, were related to Baha'i principles. The program served as an indirect method of attracting the interest of the townspeople in the Faith. Excerpts from the account which was published in the local newspaper stated:

Last Saturday's "Unity Festival" of music and modern dance succeeded in generating a tremendous spirit of unity between the audience and the performers.

Pyer Vaillancourt, the Master of Ceremonies for the bilingual program, and a member of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Aylmer who sponsored the evening, said, "The response was beyond our greatest expectations. We had a good turnout, about 150 people of all ages, from children to senior citizens."

The theme of unity was conspicuous throughout the program. . . . all the acts were well received by the audience, which included residents of the Hospital of St. Isadore, to whom a special invitation had been extended.

The Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Aylmer hopes to sponsor a similar festival later in the year, drawing on more talent from the Aylmer-Lucerne-DesChenes region."

Germany:

European Institutions consult on Plan

The following cable was sent to the World Center by the European Counsellors, National Spiritual Assembly representatives, and Auxiliary Board members who met in conference at Langenhain, Germany, to discuss the progress of the Five Year Plan in Europe:

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE, 72 PARTICIPANTS, SHADOW MOTHER TEMPLE, INCLUDING 26 (AUXILIARY) BOARD MEMBERS, REPRESENTATIVES ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, BLESSED PRESENCE HAND CAUSE ADELBERT MULHSCHLEGEL, FIVE COUNSELLORS, EXPRESSES LOYALTY, SENDS LOVING GREETINGS UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE, CONSCIOUS HISTORIC GATHERING, AWARE WEIGHTY RESPONSIBILITIES, CONSCIOUS GOALS, PLAN EXCHANGE USE SHARE EXPERIENCES, INVIGORATING ATMOSPHERE. CONSULTATIONS FRUITFUL. CONFIDENT FINAL VICTORY. BSEECH PRAYERS HOLY SHRINES.

Haiti:

Baha'i community afloat in Caribbean

Mr. Paul Wilson Joseph, one of the ten Baha'i crew members aboard the cruise ship Sun Viking, plying the Caribbean, wrote the following in a recent letter to the Universal House of Justice:

"I have been a Baha'i for almost four months . . . My dear brothers, I infinitely regret not having been a Baha'i since my birth, as this is the true salvation, and not to be a Baha'i is a waste of time. I am proud to be in the company of the Baha'is; here one can find faith, hope, happiness and joy. The world is in great need of this Faith . . . We are a group of ten members on the boat; . . . we are all convinced; we see the gentleness among the Baha'is. Each day we have prayers together and discussions about the Faith . . . and we also meet the Baha'is in our various ports of call. It is wonderful to meet the Baha'is when our ship enters the port."

In concluding his letter, Mr. Joseph requested prayers "so that I may continue to
Around the World

work for Baha'I.'"

The believer who initiated teaching on the ship is former Haitian National Spiritual Assembly member, Mr. Philippe Bastien, who wrote: "In the ship are working people from all nations. The passengers come from all places. I don't fail to inform them that nowadays there is no future, no hope for anybody, but in Baha'u'llah."

Korea:

Interracial marriage publicizes Cause

Extraordinary publicity for the Faith resulted from the recent Baha'I marriage of Kamal Ridvan Nizhad to Choe Hak Cha. The groom who is thought to be the only Iranian residing in Korea was interviewed on radio, television and by reporters from daily and weekly newspapers. During the interviews questions were asked about the history and teachings of the Faith, an outline of the Stations of the Three Central Figures was given, and the Baha'I marriage ceremony was described in detail.

The Secretary-General of the Government Party sent flowers to the young Baha'I couple and encouraged news reporters and distinguished citizens to attend the Baha'I wedding. At least 20 news correspondents were in attendance as well as several cameramen. One article appeared under the heading, "We are a global family" and reference to the wedding was aired three times during the news broadcast on both radio and television.

Portugal:

Extensive publicity aids proclamation

Setubal, a city situated about 40 kilometers south of the capital, has a community of approximately 100 believers. Recently the Spiritual Assembly, in collaboration with the National Teaching Committee, sponsored a large-scale proclamation event in the city. Prior to the event attractive colorful posters were prominently displayed throughout the town. They showed a photograph of the globe and the challenging phrase: "Have you heard of Baha'u'llah?" In addition, a large banner, five meters in length, was placed in the principal square of the city, advertising the date, time and place of the public meeting. A report received from the Spiritual Assembly states:

To make arrangements for displaying the banner, the Baha'I visited the town hall where they spoke to the President (Mayor) who lovingly and in writing conceded the required authorization, this document being the first official authorization which we have in our possession.

The principal newspaper of the city, which already had at various times published articles and news about the Faith, announced the meeting beforehand and the following week published a report about the proclamation.

An "open letter" presenting the Faith in a clear and simple manner and inviting people to attend the meeting was distributed during the day; to carry out this work, members of other communities came to Setubal and gathered in the local center where they said prayers and were organized into groups before going into the streets to distribute the invitations.

Portugal reports that the proclamation effort has begun to bear fruit as witnessed by the increase in attendance and interest at the weekly meetings.

Togo:

Nine-day proclamation largest in 21 years

More people may have heard of the Baha'I Faith during a recent nine-day proclamation in Lome, Togo than during the entire 21 years of painstaking labor since the Faith was introduced to the country in 1954. This assessment was given by the Spiritual Assembly of Lome at the close of its December 5-13 teaching campaign. In that brief period presentations were made at five secondary schools to more than 1,600 students, a series of four public meetings were held and were attended by more than 1,000 people, two television broadcasts on the Faith were made, and the national newspaper, Togo-Presse, carried a laudatory, full-page account of the Teachings of the Faith written by a prominent sociologist.

The occasion for the proclamation was the visit to Lome by Ghanaian singer and guitarist Ranzie Mensah. Miss Mensah's program of Baha'I songs and instrumental music was enthusiastically received at many public meetings. In Vogan, a town of 10,000 40 miles from the capital, the district gov-

Honduras: Friends discuss Five Year Plan goals

Bahai's who attended one of five scheduled conferences in Honduras last year, called to consult on the goals of the Five Year Plan. This conference was at the Karbila School, near Tegucigalpa; others were held in Trujillo, La Ceiba, and Santa Rosa de Copan. (The fifth conference, scheduled to be in San Pedro Sula, was cancelled because of damage caused by hurricane Fifi.)

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error invited Miss Mensah to perform before an audience of 600. The governor himself served as master of ceremonies on this occasion. As in most of her appearances, Miss Mensah was accompanied in Vogan by Auxiliary Board member Thelma Khelghati, who supplemented the music with a talk on the Teachings of the Faith.

"These activities have sparked new life in the Bahá'í community of Togo, and made everyone realize what victories can be won if we but put our trust in Baha'u'llah," the Spiritual Assembly of Lomé wrote. "All are now waiting to see what the remaining months before the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Togo at Riqvan will bring."

United States:

Special teaching plan launched in New York

Participation by the Hands of the Cause Mr. Dhikru'llah Khadem and William Sears, as well as all nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, in the official launching of the Five Year Plan for New York State attracted more than 500 Bahá'ís to a special program at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, January 11.

Representatives from 115 communities shared in the historic gathering, beginning an intensive teaching campaign aimed at doubling the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the state, opening five Indian reservations and establishing two Local Spiritual Assemblies on Indian reservations, as well as greatly expanding use of news media and reaching the minorities designated in the Five Year Plan.

In their address to the Bahá'ís, both Mr. Khadem and Mr. Sears stressed the undoubted victories assured us if we arise to pursue systematically the directions given us by the Master in The Tablets of the Divine Plan.

Citing instances of humiliation to the Prophets of God from the unknowing peoples of the world, Mr. Khadem repeatedly demonstrated the power of God to raise his Manifestations and bring down to abasement their enemies.

"Beloved friends!" he began. "At this time the present order is collapsing and will be replaced by the New World Order of Baha'u'llah. Although we are very humble and lowly, we have the assurance of the Blessed Perfection, Baha'u'llah, that we will succeed." He recalled that when Jesus Christ was brought into the gathering of the rabbis, with a crown of thorns on His head, the rabbis questioned Him as to His power and to produce the sceptre of David. Christ replied: "Do you not see the Son of Man standing on the right side of His Father, with all the glory, power and majesty?"

"'Abdu'l-Bahá tells us that people could not see that, but Christ could see that the crowns of the emperors of the world would be worth less than the thorns on His head," added Mr. Khadem.

"At the time when the Exalted Báb was brought as a prisoner to Māh-Kū, and had not even a candle at night, He wrote to the Shah of Persia and assured him that He enjoyed being in the Chamber of Paradise. He said also that all the keys of Paradise were as a ring on His finger.

"And what are those keys of Paradise?" asked Mr. Khadem. "In fact, the very night of the Declaration of His Holiness, the Exalted Báb, the keys of Paradise started to open all the doors of learning. The keys are you, my dearly-loved brothers and sisters of the West! It is you whom His Holiness the Báb addressed when He called upon the people of the West to issue forth from their cities and

Norway: Hand of Cause Faizi visits deepening conference

Deepening conference sponsored by the National Teaching Committee of Norway, held in Sandnes, October 19-20. More than 30 people from all over the country were present. The Hand of the Cause A.Q. Faizi gave talks on the Writings of Baha'u'llah, child development, and education. This session was one of several deepening conferences held in different parts of Norway since the start of the Five Year Plan. A national teaching conference was held in Norway in the early weeks of spring.
call people to God. Right from that night, all of the victories started from the fountain of His words.

"Again," continued Mr. Khádem, "when Bahá'u'lláh was in the Siyáh-Chál in Tihhrán, He tells us of the Voice which proclaimed: 'Ere long will God raise up the treasures of the earth—men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name, wherewith God hath revived the hearts of such as have recognized Him.'

"The blessed Master Himself, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, tells us that He entered the prison as a young man and came out old. The moment He was released, He came to the West, to Egypt, to Europe, back to Egypt, to the United States and back to Europe, over a three-year period. He came to help the 'treasures' of the world, the Bahá'ís. He came to inspire the people of the West. In His talk in Kenosha, Wisconsin, He helps us to see how significant was His visit to this country! The friends had told Him that every nineteen days, at the Feasts in Kenosha, two vacant chairs were placed, one for Bahá'u'lláh and one for 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They longed for the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and this is what the Master said when He spoke there. 'I longed very much that means be prepared for Me to come to Kenosha. God has upset heaven and earth, that I come to America. God has changed two Kingdoms (Persia and the Ottoman Empire) that I might come and see your faces. I hope there will be a great outcome from this visit and that a new spirit will appear in the Bahá'í world!'

"Friends!" exclaimed Mr. Khádem, "two Emperors were removed from power by God, just so that 'Abdu'l-Bahá could come to America and to Kenosha. And first He came to New York. God changed the whole political situation of the world in order that 'Abdu'l-Bahá could come to this country."

Citing the accomplishment of the beloved Guardian in raising up the institutions of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, Mr. Khádem reminded the friends that Shoghi Effendi did not leave us until the illumination of the Faith was evident in all the countries of the world, with the supreme body of the Faith, The Universal House of Justice, now bringing us the guidance of Bahá'u'lláh for this historic day. Praising the generals of the Army of Bahá'u'lláh, the National Spiritual Assemblies of the world, Mr. Khádem urged that all listen carefully to the Plan unveiled by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. "Although we are so humble, weak and lowly, yet Bahá'u'lláh is so Great, Powerful and Mighty. All the prophecies will be fulfilled, and the crowns of the world will be placed at His feet! We are sure the world commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh will come to pass. Let us be an instrument, let us be one of the treasures whom Bahá'u'lláh said in the Siyáh-Chál would be raised up to aid Him. Let us be one of the keys of Paradise, whom the Exalted Bab, in Máb-Kú, although a Prisoner, predicted would be as a ring on His right hand. What glory, indeed, to be one of the keys. Let us fulfill the expectations of the beloved Shoghi Effendi and The Universal House of Justice. Please God, we may achieve it!"

"The friends do not have to be told what to do! They know what to do! It is all in the Writings. They just need to try it!" Recalling these words which he heard as a pilgrim in the presence of the beloved Guardian, the Hand of the Cause William Sears asked, "Do we understand these words? Do we really believe that we don't have to have meetings and worry about what to do, we just have to get busy and try what we have already been given in the Tablets of the Divine Plan? That is why our heroic generals, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, have called us together today to see what we can do about this marvelous state of New York. Many things have been said already from the Tablets of the Divine Plan, the charter for the spiritual conquest of the planet. Destined to guide the teaching over the next 500,000 years, this charter was unveiled right here in this state, in New York City.

"Let us remember the praise of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the Bahá'ís of the northeastern states and the assurance He gives that these states share a unique spiritual privilege. The Master says: 'Likewise as the continent of America in the estimation of the True One is the field of the effulgence of light, the Kingdom of the manifestation of mysteries, the home of the righteous ones and the gathering place of the free, therefore every section thereof is blessed; but because these nine states have been favored in faith and assurance, hence through this precedence they have obtained spiritual privilege. . . . Now all these bounties exist and appear in full in these nine states. The divine Gardener passed by that holy ground and scattered pure seeds from the lordly teachings in..."
that field; the rain of the bounties of God poured down and the heat of the Sun of Reality—that is, the merciful confirmations—shone with the utmost splendor. It is my hope that each one of those blessed souls may become a peerless and unique irrigator and the East and the West of America may become like unto a delectable paradise so that all of you may hear from the Supreme Concourse the cry of 'Blessed are you, and again blessed are you.'

"Think of it!" said Mr. Sears. "This is you whom the Master is addressing. My hope is that from this room there will appear such a light in the skies of New York that we will win all of our goals. We hold the potential in our hand, we have had the presence of the Divine Gardener in this region.

"Do you know how many times the Master delivered public addresses and made formal visits in New York? In 55 separate places in New York City, He appeared. Now the very soil is throbbing with His foot-steps and the hosts of Baha'u'llah's battalions are waiting to come to our assistance, if we arise. I hope you will memorize all of these goals, keep them on a little card where you shave or put on your make-up. Keep them somewhere handy and say them each day. It only takes a minute. While you are riding in the bus or the streetcar, say the goals, such as 'raise the number of localities where Baha'is reside in New York to 360.' Ya Baha'u'llah! Beloved friends, let us call on the powers of the Greatest Name.

"At one end of this state is the City of the Covenant, and at the other, Hume, the birthplace of the 'mother teacher of the West,' Lua Getsinger. 'Abdu'l-Baha said that people will come to visit the land where she walked barefoot as a child, where Baha'u'llah Himself chose her for His work in your state. Think of the connection between the western and eastern ends of this state... it really could become a paradise!

"Do you remember Mr. Roy Wilhelm? He was a Hand of the Cause of God. When Mrs. Sears was on pilgrimage, the beloved Guardian said he was appointed because he was a saint. But he was a very mischievous man and had a lot of good stories which he used very effectively. Mr. Wilhelm said that when he walked down the streets of New York City, the City of the Covenant, with the beloved Master, the Master said that if the believers in New York had really loved each other, and arisen to teach, living just one of the principles in their lives, half of the people in New York would have become Baha'is by that time. And that was in 1912!

"'Abdu'l-Baha Himself says that He has scattered the seeds. In the Tablet to the Northeastern States He promises us that 'it has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not look at our own ability and capacity; nay, rather, we must behold the favors and bounties of God in these days, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea and the atom the importance of the sun.'

"If one blessed soul can do all this, imagine what the number of people in this room could do to bring change not just for this state but for this whole country. We hold the destiny of this country in the palm of our hands. At the pilgrim's table in the presence of the beloved Guardian one evening he spoke to us of Miss Martha Root, star servant and foremost Hand of the Cause of the first Baha'i century. He said there wasn't anyone at the table who didn't have more of everything in the world than Martha Root—more health, more resources, more education—but that she had given her love to Baha'u'llah. She was completely dedicated. So she was not a hero, not a martyr, not a saint, but all three. A hero, a martyr and a saint! All of us sitting there felt less than dust, but the beloved Guardian said that we could equal or surpass her record!

"Often the beloved Master was heard to say, 'Should each one of the friends take it upon themselves to carry out, in all its integrity and implications, only one of the teachings of the Faith, with devotion, detachment, constancy and perseverance, and exemplify it in all of his deeds and pursuits of life, the world would become another world, and the face of the earth would mirror forth the splendors of the Abba paradise.

"So there we have it, from the Blessed Beauty, Baha'u'llah; from 'Abdu'l-Baha, and from the beloved Guardian. If we lived just one principle in our lives! It doesn't cost anything. Just say, 'Baha'u'llah, here I am. Make something different of me than I was before. Make me an instrument of Thy Cause.' Then we would see from this room what could happen.

"It says in the Tablets of the Divine Plan that God can change one grain into seven hundred, and if He so wills He will double..."
these also. If we are 350 in this room, that makes 700, doubled. [Note: Actual attendance was over 500.] If we multiply that by 700, I make that out to be 490,000 believers waiting. And that is not poetry, that is fact! That is the way it works. That is mass conversion. The Supreme Concourse, the powers that created the earth, is our instrument in this day, through Bahá'u'lláh. If we love each other, if we become united in our actions, we'll reach 490,000, and of course if we do that every year, by the end of the Five Year Plan we will have 2,450,000 believers in New York State alone!'

Above: National Education Committee member Deborah Christensen leads a workshop on children’s materials and their uses. Below: James Nelson gives a brief opening address at the Family Life Conference. The television at left was used to present a videotaped deepening session with the Hand of the Cause A.Q. Faizi prepared during his visit to the United States last year.

Conference focuses on Bahá’í family life

The first of a series of family life conferences was held in San Francisco February 14-16 by the National Education Committee.

"The conference was designed to assist families in developing Bahá’í characteristics in their homes," said Committee Secretary Eileen Norman. "It was meant to assist parents in training children and in developing the distinctive character of Bahá’í life."

Local Spiritual Assemblies in central and northern California were invited to send representatives to the conference in San Francisco. Approximately 60 Assemblies responded; more than 100 people attended.

After a brief opening address by Judge James Nelson, workshops were organized: how to set up children’s classes; fun and games; children’s materials and their uses; consultation and the family; preparation for a life of service; Bahá’í marriage; parent effectiveness — Bahá’í style; and the family as a cohesive unit.

The participants learned to use special materials which had been prepared for the workshops. They, in turn, are expected to demonstrate the materials at similar workshops in their own communities in the future. The workshop materials were prepared for the Education Committee by Bahá’ís with experience and knowledge in the areas covered, Mrs. Norman said. They are the first of a series of materials the Committee has planned for use by the community.

Additional family life conferences will be conducted in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Washington, D.C., Mrs. Norman said.

"The comments the friends made about this event were very favorable," the Committee Secretary said. "They said they had waited a long time for these materials and that the content could be immediately applied to their own lives. After a workshop on parent effectiveness one woman said she had had occasion to apply what she had learned in class and was amazed that it worked so well."

The National Education Committee was formed shortly before the St. Louis Conference last August. One of its first assignments was to absorb the functions of
the National Bahá'í Schools Committee, from which it inherited supervision of 20 functioning Bahá'í schools. In the past several months the Education Committee has briefed all the councils and committees appointed to administer the various schools. One item on the briefing agendas was the consideration of developing innovative approaches to Bahá'í education, Mrs. Norman said. "The Committee is also interested in the development of sequential curricula at the summer schools," she explained. This would mean that a Bahá'í school would find a teacher with knowledge of a particular subject who would make a long-term commitment to teach a course at a particular school. Each year the course would build upon material presented the previous year, becoming progressively more detailed and complex. Enrollment in the course would be conditioned upon completion of all previous material in that sequence.

During 1975 the summer schools will emphasize the Five Year Plan in courses and materials prepared. At some of the summer schools a special course on the Fund will be taught by representatives of the Office of the Treasurer of the National Assembly, Mrs. Norman said.

"In addition, renewed emphasis will be given to the development of children's activities at summer schools," she continued. "For a long time children's activities have been an afterthought. This year they will be a first thought." Some Bahá'í schools have already appointed committees to work on children's programs, she said. "It is the Committee's hope that the Bahá'í schools will give the friends an opportunity to experience the consequences of Bahá'í community life over a period of time," Mrs. Norman explained. "They should offer the believers an opportunity to participate in that experience within a controlled environment."

National Center staff attends seminar

Committee Secretaries and a selected portion of the National Center staff recently attended a daylong seminar on budget and management conducted by the Office of the Treasurer. "This seminar was an effort to relate well-proven business practices to the administration of the National Bahá'í Center, to facilitate the planning and winning of goals and objectives in the most efficient manner possible," said Stephen Jackson, Assistant to the Treasurer. The seminar was planned after a meeting late last year between the National Assembly and the heads of staff, called to explore ways of cutting expenditures.

One of the important suggestions at that meeting was that the National Center should become more familiar with proven techniques of management, Mr. Jackson explained. "At the National Center we operate under limited resources of time, people and treasury," he said. "We must be creative about using what the world has to offer in terms of management technique. We have difficult goals to accomplish and few resources to apply to the task. Calling on proven business procedures for assistance can be of great benefit.

The seminar was held at a nearby hotel. The session was well attended and participants indicated they had found the content fruitful.

