

THE MINISTRY OF THE CUSTODIANS 1957-1963



With an Introduction
by
The Hand of the Cause
Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khanum

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS**

Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause, through whom the light of long-suffering hath shone forth, and the declaration of authority is proven of God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Independent, and through whom the sea of bestowal hath moved, and the breeze of the favour of God, the Lord of mankind, hath wafted.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Devotedly, in service to the Faith of Baha'u'llah,
Mansion of Baha'u'llah,
Bahji, Akko, Israel,
November 25, 1957.

Agnes B. Alexander
JALAL AHMED
S. Q. Faizi
Dr. Alby
A. Willis Featherstone
Lara Dunn
Malcolm
Paul Stanley

Rahiyah Rabbani
Marion Dreyfus
Amelia E. Colburn
Levy A. Jones
Hanan T. Bafgi
T. S. AMAN DARI
M. B.
A. B. Kishinevsky
Korose Kelly
Enoch Olinga
William Sears
L. Farnham
G. R. H. H. H.
Dr. A. Vargha
John Kereby
Hermann Gronmann
Z. M. H. H.

Signatures of the 26 Hands of the Faith present in Bahji who signed the Proclamation on November 25, 1957.



The body of the Hands of the Cause taken in Bahjí at their first Conclave in 1957. (Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánun and Clara Dunn present but not shown.)



PLENARY MEETING OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE, APRIL
1963

On the steps of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's home: (seated) Músá Banání; first row, left to right: Leroy Ioas, Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, Agnes Alexander, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Enoch Olinga, Jalál Kházeh; second row, left to right: Dhikru'lláh Khádem, behind him Collis Featherstone, Adelbert Mühschlegel, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Hermann Grossmann, Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí, John Robarts, 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá and 'Alí-Akbar Furútan; back row: Ugo Giachery, William Sears, Paul Haney, Hasan Balyuzi and John Ferraby.

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS
1957 - 1963**

*An Account of the Stewardship
of the Hands of the Cause*

With an Introduction

by

THE HAND OF THE CAUSE
AMATU'L-BAHÁ RÚHÍYYIH KHÁNUM

BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE
HAIFA

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PREFACE

This book of messages of the Hands of the Cause, from the passing of the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, in November 1957, to the formation of the first Universal House of Justice in 1963, is based on the files of the Hands in the Holy Land and on my personal experience as one of the Custodians of the Bahá'í Faith for five and a half years. It does not pretend to be a history but rather a record of the remarkable and unique accomplishments of an unpretentious group of world religious officials who, with no forewarning or preparation, suddenly, under the most tragic circumstances, found themselves called upon to seize the helm of their Faith, protect it from dissolution and schism, win the goals of an ambitious, far-flung, world ten-year-teaching campaign, which had only reached its half-way point, and steer it to the victory of unitedly electing its Supreme Body in 1963! In other words, it is a view from the inside looking out, as one of the Hands in the Holy Land saw it, throughout that dangerous, challenging, but obviously divinely protected period which will, I am confident, increasingly be seen as one of the most extraordinary victories—won by a handful of high-ranking officers of the Bahá'í Faith, as Shoghi Effendi designated us—ever witnessed in the religious annals of mankind.

The texts of these messages, however vital, could never reflect our concern for the maintenance of the hard-won victories our beloved Guardian had achieved during his thirty-six years of unremitting labour, ending his life at 60, far too early an age for these days.

We Hands, particularly those who were acting as Custodians in the Holy Land, passed through perilous shoals indeed as we guided the precious barque of our Faith on its way through the violent flood of events that followed upon the loss of our hereditary Guardian. The Hands were widely scattered across the world and communication in those days was almost exclusively confined to air mail and cables. With exception of the women Hands, who through age or circumstances were not employed, almost all the men were earning their living and in no position to cease doing so. We all felt that

neither our teachings—which preclude a special class of paid religious clergy—nor our limited resources and our tremendous financial obligations could justify the body of the Hands' beginning to live on the Bahá'í Fund; those who were chosen to act at the World Centre as Custodians, devoting their full time to its interests, obviously had to be supported as part of the expense of running our International Headquarters. We had a strong sense of the need for economy on the one hand, and of the stupendous sums of money we should require in order to win the goals of our Guardian's World Crusade on the other.

It was not the power of our intellect nor our personal capacities which carried us through that period, but the love and loyalty of our hearts for Shoghi Effendi, the depth of our devotion to the Faith we believed in, and the divine guidance, inspiration, and protection which were undoubtedly vouchsafed to us—else how could we, all over the world, have held the scattered and diversified community of Bahá'u'lláh together, and victoriously won our Guardian's Crusade, crowning it with the election of the Universal House of Justice? The leaders of neither Christianity nor Islám had succeeded in protecting those world religions from schism, but we protected ours from it. How? By the power vested in us, in the texts of our Scriptures; by our selfless devotion not only to a man who had died suddenly and left no direct guidance or instructions behind him, but also to the great international host of believers now left shepherdless, widely-scattered, remote and isolated, throughout the continents, seas, wildernesses and islands of the planet. So tightly knit was the unity among these followers of Bahá'u'lláh that they proved indivisible in heart, invincible in faith. Above all, we owed the power we were able to exert during this unique crisis to the web of tight, written texts of our teachings that, in spite of this supreme test, could not be violated and to which we held fast, sustaining both ourselves and the Bahá'ís down to the tiniest cell of this great living organism, the Cause of God. The vast fabric of our Faith was not without its own inner system of security: its local and national Bahá'í bodies constituted a world-wide administrative network, and was in the largest sense a legal entity. We had incorporated bodies all over the world, we had national and international funds of the Faith, we had fabulous real

estate holdings at our World Centre. On the other hand, we had obligations that brooked no delay. We were like a man who is mortally ill but whose life depends on action. However grief-stricken and lost we were, we could not delay any action of any kind, for a moment. There was no time to pause, to contemplate, to savour our grief. For almost six years we ran, we met the challenges, problems, enemies—we ran.

After the election of the Universal House of Justice on April 21, 1963, when the Hands in the Holy Land returned from the World Congress to Haifa, we held constant meetings in the home of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with the newly-elected members of that Supreme Body to hand over to them the administrative affairs of the Faith. Files and information were turned over to them in a steady process of transfer from our interim, provisional authority to their permanent established authority according to the Holy Texts.

It is foolish to ask questions of history; it is even more foolish to ask questions of the Almighty. The Guardianship had ceased to exist as an ongoing institution. The Hands had gloriously crowned their function of protection of the Cause of God by calling for and supervising the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Supreme Body of the Bahá’í world; through the aegis of the Institution of the Counsellors, initiated and supported by that Supreme Body, the vital functions of propagation and protection will continue to be carried on. In 1973 the Hands of the Cause became a part of the International Teaching Centre and in this capacity, aside from specific meetings of their own with the Universal House of Justice, both as individual Hands and as a body, hold regular joint meetings with our Supreme Body.

RÚHÍYYIH

THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

APPOINTED BY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH DURING HIS MINISTRY,^[2] 1863–1892

Hájí Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-i-Shahmírzádí, known as Hájí Ákhúnd
Hájí Mírzá Muhammad Taqíy-i-Abharí, known as Ibn-i-Abhar
Mírzá Muhammad-Hasan, entitled Adíbu'l-'Ulamá, known as Adíb
Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad, known as Ibn-i-Asdaq

OUTSTANDING BELIEVERS REFERRED TO BY 'ABDU'L- BAHÁ AS HANDS OF THE CAUSE DURING HIS MINISTRY,^[3] 1892–1921

Áqá Muhammad-i-Qá'iní, known as Nabíl-i-Akbar
Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá, the martyr
Shaykh Muhammad-Ridáy-i-Yazdí
Mullá Sádiq-i-Muqaddas, entitled Ismu'lláhu'l-Asdaq

APPOINTED POSTHUMOUSLY BY SHOGHI EFFENDI DURING HIS MINISTRY, 1921–1957

John E. Esslemont
[b. 19 May 1874, d. 22 Nov. 1925] *Date Announced* 30 Nov. 1925

Hájí Abú'l-Hasan Amín, Trustee of Huqúqu'lláh
[b. ?, d. 27 May 1928] *Date Announced* July 1928

Keith Ransom-Kehler
[b. 14 Feb. 1876, d. 23 Oct. 1933] *Date Announced* 28 Oct. 1933

Martha Root
[b. 10 Aug. 1872, d. 28 Sept. 1939] *Date Announced* 2 Oct. 1939

'Abdu'l-Jalíl Bey Sa'd

[b. ?, d. 25 June 1942] *Date Announced* 25 June 1942

Siyyid Mustafá Rúmí

[b. ?, d. 13 March 1942] *Date Announced* 14 July 1945

Muhammad Taqíy-i-Isfahání

[b. ?, d. 13 Dec. 1946] *Date Announced* 15 Dec. 1946

Louis Gregory

[b. 6 June 1874, d. 30 July 1951] *Date Announced* 5 Aug. 1951

Roy C. Wilhelm

[b. 17 Sept. 1875, d. 20 Dec. 1951] *Date Announced* 23 Dec. 1951

John Henry Hyde-Dunn

[b. 5 March 1855, d. 17 Feb. 1941] *Date Announced* 26 Apr. 1952

HANDS OF THE CAUSE APPOINTED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

FIRST CONTINGENT, ANNOUNCED 24 DECEMBER 1951^[4]

Dorothy Baker 21Dec. 1898 - 10 Jan. 1954

Amelia E. Collins 7 June 1873 - 1 Jan. 1962

'Alí-Akbar Furútan 29 Apr. 1905 -

Ugo Giachery 13 May 1896 - 5 July 1989

Hermann Grossmann 16 Feb. 1899 - 7 July 1968

Horace Holley 7 Apr. 1887 - 12 July 1960

Leroy Ioas 15 Feb. 1896- 22 July 1965

William Sutherland Maxwell 14 Nov. 1874 - 25 Mar. 1952

Charles Mason Remey 15 May 1874 - 4 Feb. 1974

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí 17 Oct. 1875 - 2 Sept. 1968

George Townshend 14 June 1876 - 25 Mar. 1957

Valíyu'lláh Varqá 1884 - 12 Nov. 1955

SECOND CONTINGENT, ANNOUNCED 29 FEBRUARY 1952^[5]

Shu‘á‘u‘lláh ‘Alá‘í 16 Nov. 1889 - 16 Nov. 1984
Músá Banání 1886 - 4 Sept. 1971
Clara Dunn 12 May 1869 - 18 Nov. 1960
Dhikru‘lláh Khádem 1904 - 13 Nov. 1986
Adelbert Mühlischlegel 16 June 1897 - 29 July 1980
Siegfried Schopflocher 1877 - 27 July 1953
Corinne True 1 Nov. 1861 - 3 Apr. 1961

THIRD CONTINGENT, ANNOUNCED OCTOBER 1957^[6]

Hasan Balyuzi 7 Sept. 1908 - 12 Feb. 1980
Abu‘l-Qásim Faizí 1906 - 19 Nov. 1980
H. Collis Featherstone 5 May 1913 - 29 Sept. 1990
John Ferraby 9 Jan. 1914 - 5 Sept. 1973
Rahmatu‘lláh Muhájir 1923 - 29 Dec. 1979
Enoch Olinga 24 June 1926 - 16 Sept. 1979
John Robarts 2 Nov. 1901 - 18 June 1991
William Sears 28 Mar. 1911 - 25 Mar. 1992

INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

Amatu‘l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm
[b. 8 Aug. 1910] *Date announced* 26 Mar. 1952

Jalál Kházeh
[b. 1897, d. 20 Feb. 1990] *Date Announced* 6 Dec. 1953

Paul E. Haney
[b. 20 Aug. 1909, d. 3 Dec. 1982] *Date Announced* 19 Mar. 1954

‘Alí-Muhammad Varqá
[b. 1911] *Date Announced* 15 Nov. 1955

Agnes B. Alexander
[b. 21 July 1875, d. 1 Jan. 1971] *Date Announced* 27 Mar. 1957

INTRODUCTION

One of two things happens to great historic events, either they are lost sight of temporarily, to sometimes be re-discovered at a later date, or they form part of the great river of man's destiny, never for an instant to be forgotten or submerged. Of such is the unique period of almost six years during which the Hands of the Cause of God, appointed during his lifetime by Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, who styled them the "Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth" and its "high-ranking officers", arose and firmly seized and guided the destiny of the endangered and grievously shaken body of Bahá'u'lláh's followers the world over. When the appointed and much-loved Head of our Faith suddenly passed away on November 4, 1957 in London, we were twenty-seven in number, five women and twenty-two men, drawn from all continents of the globe, some of whom had never even met the Guardian personally, indeed, eight of us had only been appointed to the rank of Hand by Shoghi Effendi a few weeks prior to his death. Those of us of longer standing felt great compassion for this last contingent of our peers, who, in addition to the shock each one of us had experienced when we were elevated to this high position, were now faced with the additional shock of the realization that Shoghi Effendi was no longer there to guide them personally, that this door was closed forever. The eldest among us, Corinne True, one of the early group of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's disciples in America, was already 96; the youngest, Enoch Olinga, a native of Uganda, only 31; listing us according to our diminishing ages, covering sixty-five years of difference, we were, after Corinne True, Clara Dunn in Australia—herself 88, Amelia Collins at the World Centre, Tarázu'lláh Samandarí in Persia, Mason Remey at the World Centre, Agnes Alexander in Japan, Músá Banání in Africa, Horace Holley in America, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í in Persia, Leroy Ioas at the World Centre, Ugo Giachery in Italy, Jalál Kházeh in Persia, Adelbert Mühlischlegel and Hermann Grossmann in Germany, John Robarts in Africa, Dhikru'lláh Khádem in Persia, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan in Persia, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí in Arabia, Hasan Balyuzi in England, Paul Haney in

America, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum at the World Centre, 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá in Persia, William Sears in Africa, Collis Featherstone in Australia, John Ferraby in England, Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir in Indonesia and Enoch Olinga in Africa. Among the men five held the title of "Doctor", two of these being medical men; some of the others had university degrees but we five women, as far as I know, held no university degrees. I go into these details because this is the backdrop, these the leading actors, as the perilous drama of this most recent world religion played itself out successfully from November 4, 1957 to April 21, 1963.

The words of the Universal House of Justice, the Supreme Body of the Bahá'í Faith, in its first message to the Bahá'ís of the world, dated April 30, 1963, at the time of the World Congress in London, are the best tribute to our role in history: "We do not wish to dwell on the appalling dangers which faced the infant Cause when it was suddenly deprived of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, but rather to acknowledge with all the love and gratitude of our hearts the reality of the sacrifice, the labour, the self-discipline, the superb stewardship of the Hands of the Cause of God. We can think of no more fitting words to express our tribute to these dearly loved and valiant souls than to recall the words of Bahá'u'lláh Himself: *'Light and glory, greeting and praise be upon the Hands of His Cause, through whom the light of long-suffering hath shone forth, and the declaration of authority is proven of God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Independent; and through whom the sea of bestowal hath moved, and the breeze of the favour of God, the Lord of mankind, hath wafted.'*"

To this unique testimony should be added the fact that although the Hands were firmly established as the ruling and guiding body of the entire Bahá'í world, I can bear witness that never for a single instant were the Hands influenced by either ambition or self-esteem. Our sole objective, the purpose of our every effort, was to succeed in electing in 1963 the Universal House of Justice. The Universal House of Justice itself testified that: "The entire history of religion shows no comparable record of such strict self-discipline, such absolute loyalty, and such complete self-abnegation by the leaders of a religion finding themselves suddenly deprived of their divinely

inspired guide. The debt of gratitude which mankind for generations, nay, ages to come, owes to this handful of grief-stricken, steadfast, heroic souls is beyond estimation.”