One of the management theories discussed was that of Management by Objectives, developed by the well-known business professor and consultant Peter Drucker.

In a related action, the National Assembly recently assigned two of its members to participate in an in-depth course in business management practices, to determine what procedures could be profitably

Some of the staff members taking part in the seminar were (from left to right): Diane Gray, Eileen Norman, Philip Christensen, Sâm Sohrab, Russ Busey, and Cindie Hurley.
Above: A view of the new displays in the House of Worship in Wilmette. The large planter set in the center of the display area and surrounded by a low bench enables visitors to rest, read the literature on display, and meditate. Below: Visitors descending the steps from the auditorium of the House of Worship.

Pilgrimages to begin at House of Worship

Applications are now being accepted for two scheduled, small-scale pilgrimages to the House of Worship in Wilmette.

The first pilgrimage is scheduled to take place at the National Center between June 19-22; the second, between August 28-31.

"The programs are planned to provide a unique opportunity for Baha'is to develop an expanded awareness of the significance of the House of Worship and to gain a better perspective on the working of the National Center," said Ray Collins, Manager of the House of Worship Activities Office.

Each pilgrimage will begin on Thursday afternoon and end the following Sunday afternoon, Mr. Collins said.

The activities planned for the visitors include:
- an exhibit drawn from the National Archives;
- a tour of the National Center, National Baha'i Committee offices, Baha'i Publishing Trust, and the Baha'i Home;
- a guided tour of the House of Worship and a presentation on its history and construction;
- dinner with the staff of the National Center; and
- lunch at the Haziratul-Quds with representatives of the National Assembly.

"The friends will also have ample time for prayer and meditation at the House of Worship," Mr. Collins said.

Mr. Collins said the House of Worship Activities Committee would like to see the pilgrimages become regular events at the National Center.

"The intent of these pilgrimages are as serious as visits to the World Center," he said. "All Baha'is can't get to Haifa at this time for one reason or another. Maybe these pilgrimages to the National Center can serve as a prelude to going to the World Center on pilgrimage. The House of Worship is the holiest House of Worship ever constructed and there are still thousands of Baha'is who have never visited here. These programs may provide that opportunity."
Baha'is help plan Indian festival

The Spiritual Assembly of Citrus, J.D., California, with the assistance of the Navajo Culture Club of Los Angeles County (Dineh Bah A'Lil), commemorated the birth of Baha'u'llah with a program of entertainment which included Indian dancing, a chorale presentation, and folk-rock music.

More than 500 people — hundreds of them non-Baha'is — crowded into the Ford Park Pavilion Auditorium in Bell Gardens for the November 10 event. More than 100 of these, including many of the dancers, were American Indians.

Most of the Dineh Bah A'Lil repertoire was Navajo in origin, although the troupe also performed traditional dances of other tribes. The Begay and Hale families, who participated in the dancing, are considered among the very finest Indian dancers in the country.

The dancers on this occasion were children primarily. They were taught by Virginia Denetdale, a Navajo interested in preserving Indian culture and traditions.

Two members of the Citrus, J.D. Assembly, Wayne Steffes (an Oneida Indian) and his wife Alice, (a Navajo) are members of the Dineh Bah A'Lil. Their daughters Regina and Rhea perform with the dance troupe.

England Dan and John Ford Coley performed ballads and folk-rock selections which were warmly received. The California Baha'i Chorus also performed at this event.

During the intermission baskets of fry bread, were distributed to the audience. The fry bread was prepared by the women of the Navajo Culture Club.

The Baha'i speaker for the occasion was Franklin Kahn, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly. Mr. Kahn, who is himself a Navajo, directed his remarks to the Navajos in the audience. He spoke of the spiritual significance of sandpainting, a subject which only men of recognized achievement are permitted to explore with fellow members of their tribe.

David Villasenor, an Indian Baha'i artist of note, displayed paintings and handicrafts at the event.

The Baha'i community has expressed interest in working closely with the Navajo Culture Club on similar events in the future. Los Angeles County reportedly has one of the largest Indian populations in the country.

Vietnam:

Human Rights program receives wide support

A Human Rights Day observance in Saigon sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly was held on December 10. Approximately 200 people attended, among them Buddhist monks, Christian ministers and priests, members of the diplomatic corps, and government representatives. The speaker was Pierre Lucien Sales, resident representative of the United Nations Development Program. The National Assembly's Vice-Chairman, Pham Van Lien also made a brief address. He attempted a definition of justice from a Baha'i perspective.

That evening the Vietnamese National Youth Committee joined the student body of Van Hanh University in sponsoring a Human Rights Day observance. More than 2,000 students participated in the event, which was reported extensively in the local press.
One of the outstanding features of Indian history, and one which cannot but become apparent even to the casual observer of this record, is the numerous religious traditions that have left their mark on India’s cultural heritage. Three of the world’s great living religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, have at one time or other been focal points in the development of India’s religio-cultural life, and, in modern times, Christianity, though to a lesser extent, has also made contributions to this development. For this reason, India has often been referred to as a melting pot of religious experience. Today, the Bahá’í Faith is in the process of adding another chapter to the history of religions in India. In the following pages we will attempt to trace the development of the Faith in that country, for at present, India harbors within its borders one of the largest Bahá’í communities in the world, and therefore, its history deserves to be told.

India’s earliest contact with the new Movement took place during the time of the Bab. The various histories of the Bab mention several prominent Indian believers within their accounts. Nabil-i-A’zam tells us that one of the Letters of the Living was an Indian who was known by the name Shaykh Sa’id-i-Hindi. Like the other disciples of the Bab, he was directed by his Master to spread the message of the new Revelation. This command took him not only to various parts of Persia, but also to his homeland of India. However, his work in India was unproductive. As Nabil states, this enterprise “was productive of what might seem a negligible result, its only fruit being the conversion of a certain siyyid.”1 After this, Shaykh Sa’id-i-Hindi dropped from sight; his ultimate fate remained a mystery.

Another Indian convert during the Ministry of the Bab was a certain blind Siyyid, Jenab-i-Hasir, about whose life the Babi histories are not in complete agreement. Nabil states that this believer was none other than the above mentioned “siyyid” converted by Sa’id-i-Hindi in the town of Mooltan, where, “Casting behind him the trappings of leadership, and severing himself from his friends and kinsmen, he arose with a fixed resolve to render his service to the Cause he had embraced.”2 The Tarikh-i-Jadid however claims that Siyyid Basir, having heard in Bombay of the Bab’s appearance, hastened to Persia and subsequently Mecca where he met the Bab in person.3 After this meeting he returned to Persia and began to disseminate the teachings of his new Master. Both histories agree however, that he became ac-
tive within the Babi community, and that he was well known for his depth of learning and his eloquence.

The activities of Jenab-i- Bàsír were finally brought to the attention of the state authorities, which resulted in his imprisonment and eventual death. The Tárikh-i-Jádíd says that after the Mázindarán upheaval, the Siyyid went to 'Irán. Eventually he was arrested by the Prince-Governor in Burújírd [in the western Persian province of Lurístán] who, "because he was so ready of speech and eloquent in discourse, first ordered his tongue to be cut out, and then put him to death."4

A third convert from India was a dervish mentioned in the Tárikh-i-Jádíd. 5 This is most likely the same individual mentioned in Nábíl’s account who while in India had seen the Báb in a vision and soon hastened to Persia on foot to find the Míhídí. The dervish met the Báb during his sojourn at Chíhriq, where the latter gave him the title Qáhru'lláh. 6 The Indian believer, after leaving the Báb’s presence, began to expound his Leader’s doctrines which eventually led to his being arrested by the Governor of Khúy. The new convert along with several other Bábis was beaten and paraded through the streets on an ass. 7 If indeed the Indian believer was the same Qáhru’lláh mentioned by Nábíl, the likeness of the two accounts making it appear to be so, he later, following orders from the Báb, left on foot for India where he was to announce the arrival of the Qa’ím. Whether he successfully returned to India is unknown.

The presence of other Indian believers in Persia during the time of the Báb is documented by a monograph on the Bábí insurrection in Mázindarán which lists four Indians among the 318 Bábis who defended themselves at Fort Shaykh Tabárí. 8 However, it is apparent that the activities of Indian converts at this time were for the most part limited to Iran; Shaykh Sa’íd-i-Hindi upon reaching India found his efforts there unproductive, Qáhru’lláh’s arrival in his homeland remains doubtful, and while it seems apparent from the Tárikh-i-Jádíd’s account of Jenab-i- Bàsír hearing about the Báb in Bombay that some knowledge of the Báb’s doctrines was current in India, it appears that it was only partial and scattered knowledge. Therefore, it is safe to say that during the lifetime of the Báb, the new Faith was virtually nonexistent in the subcontinent.

The year 1872 is a historical landmark in the history of the Bahá’í Faith in India,
for it was in this year that Jamál Effendi arrived in Bombay and began to actively teach the doctrines and principles of the new religion. Since the time of the Báb’s death in 1850, several Bábís and henceforth Bahá’ís had settled in Bombay, largely in association with the Parsi community there, but no active teaching of the Message had taken place. In 1871 Bahá’u’lláh from his confines in ‘Akká commissioned one of the numerous pilgrims who came to visit Him from throughout the Near East to proceed to India and there spread the word of the Cause. This man, a learned scholar of Arabic and Persian, was the above mentioned Sulaymán Kháń-i-Tánákábuní Jamál Effendi. Having had the title of Lamía (the brilliant one) conferred upon him by Bahá’u’lláh, 8 Jamál Effendi and his kinsman Mírzá Husayn late in the year 1872 boarded a boat in Port Said, Egypt, and set sail for India.

During his stay in Bombay, Jamál Effendi delivered a great many talks concerning the claims and principles of the Bahá’í Movement. One such talk was directed towards the head of the Khoja* community in that city, the Aga Khan. However, his discourses, rather than bringing converts to the Bahá’í Faith, aroused the animosity of numerous religious leaders in Bombay and consequently, the two teachers, on the advice of their friends, departed the city. Although their initial stay in the great port city was cut short, Bombay was subsequently to become a leading Bahá’í community in India.

After leaving Bombay, the two men travelled throughout the subcontinent delivering the message of Bahá’u’lláh to the elite of the country. The Bahá’í Newsletter of India reported that it was Jamál Effendi’s custom to notify his arrival to the Governor or highest official of the place in British India and to the ruling prince of an Indian State. He would then pay a visit to them and deliver the Message. His list of those to whom he delivered the Message contains names of almost all the high officials and princes and princesses of the land. 10

In 1876 an historic gathering was held in the old Mogul capital of Delhi. The event was the receiving of the title “The Empress of India” by Queen Victoria. Present at this ceremony were all the rulers of the various states in India, as well as numerous religious and secular leaders of the country. Jamál Effendi used this timely occasion to reveal the message of the Bahá’í Movement to many of the dignitaries. For example, he was able to meet and talk with Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj. 11

The Faith’s initial reception in India was a mixed one. In most instances Jamál Effendi was met with consideration and courtesy. However, there were several exceptions to this gentility, notably, as we have already mentioned, his experiences in Bombay, and later, outbreaks of hostility by Muslims in Calcutta. The fruits of his labor seemed negligible. During a year’s travel in India he had managed to attract only a handful of individuals. When he left the subcontinent in 1878 to carry the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh to the countries of Southeast Asia, he left behind him three prominent converts: Rafiuddin Khan of Hassanpur, Haji Ramadhan of Rampur, and Siyyid Muştafa Rumi of Madras. 12 The latter was destined not only to give great service to the Faith in India, but also in Burma, where he helped in establishing two Bahá’í groups, one in Rangoon and the other in Mandalay. 13 [Siyyid Muştafa Rumi was posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause in 1946.]

The next twenty years was a period of slow growth and development for the Bahá’í Faith in India. The message of the Movement was spread via the work of devoted converts to the major cities of the subcontinent. Teaching activities were directed from three centers of Bahá’í organization: Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. Many of the programs were presented under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, while others were carried out by individual believers in their own way and by their own means. Slowly, the claims of the Bahá’í Faith began to reach the ears of many of the educated members of Indian society.

During His years of leadership, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent several prominent Bahá’í teachers to India to help promote the Cause. Among these were Aga Mírzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqáni, and Aga Mírzá Mahram. The latter finally settled in Bombay where he played a leading role in the Bahá’í community there, while Aga Mírzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqáni toured the country eventually returning to his native Persia. 14

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*A Muslim subsect in India.

†† “The Arya Samaj are a protestant movement in Hinduism who are trying to reform Hindu society and bring it up-to-date without reference to the orthodox interpretation of the Hindu scripture; although as far as possible they try to read their interpretations into the ancient texts.” (Horace Holley, “Survey of Current Bahá’í Activities in the East and West,” The Bahá’í World, vol. II, p. 42.)
Both men by means of their zealous spirits helped enhance teaching activity throughout the country. In order to meet the year 1908, there were a number of local spiritual assemblies established in India, including assemblies in Bombay, Calcutta, Aligarh, and Lahore. Of these, the Bombay community took the forefront in both the teaching of the Cause and the translation of literature. Its advancements in the area of translation marked the first time that any of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh had been translated into one of the native languages of India. The activities of the Bombay community were commented upon by a travelling American Bahá'í, Sydney Sprague, who in 1908 reported, "There are three meetings a week held in Bombay and there are as a rule eighty to a hundred men present." However, he also emphasized that it was no easy thing to become a Bahá'í in India. "It often means a great sacrifice on the part of a believer, a loss of friends, money, and position."15

In January of 1910 a convention comprised of members from the various religions of India was held in Allahabad. The Bahá'ís were invited to this convention. Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rúmi, one of Jamál Effendí's original converts, presented a talk on the Bahá'í Faith. According to the contents of a letter written to the Bahá'ís of the United States by some of the followers in India, his speech had a great effect on the delegates. Feeling that the time for teaching was ripe, members of the Indian community made direct requests for American teachers to come to India and help spread the message. Approximately one year later a national teaching campaign was launched with the help of several notable American Bahá'ís. The program called for the election of a nineteen member teaching council which would be in charge of spreading the Cause across the entire country. This group officially came into existence on August 1, 1911.17

Two female American Bahá'ís were very prominent during this campaign, and their influence was felt throughout the various Bahá'í communities of the subcontinent. One, Lúí Getsinger, was personally directed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to travel to India and spread the Faith. "Just as 'Abdu'l-Bahá had sailed from East to West to spread the Faith, He now summoned Lúí to travel from West to East to do the same thing."18 The other teacher, Mrs. H. Stannard, a student of comparative religion, well-versed in the teachings of the religions of India, answered the call for pioneers put out by the Indian community. For several years these two dedicated women delivered lectures from one end of the country to the other. Lúí Getsinger spoke on various aspects of the Bahá'í Faith at numerous meetings sponsored by such groups as the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj, and the Theosophical Society. Mrs. Stannard, in addition to her lecture tours, represented the Bahá'í religion at the All India Theistic Conference of 1913.19 Both women were also very influential in the area of publicity, for they were largely responsible for the publication of Baha'i articles in several Indian newspapers. For example, in the Sind Gazette of December 24, 1913, an editorial appeared which stated that,

A rather remarkable visitor to Karachi — far more remarkable than any of the Congress and Conference dignitaries — is Mrs. Stannard, the Bahá'í Missionary. This gifted lady, who has studied all the religions of the world, and all the philosophies, and has come to the conclusion, not that they are all wrong, but that they are all right, has a new gospel to preach — not her own, but that of her Master, 'Abdu'l-Baha, the head of the Bahá'í religious movement.20

Other articles also appeared in such papers as the New Reformer of Madras, and the Daily Gazette of Karachi.

The popular response that the two Americans received throughout their travels was a sign of things to come, for in future years American believers would continue to play an active role in the teaching campaigns of the Indian community. The teaching campaign initiated in 1911, although not winning many new believers, was still of great importance in the development of the Bahá'í community in India, for it marked the first real attempt at a systematic teaching effort characterized by inter-community coordination. It not only paved the way for future plans, but also gave the Bahá'ís of India their first true feeling of community spirit. Before this time, teaching activities were, for the most part, efforts of individual believers or communities, and rarely was there any real attempt made to organize anything beyond the local level. Thus, the Teaching Council of 1911 was in many ways the forerunner of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India and Burma.

December 27-29, 1920, is another significant landmark in the history of the...
Baha'i Faith in India. It was on these dates that the first All India Baha'i Convention was held in the city of Bombay. Representatives of all the major world religions were present, as well as Baha'i delegates from throughout the country. Although there were no official figures on the number of Baha'is residing in India during this time, it was estimated that there were nearly 175 followers present at this conference.\(^2\)

There were several important resolutions passed at the conference from which the following were taken: (1) that funds be collected to build a Baha'i temple in India, (2) that a school be started in Bombay for the education of Baha'i children, (3) that a Baha'i library be established in India, (4) that a publishing society be established to translate Baha'i literature into different Indian languages, and (5) that there be a greater expansion in teaching activities and distribution of literature.\(^2\) It was to these objectives that the Baha'is of India now turned.

It is significant to note that the first All India Baha'i Convention and the death of 'Abdu'l-Baha were separated by less than a year. It was as if the India community sensed the new course the Faith would take under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi. From this point forward the Cause in India, in accordance with the Guardian's plans for the community, was to an ever-increasing degree to become oriented towards executing its teaching plans and activities within the framework of an international administrative structure, the center of which was the Guardian himself.

Between the years 1921 and 1938 the objectives initiated by the first All India Baha'i Convention were pursued vigorously. Consequently, there were notable accomplishments in all areas of endeavor during this period. The guidance of these projects was entrusted to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma, which Shoghi Effendi saw fit to create in April of 1923. The role he bequeathed to this body is evident from the content of the following message which he sent in November of 1925, "I pray that your newly constituted National Spiritual Assembly may grow from strength to strength, may co-ordinate and consolidate the ever-expanding activities of the friends in India and Burma and inaugurate a fresh campaign of Teaching that will redound to the glory and power of the Most Great Name."\(^2\) The National Spiritual Assembly met periodically in Bombay. Mr. Hashimatu'llah of Karachi was elected India's first National Secretary. Ten years later, in January of 1933, this body was incorporated with the Government of India.

Organized teaching activities and the distribution of literature were greatly increased during these years. One of the largest teaching events took place at the centenary celebration of the birth of the founder of the Arya Samaj, Dyanand Saraswati. The commemorations were held in Mutra in the year 1925. It is estimated that it was attended by nearly two million people. The Baha'is were granted special camp grounds and were allowed to distribute their literature. During the five-day event, almost 5,000 booklets explaining the principles of the Faith were distributed.\(^2\)

The Guardian constantly encouraged the Baha'i community of India and Burma to increase their teaching activities. He continually stressed the point that it was part of their duty as Baha'is to spread the message of Baha'u'llah. For example, in a message to the Baha'is of India dated November 25, 1934, he said, "The essential is that all the friends, without any exception whatever, should realise the full measure of the responsibility which Baha'u'llah has placed on them for teaching far and wide His Message."\(^2\) And again, "... an unprecedented effort in the field of teaching is urgently required. Such an effort is of vital and paramount importance."\(^2\)

In an effort to stimulate teaching activity Shoghi Effendi sent several pioneers from various parts of the world to the subcontinent. Among the most famous of these travelling teachers was Martha Root. She made two tours of India, one in 1930 and the other in 1937-38. A short synopsis of her work shows that she delivered public lectures from Karachi to Madras, including major presentations in the colleges and universities of Lahore, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Delhi, Aligarh, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Allahabad, Benares, Patna and Calcutta. She also broadcast radio messages in both Mysore and Hyderabad, and met with many of the leading personalities of the country including the poetess, Sarojini Naidu. Her work was so impressive that the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma in a letter to the Baha'is of the United States said of her, "Martha Root has opened the whole of India for us, and it now devolves upon us to so utilize these openings as to produce the best results."\(^2\)

There were numerous other teachers who also took to the highways and railways of India during these years in order to...
help spread the knowledge of the Faith to a greater number of the inhabitants of the subcontinent. Mahfuz-ul-Haq Ilmi carried on active propagation in Delhi and other cities of northern India, while Pritam Singh made several teaching tours of the colleges and universities of this section of the country. Shirin Fozdar spoke to over 1,000 people in the town hall of Calcutta,\textsuperscript{28} and Keith Ransom-Kehler [later appointed a Hand of the Cause] made a two-month lecture tour which involved talks in most of the major cities of the country. Thus, the teaching work which Shoghi Effendi prescribed as a vital necessity to the maintenance of the Faith in India was consciously and systematically increased.

Advancements were also made in the field of publishing between the years 1921 and 1938. Many Baha’i books were translated into several different Indian languages including Gujarati, Bengali, Sindhi, Hindi, and Urdu. J.E. Esslemont’s \textit{Baha’u’llah and the New Era}, was one of these texts. Shoghi Effendi had personally encouraged the Baha’is of India to translate this work. In March of 1932 he wrote, ”I wish to urge you to take as soon as you possibly can, the necessary and most effective steps to ensure the translation of Dr. Esslemont’s book into Urdu and Gujarati.”\textsuperscript{29} One of the major accomplishments in publishing was the establishment of a Baha’i monthly magazine, the \textit{Kaukib-i-Hind}. The magazine was published in Urdu and had over 200 subscribers. In addition, over 200 articles appeared in newspapers and magazines throughout the country including many articles in Telgu-speaking areas. In fact, the Brahmo Samaj of Madras translated over 2,000 booklets entitled “The Dawn of the New Day” into several Dravidian languages.

Concerning the other goals which the All India Baha’i Convention of 1920 had set for the Indian community, we can relate the following: a Baha’i school for children was successfully established in Poona, and in September of 1937 the first Indian Baha’i summer school session was held, to which Baha’is from throughout the country came to receive instruction in various aspects of the Faith from history to administration. Although a separate Baha’i library was not completed, Baha’i books were presented to a number of major libraries around the country.

The efforts in all areas of endeavor made by the Baha’i community of India during these years marked a great step forward in terms of increasing the public’s knowledge of the Faith. Furthermore, under the guiding hand of Shoghi Effendi and their National Spiritual Assembly the various Baha’i communities in India slowly began to function as a unit. The time had come when Shoghi Effendi could truly speak of the “Indian Community”. However, even with the inter-community organization that marked this period, the number of new believers to join the Faith was practically nil. Over the 18 year period only three new Local Spiritual Assemblies had been added to the list of Assemblies in the country, and not more than 50 new believers had been enlisted. To be continued.

14. \textit{Baha’i Newsletter of India}, May 1944, p. 2
15. Sydney Sprague, \textit{A Year with the Baha’is of India and Burma}, (London, 1908), p. 15.
16. Sprague, \textit{Baha’is of India}, p. 17.
20. \textit{Star of the West}, April 1914, p. 22.
Baha'i Proclamation and Deepening Film

Step by Step

An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator — what have these people in common? They're Baha'is and they appear in a new Baha'i film, *Paso a Paso*, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled *Step by Step* in English, depicts the growth of the Baha'i Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Unified by their common belief in Baha'u'llah and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Baha'u'llah is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Baha'i administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Baha'i House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, *El Alba* and *The Dedication*. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

How to Get the Film

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Baha'i distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Baha'i Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify *Step by Step*, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or *Paso a Paso*, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
The dedication of the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the West
Call for traveling teachers to arise in support of teaching plan

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

As we approach the threshold of the second year of the Five Year Plan, it is evident that the need for traveling teachers as indicated in the message launching that Plan is acquiring greater urgency and importance.

During the past year steps have been taken to revise the functions, broaden the base and strengthen the work of the Continental Pioneer Committees and to bring them into much closer collaboration with the Continental Boards of Counsellors. Already, with their assistance an army of pioneers has moved and is moving towards its objectives, and a general readiness has been evinced by the friends, particularly the youth, to serve as itinerant teachers.

The strenuous efforts being made to fill the pioneer goals by the mid-way point of the Plan must now be paralleled by well-considered and determined efforts to swell to a mighty river the stream of those friends who will travel to foreign lands to reinforce the efforts of those who are laboring so valiantly to expand and consolidate the widely scattered Bahá’í communities and to proclaim the Message of Bahá’u’lláh to every stratum of society.

At our request the International Teaching Center has evolved a plan, which we have warmly approved, comprising specific goals of international collaboration in the field of traveling teaching. This plan is now being sent to the Continental Boards of Counsellors who will, in turn, present it to the National Spiritual Assemblies, whose task it will be to implement it. In consultation with Counsellors each National Spiritual Assembly is to work out specific proposals which it should then present to the other National Assemblies with whom it is to collaborate, so that, as soon as possible, actual projects can be worked out and set in motion, thus inaugurating a process which should rapidly gather momentum and be prosecuted with undiminished vigor in the years ahead.

The Continental Pioneer Committees should be kept closely informed of all projects so that they may know how best to reinforce the flow with those many volunteers who will undoubtedly arise outside the framework of the specific projects now to be conceived. It is our hope that, as far as possible, travel teaching projects will be self-supporting or can be assisted by the National Funds involved, but where necessary, the International Deputization Fund is available to assist. Whenever assistance from the Deputization Fund is required, the request should be made to the Continental Pioneer Committee, giving details of the project. If the sum required is small the Committee may be able to help immediately, otherwise it will pass the request, together with its recommendation, to the Universal House of Justice for consideration.

We sincerely hope that in the forefront of the volunteers, the Bahá’í youth will arise for the sake of God and, through their driving force, their ability to endure inhospitable and arduous conditions, and their contentment with the bare necessities of life, they will offer an inspiring example to the peoples and communities they set out to serve, will exert an abiding influence on their personal lives, and will promote with distinction the vital interests of God’s Cause at this crucial stage in the fortunes of the Plan.

We shall offer our ardent prayers at the Holy Shrines for the confirmation of the efforts of all those who will heroically respond to this call.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,

The Universal House of Justice

March 25, 1975
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Cover photo: A view of the concrete ribs of the dome which meet to form the pinnacle of the House of Worship.

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Bahá’í representatives will attend Mexico conference

The Bahá’í International Community announced it will send two delegates to the International Women’s Year World Conference in Mexico City June 19-July 2.

Wilma Brady, the UN representative of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, said the delegate selection will be made by The Universal House of Justice. Details for their participation in the conference will be handled by the Mexican National Assembly, she said.

The Bahá’í International Community, as the UN representative of Bahá’í communities throughout the world, was invited to send two delegates by the Economic and Social Council, with which it enjoys consultative status at the United Nations.

National Assemblies, as national non-governmental organizations at the UN, will not send representatives to the Mexico conference, Dr. Brady said. They will be represented by the Bahá’í International Community.

A second gathering for non-governmental organizations (NGO) will run concurrently with the large official conference, she explained. This second session, called a NGO Tribune, will provide a forum for discussion to a greater range of organizations than will be represented at the Women’s Year Conference.

The Tribune will be held at the National Medical Center in Mexico City, and will include plenary meetings, exhibits, films, and group discussions on the subject of improving the status of women in world society.

The Bahá’í International Community will send an official delegation to the Tribune as well as to the Women’s Conference, Dr. Brady said. This delegation will also be selected by The Universal House of Justice.

This special Tribune will be opened to individual participants, Dr. Brady explained. Individual Bahá’ís may attend this Tribune as non-delegates if they desire, she said. Bahá’ís who attend independently, however, will not represent the Bahá’í community or any Bahá’í agency, she noted. Tribune participants must make travel and housing arrangements.

Bahá’i is from the Central African Republic participating in the national independence day parade on December 1, 1974.

Central African Republic:

Example of unity favorably impresses head of government

A few weeks before the December 1 national parade marking the anniversary of the establishment of the Central African Republic, the Bahá’ís were astonished to hear announced on the government radio station that the Bahá’í Faith and other major religious groups would be represented in this important annual event, the National Assembly reported. “As no preparations had been made and as we had never before participated, we considered asking to be excused, but after consultation and encouragement from the visiting Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga it was decided that we should do our best to respond positively to this expectation of the government even if our participation would perforce be rather modest.”

An ingenious and inexpensive solution was adopted. The Bahá’í delegation was led by two men who carried a large placard reading “La Foi Bahá’ie”. Following were nine ladies marching three by three and nine men marching in a similar formation. The women wore traditional African dresses made from the same material which all had contributed to buy. The men wore dark trousers and light colored shirts. Each wore a diagonal red band across the chest as a unifying element of design.

As the Bahá’í delegation progressed through the streets it attracted a good deal of attention. Many spectators called out “La Foi Bahá’ie” or “Bahá’u’lláh” or sang snatches of the theme song from the Bahá’í radio program.

Observers noted that the black and white believers marching together caused the greatest comment among the spectators; some cheered seeing three white pioneer women dressed in traditional costume marching with their African sisters. A white male pioneer marched among the men. This demonstration of the unity of mankind was commented upon by the radio announcer who gave a live broadcast. As the delegation passed before the dias on which the president was seated he rose, accompanied by all his ministers and distinguished guests, and applauded.

Two days later the pioneers who had participated in the parade were summoned to the presidential palace where they were received by the director-general of the presidential security forces who said that the head of state had asked him to convey to the Bahá’ís his personal appreciation for their participation in the parade. He stated that the president had been deeply moved to see such a tangible expression of solidarity. The friends explained that there had been no design to attract attention, and that their participation was a natural expression of the Bahá’í belief in the oneness of humanity. It was explained that Bahá’í pioneers live in unity with their fellow
believers because they are not paid missionaries but must work in their adopted society and earn a living and participate in the work of the Faith on a voluntary basis like everyone else. The director seemed most interested, and assured the Bahá'ís that he would include these facts in his report to the president. In closing the interview he again thanked and congratulated the Bahá'ís most warmly.

Teaching conference brings believers to capital city

The first national teaching conference of the Five Year Plan was recently held in Bangui, the capital city of the Central African Republic. More than 50 believers representing 13 communities attended, many through sacrificial effort. Local pioneers and Bahá'í visitors from France and the United States were present and “a wonderful spirit of fellowship, unity, and brotherhood prevailed,” one observer reported.

Each participant was given a file containing deepening material on basic subjects, among them: living the life, prayer, the life of Bahá'u'lláh, the 19-day Feasts, the Bahá'í calendar, and some practical guidelines on Bahá'í marriage and burial. Workshops were held daily during the conference and the friends explored means of using the deepening material in various situations, including in communities where illiteracy presents a problem.

Ethiopia: Eager students enrolling in Faith

A high degree of receptivity to the Faith is now apparent in the Arussi province of Ethiopia, and particularly in the community of Assela where students are reported to be enrolling in the Faith in considerable numbers. “All we do is relay the message and the students, beaming with exceeding joy and happiness, express their allegiance,” one observer commented. “No longer does it appear necessary to present lengthy proofs from the Bible and the Qur'án because the students go directly to the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh by which they are strongly affected and enchanted. This is also true of Nazareth where, as of now, there are 42 Bahá'ís. The believers of these two communities are in process of opening approximately 40 new centers.

Bahá'í song received with enthusiasm

The Faith has been proclaimed in Puerto Aisen, Chile, a virgin goal of the Five Year Plan. A song with a Bahá'í theme “Caminando Juntos” (Walking Together) composed by two pioneers, was selected for performance at a song festival in Puerto Aisen where ten finalists were to compete. The team, Robert Siegel and Reed Chandler, met in Puerto Aisen, rehearsed for a few hours, and then performed their selection for audiences of more than 3,000 on three successive evenings. The song was received with great enthusiasm and the artists were several times called on stage for encores. The song tells of the Faith in simple and direct language. Many teaching opportunities arose during the three-day festival.

Mapuche believers attend summer school

Thirty believers, twenty of whom are Mapuche Indians, attended the summer school at Nueva Imperial, Chile, from November 21-24, 1974. The active participation of the Mapuche friends, who walked long distances to attend, contributed greatly to the success of the sessions. Public talks were given in the evenings, and the film “El Alba”, about the dedication of the Panama House of Worship, was shown.

As a result of teaching activities the week following the summer school 76 new believers enrolled in the Faith.

Week of teaching accompanies purchase Hazíratu’l-Quds

In conjunction with the purchase of the first local Hazíratu’l-Quds of the Five Year Plan in Chile, the Local Spiritual Assembly of Punta Arenas launched a week-long proclamation program. The opening event was a formal tea to which 50 invitations were printed and directed to civic and ecclesiastic leaders of the city. The mayor and government administrator granted interviews to the Bahá'ís and accepted gift literature. Three civic leaders, including the manager of a local newspaper, attended one event, the latter being eager to learn more about the Faith and expressing himself as impressed with what he heard.

An exhibition of panels proclaiming the Faith was displayed in the public plaza. Inquirers were invited to attend public meetings and scores of brochures were distributed. Each evening for nine days a planned program was executed including a reception for the public, slide shows, music, panel discussions and prepared talks. The film of the Panama Temple Dedication, “El Alba”, was shown twice at the Bahá'í center and on one occasion was viewed by 20 children from a local orphanage. In a letter directed to all of the local schools the film was offered for viewing. One of the two local high schools showed the film several times to various classes and also to more than 50 adult night-class students.

A total of 40 minutes of free radio time was obtained and throughout the proclamation week all local radio stations broadcast details of the events and the theme. A total of sixteen column inches of newspaper publicity was obtained in two local newspapers. Particular assistance was lent by Auxiliary Board member Katherine Meyer, and Ana Maria Chandler who came from Temuco to help.

As a result of the proclamation many people have become attracted to the Faith and the Bahá'í community itself, encouraged by the success of the program, has doubled its efforts. Nine new believers have enrolled since the proclamation effort.
Around the World

Participants at the first National Bahá‘í Children’s Conference in Langenhain, Germany, pose outside the House of Worship. Continental Counsellor Erik Blumenthal was one of the teachers at the conference, held October 5 and 6, 1974.

Germany:

Children’s conference held in Langenhain

Parents and children gathered in Langenhain, Germany, October 5-6, 1974, to participate in the country’s first National Bahá‘í Children’s Conference.

Classes for adults, youth, and children on Bahá‘í education, the lives of Bahá‘u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá‘í history and administration, and arts and crafts were organized by the National Children’s Committee and held in the new national Hazírat’u’l-Quds.

Two of the older children who participated wrote that they were especially impressed by stories from the life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “after Bahá‘u’lláh was thrown into the “black pit” (the Siyáh-Chá‘l) and the family was plundered of all possessions, they had nothing to eat... except a little bit of raw flour. We children were able to taste some raw flour from a sack and could well imagine how difficult ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had it as an eight-year-old boy. With the story from America, when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá compared black children with candies, we also could taste how good these sweets are.”

Children’s groups from Frankfurt and Weisbaden organized the program for Saturday evening. Events in the life of Táhirih were reenacted in pantomime accompanied by a tape recording with music and texts; a slide program and games were enjoyed later in the evening.

On Sunday morning the children arranged the devotional service in the House of Worship.

All children present at the conference received a small prayerbook with a stamp of the House of Worship as a memento.

India:

Non-Bahá‘í editor aids proclamation

The Local Spiritual Assembly of Mysore, India, recently sent a teaching team to Hassan, a nearby locality, to support the efforts of the lone pioneer there.

The nine friends divided themselves into teams of three. One team visited the colleges, the second team visited various offices and the third team taught people in the streets who expressed interest in the Faith.

All those who were contacted willingly cooperated with the Bahá‘ís. A leading editor and writer was so interested that he summoned notaries and assisted the Bahá‘ís in explaining the Faith. He also published a newspaper article about the Cause.

During the two-day visit, six talks were delivered in all the local colleges. An excellent response came from the respective principals. A Muslim teacher at an Urdu school served as translator and repeatedly extolled the Station of Bahá‘u’lláh.

Three theaters of the town exhibited Bahá‘í slides and a prominent hotel owner accepted a Bahá‘í poster for permanent display. Twenty posters in all were posted at strategic locations in the town. The local library and some townspeople purchased Bahá‘í books and nine people enrolled in the Faith.

Week-long exhibit attracts large crowds

Several thousand people learned about the Faith during a recent week-long exhibition held in the city of Indore, in Central India. Posters inscribed with passages from Bahá‘í Writings, literature, photographs, charts depicting Bahá‘í history and printed and illustrated displays explaining the Teachings attracted large crowds to the exhibition where local Bahá‘ís greeted them, escorted them through the displays, answered questions, and invited them to participate in ongoing informal discussion groups which the guests could intelligently join, having just received a brief but very complete introduction to the Cause.

“Through this media”, one observer commented, “many came to know about the Faith...it is one of the best methods of expansion and consolidation.”

Each evening during the exhibition slide programs were offered. A midweek press conference was adjudged successful and a public lecture held the last day of the exhibition brought a good turnout. Five local newspapers carried lengthy articles which, it was said, “beautifully explained the aims and objectives of the Faith.”

Italy:

First Bahá‘í women’s seminar attracts educators

“Today’s Woman and the Woman of the New Era” was the title for a panel discussion presented by the Bologna Bahá‘í community on March 23. The program was the first of its kind to be presented by an Italian Bahá‘í community.

Women panelists from Italy, Persia, and the United States discussed the role and condition of women in their respective countries. Magda Gallenga, of Florence,
concluded the discussion by describing the role of women in education, work, and the family as envisioned in the Bahá'í writings.

The discussion prompted numerous questions from the many educators, students and professional people attending. "The Bahá'í round-table discussion was noteworthy if only for the reason that it demonstrated to the public that Bahá'í women perform a role in advancing women's rights that is moderate yet progressive," said the report.

Kenya:

**Nakuru Bahá'ís dedicate new center**

The Bahá'ís of Nakuru, Kenya, have joyfully announced the completion of their new center where approximately 40 believers gathered to observe the Feast of Sovereignty on January 19, 1975.

A week later, at the request of the Local Spiritual Assembly, the Nakuru friends gathered at the center equipped with gardening tools, and spent several hours clearing the land surrounding the center. They then entered the structure for prayers and enjoyed a program of songs following which they reverently placed the Greatest Name in a commanding position and erected a dignified sign identifying the center. After breaking for lunch the friends planted trees bordering the garden of the center.

One of the friends who participated reported: "Our center is on one of the busiest streets, facing the main police station. As we worked, literally hundreds of persons walking by stopped and watched our activities and people in passing cars paused to watch. It was a most successful proclamation!"

Panama:

**Guaymi believers win goals promptly**

During late December 1974 the National Spiritual Assembly of Panama presented pioneer Robert Little of Panama City a challenging assignment, which included the following goals: to visit the Guaymi believers in the Chiriqui mountains of northern Panama to assist the
Spiritual Assemblies of Cerro Tigre and Quebrada Nigua to incorporate; to obtain a list of delegates elected in pre-Convention meetings; to record five Bahá’í prayers recently translated into Guaymi; to report on the efforts of Assemblies selected to assist neighboring non-functioning Assemblies, and to visit as many of them as possible; to meet with the Regional Teaching Committee; and to arrange transportation for three couples to attend the institute in Villa Virginia.

Mr. Little submitted the following report on his activities: “All goals were successfully completed, and some exceeded. This was accomplished in two weeks, not one month. And all credit belongs to the Guaymis themselves. These people have taken the Teachings into their hearts with such faith that, for example, two new Local Spiritual Assemblies were elected despite fierce opposition by an antagonistic evangelical group in one area and by their own corregidor (mayor or elected leader) in the other.

“The nine delegates represented eight different communities and their official report is practically the model of the right way to conduct a convention—and they did it all themselves.

“The one sad part about the trip is that we brought back the name of one one new Bahá’í. The only excuse we can offer is that he was almost the only non-Bahá’í we met in two weeks of traveling.”

Deepening institute trains assistants to Auxiliary Board

A three-month long deepening institute instigated by Auxiliary Board member Ruth Pringle and financed by the National Assembly was recently held in Villa Virginia, Panama, at the Bahá’í summer school there. The institute, which was unique in terms of purpose, duration, and diversity of activity, was considered an experimental project. A primary goal was to train and inspire Bahá’í teachers to become Auxiliary Board assistants capable of assisting the deepening and development of their own and neighboring communities.

Other goals included improving literacy, study of agriculture and hygiene, child education, and the development of
Baha'i family life.

Five families—15 adults and 6 children—participated in the program which began in January and ended in March. Several distinguished instructors taught classes, among them the Hands of the Cause Rahmatu’lläh Muhâjir and Adelbert Mühlschlegel, Counsellors Rowland Estall, and Alfred Osborne, and Auxiliary Board members Fred Berest, Ursula Mühlschlegel and Ruth Pringle.

Adults, representing three distinct culture and language groups, learned how to better communicate in Spanish, how to cultivate vegetables according to the conditions in their communities, and how to teach reading and writing. Two students were subsequently appointed assistants to the Auxiliary Board.

Children learned a variety of skills and to accept and mingle with other children of various tribes represented at the institute. On one occasion the oldest boy, who was 8, unaware that he was being observed, led the younger children in a round of prayers.

Activities away from the summer school included visits to the House of Worship, a tour of Panama City and of the Canals and intercalary day and Naw-Rûz parties in the city.

Papua New Guinea:

Over 300 enroll in remote community

A total of 386 new believers recently embraced the Cause in the Mt. Brown region of Papua New Guinea. Canadian pioneers Linda and Milton McMahon in a recent report described teaching opportunities in their chosen goal:

"Linda and I were invited to attend the opening of the newly constructed [meeting place] at Aireauka village in the Mt. Brown area. The building is meant to be a place for Bahá'ís to come together and worship rather than an office or administrative center.

The Mt. Brown area is remote. We drove as far as a car could go, then waited two-and-a-half days for a passenger truck that would take us to the end of the road. From there we walked for three days up and down mountains and across six rivers until we reached Aireauka, where we received a welcome fit for royalty.

Aireauka is one of eight villages which are nearly all Bahá'í. No outside Bahá'ís have taken the message to these people, but some of the men who have traveled outside the area heard of the Faith and went back and told their people.

"One of the most important things for people here is education for the children. They go to great efforts to get their children into one of the few schools. The mission that used to be very strong provides a school, but when the people became Bahá'ís their children were expelled. Yet they have remained steadfast in the face of this, and other persecution.

"These people are very poor. The business of making a living requires great effort, but still they found the time and resources to build a beautiful round [meeting place] after postcard pictures of the Temples.