Although Bahá'u'lláh created the Institution of the Hands, appointing during His own lifetime four distinguished Persian believers to fulfil this function, and His son and successor, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, later referred to four more outstanding Persian followers of His Father as Hands, it remained for Shoghi Effendi—according to the explicit text of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament the Hands may only be appointed by the Guardian himself—to add forty-two more names to this unique list of people heading the appointive half of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order, thus raising the total to fifty individuals who have borne this exalted title. Ten Hands were raised by him posthumously to this high rank; of these ten I was present when he nominated six of them after their death. I gathered from Shoghi Effendi that the reason he had not designated as Hands these distinguished men and women during their lifetime was because he considered that, for the most part, the Bahá'ís were still too immature to accept, without jealousy and criticism, that a fellow-believer should stand forth from the rank and file in such a high station, bathed in such a bright light of distinction. I remember how surprised I was when he said this. It was not until six years before his death that Shoghi Effendi—after thirty years of his ministry as Guardian had passed—announced in a cable to the Bahá'í world, dated December 24, 1951, that the hour was “now ripe take long inevitably deferred step conformity provisions 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Testament . . . through appointment first contingent Hands Cause God, twelve in number . . .”, linking it to his November 30th message in which he had outlined detailed plans for the holding of four Intercontinental Conferences in Africa, America, Europe, and Asia, and stating that this step marked the “inauguration beyond limits World Centre Faith intercontinental stage Bahá'í activity”. Two months later he followed this by the announcement of the elevation of seven more individuals to the rank of Hand, thus raising the number to nineteen. This initiation of the active functioning of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause under the aegis of the Guardian was not only an immense step forward in the evolution of our Faith but an indication that the still small and few

in number Bahá'í communities throughout the world were now mature enough to accept the guidance and leadership implicit in such a body. Between March 1952 and March 1957 Shoghi Effendi appointed five more Hands to replace five who had died, and a month before he passed away he added a final, last contingent to the Hands of the Cause through raising their number by eight more, thus bringing us to twenty-seven—three times nine.

From 1951 to 1957 Shoghi Effendi constantly supervised and guided the Institution of the Hands, that half of the institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh which has the specialized function to both propagate and protect it. Like a wise gardener, tending and pruning a rare, promising and cherished fruit tree, he watched over us as we Hands served him at the World Centre and in the five continents of the globe. It was he who developed the second phase of our activities through adding, in April 1954, to the powers of our Institution by authorizing us to appoint Auxiliary Boards. Looking back, I believe this constant care and encouragement he gave us succeeded in creating among us not only a sense of passionate loyalty and devotion to him, but a sense of belonging, as a group, to the Institution of the Guardianship.

I would never claim that my impressions are a reflection of Shoghi Effendi's motives; anyone who ever pretends to really understand the Centre of the Covenant—be it Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, or Shoghi Effendi—immediately presumes equality, which is of course out of the question and utterly ridiculous. However, as a close observer, one has a right to one's opinions. I believe, in choosing those he elevated to the rank of Hand during their lifetime, Shoghi Effendi was primarily influenced by their already demonstrated devotion and capacity to serve the Faith, or the indications he saw in them of a great potential capacity to do so. In rare cases, such as Corinne True, or "Mother" Dunn, it was, I think, a well-deserved crown of reward placed upon their heads for a singularly long and distinguished period of service. The Guardian was certainly not influenced for a moment by what the opinion of the Bahá'ís might be of his choice. He was equally uninfluenced by how we might personally feel; three of us were appointed to our face, so to speak: I was present when he told Fred Schopflocher at the Pilgrim House

table that he was making him a Hand; Freddie turned so white I thought he was going to faint! He told Músá Banání, likewise on his pilgrimage, that he was appointing him a Hand; Mr. Banání begged not to be! I was not present but I heard this. And he told me, after my father died, that he was appointing me a Hand in his place; all my tears and remonstrances and begging him not to had no effect. Shoghi Effendi was singularly uninfluenceable.

Of the thirty-two Hands he appointed during their lifetime the geographic distribution was as follows: Holy Land 4, Asia 10, America 6, Europe 6, Africa 4, Australasia 2; sometimes he associated these appointments with a continental distribution. The final eight Hands—whose names were announced a month before he died and who, with the other nineteen still living Hands, were suddenly obliged to assume the leadership of the Cause of God pending the time when the Universal House of Justice could be elected on a firm basis—were characterized in surprising and significant terms: he said they had been chosen from four continents of the globe and represented not only the black and white races but were of Afnán^[7], Christian, Muslim, Jewish and pagan backgrounds. Surely this was a most phenomenal statement, to bring up Enoch Olinga's "pagan" background, considering that his immediate ancestors had been Christians. It certainly emphasized the total lack of any form of prejudice within the Bahá'í Faith; I am sure, however, that the Guardian made Enoch's appointment, like all the other appointments of Hands, on the sole basis of individual merit. I think, moreover, the fact that Enoch was a black African, from a continent which in many cases still had a pagan element, was an added asset in Shoghi Effendi's eyes. It gave the Institution of the Hands a very broad, world-wide base of not only racial but religious background. As Shoghi Effendi never did anything thoughtlessly, we should ponder the implications of the terms he used. In 1957 there were—and still are—many millions of pagans in the world.

Whatever the reason for Shoghi Effendi's choice of Hands, he once said to me that these were the best he had to choose from; I got the impression he wished he had better. Knowing myself, and my fellow-Hands, I am sure all of us lamented in our hearts that we were not worthier, had not more capacity in every way to serve him.

Before he died Shoghi Effendi had succeeded in making us feel we were a body to assist him, a world-wide, developing Institution, with an integral and essential part to play in promoting the growth and expansion of our Faith. We were wholly his creation.

The Guardian, in a cable to the Bahá'í world dated January 9, 1951, had proclaimed his "weighty epoch-making decision" to form the first International Bahá'í Council, the "forerunner" of the "supreme administrative institution"^[8] of the Faith, which was destined to emerge in the fullness of time, and he characterized this "historic decision" as "marking most significant milestone evolution Administrative Order Faith Bahá'u'lláh course last thirty years." Those thirty years were his own ministry since the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1921. This first International Bahá'í Council was not elected but selected by Shoghi Effendi himself from individual believers of long standing and proven dedication to the service of the Cause. Less than one year later, on December 24, 1951, he announced the names of the first contingent of Hands. In view of the clear distinction in the Teachings between the elected Universal House of Justice and the appointed Hands of the Cause, it seems to me portentous that the first membership of the International Bahá'í Council included three people soon to be nominated Hands, and that, at the time of the beloved Guardian's passing, five of its officers, so designated by him, namely, myself as liaison between it and him, Mason Remey, its President, Amelia Collins, its Vice-President, Leroy Loas, its Secretary General, and Ugo Giachery, its Member at Large—who lived in Italy and functioned as a European Hand, but frequently visited Haifa at Shoghi Effendi's request—were all Hands of the Cause. In addition to being members of the International Bahá'í Council, these Hands, resident and serving at the World Centre, constituted a separate body, specified by Shoghi Effendi to act as liaison between him and the other Hands throughout the world, conveying their messages to him and his to them, thus giving us, during his own lifetime, a dual function as Hands directly serving under him and officers of the International Bahá'í Council. I believe that at that particularly dangerous juncture in Bahá'í history this duality was providential and greatly reinforced the authority and power of the Custodians when faced by the crisis of his sudden

passing. When that terrible blow fell upon the Bahá'í world, these five Hands had been constantly serving under his personal instructions for almost six years.

Historic and stirring events moved rapidly during those last years of the Guardianship: on June 30, 1952, Shoghi Effendi wrote of the Faith that “at long last the machinery of its highest institutions has been erected,” and that around its most holy Shrines “the supreme organs of its unfolding Order, are, in their embryonic form, unfolding . . .” Block by block he had been laying the foundations of the future World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh in what he termed the “heart and nerve-centre” of the Faith situated in the Holy Land. By April 1954, two years and four months after his first announcement of the appointment of Hands of the Cause, he was able, in a cable addressed to them and to the Bahá'í world, to state how greatly he valued the support of their members at the World Centre, citing five particular fields of service that he considered outstanding: the erection of the superstructure of the Báb's Shrine on Mount Carmel; the reinforcement of the World Centre's ties with the new State; the extension of international endowments in the Holy Land; and, in his own words, the “initiation preliminary measures establishment Bahá'í World Administrative Centre”; to this grandiose picture of our support of his work he added our participation in the four successive Intercontinental Teaching Conferences held at the inception of his World Crusade.

In this same message an immense step forward took place in the world-wide function of the Hands—now nineteen in number—four in the Holy Land and fifteen in the various continents, namely, six in Asia, one in Africa, four in Europe, one in Australasia and three in the Americas—through the Guardian's instructions that these continental Hands should appoint Auxiliary Boards, of nine members each, to assist them in their continental areas. He also specified that in addition to acting as deputies of the Hands in their respective continents, they would “aid and advise them in the effective prosecution of the Ten Year Plan” and that, at a later period, they would assist “in the discharge of their dual and sacred task of safeguarding the Faith and of promoting its teaching activities.” In October 1957 Shoghi Effendi implemented this duty to safeguard the

Faith, shortly before his passing, by creating an additional Auxiliary Board, whose function was to be, under the direct guidance of the Hands of the Cause, “watching over the security of the Faith”. He had already stated, only five months before he passed away, in a general communication addressed to both the Hands and the National Spiritual Assemblies, that the divinely appointed Institution of the Hands of the Faith was entering a new phase in the unfoldment of “its sacred mission”, and that to their other functions was now added the “primary obligation” to watch over and ensure the protection of the Bahá’í World Community “in close collaboration” with the National Assemblies.

The temporary headship of the Bahá’í Faith by the Hands of the Cause appointed by Shoghi Effendi commenced with his wholly unexpected and sudden passing through a heart attack in London, England, on November 4, 1957, after he had fully recovered from Asiatic flu, an event which shook the Bahá’í world to its roots. I sent a cable as follows, via Haifa (our usual practice), on that same day, which announced, from the World Centre, his passing:

SHOGHI EFFENDI BELOVED OF ALL HEARTS SACRED TRUST GIVEN BELIEVERS BY MASTER PASSED AWAY SUDDEN HEART ATTACK IN SLEEP FOLLOWING ASIATIC FLU. URGE BELIEVERS REMAIN STEADFAST CLING INSTITUTION HANDS LOVINGLY REARED RECENTLY REINFORCED EMPHASIZED BELOVED GUARDIAN. ONLY ONENESS HEART ONENESS PURPOSE CAN BEFITTINGLY TESTIFY LOYALTY ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES BELIEVERS DEPARTED GUARDIAN WHO SACRIFICED SELF UTTERLY FOR SERVICE FAITH.

RUHIYYIH

Once this official and tragic announcement had gone forth from the World Centre, subsequent messages perforce were sent direct from London. On November 5th another cable went out to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

BELOVED ALL HEARTS PRECIOUS GUARDIAN CAUSE GOD
PASSED PEACEFULLY AWAY YESTERDAY AFTER ASIATIC
FLU. APPEAL HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES AUXILIARY
BOARDS SHELTER BELIEVERS ASSIST MEET
HEARTRENDING SUPREME TEST. FUNERAL OUR
BELOVED GUARDIAN SATURDAY LONDON. HANDS
ASSEMBLY BOARD BEMBERS INVITED ATTEND. ANY
PRESS RELEASE SHOULD STATE MEETING HANDS
SHORTLY HAIFA WILL MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT TO BAHA'I
WORLD REGARDING FUTURE PLANS. URGE HOLD
MEMORIAL MEETINGS SATURDAY.

RUHIYYIH

This terrible news evoked throughout the Bahá'í world a passionate wave of response; cables and letters expressing the shock and sorrow of the believers and their firm loyalty to the Hands poured in after his passing.

Eighteen Hands of the Cause assembled in London to attend the funeral of their Guardian. Those who were unable to be present were either too old and frail to do so, or, in some cases, were requested to remain at their posts for the protection of the Faith at this moment of great crisis.

The following cables were sent on two successive days after the funeral, held on November 9th in the Great Northern London Cemetery:

BELOVED GUARDIAN LAID REST LONDON ACCORDING
LAWS AQDAS BEAUTIFUL BEFITTING SPOT AFTER
IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY HELD PRESENCE MULTITUDE
BELIEVERS REPRESENTING OVER TWENTY COUNTRIES
EAST WEST STOP DOCTORS ASSURE SUDDEN PASSING
INVOLVED NO SUFFERING STOP BLESSED COUNTENANCE
BORE EXPRESSION INFINITE BEAUTY PEACE MAJESTY
STOP EIGHTEEN HANDS ASSEMBLED FUNERAL URGE
NATIONAL BODIES REQUEST ALL BELIEVERS HOLD
MEMORIAL MEETINGS EIGHTEENTH NOVEMBER
COMMEMORATING DAYSPRING DIVINE GUIDANCE WHO

HAS LEFT US AFTER THIRTY-SIX YEARS UTTER SELF-SACRIFICE CEASELESS LABOURS CONSTANT VIGILANCE.

RUHIYYIH

ASSURE FRIENDS BELOVED SACRED GUARDIAN BEFITTINGLY LAID REST SURROUNDED BY LARGE REPRESENTATIVE GATHERING BELIEVERS EAST WEST STOP LIGHT OUR LIVES DEPARTED WE MUST NOW STAND FIRM REMEMBERING PEERLESS EXAMPLE HIS DEDICATION WORK BLESSED PERFECTION GLORIOUS VICTORIES HE WON PLANS HE LONGED SEE COMPLETED STOP ONLY REDEDICATION GREATER UNITY STEADFAST SERVICE CAN BEFITTINGLY SHOW OUR GRIEF MAKE US ACCEPTABLE HOLY THRESHOLD.

RUHIYYIH

The labours of the Hands of the Cause at the time of this unique crisis followed an unbroken pattern till the day the Universal House of Justice was elected on April 21, 1963. The Hands who had gathered in London met and, in spite of their shock and grief, decided not an instant's time must be lost in holding a plenary meeting of our entire body at our World Centre in the Holy Land. This was called for November 18th. Our first act was to choose a delegation to open the apartment of Shoghi Effendi which had been sealed by the International Bahá'í Council right after his passing (in addition to being locked by him when we left Haifa, as was his usual custom) and to make an exhaustive search for any document he might have left—a Will or otherwise. There was no such thing to be found.

The general body of the Hands then met in the upper hall of the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, near His resting-place, for the first of their six Conclaves until the election of the Universal House of Justice took place. Of all our Conclaves—the only befitting term for such august gatherings—that first one was the most epoch-making. Not only were we dazed and grieving, we were orphans, deprived of our father. The responsibility for the entire Cause of God, to which each one of us was wholly consecrated, had been placed in our

hands, with neither premonition, warning nor advice. Aside from the thought that we were now the only ones to direct the Bahá'ís of the world, to protect and guide them and to win the Crusade of our beloved Guardian, we were faced with problems of inconceivable magnitude. How to assume the reins of authority, with no document to support us, other than the general theological statements about the Hands? What should we do regarding money, urgently needed for the monthly upkeep of the Shrines, Holy Places, pilgrim houses, and gardens, and to pay not only these substantial recurring bills but continue to finance innumerable vital Bahá'í undertakings throughout the world which Shoghi Effendi himself had inaugurated and supported from his funds as Head of the Faith? What was our legal status, on which hinged the delicate question that all the international financial assets of the Faith were in the name of Shoghi Effendi? What would we say about the Guardianship?

When one adds to the staggering total of the above enumerated problems the fact that all this rested on the shoulders of twenty-seven Hands, the first of whom had only been called to their high office six years previously and the last of whom were appointed a bare four weeks before Shoghi Effendi passed away, one gets some idea of the state and the burden of the Hands of the Cause of God.