The trip to Mt. Brown has taught me much. Most of the people are unable to read or write—their factual knowledge of the Faith is little, but their understanding seems so great. Most teach the Faith at every opportunity; local Assemblies are functioning. The Regional Teaching Committee recently organized a teaching project in the adjacent regions, with follow-up deepening teams, which resulted in 386 new believers. This was in response to their particular goals for the Five Year Plan!"

Rhodesia:

Conference on Plan held in Mrewa

The first national conference of the Five Year Plan in Rhodesia was held in late 1974 at the Mudarikwa kraal in Mrewa, some 50 miles northeast of Salisbury. A series of talks and slide programs stimulated the friends to win the goals of the Plan.

At the end of the day's sessions pioneers from Salisbury were unable to obtain permission from the district commissioner to spend the night at the kraal and so had to return to the capital. The program continued, however, under the direction of Amos Zauyamakando, who addressed a public meeting attended by nearly 300 people, many of whom asked a number of questions. The meeting was closed with a round of Bahá'í songs.
Solomon Islands:

Conference inspires large-scale enrollments

All Bahá'ís who felt able to contribute two uninterrupted months to teach the Faith in the Solomon Islands were called together to a "Hero's Conference" March 13-15 by the National Spiritual Assembly. More than 50 people attended, and nearly 30 offered to teach throughout the islands in the subsequent two months.

The meeting was opened with a unity feast and for two days talks on such subjects as living the Bahá'í life, the obligation to teach the Faith, and the Five Year Plan were presented.

The National Assembly reports that news of teaching activities began to be collected shortly after the conference. New areas were opened to the Faith and hundreds of people were enrolled. Two friends, who could neither read nor write, were said to have established the Faith in nine new districts helping to elect local Assemblies in each one before moving on.

United States:

Teaching program launched in nation's capital

More than 100 believers who attended the launching of the teaching program for Washington, D.C. were urged by the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly to demonstrate the triumph of Bahá'í attitudes, through the loving and united existence of all races and people under the shadow of the protective law of Bahá'u'lláh.

The launching ceremony on March 2, the first day of the Fast, was held in the house once owned by Agnes Parsons, a pioneer Bahá'í worker in the cause of racial unity. Mrs. Parsons, at the behest of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, organized the first Race Unity Conference in Washington, in 1921. The friends gathered in the same room in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá met with the Bahá'ís during His visit to America.

Representing the National Assembly at the ceremony were its Chairman, Firuz Kazemzadeh, and its Vice-Chairman, Daniel Jordan. The Continental Board of Counsellors was represented by Counsellor Sarah Pereira, who lives in Washington. Auxiliary Board member Albert James, whose territory includes the city, was also present.

Dr. Kazemzadeh said the city was chosen for special attention during the Five Year Plan because of its importance as one of the major world capitals, and because of its importance in Bahá'í history.

Some of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's greatest pronouncements during His visit here were made in the capital—particularly pronouncements on the subject of race unity, Dr. Kazemzadeh said.

"It was in Washington, D.C. that 'Abdu'l-Bahá began to teach the American Bahá'í community about the meaning of
the unity of mankind—the unity of the races,” he said. “Mrs. Parsons became the instrument for the furtherance of the Baha’i principle of the unity of mankind.”

Only after the Master had departed from America, and two subsequent world wars had ravaged the world, did the racial composition of the nation’s capital change dramatically, Dr. Kazemzadeh observed.

“It became a city which presents to the country today a very serious problem in the mutual existence in brotherhood and friendship of the two major races inhabiting the United States,” he said.

“Isn’t it interesting,” he asked, “that ’Abdu’l-Baha should have chosen this city before problems arose, to teach the Baha’i community of the meaning of the unity of mankind?”

“Indeed, the Baha’i community of Washington is called upon to demonstrate the triumph of Baha’i attitudes through the loving and united existence of all races and people under the shadow of the protective law of Baha’u’llah.

Among the goals given to Washington in its special plan are these:

• to take steps to establish a full-time secretariat for the Spiritual Assembly to increase its executive ability;
• to send at least 9 pioneers to foreign posts during the remainder of the Plan;
• to publish a regular newsletter;
• to develop regular, graded classes for Bahá’í and non-Bahá’í children;
• to triple the number of believers in Washington;
• to increase the use of radio and television for Bahá’í broadcasts aimed at proclamation of the Faith to greater numbers of people;
• to use the press more widely, and to publicize events in neighborhood, minority, college, and foreign-language newspapers in the city.

Conference held on Indian teaching

A special conference on Indian teaching was conducted by the National Teaching Committee at the House of Worship in Wilmette between March 28-30.

Participants included Bahá’ís from the Ute, Choctaw, Navajo, Sioux, and Oneida, tribes, members of the American Indian Committee, members of the Navajo-Hopi Indian Committee, and Auxiliary Board member Nancy Phillips.

The consultation focused on ways to expand the teaching work in Indian areas and to win the goal of the Five Year Plan calling for the election of 25 Spiritual Assemblies on Indian reservations.

The conference prepared a series of recommendations on Indian teaching for the National Assembly and the National Teaching Committee. The group met briefly with the National Spiritual Assembly on Sunday, March 30.

Their recommendations will be studied closely by the National Assembly in future meetings, the Secretary of the National Assembly said.

In opening the conference, Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman of the National Assembly, described how mankind had at first lived in isolation, showing hostility to strangers. “Then in the nineteenth century, Baha’u’llah came, saying that separation and division were to end,” he said. “He told us to live like members of one family.

“Unfortunately, we must look at what mankind has done to itself. Look at what people have done to one another all through history. We are all so different, yet, if you could go into the mountains and see all the different streams, you would realize that they are all flowing into one ocean.

“In the same way,” Dr. Kazemzadeh continued, “we are now leaving that age of separation and entering the age of unity. . . . Our task as Bahá’ís is to spread out across this country and be the shock troops working in this front-line area of establishing unity. In your work with the North American Indians, a way must be found to convey the teachings of

Ben Kahn, John Cook and Wayne Steffes follow the discussion intently.
Around the World

Many children were in the group of pioneers (shown above) attending the Pioneer Training Institute the weekend of April 4 at the House of Worship, Wilmette.

Bahá'u'lláh so that they know that this religion belongs to them and that their own future in it has been predicted.

A general over-view of Indian teaching in this country was given by Mrs. Phillips, who shared stories of the difficulties faced by the first believers involved in Indian teaching.

"The Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins and Ethel Murray are among those who have set us an example to follow," she said. "Their work was historic, helping to bring into being the first all-Indian Local Spiritual Assembly and, in the case of Mrs. Murray, living on a reservation and serving in every way she could the needs of the Indians around her."

A tape recording of a talk given by the Hand of the Cause Dorothy Baker, made at Ridván, 1953, was played for the symposium. In the recording Mrs. Baker refers to the great emphasis the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, placed upon teaching American Indians, and urged the believers to become involved more directly with Indians and attract them to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

"At the age of 11 years, it was my privilege to recognize Bahá'u'lláh," said Benjamin Kahn, the chairman of the Navajo-Hopi Teaching Committee. He then described what stimulated him to accept the teachings for this New Day and his hope for the knowledge of this to reach all Indians.

During the last session Sunday morning, the National Spiritual Assembly joined the symposium and listened quietly as recommendations were made. At the closing of the session participants affirmed their agreement with the suggestion of National Spiritual Assembly member Franklin Kahn, that we teach Indians, as well as all people, by "sharing our love and being Bahá'ís."

Pioneer institute held during snowstorm

In spite of a sudden blizzard which brought Chicago traffic to a halt and closed O'Hare airport for twenty-four hours, forty-two prospective pioneers arrived at the appointed time to attend a Pioneer Training Institute at the House of Worship in Wilmette, beginning Thursday evening, April 3, and concluding Sunday afternoon, April 6. The Hand of the Cause Khádem, National Assembly members Daniel Jordan and Charlotte Linfoot, together with members of the National Center staff and Bahá'ís from the Wilmette area, served as teachers at the institute.

Among those attending were two citizens of foreign countries who are now returning to their native lands as pioneers: Gunnar Sveindal Jr., of Moss, Norway, and Heriberto Moncada, of Siquatepeque, Honduras, and now returning to the capital city of Tegucigalpa.

According to Janet Rubenstein, secretary of the International Goals Committee, this fortunate occurrence has filled two goals otherwise difficult to win, due to increasing restrictions on working permits for foreigners in overseas countries.

Comments of those attending, as the Institute drew to a close, indicated the importance of the carefully-planned agenda.

One pioneer who had had to leave a post but is now returning to the pioneering field said the meetings were so valuable that, had they been held before his first pioneering venture, he might not have had to leave his post. Another pioneer said:

"I know when I am in my new country and faced with difficulties that I can't predict, hearing this week-end stories of the earlier pioneers, like Ella Bailey, will help me to stay at my post."

Still another exultant Bahá'í, emerging from a particularly long session, said: "All the little points that are being covered here, like the question of whether to stand or sit at a public meeting where you are the speaker, is helping us to think about the customs of our goal countries and to try to find out what is appropriate behavior there."

Gunnar Sveindal, who came to this country to study chiropractic, always intended to return home with a service he felt was needed in Norway. In Davenport, Iowa, he roomed with a Bahá'í who invited him last summer to go on an eight-thousand mile teaching trip with him and meet the Bahá'ís of America.

"I could never tell you what that trip meant to me," said Mr. Sveindal, when interviewed between sessions of the institute. "We stayed in many different places, met Bahá'ís of all different races, and I learned something of what oneness means. There is something the same in all Bahá'ís, the same spirit. When we came to the House of Worship at the end of the trip, I knew I had to be a Bahá'í!"

What Mr. Sveindal did not know was that the International Goals Committee was searching for a pioneer who could support himself in Norway. When news came to the Committee that Mr. Sveindal had completed his studies and was preparing to go back, he was invited to the institute.

The youngest of four children, Mr.
Sveindal looks forward to discussing the Faith with his parents, brothers and sisters, as well as becoming acquainted with the Baha'is of Norway. “I look forward especially to meeting Amelia Bowman in Stavanger,” he added, referring to a pioneer who has been at her European post since early in the second Seven Year Plan.

For Heriberto Moncada, concern about general conditions within his own country, Honduras, led him to do volunteer work for several years for the Red Cross before coming to America. In Chicago, through a friend, he learned of a beautiful building on the North shore and went to see it for himself.

“From that day, when I walked through the House of Worship,” he recalls, “I began studying the Writings. I knew this was true. For eleven months, I attended the Sunday services. One day the speaker told about having been to Central America. Afterwards, she spoke with me and asked if I were a Baha'i. When I said no one had invited me, she did so and that day I enrolled.”

Now, all the experiences in Mr. Moncada's life in Honduras before coming to America have a new meaning.

“There are many people I want to see again and tell about this beautiful Faith,” he said. “My people have suffered a great deal and I want them to be happy, as I have been made happy by the coming of Baha'u'llah.”

With almost one year of the Five Year Plan completed, this institute demonstrated the vitality of the American community in responding to fill the goals set by the Universal House of Justice. Many left saying, “I couldn't have missed it!” One pioneer telephoned from the airport, the day after the institute, to report as he left the country that his sister and brother-in-law had entered the Faith the previous evening. “I was so happy about the institute and I told them all about it. Now they are Baha'is!”

Those leaving for their posts include: Reuben and Bea Busby, Violet Clark, Dale and Nahid Eng, Ronald and Giel Goldman, Francis and Norma Jordan, Emily Kramer, John and Patricia Lang, Michael and Kay Maloney, Dale and Jeanne Morrow, Terry and Liz McAtee, Mary Jane Nelson, Robert and Gwen Palmer, Marilyn Smith, Gunnar Sveindal, Jr., Donald Thompson, Daniel and Pam Wegener, Joseph and Heather Wissler, Clark and Betty Cooper, Lori Reida Doss, Penny Walker, Beth Dickey Maglothin, Gary and Elaine Hogenson, James and Christine Wonders, Jean Harris, Steve and Sherman Waite, Heriberto Moncada, and Susan Isaacs.

**Youth project held at national center**

Twelve Baha'i youth participated in the second work/study project in recent months at the National Baha'i Center in Wilmette, Illinois, March 24-April 14.

The volunteers, from as far away as Massachusetts and California, and from as near as Chicago, spent part of their time working in the offices at the National Center, and part studying Baha'i administration.

The Hand of the Cause Dhikr'ullah Khadem spent an afternoon with the volunteers. His presentation centered on the significance of Baha'u'llah's Tablet of Carmel and the formation of the Universal House of Justice.

Among the classroom instructors were the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the National Assembly, Glenford Mitchell and Charlotte Linfoot, and Gary Worth, chairman of the National Youth Committee, the sponsor of the program.

The youth received a special guided tour of the House of Worship. They attended a Naw-Ruz party in Wilmette, and participated in firesides and other teaching events.

**Baha'i musicians to meet in Utah**

A meeting of Baha'i musicians will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 8-15.

The meeting, sponsored by the Utah District Teaching Committee, will give Baha'i musicians an opportunity to become acquainted with one another, and to exchange information and resources.

This conference of musicians will end with two public concerts in Salt Lake City. The local Assembly has scheduled a musical proclamation in the downtown area on the evening of June 13. On June 14, Saturday, the Baha'i Club at the University of Utah will sponsor a proclamation concert on campus.

During the week seminars and workshops on music and related subjects will be conducted. Each attending musician will have an opportunity to perform at a local fireside or teaching event in the area.
The dedication of the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the West

By Bruce Whitmore

The first rays of morning light penetrated the majestic, lacy dome and poured down through the vast spaces of the auditorium, creating a scene of unsurpassed beauty. Everything was in readiness. The fifty years of toil were ended. Gone were the workmen, the scaffolding and concrete forms, the ladders, hammers, and other tools that had given birth to a brilliant architectural gem. Outside, rows of newly planted Chinese Junipers, lining the just completed walkways and gardens, swayed gently in the breeze.

The midpoint in the second of three Holy Years (1944, 1953, and 1963) had passed and the first Bahá’í House of Worship of the West was about to be dedicated. For months Shoghi Effendi had been preparing the Bahá’ís for this Holy Year—the Centenary Celebration of the commencement of Bahá’u’lláh’s Prophetic Mission—about which he had written:

The beginning of the year Nine occurred about two months after His imprisonment in that dungeon. We do not know the exact time He received this first intimation. . . . We therefore regard the entire year Nine as a Holy Year. . . . This means our Centenary Year of Celebration will be from October, 1952 to October, 1953.

This unique event, the centenary of which is to be befittingly celebrated, . . . throughout the Bahá’í world, is none other than the “Year Nine”, anticipated 2,000 years ago as the ‘third woe’ by St. John the Divine . . . specifically mentioned and extolled by the Herald of the Bahá’í Dispensation in His Writings, and eulogized by both the Founder of our Faith and the Center of His Covenant. . . . In that year, while the Blessed Beauty lay in chains and fetters, in that dark and pestilential Pit, ‘the breezes of the All-Glorious’, as He Himself described it, ‘were wafted’ over Him. There, whilst His neck was weighted down by the Qarâ-Gulâr, His feet in stocks, breathing the fetid air of the Siyâh-Chál, He dreamed His dream and heard ‘on every side’, ‘exalted words’, and His ‘tongue recited’ words that ‘no man could bear to hear’. ²

The months preceding the start of the
centenary year were marked by renewed activity amongst the Covenant-breakers in the Holy Land; activity which resulted in absolute defeat of their painstaking efforts, and which demonstrated once again, at the opening hour of this hundredth year, the unchallengeable power of God's Covenant.

From the moment of the Blessed Beauty's Ascension, the Mansion and Shrine at Bahjí had been in the possession of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's half-brother, Mirzá Muhammad-Alí, even though Bahá'u'lláh's Will gave the greater share of ownership to the Master. Most of the members of Bahá'u'lláh's family, filled with jealousy, animosity and an unquenchable desire for power, had joined Muhammad-Alí in opposing the Master.

Isolated in 'Akka with His sister, His wife, His four daughters, and an old uncle, He was even prevented from entering the Shrine of His Father. There were times when He stood on the plain, and performed the devotions of visitation from a distance. Mirzá Muhammad-Alí and his associates... thronged the upper veranda of the Mansion and hurled insults at 'Abdu'l-Bahá and those faithful to Him whenever they came to pray at the spot where the human temple of Bahá'u'lláh had been laid to rest.

The Covenant-breakers lived in the Mansion for forty years, until the Guardian in 1932, troubled greatly by the vast disrepair of the buildings, convinced Muhammad-Alí to vacate the Mansion and allow the Bahá'ís to restore it. When the work was completed, the Guardian invited the British District Commissioner to visit the Mansion. As a result of this visit the building was designated a Bahá'í Holy Place, and the Guardian was named its custodian, thus preventing the Covenant-breakers from re-establishing residency.

During the next several years, other buildings, including a ruined blacksmith's shop and an old stable, were removed and the area beautified. In December 1951 the Guardian directed that a small, dilapidated, one-story building be demolished to enhance the beauty of the sacred surroundings. The Covenant-breakers, owning one-sixth of this building, chose again to create mischief by unjustly accusing Shoghi Effendi of denying them their rights. For nearly six months they pursued every legal recourse in an attempt to discredit the Guardian. The International Bahá'í Council, established by the Guardian in January 1951 as the forerunner of The Universal House of Justice, later summarized the tense series of events:

"It would be no exaggeration to say that the entire course of the case was providential; and indeed all those here had the feeling that from beginning to end, it was pursuing a plan which no one could check or interfere with. Over and over again, when it seemed that the case would be dropped or settled out of Court or brought before the Judge and speedily dismissed, or the demolition Stay removed pending a hearing, or that the ruins would be torn down because the

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum represented the Guardian at the dedication ceremony and presented his message to the historic gathering.

Twelve Hands of the Cause of God attended the dedication ceremony, including five from the cradle of the Faith. Among them was the Hand of the Cause Táhirih Samandari, who had been in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh as a young man.

One view of the completely filled auditorium.
Crowds stream from the House of Worship. The public dedication ceremony was held three times on May 2, 1953, during which the auditorium was filled to capacity. Hundreds of people had to be turned away.

proper Civil authority had issued a demolition order, at the last moment, everything would go awry and the case would continue, growing and growing in importance, and going to ever higher official levels until it reached the Prime Minister himself. In fact, it gathered itself up like a big summer thunder cloud, and when it burst, crashed with full force on the heads of those who have disputed Bahá'u'lláh's instructions, the Successorship of His beloved Son, the Will and Testament, and the Guardianship, for sixty years. 4

Seven days after the case was settled, all traces of the building were gone. It was replaced by a beautiful garden with marble vases and ornamental eagles, cypress trees and flowers, lamp posts and pebbled walks. The garden's gate, forming the new entryway to the Holy Court and the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, seemed to symbolize the Faith's victory over a hundred years of oppression, and its entrance into a new stage of development.

Early in 1952 Shoghi Effendi had announced that four intercontinental teaching conferences—the first ever held—would be staged on the continents of Africa, America, Europe, and Asia during the Holy Year to inaugurate the “long anticipated intercontinental stage in administrative evolution Faith . . . “5 The second of these, involving all republics of North and South America, was scheduled to coincide with the Temple dedication.

On the opening day of the week-long American Jubilee Celebration, April 29, 1953, a special bond between East and West which had developed for many years through a unique relationship between the Mother Temple and the Shrine of the Báb, was further strengthened. The Guardian cabled participants in that celebration that the final phase of construction had been initiated that very day by the erection of the scaffolding for tiling the dome. The first 44 of the 12,000 gilded tiles that would be used to cover the dome had been placed in permanent position. During a moving ceremony, the cablegram said, he had reverently placed a “fragment plaster ceiling Báb's prison cell castle Mâh-Kû beneath gilded tiles . . . “6

That bond had been formed as early as 1909, when the election of the first Bahá'í Temple Unity Executive Board providentially coincided with the Master's laying of the precious remains of the Báb in His Shrine. It had been strengthened during the 1944 Holy Year when the Guardian announced to the Centennial Convention, gathered to celebrate the conclusion of the first Bahá'í century and the completion of the Temple's exterior ornamentation, that the Báb's sepulcher would be finally completed through the erection of an arcade and superstructure of great beauty.7

Although the time for the dedication ceremonies in Wilmette had been chosen far in advance, the Guardian had not initially intended that the work on the Shrine of the Báb should have progressed as far as it had; but, in August 1951, he had cabled that the deteriorating international situation at that time impelled him to immediately contract for the cutting of the stone for the octagon and dome sections.8

The Jubilee week, the pinnacle of the year-long festivities, included not only the teaching conference and dedication ceremonies, but also the Forty-Fifth National
A further demonstration of the interesting relationship between the Shrine of the Báb and the Mother Temple of the West can be seen in these two photographs of architectural drawings made by the Hand of the Cause William Sutherland Maxwell. Mr. Maxwell submitted the drawing on the left to the competition for Temple designs held in New York City in 1919. The design on the right is for the completion of the Shrine of the Báb. The Guardian notified the Baha’i world of the completion of this enterprise in October 1953.

Convention. The Convention, held at Chicago’s Medinah Temple, occupied the first two-and-one-half days of the proceedings. On the afternoon of the third day the believers traveled to the Temple site for a private dedication and simple service commemorating the Master’s visit in 1912 and His laying of the cornerstone.

Later that evening the Baha’is as well as several hundred residents of Chicago’s northern suburbs gathered at a nearby high school auditorium to hear of the history, architecture, and purpose of the Temple. This was one of four public meetings held during the week at which lectures were delivered not only by well-known Baha’is, but by noted non-Baha’is as well, including Paul Hutchinson, editor of the Christian Century, an influential Protestant periodical, and Norman Cousins, editor of The Saturday Review, America’s oldest literary magazine.

The public dedication was held the following afternoon, May 2. The sky was overcast though it was hardly noticed by the great number of people who stood waiting, filling the Temple steps and entrance walkway as well as the sidewalk beyond. The morning had witnessed great activity in the auditorium as the Northwestern A Cappella Choir and the readers had endured a lengthy rehearsal so that cameras and recording equipment could capture perfectly this historic event.

As the doors were opened and people quietly filed in, reporters made their way to the gallery where they stood on wooden chairs to peer over the edge at the crowd below. Microphones were placed in front of the lectern while beside it stood huge bouquets of red roses. In the front rows sat twelve of the Hands of the Cause of God: ’Amatu'l-Baha Ruhíyyih Khánum, Shu’á’u’lláh ‘Alá’í, Dorothy Baker, Músá Banání, Amelia Collins, ‘Alí Akbar Furú’tán, Horace Holley, Dhibru’lláh Khádem, Tarázu’lláh Samandari, Siegfried Schopflocher, Corinne True, and Valíyílláh Varqá.

Others were present who would later be appointed to serve as Hands of the Cause. One was Paul Haney, then Chairman of the National Assembly of the United States; another, William Sears, who wrote a moving account of that day’s events:

Across the aisle could be seen the glowing and triumphant faces of those apostles of Baha’u’lláh who had stood upon this same plot of ground with ‘Abdu’l-Baha on that cold, windy May day forty-one years ago. They had watched their beloved Master dedicate this spot, then an empty, open field, to the welfare of all humanity. The real Temple, He had told them, was the Word of God; for to it all humanity must turn. Then He looked up, smiled, and assured them that “in the unseen world, the Temple is already built.

Every moment inside that dome of exquisite beauty and majesty, on the day of its dedication, was enriched by memories of the love and sacrifice that had raised this precious jewel of God. From a lofty gallery, the unseen choir filled the Temple with ... music and words.

The music soared up to the dome of the Temple and departed. Then were heard the first spoken words, delivered by Ruhíyyih Khánum, the representative of the Guardian of the Baha’i Faith.
"On behalf of the Guardian of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, I have the great honor of dedicating this first Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of the Western World to public worship....

I greet and welcome you on behalf of the Guardian of our Faith within these walls, and invite you to share with us the words recorded in the Sacred Scriptures which we believe to be the repositories of the eternal and fundamental truths revealed by God in various ages, for the guidance and salvation of all mankind."

As the address of Dedication ended, a quiet settled over the assembled throng. Through the doorway to the East could be seen the blue waters of Lake Michigan rushing toward the Temple in great white waves, bowing and prostrating themselves upon the sand. Through the doors to the South were visible the throngs of people streaming toward the Temple. The clouds, which had threatened to shut out the sun, parted and down through the glass dome came the flooding sunlight as the first of the Holy Books was opened.9

The service was conducted three times, each filling the auditorium to its 1200 capacity. Many hundreds more had to be turned away. Although it is not possible to obtain an accurate count of the general public who attended, particularly since many Bahá'ís came who were not registered at the Medinah Temple, a reasonable estimate places the non-Bahá'í attendance at slightly more than 2000 people.

Messages of greeting poured in, including many from prominent public leaders:

The Bahá'í House of Worship... is a structure of great beauty, as millions who had seen it know. But perhaps not so many realize its symbolic significance. It teaches the essential unity of mankind under one God, irrespective of the various sects and creeds that give expression to the various faiths. There is a basic wholeness among people the world around. There are spiritual ties that unite them in the brotherhood of man... The important thing is recognition of the essential unity of mankind under one God. That is a force which cuts across politics, trade routes, racial groupings the world around. It can be made a powerful moral force in the practical affairs of the world if there is a dedication to the cause—the kind of dedication that went into the long and difficult task of constructing the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette.10

(signed) Justice William O. Douglas Supreme Court of the United States

On occasion of dedication of Bahá'í House of Worship I wish to convey to you sincere greetings and congratulations of State of Israel. Israel people and government, harboring in their country the Bahá'í spiritual Center, have always cherished cordial, friendly relations with Guardian of that Center and all Bahá'ís. Ideals of peace and brotherliness underlying Bahá'í Faith are dear and sacred to Israel, ancient and revived alike. Wish you every success.11

(signed) Abba Eban Ambassador of Israel in the United States

Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, then director and counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, praised the Bahá'ís for offering "full religious fellowship to all without distinctions based upon race and color", while Mr. Roy Wilkins, administrator for the NAACP, wrote that "Our poor world is in great need of the deep faith and sincerity and unostentatious practices of the Bahá'ís."12

Clergymen and educators also sent moving messages and Ruth Bryan Rhode, former United States Ambassador to Denmark, wrote, "I join in spirit with the Assembly whose aspiration is the unification of mankind. May the beauty of the edifice and its symbolism carry inspiration in wider and wider circles around our troubled earth."13

The Faith gained significant prestige through unprecedented interest shown by the media. Five-hundred-seventy-five newspapers in 397 cities carried articles on the dedication and Centenary celebration, including the Washington Post, Seattle Times, Boston Advertiser, Cincinnati Enquirer, Minneapolis Star, Los Angeles Times and the Detroit News.

Universal International covered the dedication in its Universal Newsreel, re-
marked the launching of the Ten Year Global Crusade as well. It was held in the Medinah Temple in Chicago.

leased through film exchanges in 31 cities and 38 foreign countries. A series of 13 radio programs were broadcast in many cities and were also beamed by World Wide Broadcasting Corporation to Europe, the Near East and Latin America. A film-short was broadcast on 50 television stations while three major railroads serving Chicago—the Rock Island, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul and the Santa Fe—distributed booklets to all passengers throughout the centenary which pictured the Temple on the cover and carried a major article about it inside.

The day after the dedication, May 3, marked the beginning of "the most distinguished of the four Intercontinental Teaching Conferences", the "most momentous gathering held since the close of the Heroic Age of the Faith." In referring to communities of the Western Hemisphere, and in particular to the United States community, the Guardian declared: "Standing on the threshold of a ten-year long, world-embracing spiritual crusade these Communities are now being called upon by virtue of the

weighty pronouncement recorded in the Most Holy Book, and in direct consequence of the revelation of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, to play a preponderating role in the systematic propagation of the Faith, in the course of the coming decade, which will, God willing, culminate in the spiritual conquest of the entire planet." That afternoon the more than 2300 Bahá'ís from 33 countries traveled for the third time to the Temple to view a sacred gift sent by the Guardian. It was again cold and windy and people huddled together on the steps for warmth. As each person entered through the glass doors, Rúhíyyih Khánum anointed their hands with fragrant rose oil, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá had done in 1912.

At the opposite side of the auditorium the friends slowly and quietly passed by two tables. On the first rested a portrait of the Báb, a gift from the Guardian to the House of Worship in 1944. On the second was a colored photographically reproduced portrait of Bahá'u'lláh when He was a young man. The original portrait, a likeness of which had never before left the Holy Land, was painted by a Christian artist in Baghdad when He was in His late thirties or early forties.

There were many other events during the remaining days of the conference which made lasting impressions on the Bahá'ís—such as the unveiling of the design for the future House of Worship to be built on Mount Carmel, the pledges of 150 believers to forsake their homes to pioneer, and the unprecedented joint meeting of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States, Canada, Central America, and South America at which plans for cooperation during the Ten Year Crusade were developed.

One of the greatest hours in the history of the Temple and the Faith had passed, but the events and the significance of that hour will be extolled for years to come.

4. The International Bahá'í Council, as quoted in "Progress at the World Center", Bahá'í News, no. 258, August 1952, p. 4.
7. Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í News, no. 169, July 1944, p. 3.
11. Abba Eban, Jubilee Celebration, p. 12.
16. Shoghi Effendi, Jubilee Celebration, p. 27.
In Part I of this article, published in the March 1975 edition of Bahá’í News, Mr. Garlington sketched the early history of the Faith in India beginning in the time of the Báb with the Persian pioneers to the subcontinent. He tells of the travels of such distinguished teachers as Jamal Effendi, Siyyid Musta’fá Rúmí, Lua Getsinger, and Martha Root, of the birth of the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma in 1923, and of the teaching plans carried out under the guidance of the Guardian in subsequent years.

Part II begins in 1938 with the launching of the Six Year Plan, outlines the process which led to the tremendous upsurge of enrollments in the sixties, and concludes with the present day.

When Shoghi Effendi initiated the Seven Year Plan in the United States in 1937, the Indian community, meeting in convention in Karachi, suggested to the National Spiritual Assembly that a similar project be started in India and Burma. The National Spiritual Assembly resolved to undertake a Six Year Plan which would commence in 1938. However, it was not until 1940 that any real action was taken, and this was largely due to lack of funds. It was the Guardian who finally set the project in motion by earmarking money for the creation of a special teaching fund to help finance the plan. He encouraged the Indian and Burmese friends to contribute generously to this Fund also.30

The Six Year Plan contained several distinguishing characteristics which were not found in previous teaching plans. As we have seen, until this time, most of the teaching activities had involved lecture tours in coordination with various reform movements such as the Arya Samaj, the Brahma Samaj, and the Theosophical Society. In the past there had been very little contact with sections of society outside the intellectual circles. The new Plan attempted to change these policies. No longer were only the large cities visited, efforts were also made to hold meetings independent of other groups in smaller cities and towns. More importantly, the emphasis was shifted from teaching tours to having Bahá’ís establish residence throughout the country. Individual Bahá’ís now left their homes and moved to areas where they could address a larger segment of the population. Hence, a conscious effort was made to introduce the movement into new localities and to direct its teaching activities towards different social strata.

Once under way the new Plan produced immediate results. By 1941 three new local Assemblies had been formed: one in Hyderabad, one in Kotah, and one in Bangalore. Shoghi Effendi, as was his custom, wired the Indian community congratulating them on their achievements and urging them to continue their efforts.31 The next year saw three more local Assemblies established and Bahá’í groups were formed in Secunderabad, Belgaum, and Ujjain. Thus, by the time of the fourteenth annual Bahá’í Convention held in Poona in 1943, eight new Assemblies had been formed. The rigorous teaching efforts of the Indian Bahá’ís continued during the final year of the Plan so that by the conclusion of the Plan in 1944 sixteen new assemblies had been established in the subcontinent.32

The achievements of the Six Year Plan encouraged the Indian Bahá’í community...
to launch another teaching campaign in April of 1946. A month before the new Plan's inception Shoghi Effendi, writing to the National Spiritual Assembly of India from Haifa, remarked.

The believers in India have set an inspiring example to their fellow believers throughout the East, and even to the great mass of their co-religionists in Bahá'u'lláh's native land, and have abundantly demonstrated to them all, what organized activity, boldly conceived and soundly and energetically conducted can achieve when directed and animated by the enabling influences and the generative spirit of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. 33

Although marred by the disruptive events brought upon the subcontinent by the partition of Pakistan and India in July of 1947, the Four Year Plan met with much the same success as had the previous Six Year Plan. By April of 1947 another eight Local Spiritual Assemblies had been founded and the same number of groups had been established. In addition, each summer, Bahá'í schools for both adults and children were organized. Due to these encouraging figures, the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma received nearly 600 pounds sterling from National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í world to finance yet another teaching project. Thus, in the year 1950 Indian embarked on its third successive teaching plan.

One of the major accomplishments of India's third teaching project occurred in the area of translation and publications. The language problem had always been a major roadblock for Bahá'í teachers in India. At this time, the majority of Bahá'í teachers in the country came from Persian backgrounds or, in the case of overseas teachers, from English-speaking backgrounds, which prevented their direct contact with the masses of Indians who were neither literate nor conversant in either of these two languages. During the third plan a determined effort was made to bridge the communication gap by translating publications into as many as fifteen different languages. As a result, over 40,000 books and pamphlets were sold and distributed. 34

Also, between the years 1951 and 1953 eight new local Assemblies were established. Thus, by the end of 1953 there were approximately 700 Bahá'ís in India. In October of 1953 the fourth and final Intercontinental Teaching Conference, which had been designed to inaugurate the Ten Year Crusade, was convened in New Delhi. The National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan, and Burma 35 hosted the gathering. Other participating National Spiritual Assemblies included the United States, Canada, Central and South America, Persia, Iraq, and Australia and New Zealand. Mason Remey, the Guardian's representative at the conference, delivered Shoghi Effendi's message which enumerated 41 new territories and islands within the Asia Teaching Mission to be opened to the Faith during the Crusade. In this message the Guardian said of the Asiatic Continent,

"The Asiatic continent, 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; . . . such a continent, so privileged among its sister continents and yet so long and so sadly tormented, now stands at the hour of the launching of a world-encompassing Crusade, on the threshold of an era that may recall, in its glory and ultimate repercussions, the great periods of spiritual revival which, from the dawn of recorded history have, at various stages in the revelation of God's purpose for mankind, illuminated the path of the human race. 36

The 450 Bahá'ís present at this conference not only outlined strategies for the upcoming crusade, they also engaged in a program of public relations. A public reception was held in one of Delhi's large hotels and was attended by over 1000 people. Delegates were also sent to meet with government leaders including the president and vice-president of India as well as the prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. When the closing prayer of the final session had been chanted on October 15, 1953, the Indian community once again found itself embarking on another teaching project; one, which, by the time of its completion in 1963, would have completely transformed both in numbers and religious background of its adherents, the composition of the Indian Bahá'í community.

The fifties, while not seeing any outstanding numerical increase for the Bahá'í community in India, contained two important events of which we should take note. One was the separation, in 1957 and 1959 of the India, Pakistan, and Burmese National Spiritual Assembly into three distinct bodies; Pakistan received an independent National Spiritual Assembly in
1957 and Burma became separate in 1959. The other, although a rather minor occurrence at the time, proved to be an omen concerning the future direction the Faith would take in India. It involved a teaching conference held in the village of Rampur, near Benares, where several villagers had earlier declared. This was the first village conference to be held in India. Several recommendations came from this conference which were important in terms of their future implications. First, it was requested that the National Spiritual Assembly print up simple leaflets in Hindi to be distributed in villages near Rampur. Second, it was suggested that study classes in Hindi be established in the village of Rampur. And, finally, it was recommended that the Hands of the Cause interact with Rampur village Bahá'ís in such a way that “they may participate in their religious festivals and thus create an atmosphere of friendliness.”

The modern period of Bahá'í history in India began in the year 1961. In that year, the Hand of the Cause, Shú'íyá'ulláh Khádem, while making one of his frequent trips to the subcontinent, decided that a village conference, similar to the one that took place in Rampur, should be held in Central India. As a result, in January of that year, a conference was held in the village of Sangimanda located in Shahpur district of Madhya Pradesh in the region traditionally known as Malwa. At the conclusion of the conference a great many villagers enrolled in the Faith, and word of this occurrence spread to nearby villages. Within the next few years a great tide of villagers declared their belief in Bahá'í. In other areas of India, the Bahá'í communities, having taken note of the occurrence in Malwa, began directing their teaching activities towards village communities. As a result, in the following years, the numbers of believers and Local Spiritual Assemblies in India mushroomed. A message from the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land to the National Conventions of the Bahá’í World in April of 1962 reflected this increase: “India, one of the first countries in the world to receive the light of a newly-born Revelation has, during the past year, witnessed a tide of mass conversion not only wholly unprecedented in that country but without parallel anywhere in the entire world during the last one hundred years of Bahá’í history.”

In 1961 there were 270 local assemblies in India; by 1973 the number had increased to 4369.

The natural question which arises when one examines these figures is, “what was the cause of this sudden upsurge?” In many instances the question is not an easy one to answer. Many of the Indian Bahá’ís claim that the recent growth was a sprouting of seeds that had been planted by earlier teachers. While this answer may contain some grain of truth, it seems evident however, that there were certain new approaches and concepts introduced into teaching activities during these years that set them apart from earlier programs.

The most obvious change was that after 1961 teaching activities were for the most part directed towards the village population of the subcontinent. The Rampur conference in the fifties had been the forerunner of this shift in emphasis and direction. With the Sangimanda conference the Bahá’í teaching mission in India was converted from primarily an urban movement to a ruraly-oriented crusade. As a result, the Indian Bahá’í community became known throughout the Bahá’í world as a “mass teaching” community, that is, a community whose resources were directed towards teaching the Bahá’í Faith to the rural unschooled masses of humanity. In fact, India was the first country in the world since the time of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh to orient itself towards the masses.

In conjunction with this shift in goal direction, the community, out of necessity, began to revise its teaching methods. In the past there had been little attempt to relate the Bahá’í Faith to the Hindu tradition. By and large, before the mass teaching era, Bahá’í contact in India was more closely allied with Islam than with Hinduism. This development was only natural. The early pioneers to India had come from Persian backgrounds and were more apt to communicate with individuals who shared in a similar cultural heritage. Thus, in terms of language, theology, and cultural symbols, the Bahá’í Faith had much more in common with Indian Islam than it did with Hinduism. In the sixties a conscious effort was made to relate the Bahá’í message to the Hindu tradition and if the Bahá’í Faith was to speak to these people it would have to do so in concepts and symbols which they could understand. For example, in Sunni Islamic theology it is the Mihdí whose return will mark the coming of the Day of Judgement. The Bahá’í Faith had already identified the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh with this cultural-religious symbol. Needless to say, in Hinduism this symbol had no meaning. However, in Hindu cosmology there is a concept of the sacred manifesting itself into the world in order to destroy evildoers and
In 1973 Bahá'í is of the Surat district in Western India gathered at Broach for the election of a delegate to the National Convention.

to re-establish righteousness. This is the concept of the Avatar, most succinctly elaborated in the Bhagavad Gita. In order to more adequately communicate their message Bahá'í teachers now began to speak of Bahá'u'lláh in terms of the Avatar. He was identified with that One whom as Krishna explains to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, ‘Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and there is exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth; for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age.’

Another innovation which was introduced during this period, and one which may have been partly responsible for the increase of believers in the sixties, was the opening of three teaching institutes in Indore, Mysore, and Gwalior. The main function of the institutes was to familiarize new converts with all aspects of the Faith and also to train circuit teachers. In regard to the latter, courses were given in techniques of village teaching whereby trainees were instructed in methods of explaining both the basic teaching and institutional structure of the Faith to unschooled rural villagers. For added incentive examinations were given at the end of the training period. As a result of this new training program, Bahá'í teachers were better equipped to relate the Bahá'í message to the Hindu tradition.

Of course, the efforts of individual Bahá'í teachers during these years cannot be underestimated. The upsurge in enthusiasm which became evident after the first signs of mass conversion in Malwa in 1961 and which became a great flood by the time of the second Intercontinental Conference held in New Delhi in October of 1967, where the assemblage of nearly 3,000 Bahá'ís from throughout the world, a great number of these being new believers from Indian villages in Madhya Pradesh, seemed to boost the confidence of the Indian Bahá'í community, and was a main factor in the sudden spread of the movement. Men and women who were before hesitant to move in rural areas now began to actively teach this segment of society. The National Spiritual Assembly of India in a newsletter dispatched in April 1963 spoke of this new dedication:

There is a young man who is going to many parts of the country with his car, leaving behind his young wife and children and aunt to look after his business, just to serve the Cause of God for the love of the beloved Guardian. There are many like him who have left their jobs — whether in business or the medical profession to move among the people. There are a few young men who have given up their college studies for one year to teach the Faith, saying that the studies could wait but the Crusade of the beloved Guardian would not last forever. These are a few examples of the upsurge of enthusiasm which have made our previous exploits pale. Today there are 4,412 Local Spiritual Assemblies in India, and The Universal House of Justice has set a goal of doubling this figure within the next five years. The Bahá'í community is no longer unknown in Indian society. Since the time of its inception in India it has increased from a handful of believers to an ever-growing national community. It has passed through several stages of development during the course of its history in the subcontinent. Originally it was composed of a small band of Persian immigrants, it subsequently developed into a small yet internationally linked group of educated elite, and finally into a community characterized by its large number of unschooled rural constituents. Today the Bahá'í Administrative Order in India is involved in a dual process of both educating new declarants in the various aspects of Bahá'í life, and continuing to spread the message of Bahá'u'lláh. The process is slow and often arduous, but the Bahá'í teachers are dedicated, for they believe in their hearts that in India “not hundreds, not thousands, but literally millions are ready to accept Bahá'u'lláh if you will only tell them He has come to them, for them, in this glorious new age in which we are living.”

35. With the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma became the National Spiritual Assembly of India, Pakistan and Burma.
37. Bahá'í Newsletter of India, no. 93, March 1958, p. 3.
40. The Bhagavad Gita, IV, pp. 7-8.