As we sat in the great upstairs hall of the Mansion—so sacred, so private—our historic Proclamation was worked out; it was signed by all the Hands of the Cause except Corinne True, then aged 96, who was unable to travel from the United States to the Holy Land but quite capable of being one of the signatories by consent of that historic document. Clara Dunn, 88, was, however, present in Haifa and signed the document herself, but because of age and infirmity was not able to attend our meetings. When one remembers that of the twenty-five of us gathered in the Mansion, most of our Persian Hands spoke little or no English at this time and none of the Western Hands spoke any Persian except myself—and my vocabulary in no way covered the issues facing us—and that only two of the Persian Hands were completely bi-lingual and therefore we had to translate every word, back and forth—as each Hand, conscious of the frightening responsibilities resting upon us, insisted on exact translation of the opinions voiced in the other language not his own

—and that this went on hour after hour, in day-long sessions, morning and afternoon, one gets a glimpse of what kind of burdens were added to our sorrow.

At this first Conclave we were faced with the inescapable obligation of voting from amongst the membership of the Hands of the Cause for who would, if chosen by all of us, accept to live and serve at the World Centre as one of the nine legal Custodians. For those who were not already part of the body of the Hands in Haifa this meant literally burning all their bridges behind them. I can remember the words of Paul Haney, an economist just promoted in the prominent investment firm to which he had belonged for some years, with the assurance of financial increases and a substantial pension on retirement, as he bowed his head and said, “You are only called once.”

We had, from our very first Conclave, a fixed procedure: every morning we went to pray in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh before our meetings started and our last act every evening was to visit the room in which He passed away for closing prayers. If my memory serves me, the longest Conclave lasted twenty-two days—all the days being the same. We were not interested in days off!

A policy was established that no notes of individual Hands would be taken out of that hall, but would be gathered and burned at the end of the day by one of the Hands. As our consultations were full, free and frank, the notes—in discussions involving more than twenty people, where each one had to wait his turn—were obviously far too pertinent to risk individual opinions leaving that room. Any carelessness, any gossip or speculation at such a juncture could have divided the Hands from each other and split the Bahá'í Faith.

After long and often agonizing consultation and soul-searching—which took place in discussion at more than one Conclave—we finally agreed as a body to announce to the Bahá'í world that the Institution of the Hands, different in both nature and function from the structure constituting the elected administrative bodies of the Faith, placed us in a separate category and we requested the believers not to vote for the Hands of the Cause in Bahá'í elections. We Hands burned in the fire of this weighty decision until it became clear to us that greater strength, diversity, and breadth lay in keeping these two

aspects of the system of Bahá'u'lláh separate and therefore more mobile, each free to function in its own field.

When the Guardian passed away the paramount, supremely urgent task confronting us at our first Conclave was to ensure that everything connected with the affairs, direction and administration of the Faith was solidly and speedily vested in the Institution of the Hands. We were blessed in the unity and strength we found among ourselves—some of the Hands meeting each other for the first time—and also in having the loyal advice and assistance of Dr. Abraham Weinshall, a distinguished lawyer who had attended to all the legal affairs of the Guardian for many years, each one holding the other in high esteem, and whom we now called upon to advise and assist us.

All the legal powers at the World Centre of the Faith—which had been vested in Shoghi Effendi as the appointed successor of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—were left in limbo when he passed away as he himself had made neither a Will nor a statement of his intentions. The holdings at the World Centre, including its sacred Shrines, its historic buildings, hundreds of square metres of prime real estate, and substantial local bank accounts, were therefore in great danger. The Hands were able, however, to successfully and legally establish the principle that the Guardian held all properties as the Head of the Faith and not as an individual, and to have this priceless heritage safely placed in the hands of the Custodians. A further large deposit, invested for safekeeping in Switzerland in both his and my name, I later turned over to the Universal House of Justice after its election. I remember remonstrating with Shoghi Effendi, when he made this arrangement, that it was unnecessary to include my name on this account; but when he passed away so suddenly in London I was in a position, with grace and dignity, to draw on this money to pay for all his funeral expenses and our hotel bills and later to design and supervise the construction and erection of the monument, in white Carrara marble, marking his grave, without turning to any Bahá'í source for assistance. This was a great consolation to me in my sorrow and surely reflected the mercy of God in an hour of terrible trial and suffering.

Following the historic inaugural Conclave in Bahjí, from November 18th to the 25th, 1957, one of the first acts of the Custodians was to

fulfil what had been a cherished plan of Shoghi Effendi himself, namely, to tear down the long, two-storey house occupied by a remnant of the Covenant-breakers, a building which abutted on the garden wall of the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí, towards the north, the legal possession of which he had acquired, after years of effort, shortly before his passing. We accomplished this in December 1957 not only in a spirit of fidelity to his wishes, but, in our deep sorrow, longing to please him by fulfilling one of his last cherished plans for the beautification of the precincts of our Most Holy Shrine, the Qiblih of our Faith. As the clouds of dust arose from the demolition of this ugly building, in some strange way it assuaged our aching hearts. It was a revelation to me, when we extended the pattern of Shoghi Effendi's garden into the space the demolished building had occupied, to see how, within half a metre, the large symmetrical design of the existing gardens he had made was completed.

Indeed, in the years following his passing, in one field after another, one plan Shoghi Effendi had made after another, whether in connection with the Bahá'í properties in the Holy Land or throughout the world in detailed national plans and objectives, was fulfilled. This included the five large Intercontinental Conferences he announced would be held during 1958—the midway point of his decade-long global Spiritual Crusade. In spite of our heartbreak, the fidelity of the Hands was so great we each went to the Intercontinental Conference the Guardian had specified. He had sown and we reaped, and still do, his harvest.

In the meetings of the Custodians we almost never worked to an agenda and had no rigid format. We had decided, from the time of our first Conclave that, in order to protect the Cause of God, we would have no officers, such as President, Chairman, Secretary, etc. lest one of the male Hands, holding such a position, should begin to assume in the eyes of the Bahá'ís the function of the leader, and, God forbid, begin to be seen as a sort of second Guardian in importance. I think this was one of our wisest decisions and a great shield for the purity of our services. Likewise, in the Custodian's meetings we had no "head", but took the chairmanship in rotation. We did, however, divide our work in the sense that Persian Hands

handled the correspondence in Persian and Arabic and those of us from the West, all correspondence in western languages.

In spite of all our devotion and sacrifices, one of our greatest problems was to ensure, all the year, every year, that a quorum of Hands was present in the Holy Land for our decisions. Within the first two years of our ministry two of the Custodians found they could not continue to serve in a permanent capacity at the World Centre, and in order to maintain our number at nine, it was necessary to select two other Hands to replace them. In November of 1959 the Hands announced that John Ferraby and Horace Holley—an immemorial figure in the development of the Administrative Order in America, which was the world prototype—had been chosen to serve as Custodians.

During the period of our ministry we were grieved by the death of four of our fellow-Hands, two of whom were Custodians. Only eight months after having been chosen as a Custodian, Horace Holley passed away, in July 1960; William Sears was called upon to serve as his replacement. On January 1, 1962, our dear Amelia Collins died and Hasan Balyuzi was appointed to act as a Custodian temporarily to fill the vacancy created by her passing.

If one is to understand how the Institution of the Hands achieved the preservation of the Faith between the passing of its hereditary Head and the election of its Supreme Body, one cannot do so without a clear picture of the stage of development at which the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh found itself in 1957. As early as 1924 Shoghi Effendi stated that the Local and National Assemblies constituted “the bedrock upon the strength of which the Universal House of Justice is in future to be firmly established”, and in 1951 he cabled: “. . . Future edifice Universal House of Justice depending for its stability on sustaining strength pillars erected diversified communities East West.” In 1953, at the outset of Shoghi Effendi’s World Crusade—itsself a direct projection of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s “Tablets of the Divine Plan” designed to spread His Father’s message throughout the world—there were only twelve National Spiritual Assemblies; when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away in 1921 there were none. One of the major acts of Shoghi Effendi, two years before his passing, was to call for the election, in Ridván 1957, of thirteen National Spiritual Assemblies,

two of which already existed but would change names and areas of jurisdiction, thus adding eleven in number; these eleven, plus three more which had been elected in Africa in 1956, brought the total number formed by the Guardian during his thirty-six-year ministry to twenty-six. The Hands of the Cause, during our brief custodianship of less than six years, increased this number to fifty-six.^[9] When Shoghi Effendi succeeded his Grandfather, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, only thirty-five countries throughout the entire world had received Bahá’u’lláh’s Message: two in the Báb’s days, thirteen in Bahá’u’lláh’s days, and twenty in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s days. Shoghi Effendi enlarged this by 219 during the thirty-six years of his ministry; the Hands of the Faith, during the ministry of the Custodians, added five more. In his Ridván 1957 Message the Guardian informed us there were 4,200 localities throughout the world where Bahá’ís resided; at the end of his World Crusade the Hands were able to report this total had reached 11,210—an increase of over 7,000.

It is beyond the scope of this introduction to present all the goals of Shoghi Effendi’s vast Ten Year Teaching and Consolidation Plan^[10]; only the most arduous and costly tasks which faced the Hands will be mentioned. The Guardian, by the time of his passing, had either inaugurated, changed, or accomplished some of his own goals; a few, dependent on political situations, proved unfeasible. The monetary tasks alone which faced the Hands were formidable. Shoghi Effendi had called for the “doubling” of Bahá’í Houses of Worship. The “Mother Temple of the West”, situated in the United States, near Chicago, whose cornerstone ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself had laid in 1912, the Guardian had, with the greatest difficulty, over a period of three decades—decades which included the “Great Depression” in the United States, which began in 1929 and lasted over ten years—shepherded to completion, and it had been opened to public worship at the beginning of his Crusade. However, in the original Ten Year Plan goals for this Crusade he stipulated that two more Temples should be built, one in Asia, one in Europe, the Asian one to be erected in the Cradle of the Faith, in Teheran, the European one in Frankfurt, Germany.

During the five years prior to Shoghi Effendi’s passing it became evident there was no hope of building a Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in Persia

as both the official and popular hatred of the Bahá'ís had not modified in over a century.^[11] The Guardian, saddened and indignant, decided to compensate the steadfast, continuously oppressed and persecuted believers in that country by erecting not two but three Temples. He launched, in his own words, an “ambitious three-fold enterprise, designed to compensate for the disabilities suffered by the sorely-tried Community of the followers of His Faith in the land of His birth, aiming at the erection, in localities as far apart as Frankfurt, Sydney and Kampala, of the Mother Temples of the European, the Australian and African continents, at a cost of approximately one million dollars, complementing the Temples already constructed in the Asiatic and American continents. One-third of this sum I, gladly and with a grateful heart, pledge at this auspicious hour, a sum which, when added to the funds already donated for this laudable purpose . . . will constitute well-nigh half of the entire amount required to ensure the consummation of this stupendous, epoch-making undertaking.”

The Guardian, before announcing these decisions, had privately calculated that about one-half of the cost he already had in hand or was assured of receiving; the remainder, so to speak, he trusted in God to provide. He gave them first the Mother Temple of Africa in its heart, Kampala, Uganda, and later, to everyone's joy and surprise, he added the Mother Temple of the Antipodes in Sydney, Australia, and finally, the last of those to be built, the Mother Temple of Europe in Frankfurt. Fortunately for the Hands, he had already advanced his plans for these three Temples by approving their designs. It was a great blessing for the Bahá'ís of the world that the Commander-in-Chief of the forces of Bahá'u'lláh's world-conquering spiritual army had announced and set in motion himself such momentous projects. But think of the agony of twenty-seven heart-broken Hands faced with the duty of fulfilling these commitments! The cornerstone of the African Temple in Kampala was laid on January 26, 1958; that of Sydney on March 22, 1958; and that of Frankfurt on November 20, 1960. Triumphantly the Custodians were able to see the first of these precious Houses of Worship, chosen by our beloved Guardian himself, opened to public worship, in Kampala on January 15, 1961, and the one in Sydney on September 16, 1961. The purchase of the

land and commencement of work had been more complicated in Germany and the foundation-stone for the Mother Temple of Europe was not laid until November 1960; its superstructure was completed in November 1962 during the ministry of the Hands but the Temple was not opened to public worship until July 4, 1964.

It is, I think, impossible for others to understand how hard the Hands in the Holy Land daily worked, how much we struggled to raise the money for and to build these three large and imposing edifices for Shoghi Effendi. Many times the diminishing number of Hands resident at the World Centre have said to each other: "We could not again pass through even five minutes of the suffering we went through in those years!"

One of our most pressing worries concerned the heavy financial obligations left us in the plans of Shoghi Effendi regarding not only the construction of Bahá'í Temples but other properties, and the monetary support we had to give to the new National Bahá'í Assemblies in developing countries. The national Bahá'í bodies in a position to provide any substantial aid at that period were those of Irán and America.

The main income of the Hands was from the contributions of the Persian Bahá'í community, which was the oldest and at that time the most affluent Bahá'í community in the world. This monetary aid we estimated at about \$100,000 a year. In June 1960, as we considered our financial position, we felt obliged to vote this entire sum for Temple construction, the expenses of the Institution of the Hands and support to the National Assemblies, nearly all of which at that period were not self-supporting and received most of their annual budget from the Hands at the World Centre.

The munificent financial contributions of our fellow-Hand and Custodian Amelia Collins were of great assistance to the Hands; her outstanding generosity afforded infinite comfort to our heavily-burdened minds and hearts as we faced the ever-increasing financial needs of the Faith. The following minute from our Conclave meeting in 1959 conveys only one instance of her magnanimous spirit: "Milly offered to provide one-third entire sum to be given by Hands Holy Land to Hands in the continents."

The Hands living at the World Centre practised rigid economy; as the pilgrimage had been suspended for a nine-month period of mourning throughout the Bahá'í world after the passing of Shoghi Effendi, our Eastern and Western Pilgrim Houses were available and the newly-chosen Custodians and their wives resided in them for some time, only moving to more suitable accommodation when the pilgrimage was reopened.

With very few exceptions, the Hands had all been, at some period, members of various National Spiritual Assemblies; they were highly informed and highly skilled Bahá'ís. They not only had a right to hold individual opinions but did so very strongly. Like most consultative bodies, we got over the bumps, the exasperation at interminable waits for one's turn to speak, the long-windedness which our passionate sense of responsibility and the fact that most of us were public speakers, produced. But there was one agonizing issue we could not agree on. Year after year we could come to no conclusion about whether the Guardianship was closed for the period of this Faith. The death of Shoghi Effendi had really been like an arrow shot into our hearts. Each one struggled with his bereavement in his own way. One of us, Mason Remey, one of the oldest and most distinguished, solved his personal dilemma by concluding that the Bahá'í Faith could not go on without a Guardian and that undoubtedly Shoghi Effendi's successor was himself—for various invalid and unprovable reasons, such as that he was one of the earliest, famous believers of the West, had been made a Hand of the Cause by Shoghi Effendi and President of the International Bahá'í Council. All this was true, but it still did not make him the second Guardian. Mason Remey's activities, beginning in 1960, when he "proclaimed" himself the second Guardian, were a profound source of embarrassment to his fellow-Hands who, in addition to all their other heavy, heartbreaking responsibilities, now found themselves obliged to progressively remonstrate with, admonish, warn, expose and finally excommunicate him. This extraordinary and sudden display of unexpected pride and conceit passed over the Bahá'í world, producing a brief flutter in France, a passing ripple in Chile and sundry vibrations in the United States, Pakistan and one or two other countries, and was soon gone forever. For those who, like

myself and Paul Haney, had known and loved him all our lives, and Milly Collins, who had been a particularly old friend and co-worker, it was a very bitter and tragic experience. Unfollowed and unmourned, alone and isolated in his old age, when he died he was buried by his young secretary who was not a Bahá'í. Although this whole episode had no effect on the Faith, it added to the burdens of the Custodians, consumed hours of consideration better spent on constructive matters, and saddened our hearts. Like any branch cut off from the root, the Remey incident withered away.