April 1975/Bahá'í News 21
Bahá'í Proclamation and Deepening Film

Step by Step

An artist, a mechanic, a field laborer, an accounting manager, a policeman, a hospital administrator — what have these people in common? They’re Bahá’ís and they appear in a new Bahá’í film, Paso a Paso, produced by Kiva Films.

The film, which is titled Step by Step in English, depicts the growth of the Bahá’í Faith among Indians, blacks and Latins in Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama. Unified by their common belief in Bahá’u’lláh and His Message, these persons comment on their faith and what it means to them.

These native teachers share their views on such widely varying topics as prophecy, the unity of mankind, world peace, universal governing institutions and a divine civilization. Simply, clearly and directly they discuss how the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh is unifying all mankind, step by step, through the infusion of Divine Love.

Feasts, the local spiritual Assembly, elections and other aspects of Bahá’í administration are explained.

In addition, the 29-minute, color-and-sound film mentions ancient Mayan prophecies concerning world peace, the Return and a spiritual revival, and relates these to the newest Bahá’í House of Worship in Panama. It complements two earlier films, El Alba and The Dedication. Designed for television use, this new film is also suited to public meetings and other proclamation events. The film is also universally suitable for teaching and deepening.

How to Get the Film

To obtain rental information and purchase prices, write to your publishing trust or national Bahá’í distributor. If you do not know the name and address of the one serving your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Bahá’í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.

Specify Step by Step, Product Number 20672, for the English edition, or Paso a Paso, Product Number 20671, for the Spanish version.
The green light expedition
A journey of friendship by Rúhíyyih Khánum
to the Indian tribes of South America
Ridván message

Plan objectives present distinct, insistent challenge entire Bahá’í world

OCCASION MOST GREAT FESTIVAL WE CONTEMPLATE WITH THANKFUL HEARTS ACHIEVEMENTS FIRST YEAR FIVE YEAR PLAN ELECTION THIS RIDVÂN FIVE NEW NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES FOUR IN AFRICA ONE IN ASIA. DESPITE WORSENING PLIGHT MORIBUND CIVILIZATION EVIDENCES GATHERING CLOUDS WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION DIVINE MESSAGE BELIEVERS THROUGHOUT WORLD FORGING AHEAD ACCOMPLISHMENT GOALS. THREE HUNDRED EIGHTY-SIX PIONEERS ALREADY SETTLED ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-TWO PREPARING PROCEED POSTS. NEW WORLDWIDE TRAVEL TEACHING PROGRAM DESIGNED BY INTERNATIONAL TEACHING CENTER NOW BEING LAUNCHED BY NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES IN CONSULTATION COUNSELLORS. BELOVED HANDS CAUSE ADVANCING VANGUARD ARMY LIGHT LENDING CONSTANT LOVING GUIDANCE ENCOURAGEMENT PROTECTION FRIENDS LABORING DIVINE VINEYARD. WORLD CENTER FAITH RICHLY BLESSED THROUGH ACQUISITION HOLY HOUSE MASTER BIRTHPLACE SHOGHI EFFENDI WITHIN WALLS ‘AKKA WILL EARLY WITNESS ON CONSECRATED SOIL SLOPES MOUNT CARMEL INITIATION EXCAVATION FOUNDATIONS PERMANENT SEAT UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE AND IN ITALY SIGNATURE CONTRACT MARBLE REQUIRED MAJESTIC EDIFICE. AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE HUMAN HISTORY THREE MAJOR OBJECTIVES PLAN AND ITS SPECIFIC GOALS PRESENT DISTINCT INSISTENT CHALLENGE TO EACH INDIVIDUAL BAHA’I ADULT YOUTH CHILD TO EACH BAHA’I FAMILY TO EACH LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ABOVE ALL TO EACH LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY WHOSE DEVELOPMENT IS VITAL SUCCESS FIVE YEAR PLAN AND PROGRESSIVE UNFOLDMENT DIVINELY ORDAINED BAHA’I SOCIETY. MAY REMAINING THREE HUNDRED NINETY-FIVE PIONEERS SPEEDILY ARISE AND ARMY VOLUNTEERS RESPOND NEWLY LAUNCHED TRAVEL TEACHING PROGRAM. NATIONAL LOCAL ASSEMBLIES INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS URGED CONTRIBUTE UNSTINTINGLY TIME EFFORT OUTPOURING MATERIAL RESOURCES SUPPORT EVERY PHASE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN COMING YEAR. APPEAL BELIEVERS EVERY LAND JOIN US PRAYERS SUPPLICATION BLESSED BEAUTY GUIDE SUSTAIN PROTECT HIS DEVOTED FOLLOWERS IN THEIR DEDICATED EFFORTS PURIFY THEIR SOULS RAISE HIS BANNER SERVE HIS CAUSE.

UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Ridván 1975
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Hawaiian Islands, Papua New Guinea, Kenya, Solomon Islands

Cover photo: The “beautiful barge” on which the expedition traveled for 32 days, was powered by two dugout canoes with outboard motors. Here it journeys up the Ventuari River, a tributary of the Orinoco.
On March 12, 1975, the Hand of the Cause of God Amatu'l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum returned to Puerto Ayacucho, capital of the Federal Territory of Amazonas and principal city of the Venezuelan Frontier Region, having just completed a journey of more than a thousand miles by riverboat and dugout canoe up the Orinoco and Ventuari rivers and many of their tributaries. She had penetrated one of the few undeveloped and largely unexplored wilderness areas remaining in the world. In the course of her 32-day trip she and the seven other members of her expedition visited 38 towns, villages, and homesteads, contacting eight Indian tribes, the Guajibo, Piaroa, Maco, Puinabe, Curipaco, Makiritare, Yabarana, and Sanemá, this last tribe being part of
the Yanomamo group, the most primitive Indians in Venezuela and one of the most untouched tribal societies in Latin America. "It was a thrilling and wonderful experience," she told a group of Bahá'ís in Caracas at a Naw-Rúz gathering. "Every moment of this voyage except for the bug bites was for me an unmitigated joy. City people tend to forget they are a minority of the human race. According to United Nations statistics two-thirds of the world's population still lives in villages. If we take the premise that the Bahá'í Teachings have the remedy for the spiritual, social, intellectual, and economic problems of the world, then we have to ask ourselves when are we going to deliver this message to the other two-thirds? Very few are willing to leave the comforts of the city and go to primitive areas. The Bahá'ís are a small community. Unlike the church we do not have a great many people to call upon for this kind of service. Yet it must be done and done quickly."

It was to draw the attention of the Bahá'ís of the world to the urgency of arising and pioneering to primitive areas such as the Orinoco that Amatu'l-Bahá embarked upon this expedition. "Suppose you have two mountains," she said, explaining the plight of villagers all over the world. "Let us say that one mountain is the civilization of the future, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. And the other mountain is the culture of the primitive people. In between is the valley of disillusion, corruption, materialism, and moral degradation, the very thing that many of us highly sophisticated people are just coming out of. How can we get the primitive people, who are so spiritually sound and in many ways pure, from where they are over to the future World Order? I think it is by giving them the Bahá'í Teachings as quickly as possible. Otherwise they will have to make the long journey down into this dark valley of our present civilization which is too terrible, too difficult for many of them to survive. Many of the tribes will never come through, they will die out or be morally destroyed." Compelled by the repeated calls of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and The Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the world to arise, while there is yet time, and take the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to the far corners of the world, and by her own keen awareness of the urgent need for pioneers gained from years of extensive travel throughout Africa, South America, and Asia, Amatu'l-Bahá formulated her plans for a journey to the great Amazon River Basin. Her main purpose is to make a documentary film of some of the indigenous peoples of South America which can be shown to Bahá'ís all over the world to demonstrate the tremendous teaching opportunities and the pressing need for pioneers to respond immediately to the call of The Universal House of Justice in order to meet the goals of the present Five Year Plan. "If I," she said, "at the age of 64 can undertake such a trip, then surely the younger generation of believers can do as much."
Amatu'l-Bahá with Dr. Pablo Anduze, Governor of the Federal Territory of Amazonas, when he received her at his residence in Puerto Ayacucho.

Embarking on the Queen Mary at Venado on the Orinoco River.

While the boat goes up the river members of the expedition cook and write. Left to right: Amatu'l-Bahá, Rodney Charters, Mas'úd Khamsí, Counsellor for South America, David Walker, Mark Sadan, Leco Zamora and Nosrat Rabbani.

Rúḥíyyih Khánum sweeping the deck in the prow.

Meeting in the school room at San Vicente. Amatu'l-Bahá's talk is being translated into Spanish by Mas'úd Khamsí; Leco Zamora, Argentine pioneer to Venezuela, sits on her right. The Indian woman holding her child translates into Guajibo.
The green light expedition

Accompanying Ruḥiyih Khánum on this journey are Mas'ūd Khámsí, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for South America, and Nosrat Rabbani, a pioneer from Iran who completed her medical studies in Holland and has since been pioneering for nine years in Surinam and Curacao. Ruḥiyih Khánum also invited four filmmakers to handle the photographic documentation of her trip, Mark Sadan and David Walker of Kiva Films from the United States, Rodney Charters from New Zealand, and Anthony Worley from Brazil. As plans for the project began to unfold in the latter part of 1974 one door after another seemed to open with such marvelous ease and swiftness that Ruḥiyih Khánum has called this "The Green Light Expedition." The Universal House of Justice in a letter to her last December wrote, "It is our fervent prayer in the Holy Shrines that this great expedition which is so dear to your heart and which can have such an electrifying effect upon the believers throughout the world will continue to be confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh and showered with His blessings throughout the whole of its course."

We arrived in Puerto Ayacucho, deep in the hinterlands of Venezuela, on February 6, where our team was joined by Leco Zamora, a pioneer from Argentina and himself an Indian of the Mataco tribe. An appointment had been made for Amatu'l-Bahá to pay a courtesy call on the governor of the territory, Pablo Anduze, whom she had met eight years previously when she had made a brief visit to Puerto Ayacucho and the Orinoco River. On the evening of our arrival, accompanied by Mr. Khámsí, Dr. Rabbani, Leco Zamora and Anthony Worley, she spent almost an hour with Dr. Anduze and two English guests who were visiting him; the interview was most cordial. Although Mr. Khámsí was armed with a letter from the National Defense Department of the Ministry of War requesting that we be given every courtesy, there is no doubt that Dr. Anduze's authority was such that he could have seriously interfered with our trip had he cared to do so. Therefore Ruḥiyih Khánum felt it was essential to speak only about the purely personal aspects of her plans. She told the governor that she, as he perhaps recalled, had not been able to procure a boat to go any distance up the Orinoco at the time of her previous visit and thus had been deprived of meeting the Bahá’ís in the villages along the river. Now she had made her plans well in advance and had hired a large boat and wanted to spend several weeks going into the interior. The governor, who is very much opposed to any touristic exploitation of the Indians, asked her why she wanted to do this. She told him truthfully that it was because she loves jungles and before she died she wanted to really visit the jungle, to see it and breathe it and drink in its beauty. She told us later that she felt it was this remark that produced an instant meeting of minds, as Dr. Anduze is a great authority on the whole Amazon region and its tribal people. She made no mention of the filming aspect of our trip, since a great deal of filmmaking is done in search of the sensational or in an attitude of patronizing curiosity and Dr. Anduze has for years endeavored to protect the Indians from the wrong outside influences. Whether their rights can be protected at all is problematic because by the time we returned from our river trip a new governor had been installed.

We embarked February 9 at Venado, an hour by truck upriver from Puerto Ayacucho. Venado is the port for the entire upper Orinoco River system, and consists simply of one giant hump of rock, flat enough for our truck to drive almost up to the side of our boat for loading. Some soldiers of the National Guard went through the motions of checking us in. There is a small shop that sells soft drinks, a few huts, some dugout canoes, and occasionally a larger boat, and that is Venado, the jumping off place for the vast network of rivers beyond—so vast that when the water is high one can travel by boat all the way to the Amazon River in Brazil.

Our private river boat, which Ruḥiyih Khánum described as "a beautiful barge," was pushed by two dugout canoes with outboard motors on the back. Since it appeared to be without a name, we dubbed it the Queen Mary. We were indebted to Mr. Khámsí for having made all of the arrangements for our Venezuelan trip during a previous visit to Puerto Ayacucho in January. The boat he had secured for us was spacious enough to hold a table with benches, a small butane stove, 42 boxes of food and supplies, a dozen barrels of gasoline, two wooden lockers for storing film and sound equipment, and sleeping space for eight members of the party and three members of the crew.
Leco Zamora teaching in the Piaroa village of Caño Panaven to which the Indians themselves had invited us.

Some villages are in the jungle and one crosses bridges such as this to reach them.

The Green Light Expedition’s first home: the Orinoco boat on which we lived for 32 days.

After the meeting at Caño Panaven showing the villagers, 21 of whom accepted the Faith.

Counsellor Mas'ud Khamsi addressing a typical small village meeting.

Typical village landing stage with friendly people seeing us off.
The green light expedition

Once before, in 1968, Rúhíyyih Khánum had been to Buenos Aires Island, just across from Venado where she had visited the small community of Guajibo Bahá’ís. Leco had traveled one or two days upriver visiting the Bahá’í villages in the vicinity of Puerto Ayacucho. But to all of us the journey ahead would take us not only to areas that were entirely unknown but into situations we could not even visualize.

Though penetrated as far back as the time of the conquistadores who came in search of El Dorado, the legendary city of gold, the Orinoco River region still remains largely untouched, underdeveloped and, in the deep jungle between the rivers, even unexplored. Among the first expeditions of white men to enter the area were those of Diego de Ordaz (1531-1532) and Sir Walter Raleigh (1595), but no permanent settlements were made until the missionary efforts among the Indians began in the middle of the 18th century first by the Franciscans and later by the Jesuits.

"We think of the jungle as a terrifying place," Rúhíyyih Khánum told the Bahá’ís of Caracas, "full of snakes, wild animals, savage people, and terrible diseases. We tend to forget that God has made a beautiful world. The difference between the dangers of the jungle and the dangers of civilization are incomparable. When I was riding in a taxi today on one of these crowded highways you have here, the driver turned right around in his seat to talk to us and I was petrified. That was twice as dangerous as any snake or wild animal. In our entire trip of about 1700 kilometers (about 1000 miles) nothing happened to cause us fear.

"I am a person of the city," she continued, "but I’ve spent a great deal of time in the wilderness during the last six years. Bahá’u’lláh tells us that the city is the home of the body, but the country is the home of the soul. I have realized this on many of these trips, but particularly on this last one to the Orinoco. It is difficult to believe in God when you live in the city. That is why the cities are so full of atheists. But it is difficult not to believe in God when you live in the country."  

February and March are the end of the dry season in the Orinoco region, and the river was low. This made it necessary to travel rather slowly, picking out the channel carefully and crisscrossing the river to avoid the rocks and sand bars. Sometimes we would have to jump overboard to help the crew push when we were grounded, and sometimes we would barely inch our way up swiftly flowing rapids. In fact on one occasion Rúhíyyih Khánum in her enthusiasm, jumped overboard in all her clothes and helped push too!

"What struck me as so extraordinary," Rúhíyyih Khánum added, "is that the river system is like a living entity. You have a sense that people know what is going on all along the river, in the same way that the parts of a living body are all connected by the arteries and blood vessels. There are merchants who travel up and down the river, there is the malaria control team, there are missionaries and developers; in fact it is surprisingly inhabited. The most we ever went without seeing a house or a settlement was perhaps five hours. And everywhere we stopped the people were always friendly. Instead of being a giant snake-infested wilderness we found it to be one great village, as it were, strung out along a beautiful river."

From Venado to San Fernando de Atabapo, a distance which we covered in four days, the Orinoco forms the border between Venezuela and Colombia. On the Colombian side of the river we could see how the jungle is being cleared to make way for large cattle ranches. On the Venezuelan side, however, commercial exploitation is only just beginning. On two occasions we met geological teams doing mineral surveys of the area which indicated to us that the era of its isolation is rapidly drawing to a close.

This first portion of the river is inhabited principally by Guajibo Indians. The first Guajibos were enrolled in the Faith 12 years ago. In fact the first Indian Bahá’í in Venezuela was a Guajibo, Ramón Ramirez; he is still an active and devoted Bahá’í living in the environs of Puerto Ayacucho. Since one of our objectives was to visit the Indian Bahá’ís, we stopped and held brief meetings whenever we came to villages where they lived. We were constantly reminded in these meetings of the principle of a universal auxiliary language. Rúhíyyih Khánum would speak in English, Mas‘úd Khámsí would translate into Spanish, and one of the villagers, often the school teacher, would have to translate into the native dialect. There were times when the language problem became critical because there was no one in town who could speak Spanish. These occasions were the exception, however, and we eventually became accustomed to meetings in three languages.

The river system is like a living entity. You have the sense that people know what is going on all along the river, in the same way that the parts of a living body are all connected by the arteries and blood vessels. . . . Instead of being a giant, snake-infested wilderness, we found it to be one great village.
The Baha'i village of La Venturosa where we stopped twice to visit the friends.

Leaving the Maco village of Citio Vapor after our meeting; note the chief and his wife in front on the right.

Up the gangplank and onto the boat with all the children seeing us off.

Villagers of the Guajibo tribe in Capuana Afuera; note the beautiful hut in the background.

The Piaroa chief of Caño Maraya on board the Queen Mary with his relatives and friends.

Some Yanomamo Indians of the Sanemá tribe on Monotiti Island.
The green light expedition

People have no idea of the urgency of taking the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the people of these areas, she told the Bahá'ís of Caracas.

The missionaries are not intent on doing any harm to the Indians, but the white race seems to have a genius for making people feel inferior. The Indians are losing their roots and it is doubtful whether they can become rooted in our civilization.

At one of the Guajibo villages, Laja Marana, where we stopped to visit the Bahá'ís, we held one of our very few nighttime meetings. After some prayers and a short talk by Amatu'l-Bahá, one of the members of our group brought out a flute or recorder and played a few tunes. Musical instruments are always a source of great interest and attraction at village gatherings, and the flute because it is a wind instrument, was particularly valuable in this setting. From the darkness we began to hear flute sounds echo those of the recorder. Eventually, after a great deal of coaxing and more playing, one of the Indians emerged into the light with a flute made of five bamboo pipes of varying lengths. We were all so delighted at this unexpected turn of events and so enthusiastic that one by one other flutes were shyly brought out and they began to play for us their traditional music.

It was only as our trip progressed that we became aware of how unusual this incident had been. Everywhere we went we found that the people were forgetting their music, or at least they were telling us they had forgotten it because they were ashamed to play it. The only songs that the Piaroa children knew were hymns.

"People have no idea of the urgency of taking the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the people of these areas," Rúḥíyyih Khánum told the Bahá'ís of Caracas. "I do not believe that the missionaries are intent on doing harm, but we, the white race, have a genius for making people feel inferior."

Almost daily the Indian culture is being undermined by contact with the civilization of the white people and by the missionaries, who in their efforts to destroy the vestiges of pagan belief often destroy the cultural heritage of the people as well. When talking to Governor Anduze in Puerto Ayacucho Rúḥíyyih Khánum mentioned some recordings of beautiful Indian music which an anthropologist had played for her when she was there in 1968. The governor told her, "I doubt they play that music anymore. All of those Indians have been missionized." At another time we were told of one missionary group that required the Indians, when they became Christians, to confess that their parents had been sinners. Among the things they had to ask forgiveness for was drinking their mother's milk!

"Fanatics are usually small-minded people," Rúḥíyyih Khánum continued, "and a great many missionaries are fanatics; as they have a narrow concept of the teachings of Jesus Christ. They believe that first they have to destroy what the Indians have in order to replace it with Christianity; it is a concept of unity based on uniformity and this is the only concept of unity that most people have. But Bahá'u'lláh teaches unity in diversity. It is a very profound thought. When we teach tribal people, we should praise their culture, and their music, their dancing, and other things. All these things are part of their culture which is being destroyed and lost. The Indians are losing their roots and it is doubtful if they can become rooted in our civilization."

When we entered another Guajibo village we saw that one of the men had intricate designs painted in red on his face. But he disappeared immediately and returned with his face washed clean. The next morning in a neighboring village as we were holding a meeting another young man with similar markings on his face and an unusual headpiece made out of bear hairs came in and sat down. During the course of her talk Rúḥíyyih Khánum said, "This young man has made me very happy because he is wearing something from his past. You must be proud of your past. The missionaries tell you you must give these things up, but Bahá'ís say you must keep the good things from your past. God loves all of us, whatever the differences in our customs, just as a parent loves all of his children." It was wonderful to see the delight on the young man's face at being spoken of in this way and to hear the murmurs of agreement from the others, especially the older people, who were present.

San Fernando de Atabapo, the last government checkpoint on the river, began as a mission town in 1758, and until 1928 served as capital of the territory. We registered with the National Guard and bought a few last provisions. After San Fernando the Orinoco makes a sharp bend to the east, away from the Colombian border, and from there to Santa Barbara the route lies through country inhabited for the most part by the Piaroa tribe.