Far more distressing to the Custodians, and indeed to the entire Bahá'í world, was the case of the fourteen Bahá'í prisoners in Morocco, three of whom were condemned to death and five to life imprisonment for no other reason than their religious beliefs. Comparable to the case of the Persian Bahá'ís during the lifetime of Shoghi Effendi, in 1955, when a violent national attack on the part of the fanatical Muslim clergy took place in Írán, headed by a particularly vehement priest who accused the Bahá'ís, over the national radio as well as from the pulpit, of being the enemies of Islám,^[12] and produced a major crisis in the fortunes of the Bahá'í Faith, now, in another continent, a very similar storm of alarming proportions blew up. Though few in number, the Bahá'í community in Morocco was firmly established and valiant in spirit. The first signs of this alarming crisis appeared in 1961; on December 7th, an article appeared in the nationally prominent newspaper *Al Alam*, lamenting the decline of Islám and attacking the Bahá'í Faith.

Suddenly a spotlight was focused on a small group of Bahá'ís in the northern provincial town of Nador who were imprisoned and accused, fundamentally, of heresy, some of them being sentenced to death. From its onset this case became a constant preoccupation of the Custodians; ceaseless anxiety and effort, and in the end acute anguish, became our daily lot as the date for the execution of three of the prisoners in that city approached. The extraordinary amount of material and comment covering this case—which began in April 1962 and ended in December 1963—cannot be presented here. The facts, the highlights, and some of the major documents are, however, included.

The Moroccan case involved the imprisonment of 14 Bahá'ís in three cities, 7 in Nador, 2 in Fez, and 5 in Tetuan in the northern Province of Nador; the arrest of the first five took place on April 10, 1962. Already, however, throughout the Riff area religious opposition of the Muslim community had been steadily increasing; some of the homes of the Bahá'ís had been searched by the police and their Bahá'í literature seized, and in January 1962 a well-known Professor of Fine Arts at the University of Tetuan was dismissed from his post and warned to have no association with his co-religionists. Another Bahá'í, a resident of Nador, lost his government job shortly thereafter.

All the accused were men of good repute; with one exception they were all young men, holding respected jobs, with some standing in the community; among them was a teacher, a Customs official and a police inspector. Six of them were single, eight were married, and seven had children. The youngest was only 20 years old, the eldest 38. One of the first five arrested, under police interrogation, was hung upside down by the feet but refused to divulge the names of any other Bahá'ís; all of them were brutally treated; they were arrested without any charge and held in prison for four days before being brought to Court on April 15th.

On October 31st the fourteen Bahá'í men were brought to the Regional Court of Nador to hear the charges against them and were formally accused of: Rebellion, Disorder, Attack on Public Security, Forming an Association of Criminals, and Attack on Religious Faith. The difference between Bahá'í religious laws—fasting, prayer, pilgrimage, etc.—and those of Islám were compared in detail by the Court.

The first intimation we received at the World Centre of the arrest of the Bahá'ís was a newspaper article from Morocco; on April 14th, news of these happenings burst in the press through an article in the prestigious *Le Courier du Maroc*. While the case was being widely publicized in Moroccan newspapers and spreading to the foreign press, the Custodians were constantly in touch with the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assemblies—in those days 44 in number—most notably that of the United States of America, in which country is situated the seat of the United Nations, by which we were

recognized as a Non-Governmental Organization with observer status, under the title of the “Bahá’í International Community”, which officially represented at that time Bahá’í communities in 257 countries, territories and dependencies. All national Bahá’í bodies were likewise urged to bring as much pressure, by every means within their power, upon the Moroccan authorities in defence of the innocence of their fellow believers, whilst the Bahá’ís of the entire world, with full hearts, prayed for their protection and release.

Between the date the Moroccan Bahá’ís had been arrested, in April, and the stage of our open, world-wide publicity, every effort to protect the prisoners and prove their innocence had been undertaken by the Hands in the Holy Land. Two distinguished Moroccan lawyers had been engaged in their defence and a famous French lawyer had come from Paris to join them.

The Custodians felt very strongly that no attack should be made on the central authorities but that the blame should rest—where it in fact originated—on a small, fanatical, prejudiced and misinformed group of local leaders, who unfortunately at that period did not seem susceptible to any central State control from Rabat.

Throughout the hearings it was repeatedly asserted that one of the cardinal teachings of the Bahá’í Faith is obedience to government, that the Bahá’í International Community is accredited to agencies of the United Nations as a Non-Governmental Organization, and so on, to no avail.

On December 14, 1962 the Regional Court of Nador pronounced its verdict. Of the original 14 people involved in the case, four were acquitted, stating they were Muslims, one was acquitted through what appears to be family connections, one was released from prison on 15 years’ probation because he was a serious diabetic, five were committed to life imprisonment and three were condemned to death.

The announcement of these sentences stunned the Bahá’í world. It also stunned the media. The new Moroccan Constitution had just been overwhelmingly accepted by a national referendum and on December 7th, three days before the Bahá’í trial opened, Morocco had voted in the United Nations in favour of a resolution for a draft convention on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance.

On January 1st all National and Local Bahá'í Spiritual Assemblies were requested by the Custodians to cable His Majesty the King of Morocco appealing for justice for the Bahá'ís. This universal demonstration of international Bahá'í solidarity would leave no doubt in the minds of the authorities of the world-wide existence of the Bahá'í community.

For those of us in Haifa who had lived, under the aegis of our beloved Guardian, through the agonizing days in 1955 when another group of Bahá'ís were being unjustly persecuted, that time in Persia where the friends suffered senseless acts of barbarism, murder, rape and pillage of property, it was history repeating itself—but with no Shoghi Effendi at the helm to guide and comfort us. We had to pray, act, endure the heavy-footed hours that never seemed to pass as the time for the execution of our fellow-Bahá'ís drew nearer and nearer. The burden of anxiety for the fate of their co-religionists was shared by the entire Bahá'í world; the burden of responsibility and decision, however, fell upon the Hands of the Cause, particularly the body of the Custodians in Haifa, and was, indeed, an agonizing and almost insupportable burden to bear.

“The Moroccan Case” ran for some twenty months. Ultimately by decision of the Moroccan Supreme Court all Bahá'í prisoners were set free on December 13, 1963. The civil authorities not only released and fully exonerated them from any culpability but paid them financial compensation for their loss of freedom to earn their living and, in a few cases, where they were employed by the Government, indemnified them. All National Spiritual Assemblies, wherever possible, were asked by the Universal House of Justice to express gratification, through the Moroccan Embassy or Consulate in their areas, to the King for this decision of the Supreme Court.

In Shoghi Effendi's vision for the development of the World Administrative Centre on the great semi-circular “arc” he laid out on Mount Carmel, he foresaw a Seat for its supreme governorship and Centres for the study of the Holy Texts and for the protection and teaching of the Faith, under the supervision of the Hands of the Cause, as well as an International Archives. Before he passed away the Guardian himself chose both the site and the Grecian style of architecture for our museum of historical material, the International

Bahá'í Archives; this building was erected under his own supervision, but he passed away before the completion of the interior and was not able personally to arrange the unique and historic exhibits he had long been collecting. The accomplishment of this task was one of the labours of love of the Hands of the Cause. It was opened to Bahá'í pilgrims in the winter of 1961.

One of the final and major accomplishments of the Hands at the end of this historic five-and-a-half-year period was to work out, during our last Conclave, in Bahjí—to a great extent due to the vision of our fellow-Hand Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir—a projected nine-year plan, involving no less than sixty-nine national teaching plans, which was to begin in Ridván 1964 and end in Ridván 1973, thus continuing the unbroken sequence of the implementation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Divine Plan" for the spiritual conquest of the globe. This was submitted to our Supreme Body, the Universal House of Justice, which adapted and adopted many of our suggestions when it finalized the details of its majestic Nine Year Plan.

The Hands of the Faith and the members of the International Bahá'í Council were tremendously excited by the prospect of the first election of the Universal House of Justice, which was to take place on the Centenary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission in Baghdád in 1863. One evening, as one of the Council members was sitting with me in the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and we were discussing the forthcoming International Bahá'í Convention and election and where it should be held, the idea was suggested by him that it might be possible to hold it in that house. As the electoral college of the Universal House of Justice is composed of the nine members of all National or Regional Spiritual Assemblies and there were at that time fifty-six of these national bodies, we would need space to accommodate 504 delegates, plus the Hands of the Cause and members of the International Bahá'í Council. We measured the large main hall and adjoining rooms and concluded that by removing all the twelve doors on the four sides of the hall we might be able to do this. It was 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself Who, in His Will and Testament, had elaborated the nature and duties of both the Universal House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause; what could be more sacred and

befitting than for the Hands to hold the election of the first Universal House of Justice in His home?

In preparation for this election the Hands in the Holy Land, five years after the passing of the beloved Guardian, wrote to all National Spiritual Assemblies on November 4, 1962, enclosing nine ballot papers with full details of how to fill them out and who was eligible for election. In this letter, while not prohibiting the delegates from voting for any male Hands of the Cause, we requested them to leave the Hands free to discharge the duties of their own institution. During the years of our ministry all such momentous decisions were made after exhaustive consultation and ardent prayers for guidance.

On April 21, 1963, the delegates, many of them in native costume, stepped forward as the roll call was read and cast their votes; the absentee votes of delegates unable to attend, carefully sealed in double envelopes to ensure secrecy, were likewise deposited in the ballot box, which was later sealed and locked and shut into a locked room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's home while all the Hands and delegates present in the Holy Land proceeded to the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí to render praise and thanksgiving to Him for this great victory.

The goals of the Guardian had been won by the Bahá'ís of the world, under the leadership of the Hands of the Cause he had appointed. The election of the Universal House of Justice at the World Centre had been triumphantly held. Both bodies now proceeded to London to attend the World Centennial Congress he himself had planned.

Although the ministry of the Custodians terminated with the election of the Universal House of Justice, this date did not end the painstaking services of our august institution; the crowning event of our custodianship at the end of our beloved Guardian's World Crusade was the celebration of the Most Great Jubilee, during the period of Ridván, held from April 28–May 2, 1963, in London. In Shoghi Effendi's original announcement it was hoped that this centennial anniversary could take place in Baghdád, the scene of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission. Circumstances, however, made this impracticable and the Hands decided to hold it in London, a city with many precious historic associations with both

'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, who studied at Oxford University prior to becoming the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith when his Grandfather died in 1921.

As we cast about for a befitting venue for this great Congress planned by Shoghi Effendi, we found that the unique and beautiful Royal Albert Hall, in the heart of London, famous as a centre for concerts and conferences, which accommodates about 7,000 people, could be rented for our great occasion. Bahá'ís from all over the world, including Hands and administrators, Knights of Bahá'u'lláh and pioneers, were present, and the audience was addressed by members of the Institutions of both the Hands and the Universal House of Justice. In this wonderful fulfilment of the Guardian's own plan for the culmination of his World Crusade my greatest joy was the words addressed to us by various indigenous tribesmen from the continents and islands of the globe, whether the much-loved "Uncle Fred", an illiterate Australian Aborigine, who said, after describing his journey from Australia as being carried across the ocean in "a great new flying kangaroo" and being set down in London: "Yes, dear friends, I am glad to see the people here, like flowers of all colours . . . Bahá'u'lláh has given me a good life . . . I have joy in my heart", or the cheerful Bahá'í from the Mentawai Islands of Indonesia, who assured us that if we could see him minus his European suit of clothes he was tattooed from head to toe! For all of us—largely sophisticates from Asia, Europe and North America—it was a revelation to witness the aplomb, wisdom and highly appropriate sentiments expressed by these fellow Bahá'ís from areas often referred to as "the developing countries".

There was an unprecedented feeling of happiness and oneness of spirit in this great Congress and the attendants lapped their first, newly-elected Universal House of Justice, presented to them by the Hands of the Cause, in a great wave of welcome and love. I am sure all the Hands of the Cause felt that Shoghi Effendi's desires had been fulfilled.

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS
1957**

ALLÁH-U-ABHÁ

Haifa, Israel

November 6, 1957

Rúhíyyih Khánum telephoned me on the evening of November 4th, of the great calamity which had stricken the Bahá'í world, in the passing of our dearly beloved Guardian, in London, during the early morning hours of November 4th.

During our conversation it was decided I would remain in Haifa and take all precautions to protect the Holy Places, the Guardian's apartment, where all his records were kept, and the Faith from attack by the enemies of the Faith here.

The following actions were taken:

1. The Guardian's apartment and office had been locked, so no one could enter it during his absence. We assured ourselves that it was carefully locked, and barriers were placed in front of the door so no one could enter. We then locked and put iron bars across the door to the entrance of the living quarters. These iron bars were padlocked. All the keys to the apartment were then sealed in an envelope, which envelope was signed by Sylvia Ioas, Jessie Revell, Ethel Revell and Leroy Ioas and placed in the safe of my office, in such a way that if the envelope was tampered with in any way, it would be seen immediately.

We then arranged for the Guardian's trusted servant to sleep outside the doors of the apartment and office; likewise another trusted servant to sleep at the foot of the steps, so no one could gain access to the area.

During the daytime, we maintained extra Bahá'ís in the building, so no access could be gained.

2. The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh was guarded night and day, and one of the Bahá'ís slept in the Shrine each night.

3. The same action was taken with regard to the Shrine of the Báb.

4. The same action was taken with regard to the Mansion at Bahjí.

The sealing of the Guardian's apartment and office was done in the presence of the four members of the International Council here, who have signed this document, in attestation thereof.

The envelope in which the keys to the apartment were sealed, is attached.

Leroy C. loas

[Signed as follows]

Leroy loas

Sylvia loas

Ethel Revell

Jessie Revell

HANDS IN THE HOLY LAND OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Haifa, Israel

November 15, 1957

Alláh-u-Abhá!

Rúhíyyih Khánúm, Mr. Remey, Mrs. Collins, Dr. Giachery, and Mr. loas arrived from Lydda airport about 10:50 a.m. November 15th, from the funeral of the dearly beloved Guardian.

The five Hands of the Cause, named above, then secured the sealed envelope with the keys to the Guardian's apartment, opened it, and proceeded to enter the apartment, at 11:10 a.m.

We immediately proceeded to the safe where sacred documents were preserved, and the logical place where the Will of the beloved Guardian would be kept.

The safe was sealed with tape, which was signed by all Hands and then countersigned, and then sealed with sealing wax, on the upper and lower doors of the safe. This was completed at 11:15 a.m.

The keys of the safe were then placed in an envelope which was sealed with sealing wax, and signed by the Hands. This was done immediately, and delivered to the Guardian's Assistant Secretary, Mr. Leroy loas, Hand of the Faith, who placed it in the safe in his office.

As an additional measure of precaution, the drawers of the desk of the Guardian were sealed, and the seals countersigned. This was

concluded at 12:07 p.m.

The five Hands of the Faith who were present at all times sign this document in attestation thereto.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih

Mason Remey

Amelia E. Collins

Ugo Giachery

Leroy C. Ioas

**PRESS RELEASE IN *THE JERUSALEM POST*
“BAHÁ’Í ‘HANDS’ MEET FOR OBSEQUIES”**

Haifa, Monday

November 18, 1957

A memorial ceremony for His Eminence Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, World Head of the Bahá’í Faith, who died in London on November 4, was held this afternoon at the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh, world centre of the Bahá’í Faith, north of Acre. The ceremony was held at 2 p.m. corresponding to the exact hour of the interment of the Guardian of the Faith in London. Memorial services are being held by national and local Bahá’í assemblies in all parts of the world today.

Twenty-six of the 27 ‘Hands’ of the Bahá’í Faith throughout the world arrived yesterday to take part in the service.

The “Hands of the Cause”, as the elders of the Faith are called, have come from five continents. They include one who knew Bahá’u’lláh, the founder of the Bahá’í Faith; an 88-year-old woman from Australia, who had to travel with her nurse; the only Negro “Hand”, who comes from the Cameroons in Africa; and others from Britain, the Americas, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, Iran, Germany, Italy, Uganda, Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa.

Messages of condolence continue to arrive at the International Bahá’í Council from all parts of the world, from government heads, educators and people from all walks of life.

HANDS IN THE HOLY LAND OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Haifa, Israel
November 19, 1957

Alláh-u-Abhá!

This morning immediately after 9:00 a.m. we, the five Hands of the Cause assigned to service at the World Centre of the Faith, Rúhíyyih Khánum, Mason Remey, Amelia E. Collins, Ugo Giachery and Leroy loas, as well as Hands of the Cause Hasan Balyuzi, a member of the Afnán family, Mr. Horace Holley, representing the believers of the Western Hemisphere, Músá Banání, representing the believers of the African continent, and Dr. 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá, Trustee of the beloved Guardian, representing also the Asian continent, (totalling to the number of Bahá) have met, in order to open the Guardian's safe and desk [and] search for a Will and Testament if one was executed by Shoghi Effendi.

They found that the seals placed on the safe by the five Hands in the Holy Land were intact and untouched; and similarly the seals containing the keys to the safe were intact and untouched and similarly that the sealed desk was intact.

The undersigned nine Hands of the Cause, appointed by the first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, each in the presence of the others, do hereby individually and collectively certify to the following:

That the safe and desk have been opened and searched and the non-existence of a Will and Testament executed by Shoghi Effendi was definitely established.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih
Mason Remey
Amelia E. Collins
Ugo Giachery
Leroy loas

Hasan M. Balyuzi
Horace Holley
M.B. [Músá Banání]
Dr. A. Vargha

**UNANIMOUS PROCLAMATION
OF THE 27 HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD**

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh
Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel
November 25, 1957

We the undersigned:

RUHIYYIH Rabbani

Charles Mason Remey (who is President of the International Bahá'í Council)

Amelia E. Collins (who is Vice President of the International Bahá'í Council)

Leroy C. Ioas (who is Secretary General of the International Bahá'í Council)

Dr. Ugo Giachery (who is member-at-large of the International Bahá'í Council and Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Italy and Switzerland)

Hasan M. Balyuzi (who is Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles)

Shoallah Ala'i (who is Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran)

Ali Akbar Furutan (who is Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran)

Zikrullah Khadem (who is Treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran)

Dr. Ali Mohammad Varqa (who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran)

Tarazullah Samandari (who is a resident of Shiraz, Iran)

Djalal Khazeh (who is a resident of Teheran, Iran)

John Ferraby (who is Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles)

Paul E. Haney (who is Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States)

Horace Holley (who is Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States)

Abul Qasim F. Teherani

Dr. Adelbert Muhlschlegel (who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Germany and Austria)

Dr. Hermann Grossmann (who is a resident of Neckargemünd, Germany)

Musa Banani (who is a resident of Kampala, Uganda)

William Sears (who is Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South and West Africa)

John Robarts (who is Recording Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South and West Africa)

Enoch Olinga (who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North West Africa)

Agnes Alexander (who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Asia)

H. Collis Featherstone (who is Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia)

Clara Dunn (who is a resident of Sydney, Australia)

Dr. Rahmatullah Mohajer (who is a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South-East Asia)

in our capacity as Hands of the Cause of God duly nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, assembled this 25th of November, 1957 at the Bahá'í World Centre and constituting the supreme body of the Bahá'í World Community

DO HEREBY UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVE AND PROCLAIM AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS THE Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, passed away in London (England) on

the 4th of November, 1957, without having appointed his successor;

AND WHEREAS it is now fallen upon us as Chief Stewards of the Bahá'í World Faith to preserve the unity, the security and the development of the Bahá'í World Community and all its institutions;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá "the Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the Guardian of the Cause of God";

We nominate and appoint from our own number to act on our behalf as the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith

Rúhíyyih Rabbani
Charles Mason Remey
Amelia E. Collins
Leroy C. Ioas
Hasan Balyuzi
'Alí-Akbar Furútan
Jalal Kházeh
Paul E. Haney
Adelbert Mühlischlegel

to exercise—subject to such directions and decisions as may be given from time to time by us as the Chief Stewards of the Bahá'í World Faith—all such functions, rights and powers in succession to the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith, and this until such time as the Universal House of Justice, upon being duly established and elected in conformity with the Sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, may otherwise determine.

[Signed as follows]
Rúhíyyih Rabbani
Zikrullah Khadem
M.B. [Músá Banání]
Charles Mason Remey
Ali Mohammad Varqa

William Sears
Amelia E. Collins
T. Samandari
John Robarts
Leroy C. Ioas
Djalal Khazeh
Enoch Olinga
Ugo Giachery
John Ferraby
Agnes B. Alexander
Hasan M. Balyuzi
Paul E. Haney
H. Collis Featherstone
Shoallah Alai
Horace Holley
Clara Dunn
Ali Akbar Furutan
Abul Qasim
F. Teherani
Dr. R. Mohajer
Hermann Grossmann
Dr. Adelbert Mühschlegel

AFFIDAVIT

Wilmette, Illinois
United States of America,
November 30, 1957

The undersigned, Corinne True, being one of the twenty-seven Hands of the Cause of God, duly nominated and appointed by the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, having been prevented by the state of my health, to attend personally the meeting of the Hands of the Cause of God held in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, in 'Akká, on the twenty-fifth of

November, 1957, declare to be in full agreement with the above resolution, and I am joining my signature thereto.

[Signed as follows]
Corinne True

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30th day of November, 1957.

[Signed as follows]
Sophie Loeding
Notary Public

My commission expires September 27, 1959

UNANIMOUS CERTIFICATION

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh
Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel
November 25, 1957

We, the undersigned Hands of the Cause of God, assembled at the Bahá'í World Centre, certify that by unanimous action we have constituted a body of nine Hands to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith at its World Centre in order to carry on from this Centre the provisions of the World Bahá'í Crusade and to discharge there our responsibility of protecting and propagating the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

We further certify that the body consists of the following persons:

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm
Charles Mason Remey
Amelia E. Collins
Leroy Ioas
Hasan Balyuzi
'Alí-Akbar Furútan
Jalál Kházeh

Paul E. Haney
Adelbert Mühlischlegel^[13]

We further certify that by unanimous action we have appointed Ugo Giachery as alternate member authorized to fill any temporary vacancy that might arise from time to time.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhiyyih Agnes B. Alexander
Mason Remey Zikrullah Khadem
Leroy C. Ioas Hermann Grossmann
Sh. Alai John Ferraby
A. Q. Faizi R. Mohajer
Jalal Khazeh A. Vargha
Paul E. Haney A. Furutan
Horace Holley William Sears
John Robarts Enoch Olinga
Hasan M. Balyuzi
Adelbert Mühlischlegel
T. Samandari M.B. [Músá Banání]
Ugo Giachery H. Collis Featherstone
Clara Dunn Amelia E. Collins
[Corinne True by affidavit]

RESOLUTION OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

**PASSED AT THEIR MEETING AT THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD
CENTRE**

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh
Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel
November 25, 1957

The following principles shall apply to the relations between the Hands of the Cause of God and the nine Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith and to the activities of the said Custodians:

1. The Hands of the Cause shall have their meetings at least once a year, and the time and place of their meetings shall be determined by the Custodians, who shall be responsible for convocation of such meetings.
2. The Hands of the Cause shall have the full authority to introduce such changes in the composition of the Custodians, to substitute Custodians by others from their own number, to resolve upon such alterations in functions, rights and powers of the Custodians and to give such directions to the Custodians as the Hands of the Cause in their free discretion may decide.
3. The quorum of the meetings of the Hands of the Cause shall be a simple majority of their number, and any resolution adopted by majority of the Hands attending such meetings shall be deemed to have been validly passed by the Hands of the Cause.
4. The quorum of the meetings of the Custodians shall be five, and any decision adopted by the majority of the Custodians attending such meetings shall be deemed to have been validly passed by the Custodians.
5. Dr. Ugo Giachery is appointed as alternate Custodian authorized to fill any temporary vacancy that may arise in the body of the Custodians.
6. In the event of any vacancy occurring in the composition of the Custodians, the remaining Custodians shall have the duty and the power to fill the vacancy temporarily up to the next meeting of the Hands of the Cause by appointing one of the Hands of the Cause to act as a Custodian.
7. The Custodians, in addition to their other functions, shall administer all the properties, assets and accounts belonging to the World Bahá'í Community (other than those belonging to various National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies or Bahá'í local bodies) and shall be entitled to appoint two or more of their midst to operate the bank accounts, to receive and withdraw moneys, to represent the Custodians in any dealings and transactions generally or for any specific purpose and to execute and sign any documents in connection therewith.
8. In all their dealings with the Israel Government and any local authorities in Israel the Custodians shall act through the Bahá'í

International Council, who shall act in accordance with the instructions of the Custodians.

9. The Custodians shall be deemed to succeed the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, in Palestine or Israel Branches of National Spiritual Assemblies of various countries, which are registered in Israel, and the Custodians may nominate one or more persons to act on their behalf in any such Israel Branches.

Completed, sealed and signed on this 25th day of November, 1957.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih Rabbani

Agnes B. Alexander

Mason Remey

Zikrullah Khadem

Amelia E. Collins

Abul Qasem F. Teherani

Leroy C. Ioas

Djalal Khazeh

Ugo Giachery

Hermann Grossmann

Hasan M. Balyuzi

Enoch Olinga

Horace Holley

Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel

M.B. [Músá Banání]

John Roberts

Ali Akbar Furutan

Clara Dunn

Shoallah Alai

H. Collis Featherstone

Ali Mohammad Varqa

Paul Haney

Dr. R. Mohajer

William Sears

John Ferraby [Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, inadvertently unsigned]

[Corinne True by affidavit]

RESOLUTION OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel

November 25, 1957

We the undersigned Hands of the Cause hereby record the following action taken in unanimous agreement:

1. That the body of nine Hands of the Cause already constituted shall exercise these functions, namely, to correspond with the

National Spiritual Assemblies on matters related to the prosecution of the Guardian's Ten Year Plan; to assist the National Assemblies in the solution of administrative problems by citing passages in Bahá'í literature which clarify the nature of these problems; to act for the protection of the Faith whenever its teachings or institutions or properties are assailed by enemies from within the Bahá'í Community or outside its ranks;

2. That the Council shall represent the Faith in all matters related to the Israeli Government and its courts;

3. The nine Hands to reinforce the membership of the International Bahá'í Council through the addition of the five Hands among the nine Hands not already members of the Council;

4. That the entire body of the Hands of the Cause, meeting annually or whenever convened by the nine Hands, shall determine when and how the International Bahá'í Council shall pass through the successive stages outlined by Shoghi Effendi culminating in the election of the Universal House of Justice;

5. That the nine Hands serving at the Bahá'í World Centre shall maintain correspondence with the Hands stationed in the several continents on all matters related to their work of propagating the Faith and defending it from attack, coordinating and encouraging their efforts;

6. That the authority to expel violators from the Faith shall be vested in the body of nine Hands, acting on reports and recommendations submitted by Hands from their respective continents.

7. The Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land may, if necessary, call upon any of the Hands to fill a vacancy temporarily.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih Rabbani

Mason Remey

Amelia E. Collins

Leroy C. Ioas

Hasan M. Balyuzi

Horace Holley

M.B. [Músá Banání]

A. Furutan

Dr. R. Mohajer

Zikrullah Khadem

A. Q. Faizi

Ugo Giachery

Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel

Djalal Khazeh

Hermann Grossmann

John Robarts

Enoch Olinga

Ali Mohammad Varqa

Sh. Alai
John Ferraby
T. Samandari
Agnes B. Alexander
[Corinne True by affidavit]

H. Collis Featherstone
William Sears
Paul Haney
Clara Dunn

P R O C L A M A T I O N

FIRST CONCLAVE
THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE
NOVEMBER 18 - NOVEMBER 25, 1957

To the Bahá'ís of East and West
Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh
Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel
November 25, 1957

Beloved Friends:

Nine days had not yet elapsed after the interment of the sacred remains of our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, in London, when the Hands of the Cause, to the number of twenty-six, assembled at the World Centre of the Faith, in our capacity as "Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh", to consult together on the most tragic situation facing the Bahá'ís since the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and to take all necessary and appropriate measures to safeguard the highest interests of our Faith.

On November 18th the Hands conducted a Memorial Meeting at Bahjí, in the Haram-i-Aqdas surrounding the most sacred Shrine in the Bahá'í world, afterward entering the Holy Tomb itself and prostrating ourselves in utter humility at the Sacred Threshold.

On the following morning, November 19th, nine Hands of the Cause, selected from the Holy Land, and the several continents of East and West, with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, broke the seals placed upon the beloved Guardian's safe and desk and made careful examination of their precious contents. These same Hands, rejoining the other Hands assembled in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at

Bahjí, certified that Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament. It was likewise certified that the beloved Guardian had left no heir. The Aghsán (branches) one and all are either dead or have been declared violators of the Covenant by the Guardian for their faithlessness to the Master's Will and Testament and their hostility to him named first Guardian in that sacred document.

The first effect of the realization that no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him was to plunge the Hands of the Cause into the very abyss of despair. What must happen to the world community of his devoted followers if the Leader, the Inspirer, the Planner of all Bahá'í activities in all countries and islands of the seas could no longer fulfil his unique mission?

From this dark abyss, however, contemplation of the Guardian's own life of complete sacrifice and his peerless services gradually redeemed our anguished hearts. Shoghi Effendi himself, we knew, would have been the first to remind the Hands, and the widespread body of the believers, that the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh has quickened those powers and resources of faith within mankind which will achieve the unity of the peoples and the triumph of His World Order. In this new light of understanding the company of the Hands could perceive with heightened gratitude the existence of those innumerable blessings which Shoghi Effendi had created and left as his true legacy to all Bahá'ís.

Has not the World Centre, with its sacred Shrines and institutions, been firmly established? Has not the Message been established in 254 countries and dependencies? Have not the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies, forerunners of the Universal House of Justice, been implanted in twenty-six great areas of all continents? Has not the Guardian left us not only his incomparable translations for English-reading Bahá'ís, of the Bahá'í Sacred Literature but also his own master works of interpretation which disclose to us the unshatterable edifice of an evolving Bahá'í Order and world community? Has not the Guardian, building upon the enduring foundation of the Master's Tablets of the Divine Plan, created the World Crusade to guide our work until 1963?

Has not the Guardian, moreover, in his mysterious insight into the present and future needs of the Bahá'í community, called into being

the International Bahá'í Council and the company of twenty-seven Hands with their Auxiliary Boards, whom, in his final communication to the Bahá'ís, he designated "Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh"?

Such reflections cannot but, in such a world-shattering experience as all Bahá'ís have this month endured, reveal to us how strongly Shoghi Effendi has laid the foundations of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh through the appointment of Hands of the Cause and likewise the appointment of the International Bahá'í Council, the institution destined to evolve into the Universal House of Justice.

In our capacity of Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh, we Hands of the Cause have constituted a body of nine Hands to serve at the Bahá'í World Centre. This body of nine Hands will energetically deal with the protection of the Faith whenever attacks, whether from within or outside the Bahá'í community, are reported by Hands from their areas or by National or Regional Assemblies or whether they arise within the Holy Land. Correspondence will likewise be maintained with the Hands of the Cause working in the several continents. This same body will correspond with National Assemblies on matters connected with the prosecution of the objectives of the Ten Year Plan. On matters involving administrative questions this same body will assist National Assemblies by citing those passages of the Bahá'í Sacred Literature which direct the Assemblies to a sound solution.

As to the International Bahá'í Council, appointed by the Guardian and heralded in his communications to the Bahá'í world, that body will in the course of time finally fulfil its purpose through the formation of the Universal House of Justice, that Supreme Body upon which infallibility, as the Master's Testament assures us, is divinely conferred: "*The source of all good and freed from all error.*" The main work of the Council has been to act as the Guardian's representative in matters involving the Israeli Government and its courts of law.