Though all of the Piaroas that we met had been missionized, we still found them to be extremely open and receptive to the Faith. One Piaroa Indian that we met along the way invited us to come to his village, Caño Panaven. It was an hour's walk into the jungle from the river. We found the point where the path to the village reaches the river and as we were debating what we should do next a delegation from the village suddenly emerged from the jungle. They had guessed the time of our arrival and had come down to meet us.

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An old rheumatic grandmother of the Yabarana tribe comes forward on Rūḥiyih Khánum's arm to be filmed.

A meeting with Guajibo believers in Morganito village not far from Puerto Ayacucho on the Orinoco.

Bahá’í families of Buenos Aires Island near Venado; the old woman seated on the right and her son-in-law and daughter standing behind her have been Bahá’ís for 11 years, and were among the first Guajibos to accept the Faith.

The seven members of the expedition, Leco Zamora, the three crewmen, and others disembarking at Venado; seated at Rūḥiyih Khánum's left is the captain of our boat.
The green light expedition

It was not uncommon during this drip for doors to be suddenly opened for us in unexpected ways. Every day we said prayers together, and just before approaching this particular village we had all sat down and prayed. “No matter how insignificant your abilities,” Rúhiyyih Khánum told us later, “if when you come on a teaching trip such as this your motive is pure, you will be guided and protected.”

As it was already late in the afternoon we arranged to hold a meeting in the village the next morning and they promised to come for us shortly after dawn. The walk through the jungle to Caño Panaven was beautiful. On all sides we heard the chatter and screams of birds, and a narrow winding path led us through the dense undergrowth. There were “bridges” on this trail, we were told, or rather warned: across two steep ravines were fallen trees which had been rigged up with very flimsy railings of sticks and vines on one side and across these we balanced our way over narrow streams and a drop of sometimes 20 feet.

Almost 50 people, men, women, children, and babies crowded into a house for the meeting and when it was over 21 of them wanted to become Baha’is. As we left the village Rúhiyyih Khánum said that the greatest heartbreak to her would be if no one came back to visit them again.

At Panaven we were also able to rent a large dugout canoe, or “bongo” as it is called, which we towed alongside of us for the rest of the journey. On our “bongo” we were able to mount the National Assembly’s outboard motor which we had with us and this enabled us to go up many of the smaller streams and inlets to visit villages that would otherwise have been inaccessible. One of our first trips in the “bongo” was to Caño Maraya, a Piaroa village about an hour’s journey up a small and beautiful stream. The captain of the village, José Morales, told us that he knew of the Bahá’ís. Eight years ago, when he lived near Puerto Ayacucho, some Bahá’ís had come to their village, had eaten with them and spent the night and talked with them. He told us that they had liked what they had heard and that the Bahá’ís had said they would come back, but they waited and no one came.

As a young man he had gone to Caracas and had started drinking heavily, but a woman told him to give it up or he would ruin his life. He did and he came back to the jungle. He brought several families with him to this little stream, Caño Maraya, and they cleared the land and built a village. But now, after several years, they had decided that the location was not good. The stream dried up during certain times of the year cutting them off from the river. Just now they were clearing a new site near the mouth of the stream where they could relocate their village. He wanted to be able to trade and introduce progressive ways to his people, he explained. Rúhiyyih Khánum told him that it was fine to adopt the good things of the West, but that there was a lot of bad, too, and he must be careful not to discard what is good of his Indian culture. His wife had died two years ago and his four children were around his neck and in his lap the whole time we talked. We liked the man so much that Rúhiyyih Khánum was determined to visit him again on the return trip. Just as we were about to get into our “bongo” at the mouth of the small river he lived on, lo and behold he came by in his own motorized “bongo”, waved to us, and started up the stream; Rúhiyyih Khánum told us to go after him quickly in our dugout and invite them all to come visit us on our boat as this would save us over two hours’ traveling. They accepted our invitation and came aboard and we served them coffee and biscuits and sweets and not only had an animated discussion for over an hour but were able to film that visit as well. Fifteen years earlier, he told us, he would have been afraid to come aboard a white man’s boat. “If this man ever becomes a Bahá’í,” Rúhiyyih Khánum said to us later, “the whole trip will have been worth it.” She liked him immensely and said obviously he was an independent thinker. She told us that in teaching we should always seek out those with capacity, capable of leadership. “A man such as this,” she said, “could be a key to the Piaroas in the whole area.”

Just before Santa Barbara there is a small Bahá’í village called La Venturosa. It was founded two years ago by seven families of Guajibo Indians from the area of Puerto Ayacucho. The captain of this village apologized for the fact that all of his Bahá’í literature had been stolen and that they had therefore not been able to do more teaching. Although they had not been in touch with Bahá’ís for more than two years, their faith was firm. They took us around the new village and showed us the land which they have set aside for their Bahá’í center.

At Santa Barbara the Orinoco bends southward again and is joined by the Ventuari which flows down from the north. Our map showed us that beyond Santa Barbara the Orinoco has been heavily settled by missions, so we decided to head north, up the
The green light expedition

The Macos impressed us because of the close relationship between husbands and wives. It was a remarkable thing to see a Maco captain walking hand in hand along a jungle trail with his wife. We were also struck by the forcefulness of character of the Maco women. The whole Maco tribe could become Bahá’í, Rúhíyyih Khánum said, but who is going to come and teach them?

Ventuari, in hopes of meeting tribes which have been less touched. We were not disappointed.

The region of the lower Ventuari is inhabited by the Macos. They are a tribe related to the Piaroa and estimates put their number at fewer than 200. They were the only tribe we met which has never accepted Christianity. They have always lived deep in the jungle and only recently have begun to come out and settle on the banks of the Ventuari. Their beautiful palm-thatched houses, called churuatas, round but rising to a point at the top, were exquisitely made and large enough to sleep 20 or even 40 people.

We entered them through a tiny door which we nearly had to crawl through. Inside, when our eyes became accustomed to the dim light, we could see rows of hammocks swinging from the support poles. In some of the hammocks there would be women nursing babies, or curious children, and in others men were smoking pipes. In the center of these impressive communal dwellings there would often be a metal tray with a roaring fire underneath and one of the women would be roasting cassava flour and stirring it with a large wooden paddle. In many of these churuatas, indeed in all of the Indian villages, we also found animals — monkeys, turtles, agoutis, many kinds of parrots, brilliantly colored and very tame macaws, even pygmy anteaters. In one churuata we saw no fewer than four large green parrots sitting on posts around the center pole and two others peering at us from other corners of the hut. And in another house we heard a chorus of peeps and there, in a wicker basket, we found five fledgling parrakeets so small they did not yet have feathers.

The Macos also impressed us because of the close relationship between husbands and wives. It was a remarkable thing to see a Maco captain walking hand in hand along a jungle trail with his wife. We were also struck by the forcefulness of character displayed by the Maco women. In one of the first Maco villages that we visited we began to talk informally about the Baha’i Teachings and the wife of the local captain stopped us. She told us that if we had something important to say we should not tell it to them. We should talk first to the captain of all the homesteads in that area and if he approved, then they would listen. The chief captain was away hunting, however, and would not be back for a day or more. Rúhíyyih Khánum told her that if this was their custom we were in full agreement, that our religion also teaches us to respect our elders and those in authority. We immediately changed the subject and established a friendly relationship with them on a different basis. The woman who had spoken to us was ill and Dr. Rabbani examined her and gave her medicine. We went on our way, promising to stop again on our way back.

When we returned two weeks later our patience and prayers were well rewarded. Not only was the chief captain there, but “everyone was there” they told us. The old captain greeted us warmly and called the people from all the surrounding churuatas to come and listen to our message. We had a lovely meeting under the trees attended by almost 70 men, women, and children. “If the Bahá’ís had enough initiative and determination,” Rúhíyyih Khánum said afterward, “the whole Maco tribe could become Bahá’í. But who is going to come and teach the Macos?”

The Ventuari River winds northward through beautiful forests and mountains. At times, when the water was still, it would reflect a perfect mirror-image of the shore. “It was a great revelation to us,” Rúhíyyih Khánum told the Bahá’ís of Caracas at Naw-Rúz, “to see how easy it is to go to these places. At regular intervals along the river there are posts driven into the sand where the Indians swing their hammocks at night. There is always plenty of wood for fires. They fish and hunt as they go and they take cassava bread or meal with them which they moisten for fish soup or with water, and this is their food for traveling. I have become quite fond of cassava and it is a whole lot better for you than the cotton-wool-like white bread you buy in the supermarket. We ate tapij, sting ray, turtle, turtle eggs, and wild boar. At one meal we had a deviled ham omelette made with 26 turtle eggs and a fresh heart of palm salad. It was delicious! Often to break the ice in a village we would ask if they had any eggs or bananas for sale.”

Primarily the purpose of our journey was to make a film of the region and to assess the teaching possibilities and not just to enroll Bahá’ís. Rúhíyyih Khánum did not want to arouse antagonism or stir up the missionaries and officials. She wanted the people we contacted to remember us as good, friendly people whom they liked so as to pave the way for future organized pioneering in the region. So we never pressed to teach. The captain of our boat
became very interested in the Faith and he knew the people along the river. Often he and Leco would go ahead and make the initial contact. If the people seemed interested we would talk to them. If they wanted we would stay and hold a regular meeting.

"One always has to be sensitive and tactful," Ruhiyyih Khánúm told the Bahá'ís of Caracas in reference to village teaching. "We were obviously a load of gringos. You know that Bahá'u'lláh forbids proselytizing. You can invite a man to your house to eat, but you cannot sit on his chest and force the food down. We think the Bahá'í Teachings are right and that is why we offer them, but we cannot force them. This is the spirit in which we made this trip."

Our boat took us as far north on the Ventuari as the beautiful waterfalls at Tencua. A smaller boat might be portaged around the falls, but this was as far as we could go in our Queen Mary. The area around Tencua is inhabited by the Makiritare Indians, a handsome people who are known as excellent boatmen and artisans.

The Amerindians seemed to us to be natural born actors. Our 16-millimeter camera and sound equipment, though noiseless, could not help but draw attention to itself. Yet the Indians continued to act perfectly naturally. One Makiritare woman and her daughter were preparing cassava meal in a beautiful late afternoon setting. We came with all our equipment to film them. They simply smiled, acknowledging our presence, and then went on about their business. We even asked them at times to perform operations over again, or to wait until we were ready to film, which they did most obligingly. The captain of our boat quickly grasped what we were doing and, unasked, he would tell the Indians not to look at the camera and was in many ways helpful.

Just beyond Tencua, the furthest point of commercial traffic on the Ventuari, begins the region of the Yanomamo peoples, a truly primitive race which has had little contact with the outside world. The Yanomamo, also called Waicares, are the most numerous tribe in the area, estimated at 19,000 with many spilling over into Brazil. There was a small Yanomamo settlement three hours' walk beyond Tencua on Monotiti Island, and we decided we would go there and visit them as otherwise it was unlikely we would ever see any of these Indians since the main tribe was much further south. This particular group called themselves Sanemá.

Heavily laden with film and sound equipment, cameras, can teens of water and biscuits and sardines for lunch, we set off along a track through the jungle made by tractors which have cleared the jungle from the north, connecting the town with the Lower Orinoco. This has brought trucks, Land Rovers, and motor bikes to the vicinity. The town has its own power plant which generates electricity. This has brought, among other things, cold drinks to the area which accounted for unsightly heaps of bottles and cans that were strewn along the river bank. There is a grass landing strip for airplanes there and we met a team of British pilots who are making a survey of the mineral resources of the entire region using highly sophisticated aerial equipment. The Venezuelan government is planning to exploit the vast natural reserves of the area.

We knew that San Juan de Manapiare was in a region inhabited by the Yabarana Indians, and we wanted to visit them. They are a very small tribe now, numbering, we were told, fewer than 50. At the Yabarana village nearby we found only one old grandmother. She was lame, but came out to speak with us. Her manner was gentle and friendly. The Yabaranas have been completely missionized and it was pitiful to think that this tribe may soon die out entirely. In the exclusive government compound we found the houses were covered with the pointed, palm-thatched roofs characteristic of the churua ta, and sensibly so, because they keep the buildings cool. But the Indians in town were living in rows of identical cement-block houses with tin roofs, very poorly ventilated compared to their own traditional native dwellings.

We met a Catholic priest, a Jesuit from Spain and a charming man. But there is an Evangelical mission in the town as well, and as we stood chatting with the priest in front of his house, we heard a roar and there was a cloud of dust and up came the Evangelical missionary on a Honda! He is American and has been there for 20 years with his wife and children. He belongs to the New Tribes Mission which has translated the New Testament into many of these Indian dialects. Most of this has happened in the last 10 to 15 years. The consecration of the missionaries impressed us deeply. How many times Ruhiyyih Khánúm said to us, "What this Faith needs are more David Livingstones. We should learn from the missionaries; their dedication, self-sacrifice, and methods are in many cases exemplary; in fact we should feel ashamed that they are doing what this new Revelation from God has told us to do!"

"The missionaries do a great deal of good," she told the Bahá'ís in Caracas, "but from the Bahá'í perspective their philosophy is very destructive. We do not have professional missionaries in this Faith, but a dedicated Bahá'í should be able to do as much, if not more, because we have more to offer. They are selling something that is 2000 years old. Why should we Bahá'ís fall down on the job when we have the latest Word from God? We need pioneers who will go and stay and learn the language. And we need traveling teachers who will go to areas such as these and support the pioneers. There is no time to waste if the Bahá'ís are to fulfill the mission given them by the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and The Universal House of Justice. I am 64 and I had the time of my life! Why are young people so lacking in adventure? It is a thrilling experience, and it is soul­satisfying, because you are responding to the call of the Manifestation of God."

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United States:

Mr. Sears urges believers to prepare for enrollment by troops in America

An invitation to individual believers to arise and help prepare the way for enrollment in the Faith by troops was made repeatedly by the Hand of the Cause William Sears, during his several talks at the National Convention.

Recalling a statement of the Master to Roy Wilhelm, Mr. Sears reminded his audience that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had said in 1912 that if each Bahá’í had exemplified even one of the Bahá’í principles in his life much of New York City would already have become Bahá’ís by the time of His visit.

"It is upon each one of us that this momentous Five Year Plan rests," said Mr. Sears. "If we would live just one of the principles of the Faith in our daily lives, we would change the face of the world. We have the capacity to do that... it just takes the determination to try it."

Mr. Sears took part in a number of the Convention sessions prior to his departure late Saturday evening for the National Convention of the Baha’is of Canada. He was also guest speaker at the special program Thursday evening commemorating the 50th anniversary of the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly.

One of the recurrent themes in Mr. Sears' remarks to the delegates concerned the possibility of great victories being won when a single Bahá’í becomes detached and imbued with longing to serve the Cause. Recalling the praise given Martha Root, foremost Hand of the Cause of the first Bahá’í century, by Shoghi Effendi, Mr. Sears pointed out that it was not superior education or training, or being born to wealth and power, that distinguished Miss Root. Rather, it was the degree of her dedication which won her the tribute from the Guardian as a heroine, martyr and saint.

He recalled also the experience of sitting at dinner with the pilgrims in Haifa in the presence of Shoghi Effendi, and of hearing a statement to this effect: "We know what to do, we do not have to be told what to do. All we have to do is encourage each other to do it."

He remembered also the Guardian saying that one soul on fire with the Faith could "ignite an entire country." When we are wondering how to accomplish the goals, he said, we would do well to think in terms of improvement of our own selves. Here we have the power to change, we can determine ourselves what sacrifices we wish to make, and the goals will be accomplished as we in our individual lives place the Faith first and improve our characters.

At a moving and unusual tribute to the current members of the National Spiritual Assembly on Saturday evening, Mr. Sears spoke the name of each member and lighted a special golden anniversary candle brought from Canada, each with a number "50" painted upon it. He called to mind the great servants of the past who had filled posts on the National Spiritual Assembly, and told of the year when five members went to foreign pioneering goals at one time.

It is difficult to appreciate the greatness of this occasion," he said. "In the future we will tell our grandchildren of having been present this evening, when the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the United States celebrated its 50th anniversary."

He reminded the friends how, from its inception, the national administrative body had led the community in realizing significant goals given by the Master in Tablets of the Divine Plan.

"In 1953, when the call came from the beloved Guardian for the goals of the Crusade to be filled, he said the administrators and the distinguished Bahá’ís should be the first to go and set the example," said Mr. Sears. "Isn't that a marvelous thing? Some of those who went passed away at their posts, as you know." He noted also that some former members of the National Spiritual Assembly had been named Hands of the Cause and had been called to the World Center to continue their service there.

He paid tribute also to the former members of the National Spiritual Assembly who had been called to serve as members of the Continental Board of Counsellors, as well as members of the International Teaching Center.

"We now have serving on the Supreme Body, The Universal House of Justice, five former members of your National Spiritual Assembly: Charles Wolcott, H. Borrah Kavelin, David Ruhe, Amoz Gibson and Hugh Chance. And among the..."
Hands of the Cause, the names are like a roster of beauty and wonder... Roy Wilhelm, Louis Gregory, Horace Holley, Corinne True, Fred Shopflocher, Leroy Joas, Dorothy Baker, Amelia Collins, and Paul Haney.”

“The light of Bahá'u'lláh will be reflected in the West to an even greater degree than in the East, only if we, His instruments, arise to carry out those great tasks. After acquiring the characteristics we must put them into service. It is not enough just to have them. We have Tablets of the Divine Plan and our task is the spiritual conquest of the planet.

“May I say again, we do not have to be told what to do. We know what to do. We only have to help each other to try it.”

“I leave the words for those who have the heart,” were his final words to the Convention.

50th anniversary of National Assembly observed

The president of the village of Wilmette paid tribute to the American Bahá'í community in a brief address before hundreds of guests in Foundation Hall, assembled for the National Assembly's 50th anniversary observance.

He also presented to the National Assembly of the United States a copy of a special resolution adopted by the village's Board of Trustees praising the Bahá'í community for its contribution to the spiritual life of Wilmette.

“The message I bring to you tonight on behalf of the village is that we are indeed fortunate; for you, the Bahá'ís, have given us a great deal of spiritual wealth,” said Warren Burmeister, the village president.

Mr. Burmeister and other Wilmette dignitaries, along with the Hand of the Cause William Sears and Counsellors Sarah Pereira and Edna True, joined the National Assembly at an anniversary dinner April 24 and attended an evening devotional program at the House of Worship to mark the event.

Mr. Burmeister made his remarks at a public meeting in Foundation Hall following the devotional program. The principal address was given by Mr. Sears, who spoke about the history of the National Assembly and the role assigned to that institution in the Bahá'í writings.

When considering the dictionary definition of the word community (“a group of people living together in the same place under the same law”) applied to the teachings of the philosophers, Mr. Burmeister said he could conceive of the Bahá'í community “being located not just in Wilmette, but being a marvelously expansive community that begins to embrace all of mankind.”

“So we're very grateful for the opportunity to be with you, to be moved and inspired by your presence and the fortunate presence of the House of Worship in our small corner of the earth, realizing that it links us with all mankind,” he said.

“Perhaps this, someday, will be the measure by which civilization will be realized.”

Firuz Kazemzadeh, Chairman of the National Assembly, accepted the Trustee's framed resolution on behalf of the National Assembly. “The village of Wilmette,” he told Mr. Burmeister, “has provided us for a long time now, with a perfect home for our Bahá'í activities.”

Other Wilmette residents who were introduced at the meeting included two past village presidents, William Alexander and William McKnight; a past president of the Wilmette Historical Commission, James William; and the director of the Wilmette library, Richard Thompson.

Local Assemblies to receive training

A decision to implement a comprehensive two-year training program for Local Spiritual Assemblies in the United States was announced by the National Assembly in its annual report to the Convention in Wilmette.

The training program, which will involve the local Assemblies at the beginning of 1976, is intended to help members of local Bahá'í institutions understand more fully the nature of Bahá'í administration.

In a videotaped presentation to the National Convention on Friday afternoon, National Assembly Secretary Glenford Mitchell said the training program represented the Assembly's "... response to the requirement of the Five Year Plan which calls for the strengthening of these basic administrative units of Bahá'ulláh's World Order."

The presentation was made with videotape to demonstrate to the delegates the capability of this equipment, which will be used to produce much of the program's 30 hours of classroom materials.

The training program will proceed in three phases, Mr. Mitchell said.

Phase I involves the training of 20 two-person teams to serve as trainers of the personnel that will work with the Assemblies.

The 40 persons making up the teams of "master trainers" will be brought to the National Center for a week-long orientation later this year.

Phase II calls for each of the master trainer teams to train 15 National Assembly representatives to work directly with...
the local Assemblies. It is estimated that it will take 10 weeks for this training phase to be completed. It will result in the training of 600 National Assembly representatives. In carrying out their work with the local Assemblies, the National Assembly representatives will also work in teams of two.

Phase III will bring the local Assemblies into the program. Each team of National Assembly representatives will train four local Assemblies before the end of the two-year period. The training will take 30 hours to complete. At the rate of four Assemblies per team, an estimated 1,000 Spiritual Assemblies will be covered in the allotted time.

The team that trains the local Assembly will be required to remain as consultant to that Assembly until the end of the program.

Aboriginal Australian greets Convention

"O beautiful friends of America! I bring you greetings from Australia." With these words, Harry Penrith, Bahá’í of aboriginal background, greeted the American National Convention. A Bahá’í since 1969, Mr. Penrith is recipient of a Sir Winston Churchill Fellowship which is permitting him to visit and study indigenous and immigrant housing and hostels on a round-the-world travel grant.