Beloved friends! Is not the most precious legacy bequeathed to us all by Shoghi Effendi the privilege of constancy in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and devotion in teaching His Message? This is the heartfelt plea we direct to every Bahá'í: The hour has come, as it

came with the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, when true Bahá’ís will be distinguished by their firmness in the Covenant and their spiritual radiance while pressing forward the mighty work committed to every area of the world community—to every individual Bahá’í! For now our implacable opponents may, and probably will, unleash attacks, assuming in their ignorance that the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh is weakened and defenseless. By consecration of spirit we are armed against all manner of assault and we hold the weapon of Faith with which the triumph of the Guardian’s aims and purposes is assured.

The Hands of the Cause, determined to carry out every aspect of the Guardian’s expressed wishes and hopes, call upon the National Assemblies to proceed with the holding of the Intercontinental Conferences which Shoghi Effendi has planned for 1958, and make each of them a great rallying-point of determination to achieve the tasks of the next phase of the World Crusade. We are, moreover, to keep ever before us the other tasks fixed in the Ten Year Plan as objectives to be won by 1963.

Meanwhile the entire body of the Hands, assembled by the nine Hands of the World Centre, will decide when and how the International Bahá’í Council is to evolve through the successive stages outlined by the Guardian, culminating in the call to election of the Universal House of Justice by the membership of all National Spiritual Assemblies.

When that divinely ordained Body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause.

“O God, my God! Shield Thy trusted servants from the evils of self and passion, protect them with the watchful eye of Thy loving-kindness from all rancour, hate and envy, shelter them in the impregnable stronghold of Thy care and, safe from the darts of doubtfulness, make them the manifestations of Thy glorious Signs, illumine their faces with the effulgent rays shed from the Dayspring of Thy Divine Unity, gladden their hearts with the verses revealed from Thy Holy Kingdom, strengthen their loins by Thine all-swaying power that cometh from Thy Realm of Glory. Thou art the All-Bountiful, the Protector, the Almighty, the Gracious.”

“O ye that stand fast in the Covenant! When the hour cometh that this wronged and broken winged bird will have taken its flight unto the Celestial Concourse, when it will have hastened to the Realm of the Unseen and its mortal frame will have been either lost or hidden neath the dust, it is incumbent upon the Afnán, that are steadfast in the Covenant of God, and have branched from the Tree of Holiness; the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God (the glory of the Lord rest upon them), and all the friends and loved ones, one and all to bestir themselves and arise with heart and soul and in one accord, to diffuse the sweet savours of God, to teach His Cause and to promote His Faith. It behoveth them not to rest for a moment, neither to seek repose. They must disperse themselves in every land, pass by every clime and travel throughout all regions. Bestirred, without rest and steadfast to the end they must raise in every land the triumphal cry ‘O Thou the Glory of Glories!’ (Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá), must achieve renown in the world wherever they go, must burn brightly even as a candle in every meeting and must kindle the flame of Divine love in every assembly; that the light of truth may rise resplendent in the midmost heart of the world, that throughout the East and throughout the West a vast concourse may gather under the shadow of the Word of God, that the sweet savours of holiness may be diffused, that faces may shine radiantly, hearts be filled with the Divine spirit and souls be made heavenly.

“In these days, the most important of all things is the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world. Teaching the Cause is of utmost importance for it is the head corner-stone of the foundation itself. This wronged servant has spent his days and nights in promoting the Cause and urging the peoples to service. He rested not a moment, till the fame of the Cause of God was noised abroad in the world and the celestial strains from the Abhá Kingdom roused the East and the West. The beloved of God must also follow the same example. This is the secret of faithfulness, this is the requirement of servitude to the Threshold of Bahá!”

Devotedly, in service to the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh,

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih Rabbani
Mason Remey

Dr. R. Mohajer
Dr. A. Vargha

Amelia E. Collins
Leroy C. Ioas
Hasan M. Balyuzi
T. Samandari
M.B. [Músá Banání]
Adelbert Mühlischlegel
John Robarts
Horace Holley
Enoch Olinga
William Sears
A. Furutan
[Corinne True by affidavit]

John Ferraby
Hermann Grossmann
Zikrullah Khadem
Agnes B. Alexander
Jalal Khazeh
A. Q. Faizi
Sh. Alai
H. Collis Featherstone
Clara Dunn
Ugo Giachery
Paul Haney

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE WORLD CENTRE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

November 1957

The Hands of the Bahá'í Faith, an institution established by Bahá'u'lláh, its Founder, and designated as its Chief Stewards, who number twenty-seven and represent the five continents of the globe, after a meeting at the World Centre of the Faith, announce that they have elected nine of their members to conduct and protect the affairs of the Faith from its World Centre.

This body of nine will maintain the Bahá'í Shrines and Holy Places in 'Akká and Haifa, which His Eminence, the late Shoghi Rabbani, World Head of the Faith, had made into beauty spots of the Mediterranean area, and continue their expansion. They will coordinate all the activities of Bahá'í Communities in over two hundred and fifty countries and islands of the world, and will carry forward all the plans outlined by him for its expansion and development, including the holding of the five Intercontinental Conferences which he scheduled for 1958 in Kampala, Uganda; Sydney, Australia; Chicago, United States; Frankfurt, Germany; and Djakarta, Indonesia.

They will also see that the two Bahá'í Houses of Worship in Africa and Australia, work on which was begun under the direction of the late Head of the Faith, are completed; and that the third one, contemplated for Europe, is built. It will be their responsibility to see that the National and Regional Bahá'í Assemblies, which under his ministry grew in number from two to twenty-six, and which at the present time represent more than 4,500 Bahá'í Centres, are steadily increased.

The names of the body of nine elected to fulfil these responsibilities from the World Centre are as follows: Rúhíyyih Rabbani, Charles Mason Remey, Amelia Collins, Leroy Ioas, Hasan Balyuzi, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Jalál Kházeh, Paul Haney and Adelbert Mühlischlegel.

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

December 2, 1957

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We send to your Assembly our most cordial greetings in this first letter to you from the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land, and assure you of our determination to exert every effort for the protection of the Cause of God and the propagation of the Faith according to the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan.

The purpose of our letter is to enlist your aid to facilitate the legal recognition of this body. We enclose a photostat of a legal document signed by the 26 Hands of the Cause present at the Conference in the Mansion of Bahjí, setting this body up to act on behalf of the Hands generally, under the legal title "The Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith".

Our lawyer advises us that we should also obtain from each National Assembly a letter recognizing us as the supreme body in the Cause, and this letter should include the following sentence: "We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause." We therefore ask you please to arrange by whatever means is most suited to the conditions of working of your Assembly for a

resolution to this effect to be passed without delay, and incorporated in a letter to be sent immediately to the Holy Land under the Assembly's seal, signed by its Chairman and Secretary, or in their absence, by officers authorized to act for them. The many legal negotiations we have to conduct concerning properties at the World Centre and elsewhere make speed in sending this letter of recognition vitally important, and we are confident that all National Assemblies will cooperate by seeing that the action is taken at once.

The names of the nine Hands residing in the Holy Land are on the photostat enclosed; they have been empowered to call upon any of the other Hands to serve temporarily as a substitute for one who is unable to serve in the Holy Land for the time being. Please keep the photostat in a safe place, but we ask you not to display it or give it general currency, since circulating this in addition to the Proclamation of the Hands might cause confusion.

We send your Assembly and Community every good wish for success in all you do to further the Cause of God.

With Bahá'í love,

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih	A. Furutan	Leroy C. Ioas	
Amelia E. Collins	Jalal Khazeh	John Ferraby	
Mason Remey	Adelbert Mühlischlegel		Ugo
Giachery			

P.S. All correspondence should be addressed from now on to "The Bahá'í Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land, P. O. Box 155, Haifa, Israel." Cable address HANDSFAITH HAIFA.

UNANIMOUS PLEDGE OF LOYALTY

**FROM 26 NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE
BAHÁ'Í WORLD TO THE HANDS AND CUSTODIANS**

[Excerpts from letters]

ALASKA

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the National Spiritual Assembly of Alaska is in full accord with the following statement issued by the 26 Hands . . . “to exercise—subject to such directions and decisions as may be given from time to time by us as the Chief Stewards of the Bahá’í World Faith—all such functions, rights and powers in succession to the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá’í World Faith, and this until such time as the Universal House of Justice, upon being duly established and elected in conformity with the Sacred Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá may otherwise determine.”

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

ARABIAN PENINSULA

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, CHILE, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY

In our capacity of National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, we pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of THE CUSTODIANS OF THE BAHÁ’Í WORLD FAITH, elected by the Hands of the Cause.

AUSTRALIA

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of Australia ratifies the action taken by the twenty-six Hands of the Cause in their deliberations at the meeting held at the Mansion of Bahá’u’lláh, Bahjí, ‘Akká, on 25th November 1957, in electing nine members from their own body to act as Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith. Furthermore, we pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the

body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

BENELUX COUNTRIES

As a result of our consultation, we wish to assure you of our unanimous and complete loyalty and of our entire recognition of your Bahá'í Institution as the supreme Body in the Cause. . . . we pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the Body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

With our prayers and all our complete devotion for the accomplishment of your sacred task, we assure you, once again, of our deepest thankfulness and full attachment to your supreme Body of the Cause, necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith.

BRAZIL, PERU, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR AND VENEZUELA

We, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela have carefully read the photostatic copy of the legal document signed by the 26 Hands of the Cause present at the Conference in the Mansion of Bahjí, setting up the following named Hands of the Cause: Rúhíyyih Rabbani, Charles Mason Remey, Amelia E. Collins, Leroy C. Ioas, Hasan Balyuzi, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, Jalál Kházeh, Paul E. Haney and Adelbert Mühlischlegel, as the body to act on behalf of the Hands generally, under the legal title "The Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith".

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

BRITISH ISLES

We, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles, in session on this day of November 30th 1957, having heard the Proclamation, dated November 25th 1957, by the Hands of the Cause of God at their meeting at Bahjí in the World Centre of the Faith, hereby declare our grateful acceptance of

this Proclamation and pledge our loyalty and allegiance to all of its provisions.

CANADA

We, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

Be assured of our devotion and dedication to these Chief Stewards of the Bahá'í World Faith.

CENTRAL AMERICA, MEXICO AND PANAMA

We remit the following resolution . . . “The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central America, Mexico and Panama in its fourth meeting held in the City of Panama, Republic of Panama on 25, 26, 27 and 28 of December 1957, in representation of the Bahá'ís of Central America, Mexico and Panama pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith, elected by the Hands of the Cause.”

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

It was unanimously resolved in our meeting that we pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause. Furthermore, we take the greatest pleasure in recognizing you as constituting the supreme body in the Cause which will exercise all the functions, rights and powers in succession to the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith.

GERMANY AND AUSTRIA

The National Spiritual Assembly . . . as trustee of the Bahá'ís of Germany and Austria recognizes the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith nominated in the document of appointment made out at Bahjí, Acre/Israel dated 25 November 1957 as the Supreme Body in conformity with the Bahá'í administration.

The National Assembly officially declares: “We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the Body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause,” to exercise—subject to such directions and decisions as may be given from time to time by the Hands of the Cause, the Chief Stewards of the Bahá’í World Faith—all such functions, rights and powers in succession to the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá’í World Faith . . .

GREATER ANTILLES

In our recent meeting of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Greater Antilles, just concluded, the following action was taken:

“MOTION NO. 85:

“THAT, WHEREAS, We, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the Greater Antilles now in session at Ciudad Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, have learned, with joy, that as a result of the Conference held at the Mansion of Bahjí by twenty-six (26) members of the Hands, the setting up of a body to be known as ‘The Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith’ was made,

“BE IT RESOLVED that we pledge our full support, faith, and allegiance to the body of The Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause; and

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of this Assembly, be sent to them.”

IBERIAN PENINSULA

BE IT KNOWN BY ALL MEN PRESENT

That the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the Iberian Peninsula does hereby approve and endorse the election by the Hands of the Cause of nine of their members to constitute the body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith, and that

We recognize this body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith to be the supreme body in the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh, and that

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the

Cause.

INDIA AND BURMA

RESOLUTION: The Proclamation issued by the Hands of the Cause of God after ascension to Abhá Kingdom of our beloved Guardian was prayerfully studied and it was unanimously decided to approve of the action taken by the Hands of the Cause of God in electing nine persons from amongst themselves to act as Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith and we pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the said Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause. We further unanimously resolve to assure the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith of our unreserved obedience and loyal allegiance to all their wishes and directions that they may send us from time to time in the performance of their sacred duties.

ÍRÁN

We have great pleasure in informing you that the Proclamation by the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West, dated 25th November, 1957, issued in the Mansion of Bahjí, 'Akká, has been passed on to all the Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá'í groups and isolated centres in Iran.

On reading this Proclamation, all the members of the Bahá'í community of Iran recalled at once, in the spirit of absolute faith and solidarity, which characterizes the community trained and guided by the beloved Guardian for such a long time, that Shoghi Effendi has in his Message of October, 1957 entrusted the Hands of the Bahá'í Cause with the all-important duty of protecting and propagating the Cause and of guarding the Bahá'í communities throughout the world.

The Guardian has called the Hands of the Cause in his Message the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's Embryonic World Commonwealth.

Those revered souls who, in accordance with the Proclamation of the Hands of the Cause, have been appointed by the latter as the Bahá'í Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land assuming this important duty, will doubtlessly be able under the divine protection and with their wise actions, to safeguard this original unity and solidarity of the

Bahá'í community and to take all necessary measures for the development of the Cause in all its various stages and to carry out the work of the Beloved Guardian at all times in accordance with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

We . . . do hereby announce on behalf of this Assembly and of all members of the Bahá'í community in Iran and its institutions, the recognition by us of the Nine Hands of the Cause elected by all Hands of the Cause as "The Bahá'í Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land", and wish to express our unconditional loyalty to that Supreme Body.

We feel sure that with the trust we have in you we shall be able under your guidance and supervision to fulfil our duties and obligation to the Holy Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith, elected by the Hands of the Cause and we also hereby undertake to submit to and obey the decisions which the Hands of the Cause will adopt in future for the progress of the Cause.

'IRÁQ

We, the elected National Representatives of the Bahá'ís of 'Iráq and the adjacent Countries of Syria, Lebanon and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Territories of Hadhramaut and the Seychelles Islands included in our area of jurisdiction; members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of 'Iráq, do hereby unanimously declare that, following the Ascension of our beloved Guardian, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, we recognize you, since you have been elected by the entire members of the Hands of the Cause of God, the Divinely-ordained Institution, whose members were chosen and appointed by the beloved Guardian, His Eminence, the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani and referred to them in his letters as "The Chief Stewards of the World Faith of Bahá'u'lláh" recognize you as the Most Supreme Body in the Bahá'í World Faith. We, also, pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to you.

With heartfelt gratitude, loyalty and love.

ITALY AND SWITZERLAND

We, as members of the Italo-Swiss National Spiritual Assembly, “pledge our full support, faith and allegiance” to the body of Nine Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, appointed by the entire body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í Faith, to act as Executor of all Bahá’í affairs in the Holy Land and abroad.

NEW ZEALAND

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of New Zealand sends you its love and reaffirms its loyalty and devotion to the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.

The following resolution was unanimously passed at a meeting on Sunday, December 29th, 1957:

“We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.”

NORTH EAST AFRICA

We have great pleasure in informing you that the Proclamation by the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá’ís of East and West, dated 25th November 1957 issued in the Mansion of Bahjí, has been passed on to all the Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá’í groups and isolated centres in North East Africa.

On reading this Proclamation all the members of the Bahá’í community of North East Africa recalled at once, in the spirit of absolute faith and solidarity, which characterizes the community trained and guided by the beloved Guardian for such a long time, that Shoghi Effendi has in his Message of October 1957, entrusted the Bahá’í Cause Hands with the all-important duty of protecting and propagating the Cause and of guarding the Bahá’í communities throughout the world.

The Guardian has called the Hands of the Cause in his Message the Chief Stewards of Bahá’u’lláh’s embryonic World Commonwealth.

Those revered souls who, in accordance with the Proclamation of the Hands of the Cause, have been appointed by the latter as the Bahá’í Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land assuming this important

duty, will doubtlessly be able, under the Divine Protection and with their wise actions, to safeguard this original unity and solidarity of the Bahá'í community and to take the necessary measures for the development of the Cause in all its various stages and to carry out the work of the beloved Guardian at all times in accordance with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

We, the undersigned, Chairman and Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Africa, do hereby announce on behalf of this Assembly of all members of the Bahá'í community in North East Africa and its institutions, the recognition by us of the nine Hands of the Cause elected by all Hands of the Cause as "The Bahá'í Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land", and wish to express our unconditional loyalty to that Supreme Body.

We feel sure that with the trust we have in you we shall be able under your guidance and supervision to fulfil our duties and obligations to the Holy Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith, elected by the Hands of the Cause and we also hereby undertake to submit to and obey the decisions which the Hands of the Cause will adopt in future for the progress of the Cause.

NORTH EAST ASIA

Beloved Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith,

We, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Asia, representing the Bahá'ís of this part of the world embracing Japan, Korea, Formosa, Macau and Hong Kong, at an official meeting held on 8 December 1957 adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas by action of the Bahá'í Hands of the Cause as stated in a letter dated 2 December 1957, a body of nine Hands was elected and now designated by the title 'Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith' as the supreme body of the Faith.

"We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause."

NORTH WEST AFRICA

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Northwest Africa, representing the Bahá'ís residing in twenty-five territories included along the North and the West Coasts of the African continent, hereby declare our recognition of the nine Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land as the supreme body in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh existing after the ascension of the late Shoghi Effendi—the first Guardian of the Bahá'í Cause.

We, further, pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to this body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

This document is issued upon unanimous resolution of the National Spiritual Assembly.

PAKISTAN

We, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Pakistan, elected representatives of the Bahá'í community of Pakistan, at this extraordinary meeting held at Bahá'í National Headquarters (Pakistan) Karachi, on 16th December 1957, do hereby unanimously resolve that we pledge our full support and allegiance to and faith in the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

SCANDINAVIA AND FINLAND

Having received the photostat of the legal document signed by the 26 Hands we have circulated the text to the members of our National Assembly and asked to have from each member a signed pledge of support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians.

Deeply grateful for the action taken by the Hands of the Cause of God and in full recognition of the Divine Inspiration behind the decision the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Scandinavia and Finland pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

Respectfully returning to you the hopes and good wishes for the task of protecting and furthering the Faith.

SOUTH AND WEST AFRICA

This Assembly recognizes you as the supreme body in the Cause and has unanimously passed the following resolution:

“We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.”

You, who have been elevated to be Hands of the Cause by our beloved Shoghi Effendi and are carrying out his wishes, and are fulfilling the requirements of our dearly loved Master’s Will, are our solace and our inspiration. We pray constantly for your well-being and guidance, and offer our grateful and inadequate thanks to Bahá’u’lláh for having created your station.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

WE DO HEREBY pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the said body, namely, the nine Hands of the Cause, residing in the Holy Land, as the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith elected by all the Hands of the Cause.

UNITED STATES

In our capacity of duly elected members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, conscious of and obedient to the principles and institutions of the Bahá’í Administrative Order ordained by Bahá’u’lláh, elaborated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and developed and guided by the late Guardian, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, we certify to the following resolutions unanimously adopted and recorded in the minutes of our meeting held at the National Bahá’í Headquarters, Wilmette, Illinois, on January 3-4-5, 1958:

WHEREAS the late Guardian, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, appointed Hands of the Cause, in accordance with the provisions of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to the number of twenty-seven; and

WHEREAS Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, late Guardian, designated these twenty-seven Hands of the Cause “Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá’u’lláh”; and

WHEREAS the Guardian nominated no personal successor as second Guardian of the Faith to hold this office after his own death; therefore be it

RESOLVED: that the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States fully recognizes and affirms the authority of the twenty-seven Chief Stewards to elect nine of their own number to serve at the Bahá'í World Centre, Israel, as the supreme international body of the Bahá'í community and carry out the plans made for the future activities of the Faith by said Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, late Guardian, as Custodians of the Bahá'í Shrines and Holy Places, co-ordinators of the work of the various National Assemblies, and protectors of the security of the Faith; and further be it

RESOLVED: that the Custodians have been and are duly empowered to exercise such functions, rights and powers in succession to the late Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith, and continue to do so until such time as the Universal House of Justice, upon being duly established and elected in conformity with the Sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, may otherwise determine; and further be it

RESOLVED: that this National Spiritual Assembly pledges its full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause as the supreme international body of the Bahá'í Community; and further be it

RESOLVED: that any two officers of this Assembly are authorized to execute these resolutions on behalf of the Assembly and transmit them to the nine Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith.

BAHA'I WILMETTE^[14]
DECEMBER 5, 1957

PLEASE ANNOUNCE HANDS FIVE CONTINENTS ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES HEARTWARMING NEWS
CONSUMMATION VICTORY ANNOUNCED GUARDIAN'S
MESSAGE SEPTEMBER 5TH BY TRANSFER TITLE DEEDS
ALL PROPERTIES WITHIN HARAM-I-AQDAS [PRECINCTS OF
THE TOMB OF BAHA'U'LLAH] TO NAME ISRAEL BRANCH

UNITED STATES NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THUS COMPLETING
PURIFICATION AREA SURROUNDING MOST HOLY SPOT
BAHA'I WORLD.

[CABLE] HANDS HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE
DECEMBER 11, 1957

CRITICAL JUNCTURE DEEP MOURNING SUPREME
CHALLENGE HANDS HOLY LAND CALL UPON FELLOW
BELIEVERS PARTICULARLY HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
ALL CONTINENTS EXERT UTMOST EFFORT ENSURE
SUCCESS FIVE INTERCONTINENTAL CONFERENCES
ANNOUNCED BELOVED GUARDIAN'S LAST MOMENTOUS
MESSAGE BAHA'I WORLD. CONFERENCES PROVIDE
UNEXAMPLED OPPORTUNITY DEMONSTRATE MYSTERIOUS
DIVINE FORCES ANIMATING DEARLY LOVED FAITH
VITALITY INSTITUTIONS EMBRYONIC WORLD ORDER
NOURISHED LIFEBLOOD BELOVED GUARDIAN
DETERMINATION BAHA'I COMMUNITY DIFFUSE
UNINTERRUPTEDLY FRAGRANCE BAHA'U'LLAH'S MIGHTY
REVELATION TO FEAR-LADEN HUMANITY DEPRIVED
POWER RECOGNIZE DIVINE LIGHT UNAIDED. URGE
GREATEST ATTENDANCE BELIEVERS POSSIBLE THESE
HISTORIC GATHERINGS DESIGNED GENERATE UPSURGE
ENTHUSIASM CONSECRATION UNPRECEDENTED ANNALS
FAITH USHER IN FOURTH PHASE CRUSADE DESTINED
WITNESS VICTORIES AT WHICH FUTURE GENERATIONS
BAHA'IS WILL MARVEL CULMINATING WORLD TRIUMPH
FAITH CENTENARY DECLARATION BLESSED BEAUTY.
SHARE MESSAGE ALL HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies
December 22, 1957

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum has prepared an account of the passing of our beloved Guardian, which is to be published by the British Bahá'í Publishing Trust under the title *The Passing of Shoghi Effendi*. You will be hearing from them shortly what the price of the pamphlet will be. We feel sure the members of your community will greatly welcome this account and you will no doubt want to place a bulk order for copies. Please send this as soon as possible to the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 32 Deansgate, Manchester 4.

With Bahá'í love,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**BAHA'I WILMETTE
DECEMBER 25, 1957**

REJOICE INFORM BELIEVERS COVENANT BREAKERS'
HOUSE BAHJI COMPLETELY EFFACED FULFILLING LONG
CHERISHED DESIRE BELOVED GUARDIAN WHO PLANNED
PERSONALLY SUPERVISE THIS LAST PURIFICATION
HARAM-I-AQDAS STOP SHARE MESSAGE ALL HANDS
NATIONAL BODIES . . .

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS
1958**

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JANUARY 1, 1958

WITH HEARTS STILL TORN SORROW IRREPARABLE LOSS
SACRED PRIMAL BRANCH WHOSE MIGHTY SPIRIT
GUARDED INSPIRED COMFORTED MEMBERS WORLD
BAHA'I COMMUNITY 36 YEARS WHOSE ALL-
ENCOMPASSING VISION INFLEXIBLE DETERMINATION
ESTABLISHED ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER BY LIGHT WHOSE
DIVINE GUIDANCE CAUSE GOD SPREAD
UNINTERRUPTEDLY OVER ENTIRE PLANET WHOSE
BLESSED SHADE MASTER STATES SHADOWETH ALL
MANKIND HANDS HOLY LAND CALL UPON BEREAVED
BELIEVERS SUITABLY EXPRESS LONGING GRIEF THEIR
HEARTS BY REFRAINING EVERY MANNER RELIGIOUS
FESTIVITY PERIOD NINE MONTHS FROM DAY HIS
ASCENSION STOP SHARE MESSAGE ALL HANDS
NATIONAL BODIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All Who have left their homeland to pioneer

January 5, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Though afflicted by profound sorrow at the sudden removal of the beloved Guardian, our thoughts are always with those who forsook their homes, relatives and friends to cry Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá in distant lands and raise the banner of the Faith in the far corners of the earth. Our hearts are with you, dear friends, for your treading of this glorious path has earned the approval of the beloved of us all, Shoghi Effendi, now watching so lovingly from his lofty station on High and dispensing to all his guidance and protection.

We are confident that you will remain at your posts in the same wonderful spirit of love you have already displayed and with greater steadfastness than ever before. The Guardian held the pioneers in

such esteem that even to the night before the night of his passing he worked on a map on which he recorded their achievements with his own hands. We feel certain that the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh and those who joined them later will hold their ground firmly and that before long we shall hear the glorious news of the attainment of all the goals the beloved named throughout the entire planet. The pioneers are like lamps of guidance, and when mankind is awakened from its spiritual lethargy, members of a bewildered humanity will see only by the light of the pioneers the right path to the tabernacle of love and justice where it will find shelter.

The pioneers the Guardian loved so dearly are particularly dear to our hearts too and we pray for each and every one of them. We hope they will send reports of wonderful activities to their National Assemblies, who in turn will gladden our hearts with news of these developments.

With Bahá'í love,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

The Intercontinental Conference, Kampala, Uganda January 23-28, 1958

To the Hands of the Cause, members of their Auxiliary Boards, members of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers, resident believers, and visitors attending the Intercontinental Conference in Kampala, January, 1958.

Beloved Friends:

In the shadow of the unexpected and soul-shattering sorrow which has so recently stricken the followers of Bahá'u'lláh through the passing of our much-loved Guardian Shoghi Effendi, comes the opening of the first of the momentous Conferences planned by him to take place in the five continents of the globe.

With what joy our hearts looked forward to this day when we should be gathered together to render thanks to Bahá'u'lláh for His blessings during the last five years—years which have witnessed the most phenomenal progress in the expansion of His Faith since the

Declaration of the Báb, to exalt His station and to praise the manifold evidences of His mysterious power. How our hearts hastened ahead of us to this spot where we knew the first of these mighty Conferences would be convened and with what anticipation we looked forward to receiving the message which we knew our beloved Guardian would send to us on this occasion.

It is with sadness and deep humility that the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land address to you these words. The ways of God have never been the ways of men. One thing we know however with profound assurance, and that is that no calamity has ever befallen this Faith that has not presaged a mighty victory. They martyred the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh was raised up. They persecuted and exiled Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá carried the banner of His Faith to the very heart of the Western World, to which He journeyed in His old age, and to which He gave some of the fairest fruits of His mind. After the Ascension of the beloved Master, the believers, bereft of their Father and their Refuge, found in Shoghi Effendi a mighty tree beneath whose boughs they took refuge, and which protected them for thirty-six years.

At this turning-point in history, which the beloved Guardian repeatedly pointed out to us would be fraught with calamity, we have received a blow the nature of which we never anticipated. We have every right to believe however that even such a blow as this will be the signal for a far greater expansion of our glorious Faith, and that the sacrifice of his precious life has endowed the Cause of God with a new strength to face the future, to surmount all tests, to lay more quickly and firmly than ever before the foundations of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, that Kingdom prophesied since the days of Adam, and promised to men by their Heavenly Father.

Who can doubt that Shoghi Effendi will be viewed by posterity as the true conqueror of Africa? Whoever arose to serve that continent, whatever sign of action he beheld on the part of individual, Assembly or community, attracted his glance and received a burning intensity of interest, an outpouring of encouragement and assistance characteristic of the brilliant mind and wonderful nature with which Bahá'u'lláh had endowed him. With what intense pride he viewed the achievements of the past seven years, beginning with the African

work inaugurated by the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles and continued, in collaboration with the American, Persian, Indian and 'Iráqí National Assemblies, who were allotted specific tasks in this vast continent and who worked for its spiritual conquest in cooperation with the National Spiritual Assembly of Egypt and Sudan, the first national body established on this continent in 1924 and representing territories opened to the Faith during the lifetime of Bahá'u'lláh Himself. With what love he watched over its spiritual progress, blessing it even before the inception of the World Crusade through the appointment of a Hand of the Cause, an institution he recently reinforced by raising three other African pioneers to this high rank, one of whom has the distinction of being the second Negro Hand in Bahá'í history. With what eagerness he followed the movement of the devoted and self-sacrificing pioneers, whether of African, American, Asian or European origin, as they spread out—torch-bearers of the New Day—into every territory of a continent so long stigmatized as the “dark continent”, and brought the illumination of this glorious Faith to its peoples. With what joy he announced to the Bahá'í world on various occasions the progress on the African front, the formation of four new Regional National Assemblies, one of which was the successor to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Egypt and the Sudan, and of no less than one hundred and fifty Spiritual Assemblies; the introduction of the Faith into more than two hundred tribes, the translation of its literature into more than seventy languages, the purchase of numerous Hazíratu'l-Quds and endowments both national and local; the swelling of the number of believers to over four thousand, three-fourths of whom are Africans; and the increase in the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside to over six hundred.

The holding of this historic Conference signalizes the opening of the fourth phase of the World Crusade, a phase which the beloved Guardian himself stated must be characterized by an unprecedented expansion in the vital process of individual conversion and by the construction of three Mother Temples, one in Africa, one in Europe and one in Australia. From the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade—indeed it would be more correct to say from the very beginning of his ministry—the Guardian repeatedly emphasized to the believers of

East and West the paramount importance of the teaching work and pointed out to us that the purpose for which we have so laboriously erected our administrative institutions was primarily to enable us to carry the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the peoples of the world and redeem their hearts through His grace.

In Shoghi Effendi's own messages written last year to the African Regional Assemblies he strongly emphasized that their primary function and duty was to enrol in ever greater numbers the African peoples under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh. Such was the importance he attached to the teaching work that in his last Message to the Bahá'í world he stated that although the additional Auxiliary Boards' specific duty was to watch over the security of the Faith, the old Auxiliary Boards must be exclusively concerned in assisting in the prosecution of the Ten Year Plan. He urged the Regional Assemblies in Africa to economize in matters concerning the Administration, in order that their limited resources as much as possible could be expended on ways and means of converting the African peoples, so dear to his heart, to the Faith. He pointed out to them that once they had made sure the individual had accepted the station of Bahá'u'lláh as that of the Manifestation of God for this Day, with the implications that this implies, petty obstacles should not be placed in his path or details insisted upon, but rather through a process of loving education after acceptance the new believer should be deepened in his knowledge and understanding of the Teachings. It was his dearest hope that through the concerted efforts of the Hands of the Faith, the Regional Assemblies, the Auxiliary Boards, the pioneers and all the Bahá'ís, an immense flow of new recruits would swell the ranks of the believers and, rising like a torrent, pour itself out in the channels of new Assemblies and communities throughout the territories of this vast continent.