Together with his wife, Leonie, and their three-year-old daughter, Lua, Mr. Penrith has visited many Bahá’í communities and spoke of the warm welcome extended everywhere.

"How pleased I am to renew acquaintance with the Hand of the Cause William Sears, whom I met six years before becoming a Bahá’í," said Mr. Penrith. "When we reached Samoa, we were told our beloved Hand of the Cause had just left there. And when we arrived in Hawaii, he had just left. The same was true in Los Angeles. In keeping with Mr. Sears’ comments at the special observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, concerning the significance of Wilmette," Mr. Penrith declared,

Harry Penrith, a Bahá’í of aboriginal background, was a visitor to the American National Convention.

"where should we find him? In Wilmette, Illinois!"

After listing many of the American pioneers now serving in Australia, as well as on islands of the Pacific, Mr. Penrith added: "I felt I had an obligation to bring the love of these people to you. In a sense, they have suffered from a culture shock, being away from their beloved country. On the other hand, we receive a culture shock coming here for we have not known such affluence in our particular area of Australia as we find here. We don’t really know how homes are heated, such as you have here. It was a new experience for me to walk on snow for the first time, keeping in mind that we come from an Australian summer, which is indeed warm."

After visiting European communities, the Penrith family will go on pilgrimage to the World Center before returning to their home in Australia. While in Wilmette, Mr. Penrith was interviewed on videotape by the Bahá’í National Information Office. He has gained extensive newspaper, television and radio publicity in the communities visited throughout Canada and the United States, and regards his trip as an opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the Bahá’í world community as well as specialized knowledge in his own professional field.

Mr. Penrith mentioned that he had known about the Faith for almost fifteen years before enrolling and had been won to its ranks by the consistent love shown him by the Bahá’ís.
Conventions cable news of progress to World Center

Set out below is a representative sampling of news items gleaned from the messages received at the World Center from National Spiritual Assemblies on the five continents. The volume of cables received makes it impossible to include even excerpts from them all.

Africa
Cameroon Republic: “...sum pledged toward self support...”

Lesotho: “...good news progress Faith Lesotho; between 40 and 46 Local Spiritual Assemblies formed; 298 localities opened; one new Haziratu’l-Quds site allocated; ...pledge find ways increase self-sufficiency...”

Madagascar: “...Dumont Assembly elected...”

Niger: “Hearts overflowing joy of seven delegates, 27 observers, attending blessed historic Convention presence Hand Cause Muhájir, Counsellor; offering prayer gratitude Blessed Beauty first National Spiritual Assembly Niger; beseech prayers divine confirmation accomplishment Five Year Plan under guidance beloved Universal House Justice. ...” (Niger Convention)

Rhodesia: “...flow expansion deeper consolidation indicative strengthening communities grass root level...”

Sierra Leone: “Joyfully announce successful completion first National Convention Baha’is Sierra Leone. Believers gathered Freetown all parts Sierra Leone, visitors Liberia, Guinea, blessing presence Hand Cause Olinga, Board member Kouchezkadeh, representatives National Spiritual Assembly West Africa; determined win all goals Plan; National Fund already launched full participation; beseech prayers Holy Shrine. National Convention Sierra Leone.” [See more detailed report p. 20]

Tanzania: “...pledge reduce dependence international fund...”

Togo: “First National Assembly elected presence Hand Cause Muhájir, Knight (of Bahá’u’lláh) David Tanyi. United delegates determined exceed goals Plan before Nairobi Conference, mass conversion, supplicating prayers Holy Threshold. ...” (Togo Convention)

Uganda: “...40 delegates, 42 visitors, including two Pygmies National Convention Uganda... joyfully report three arise pioneer Zaire... generous endowments donated...”

Upper West Africa: “Announce joyful election first National Spiritual Assembly presence Hand Cause Olinga, Counsellor Ardiání, Auxiliary Board member Alsalihi, 23 delegates; greetings from united Convention Upper West Africa. ...”

Americas
Alaska: “Forging ahead Five Year Plan... international pioneers four Belgium, three Finland, three Philippines; high level activity international travel teaching; homefront needs assured...”

Argentina: “...received offers five homefront pioneers, 15 international teachers...”

Belize: “joyously announce... 30 Local Spiritual Assemblies elected...”

Hawaiian Islands:

Auxiliary Board members attending the Bolivian National Convention pose with several members of the newly elected National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia. Standing from left to right: Juan Alejo O., Auxiliary Board member Eloy Anello, Yolanda Claros de Pulley, Auxiliary Board members James Selph, Sabino Ortega, and Andrés Jachakollo, Eshraghollah Ouladi. Kneeling: Prudencia Pena, Isidro Jachakollo, Stephen Pulley, Zabih’u’lláh Mohebi, and Valentín Quispe.

A member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Northeastern Asia joins the newly elected National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands for a photograph outside the National Center in Honolulu. Shown in the first row, left to right, are Mike Woodward and Counsellor Elena Marsella. Second row: Tracy Hamilton (Chairman), Evelyn Mussachia, Gertrude Garrida, Elizabeth D. Hollinger (Secretary), and C. B. Mauldin. Third row: Bradley T. Hollinger, Craig B. Quick (Vice-Chairman), and Benedict Ayala (Treasurer).
Bolivia: “... inspiring call Ridván message communicated; 36,462 believers, 4,128 localities, nearly 800 Assemblies. . .”

Brazil: “... fifteenth Convention Bahá’ís Brazil, 250, majority youth, attended. . .”

Canada: “... adoption long-term intensive prayer campaign . . . increasing consciousness nature task Francophone overseas goals . . . illuminating views expressed Eskimo, Indian, French minorities . . . gift by Eskimo believers tapestry Greatest Name for Hazíratu’l-Quds Godthaab, Greenland, signifying further development relationship Greenland. . .”

Costa Rica: “... 50 Assemblies . . . spirit service assures accomplish remaining goals. . .”

Dominican Republic: “... increased participation women, youth. . .”

Ecuador: “... estimated 140 Local Spiritual Assemblies elected . . . offers of 26 traveling teachers received homefront and abroad. . .”

Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana: “... successful Convention . . . 24 Local Spiritual Assemblies formed. . .”

Haiti: “... 17 new Local Spiritual Assemblies . . . 3,766 believers and now 167 localities. . .”

Jamaica: “... successful Convention . . . 24 Local Spiritual Assemblies formed. . .”

Leeward and Virgin Islands: “... sixteen delegates, eight gathered ninth Convention in St. Barthélemy, French Antilles. . .”

Mexico: “... joyously share achievements first year Five Year Plan . . . 17 additional pioneers, five native traveling teachers, two international teachers. . .”

Nicaragua: “... Convention held new Center; deeply grateful announce victories toward Plan goals. . .”

Peru: “... five native pioneers located; seven departing. . .”

Puerto Rico: “... one believer arose pioneer Nicaragua, 15 volunteered international travel teaching . . . greater representation native believers on incoming National Assembly. . .”

United States: “... Wilmette dignitaries joined in tribute 50th anniversary National Assembly . . . President village Wilmette presented formal congratulatory resolution behalf village. . .”

Venezuela: “... extraordinary spontaneous participation by indigenous delegates . . . 248 volunteers national, international, teaching trips. . .”

Windward Islands (Barbados and Windward Islands): “... 15 delegates, three islands, present . . . delighted increased youth participation. . .”

Asia

Iran: “... 33 among delegates and friends present Convention

Rhodesia:

Believers gathered at the National Convention of the Leeward and Virgin Islands held on St. Barthélemy April 26-27.

National Bahá’í Convention in Salisbury, Rhodesia.
responded message August Body and will pioneer . . . 85 families declared readiness leave Tihrân. . . ."

**Japan:** "... joyously announce translations Kitáb-i-íqan, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, other literature, soon ready publication. . . ."

**Jordan:** The Convention was described as an "auspicious and inspiring occasion witnessing for the first time the birth of a national community in a land part of whose soil was blessed by the footsteps of our beloved Master, and had associations with the development of His glorious Ministry." The message received from the National Convention ended with a request for prayers so that the community may rise to "heights hitherto unattained in self-sacrifice, in steadfastness, in unity, and in dedicated love."

**Malaysia:** "... first successful Convention after incorporation held Kuching, East Malaysia . . . thrilled presence 100 native believers . . . resolved achieve self-sufficiency Funds. . . ."

**Australasia**

**Australia:** "Wonderful Convention, teaching conference . . . many offers arise overseas homefront pioneering, travel teaching. . . ."

**Hawaiian Islands:** "... attendance 34 delegates, 80 adults and youth, and 25 children; newly announced worldwide travel teaching program enthusiastically received, many volunteered; nine arose pioneer call; successful completion three-months concentrated teaching deepening program tremendous increase proclamation resulting numerous requests public speakers . . . first time budget surpassed . . . buildings, equipment, caretaker secured Puna site permanent Bahá’í school. . . ."

**New Zealand:** "... new National Assembly announced theme coming year 'Spiritualization Individual Bahá’í, strengthening Local Assemblies, Foremost Task'. . . ."

**South West Pacific Ocean:** "... wonderful teaching conference preceding Convention; new spirit believers arise gain goals strengthening Assemblies utilize youth teams, women's work parties, children's classes. . . ."

**Europe**

**Denmark:** "... aiming at doubling numbers avowed believers through systematic planning of proclamation. . . ."

**Italy:** "... two new Local Spiritual Assemblies . . . new texts editions Italian ready for publication. . . ."

**Netherlands:** "... thankful 21 Assemblies secured; thrilled announcement 8 pioneers foreign goals, several homefront. . . ."

**Spain:** "... pioneer offers include three Uruguay, six homefront, also friends available teaching trips, teaching funds donated; also obtained Andorra endowment. . . ."

**Switzerland:** "... rejoice glad tidings international travel teaching plan; enthusiastic response; two pioneers Togo; two pioneers within Switzerland; nine travel teachers. . . ."

**United States:**

The Hand of the Cause Enoch Olinga with members of the first National Spiritual Assembly of Sierra Leone. Standing in the back row (left to right) are Alfred Momodu, Charles Bullock (Treasurer), Penny Hubbert (Corresponding Secretary), Horace Brown (Vice-Chairman), and Donald Williams (Chairman). On the first row: Yvor Stoakley (Recording Secretary), Joyce Collins, Rex Kenneth, Mr. Olinga, and Augustine Conteh.

Members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States elected on April 26 in Wilmette. From left to right: Richard Betts, William Maxwell, Daniel Jordan (Vice-Chairman), Charlotte Linfoot (Assistant Secretary), Glenford Mitchell (Secretary), Dorothy Nelson (Treasurer), Franklin Kahn, Magdalene Carney, and Firuz Kazemzadeh (Chairman).
Réunion:

Youth in mountain villages learn about Bahá’u’lláh

At Rídvan 1972 the National Spiritual Assembly of the small, mountainous island of Réunion was elected for the first time. Réunion is one of the Mascarene islands which lies about 425 miles off the eastern coast of the Malagasy Republic. Recently the National Teaching Committee of Réunion decided, on the recommendation of the National Assembly, to undertake teaching trips itself rather than invest long hours in planning activities which could not be carried out due to a lack of manpower.

The result of this action is that more than 200 people have learned about the Faith within a two-month period. Public conferences have been held in mountain villages, sometimes during periods of heavy rainfall, and a considerable number of youth have attended to learn more about Bahá’u’lláh and His Teachings. Mayors of various communities were contacted during this program, some of whom expressed interest in the Faith.

An even more significant effect, it was reported, was registered among the believers themselves, who have become encouraged and increasingly active. Four new localities have been opened to the Faith and the number of groups has increased.

Sierra Leone:

First election of National Assembly held

Thirty-five delegates and visitors gathered in Freetown April 19-20 to attend the historic first National Bahá’í Convention of Sierra Leone. The election of the National Spiritual Assembly of Sierra Leone fulfilled yet another of the major goals of the Five Year Plan.

The Hand of the Cause of God Enoch Olinga was the representative of The Universal House of Justice at the Convention. He read both the Rídvan message of the House of Justice to the Bahá’ís of the world and a special message to the Bahá’ís of Sierra Leone gathered at the Convention.

In the latter The Universal House of Justice transferred all of the outstanding goals for Sierra Leone from the mother community of West Africa (formerly Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea) to the newly formed National Spiritual Assembly of Sierra Leone.

Highlighting the report of the outgoing National Teaching Committee was the announcement that all seven of Sierra Leone’s present Local Spiritual Assemblies would be re-elected at Rídvan. A minimum of 15 Local Spiritual Assemblies are called for in the Five Year Plan. Other goals which have been accomplished or on which progress was reported included the incorporation of the Freetown Local Spiritual Assembly, the settling of six pioneers in the country over the past year, the holding of the first national teaching conference of the Five Year Plan, and research toward translation and publication of the Sacred Writings into several of the indigenous languages.

Auxiliary Board member Shidan Kouchezkadeh represented the Continental Board of Counsellors for the newly formed West African region. Although he and Mrs. Kouchezkadeh had come to the Convention from their new pioneering post in Guinea, they hardly seemed like visitors, having pioneered in Sierra Leone for the past nine years. Much of the foundation for this newly elected pillar of the House of Justice was laid by their devoted efforts.

Vivian Wesson, an American who first pioneered to West Africa in 1953, was also a guest at the Convention. She became a Knight of Bahá’u’lláh when she arrived at her first pioneer post in Togo. Later she moved to Liberia where she served for more than 15 years before coming to Sierra Leone in 1970.

On the eve of the Convention many friends gathered in Freetown for a unity Feast to welcome Mr. Olinga. Following the Convention the Hand of the Cause remained in Sierra Leone for five days to visit some of the rural Bahá’í communities and to speak on radio and at colleges.

Hawaii:

Bahá’ís donate trees to Honolulu college

As a part of the tree planting ceremony on May 1 College Provost Clyde Yoshioka (left), National Spiritual Assembly Chairman Tracy Hamilton (center), and Douglass Sakamoto, who represented the governor of Hawaii, plant a jacaranda tree.

In a joint celebration of the United States Bicentennial and the 132nd anniversary of the founding of the Bahá’í Faith the National Spiritual Assembly of the Hawaiian Islands recently presented more than 100 trees to Honolulu Community College for the beautification of the college’s campus.

During a ceremony on May 1, 1975, Tracy Hamilton, Chairman of the National Assembly, presented 132 trees of 23 varieties to the college. Provost Clyde Yoshioka accepted the donation. At that time five jacaranda trees were planted; two days later several Bahá’ís and college faculty members cooperated to plant the remaining trees.

"The Bahá’ís chose to plant trees," Mr. Hamilton said during the ceremony, "since in so doing they feel they are praising God the Creator, helping in the betterment of the environment, and adding to the beauty of the land. Honolulu Community College was selected because of its need for beautification and because of the importance given in the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh...to education and educators."

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A plaque commemorating the tree planting bearing the inscription, "Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch" will be presented to the college by the Bahá'ís at a later date.

Coverage of the event in the news media included a report on a network television channel in Honolulu and a large article and photo in the morning newspaper. The Bahá'ís of Hawaii carried out the project as a part of the Bahá'í Info-Expo 75 proclamation.

Kenya:

Iranian believers join urban teaching project

In March, 61 Iranian believers journeyed to Kenya to participate in an intensive teaching campaign coordinated by the National Assembly.

Irán-Dukht 1shrat arrived in Kenya a week before the teaching group and assisted the National Assembly in confirming plans to fully utilize the time of the traveling teachers.

"The group inspired us by their devotion," the National Assembly reported. "They divided into approximately 12 teams, and each group was assigned to visit two or more urban areas in the country. As a result, the Faith was widely proclaimed and we have begun receiving letters from inquirers who were contacted by the teams, asking for more information about the Faith. In Nairobi, the assigned team visited all the African localities and two of the friends spoke on the radio and appeared on television. The radio broadcast was heard throughout the country. More than 50 new believers were accepted into the Faith as a result of the teams' teaching activities." The Iranian friends had spent a few days in the Holy Land visiting the Shrines before proceeding to Kenya.

Papua New Guinea:

Bahá'í administration delights new believers

The enrollment of hundreds of believers in the Mt. Brown region of Papua New Guinea was reported in the April edition of Bahá'í News. Recently the National Spiritual Assembly received a detailed report of continued expansion in that area: "Although Mt. Brown is fairly close to the large town of Port Moresby" the National Assembly wrote, "it is remote in the sense that it is most difficult to reach, involving a four to five-day walk through arid, then steep terrain and across fierce streams. Teaching has proceeded in the Mt. Brown area for three years and although the believers are poor they often visit the Bahá'í school in Sogeri, where some of their relatives live, and with each visit they learn a little more.

"The believers have seized upon the Bahá'í administration, and have put it into practice with great joy, surmounting many difficulties. They reconstructed their own village system which, until recently, was under church direction, but as large numbers of people entered the Faith, the church began to withdraw. Since schooling in the village is quite elementary, the level of achievement, organization, and planning, and the response to every request of the National Teaching Committee is astonishing. Reports of activities are received regularly from the friends, sometimes accompanied by hundreds of declaration cards."

One year ago the Mt. Brown Bahá'ís formed a Regional Teaching Committee which immediately called a conference and established a teaching plan under which teams drawn from eight Local Assemblies in the area visit neighboring communities to teach. Soon after their return follow-up teams are sent to revisit the allocated areas.

"Recently," the report continues, "word came that the flame of the Faith had burst out in the neighboring Northern District. This activity originated from the efforts of one of the Mt. Brown believers who has married into those people. Inara Nevaru, secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee, traveled to that area to assist them in conducting their first regional convention—their numbers exceed 400 already.

"Mr. Nevaru spent a couple of weeks in the area and visited a number of villages. He reported widespread interest and enthusiasm and said he was inundated with questions. One village is entirely Bahá'í, already has its Spiritual Assembly, and has chosen a site for the construction of a Hazíratü'l-Quds. The Faith was introduced to this area only six months ago. Such is the determination these people have already shown. We all have the great hopes for its fruition and success," the report concluded.

Solomon Islands:

Women's conference held in Auki

Women from various of the Solomon Islands attended the conference.

Small discussion groups encouraged the women to participate.

Bahá'í women in the Solomon Islands gathered in Auki on the weekend of February 7-9 for a conference in response to goals set in the Five Year Plan. More than 90 women representing 12 villages attended. This diverse representation made it necessary for classes and devotions throughout the conference to be conducted in from two to five dialects and languages.

At one of the first sessions the women expressed appreciation to their fathers and husbands for supporting the conference. Discussions were held on the role of women, the equality between men and women, Bahá'í heroines, local Assemblies, loyalty to government, and child education. During one session Auxiliary Board member Gertrude Blum spoke of the desirability of forming women's clubs in local communities.

The National Assembly noted that 14 women individually stepped forward during the conference to express their ideas—a significant departure from their accustomed reticence.

The participants unanimously agreed that another conference should be held soon.

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Illuminated (decorated) Prayers and Passages of Bahá'u'lláh for teaching and deepening make welcome gifts, provide inspiring wall decoration and aid in memorization.

Illuminated Prayers and Passages of Bahá'u'lláh

Preservation and consolidation of the victories won: This is one of the three major objectives of the Five Year Plan as the Cause of God goes "from strength to strength" throughout the worldwide Bahá'í community.

We can do this even in the face of rising global chaos if we use the strengthening serenity of our Sacred Texts, the Creative Word of God, to deepen and consolidate Bahá'ís. For this purpose several short, simple, powerful quotations of Bahá'u'lláh have been chosen and are now available in large type, illuminated by dignified artwork.

These attractive, brief prayers and meditations are suitable for framing or other kinds of display. Ten different quotations have been printed on 8.5 by 11-inch paper — large enough for wall or window display, yet small enough to be carried in a notebook.

Members of teaching, proclamation, conference, and consolidation committees might want to pay particular attention to this set for possible use at summer schools, institutes, and children's classes. They are excellent for complementing normal teaching materials or for gifts to participating individuals at Bahá'í gatherings.

The large type and easy-to-handle pages also make the material useful for persons with poor eyesight, or for beginning readers, either children or adults, who are not yet accustomed to Bahá'í literature. In addition, these passages are generally brief enough so that students can memorize them without difficulty.

The entire set of ten can be bound into a new believers' booklet either as they are or mounted artistically on colorful heavy paper. Further decorative illumination can then be added, limited only by the artist's imagination. In this way home-made albums can be tailored to a variety of indigenous cultures. Other possible uses include mementos for friends on special Bahá'í occasions, or gifts for the sick or shut-in.

These ten quotations by Bahá'u'lláh are available either in complete sets or as individual prayers and meditations in multiples of ten.

How to Get the Illuminated Prayers and Passages of Bahá'u'lláh

Your local Bahá'í librarian or authorized Bahá'í distributor may have them in stock, or may be able to supply you with prices and ordering information. If, however, you cannot find them in your area, you may send your inquiry to the International Bahá'í Audio-Visual Centre, 1640 Holcomb Road, Victor, N.Y. 14564, U.S.A. for forwarding to the proper organization.