So encouraged was the beloved Guardian by the spectacular victories won in so short a time, and the evidences of the indomitable enthusiasm of the believers labouring in this fallow field that he urged them to surpass the specific tasks of the Ten Year Plan by adding supplementary ones, such as local Hazíratu'l-Quds and endowments, other languages spoken on this continent, and further undertakings which would redound to the glory of the Faith. He was

also anxious that the prizes won at the cost of so much effort should be maintained, and laid particular emphasis on the need for strengthening the work in the newly formed State of Ghana and of consolidating the work in Liberia, the Belgian Congo, Ruanda Urundi, French Equatorial Africa and Comoro; he strongly emphasized the necessity of reopening Rio de Oro and the Spanish Sahara; he made strong appeals for more African teachers to circulate amongst the various nations of Africa and carry the Message to their own people, and repeatedly called attention to the need for pioneers to go out into new districts within the territories already opened to the Faith.

It was the beloved Guardian's own arrangement that the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to be erected in Kampala should coincide with this first inaugural Conference of the half-way point of the Bahá'í World Crusade, and it is he who has specially and eternally blessed this Mother Temple of the African continent by having in its foundations the Sacred Dust from the innermost Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and a fragment of plaster from the room of the Báb in the fortress of Máh-Kú where He was imprisoned. He repeatedly emphasized the tremendous spiritual importance of this Temple, which will be a mighty silent teacher of the Faith and a haven of refuge spiritually to the believers. To the friends attending this Conference the Guardian has given in his last message the privilege of not only lending a powerful impetus to the completion of this glorious enterprise but also to that of the Mother Temples to be built in the European and Australian continents.

To these many soul-stirring bounties must be added that of viewing the portrait of Bahá'u'lláh and a lock of His precious hair, sent at the express wish of our beloved Guardian to grace this Conference, both of which will be entrusted for safe-keeping to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central and East Africa.

Now is the time for the believers to demonstrate the firmness of their faith and the ardour that will carry them through every test to the victories beyond. A great outpouring of spirit has been foreshadowed in the beloved Guardian's Message calling these Conferences, and it is for each and every one of us to receive from that outpouring his own allotted portion. Should we all arise with

selfless, united, and consecrated effort, should we fix our gaze unwaveringly on the goals the Guardian set us, and resolve to demonstrate the quality of our faith in heroic acts comparable to those of the Dawn-breakers, the unfailing mercy of the Blessed Beauty will undoubtedly sustain and support us and enable us to perform such deeds as will cause all men to wonder and bow down in awe and admiration before the Name of Bahá'u'lláh. Then will the friends in Africa be enabled to attain the bounties promised to them and contribute their share to the erection of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh about which the Guardian wrote in one of his last messages to an African National Assembly:

“Whatever may tend to accelerate the onward march, the expansion and consolidation of the institutions of this Order must be eagerly seized upon, and utilized to the utmost, for the attainment of this noble purpose. Whether or not constituting a specific objective of the Ten Year or Seven Year Plan, any measure or enterprise designed to reinforce the foundations of these institutions or to noise abroad their fame, or to extend the sphere of their beneficent influence, must be adopted and fearlessly embarked upon, however great the material sacrifices involved, however prolonged and arduous the effort required.

“The splendid exertions of the past must, in the face of the challenge now confronting these communities, be redoubled. The self-same consecration distinguishing the rank and file of the believers, as well as those so ably representing them—nay a still nobler standard of whole-hearted dedication to the pressing and manifold requirements of God’s infant Faith, now struggling to emerge from obscurity and vindicate its purpose—must be evinced, if the tasks ahead are to be adequately fulfilled. All must participate in this meritorious and collective endeavour, whatever their age, of either sex, and however difficult the circumstances with which they are surrounded.

“They cannot but feel confident, that, if they persevere along the path they have chosen to tread, the Author of the Divine Plan, Whose mandate they are executing, will guide and succour them in their historic enterprise, and the Concourse on High will acclaim their victories and sustain their labours and the Founder of the Faith

Himself will graciously assist them and abundantly reward them both in this world and in the next.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**AMERICAN HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CARE BAHAI
WILMETTE**

FEBRUARY 3, 1958

CUSTODIANS SERIOUSLY DISTURBED STATEMENT A NEW BAHAI ERA ISSUED AMERICAN HANDS NSA INTERPRETING ADDING BAHJI PROCLAMATION CONSIDER THIS GRAVE DANGER UNITY FAITH URGE DELETE ALL REFERENCE DOOR APPOINTMENT SECOND GUARDIAN CLOSED RIGHT NINE EXPEL COVENANT BREAKERS STOP STATEMENTS THIS NATURE CAN BE MADE ONLY ENTIRE BODY HANDS AS CHIEF STEWARDS AND NOT BY ANY NSA OR GROUP HANDS STOP THIS STATEMENT NOT YET RECEIVED BY CUSTODIANS BUT EXCERPTS FORWARDED HERE WITH PROTESTS STOP SUGGEST FOCUS ATTENTION RELEASE FIRST INTERCONTINENTAL CONFERENCE FORESHADOWING INSPIRING SUCCESS FOUR REMAINING CONFERENCES GREAT RALLYING POINTS CREATED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN AID BELIEVERS ADJUST TO SITUATION REMAIN FIRM COVENANT CONCENTRATE TASKS FIVE REMAINING YEARS CRUSADE STOP REQUEST ALL CORRESPONDENCE FOR HANDS HOLY LAND ADDRESSED THEM DIRECTLY NOT TO INDIVIDUAL.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God in the Holy Land

February 4, 1958

Dear Friends:

In accordance with your urgent request, steps are being taken to delete from our statement "A New Bahá'í Era" the reference to the door being closed to any hope for a future second Guardian, and the passage attributing to your body the authority to expel Covenant-breakers from the Faith.

Since your cablegram arrived in between meetings of the National Assembly, this letter is only an acknowledgement of your cable and any further communications will be based on consultation of the Hands and National Assembly members.

Since you saw only excerpts from our statement, a copy of the complete statement is enclosed.

Sincerely

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

By: Horace Holley, Secretary

To the Members of the National and Regional Bahá'í Assemblies East and West

February 13, 1958

Dearly beloved Friends and Co-workers:

This letter from the Custodians is long overdue; our thoughts have been with all the Assembly members constantly during this great period of trial and sorrow and we have realized how heavy were your loads and how great the responsibility resting on you at this time. Our own problems, however, and the crushing sense of obligation to our beloved Guardian to carry on his work, have made it impossible to send a more detailed and intimate communication to you before this.

Three months have passed since our best-beloved Guardian so suddenly left us—months of longing and heartbreak for all Bahá'ís! After the meeting of the Hands of the Faith in Bahjí, a period of suffering and heart-searching so intense that not one of them could ever endure to pass through it again, the work we had agreed to shoulder began. In our sorrow, our humility before the greatness of our task, we began to see the repeated evidences of the mercy of Bahá'u'lláh; in a truly miraculous way the endowments, properties

and funds registered in the name of our beloved Guardian have been protected and safely transferred to either the Custodians or other Bahá'í bodies.

The first of the mighty Intercontinental Conferences planned by the beloved Guardian himself was held in Kampala with great success; over 900 believers were present, well over half being African Bahá'ís; the sum of a hundred thousand pounds was raised for the purpose specified by the Guardian himself, thus ensuring a far swifter advance in the work throughout the African continent; a most wonderful spirit of determination, rededication, consecration and zeal was generated and spread to all the friends—whether African, Asian, European or American. We cannot but marvel at the forethought of the Guardian in calling for these five great Conferences to be held in the months after his passing. What a stimulation they will provide to the work and what an infinite consolation, and inspiration to the believers everywhere! The sense of nearness to him, to his wishes and his work was very strong at Kampala and we feel sure will be as strong or even stronger at the other Conferences.

It is a great pity that the immense distances separating the Hands here at the World Centre and the heavy expense of travel prevent us from meeting with the various National Assemblies or members of them; the Hands of the Faith themselves, as you know, were only able to foresee, for the time being, an annual meeting of all of them. Of course should an emergency arise they would gather at once, but barring this they felt the teaching work and other aspects of the World Crusade should take precedence over everything else in order to carry out the expressed wishes of our beloved Guardian and hasten the day when the work all over the world will have been so firmly laid that the supreme administrative Body, the infinite blessing of Bahá'u'lláh, the Supreme House of Justice, can be erected.

In view of this we particularly wish to call to your attention certain things that are, we feel, of supreme importance; our beloved Guardian gave thirty-six years of his life to the work of erecting Bahá'u'lláh's World Administrative Order; had he not felt such an urgency in carrying out this work he might be alive now; he alone saw the entire Plan, the world plan of the work as a mighty unit; how

often he pointed out to us that the “heart” and “nerve centre” of the Faith was Haifa; that Bahá’u’lláh Himself had made it clear that here in the Holy Land would forever be united the Spiritual and the Administrative World Centre; he guarded this Centre (as had ‘Abdu’l-Bahá before Him) with the greatest care, well knowing that a blow to the heart is felt in the remotest part of the body and that good circulation from the heart will keep the smallest member of the body vital and in good health. We, daily occupied with the cares and worries of this World Centre, are now greatly concerned lest any inadvertent act on our part or the part of the present National and Regional Assemblies which form the bedrock of the future International House of Justice should interrupt this smooth flow of spiritual circulation built up so wisely and painstakingly by our beloved Shoghi Effendi.

We do not know what the future holds in store; by this we mean that the world situation is so precarious that, as the Guardian so repeatedly pointed out, wars and disturbances of an unforeseen nature may break out and perhaps cut the World Centre off from all or a part of the other Bahá’í centres, temporarily; meantime we have this mighty Plan, the last five years of it, to vigorously prosecute; it can only be coordinated and directed from the World Centre. To the degree to which we receive news and reports, Minutes of your meetings, suggestions etc. from all of you, as well as from other sources in the Bahá’í world, to just that same degree will we be able to protect and promote the work of the Plan and safeguard the World Centre. The blood must go on pumping in and out of this heart of our Faith.

Your responsibility is therefore very great at this time, not only towards the believers whom you represent, but towards us who are seeking to firmly grasp and protect the world affairs of the Faith which are one of the most unique creations of the Guardian. It was his hand at the helm that preserved uniformity in essentials whilst encouraging diversity in non-essentials. This is perhaps the greatest work that must now be carried on by us from this World Centre. We cannot do it without your constant help! The recognition of the friends everywhere of the nature and function of the World Centre and the support its institutions must receive will surely hasten the

day when the Universal House of Justice can be formed and lighten its tasks.

We therefore appeal to you to continue, in every way, uninterruptedly and as before the Beloved's passing, your communications with your World Centre; send us your Minutes (from which the Guardian gleaned much of his statistical information), your reports and your questions, so that we can help preserve the uniform character of the Faith now established in over 250 territories. You and we must always bear in mind that what inspires and unites the World Bahá'í Community is the pulsating stream to and from one universal point. With the World Centre also lies the obligation of keeping up the statistics of the Faith and the maps and charts so dear to our beloved Guardian's heart and which were always such a source of joy and inspiration to the believers everywhere. The Guardian himself spoke in his last message to all National Conventions of "the Holy Land—the Qiblih of a world community, the heart from which the energizing influences of a vivifying Faith continually stream, and the seat and centre around which the diversified activities of a divinely appointed Administrative Order revolve . . ."

In closing we ask you one and all to remember the Custodians in your prayers and supplications that we may be given the strength and inspiration necessary to preserve the work for which our so dearly-loved Guardian sacrificed his entire life and which in the end cost him his life.

We in turn will pray for you all in the holy Shrines here.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

HANDS CARE BAHÁ'Í WILMETTE

FEBRUARY 16, 1958

AFTER READING STATEMENT A NEW ERA CUSTODIANS
VERY DISTRESSED DETAILED INTERPRETATION BAHJI
ELABORATION PROCLAMATION HANDS MAKING
STATEMENTS WE FEEL ONLY ENTIRE BODY CHIEF

STEWARDS SHOULD ISSUE STOP URGE DO NOT PRINT
AND CIRCULATE THIS STATEMENT FURTHER BUT
UNOBTRUSIVELY LET MATTER DROP STOP LOVE FROM
ALL.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

**To the Hands of the Faith and the Members of the National
Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States**

February 17, 1958

Beloved Co-workers:

The letter from the Hand of the Cause Horace Holley dated February 4th with copy of the statement you issued entitled "A New Bahá'í Era" was received, and after studying it very carefully we wish to share our views with you regarding it, and explain to you the reasons which prompted our recent cable requesting that certain points be deleted from it.

We never received any copy whatsoever of this statement in Haifa and are most anxious to know if one was ever mailed to the Custodians? If it was sent to the Hand of the Cause Leroy Loas, he unfortunately had to go to a sanatorium in Switzerland to take care of his heart, which had not been in a good condition for some time and was becoming seriously impaired through work and strain after the passing of the beloved Guardian and the shock he received at that time.

We heard of this statement of yours through excerpts forwarded here by some of the Hands of the Cause in Europe who were very distressed over the repercussions it might have, and indeed was already having, on the believers there.

Dear friends, the nine Hands of the Faith serving here at the World Centre have been very distressed that a statement of this magnitude, interpreting as it does the Proclamation made by the twenty-seven Hands of the Faith when they gathered in Bahjí after the ascension of the beloved Guardian, who are according to his own words "the Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh" should have been issued without

consultation with either the Custodians or the body of the Hands of the Cause who are dispersed all over the world.

Please do not misunderstand us; we fully appreciate that your motive was to protect the Faith, that you must have been asked many questions which prompted this response, and that you acted after full consultation amongst yourselves. This does not change the fact that the only way the work of our beloved Guardian for which he was immolated for thirty-six years and which cost him his life in the end, can be protected, is by preserving the world character of the Cause of God, and this can obviously only be done from the International Centre of the Faith, the Centre which he said so many times was the heart or nerve centre, and the permanent Spiritual and Administrative Centre.

If there is at this time of crisis a continental interpretation of events, and a continental answer to questions being raised by the believers, the dangers to the Cause of God are obviously immense. There are in our World Community eastern and western believers. Their backgrounds are different, their approach to a test of this nature different—the answer however must be uniform the world over; otherwise grave differences may arise and the marvellous accomplishment of our beloved Guardian in unifying this diversified Community be lost temporarily and its efficacy impaired.

We feel sure that you will see the wisdom of this, and that in future you will assist us, veteran and much-loved Community by our beloved Guardian that you are, to protect the work from the World Centre and to ensure its smooth functioning in all continents of the globe.

We have just cabled you, asking you, without making any undue fuss or attracting attention to the fact that you are doing so, to quietly divert attention, so to speak, from this statement which has been recently issued. If no further emphasis is given to it and the believers are encouraged to concentrate their full forces on making the forthcoming Intercontinental Conference in Chicago a tremendous success, which will be in itself a worthy American memorial to our dearly beloved Shoghi Effendi, we feel that no serious harm will have been done.

The spirit of the believers all over the world is truly remarkable, and their faith, although in many cases having received a severe test, is unimpaired, and their devotion boundless. They must now be led, as you yourselves are wisely seeking to do, into the path of greater service, and the grief in their hearts converted into a dynamo of energy with which to carry on the teaching work and fulfil the Guardian's cherished plans.

We send you all our Bahá'í love, and ask you to remember us in your prayers as we remember you in ours.

Yours in the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

March 4, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We would appreciate receiving by return air mail information as to the number of Assemblies, groups and isolated centres there are under the jurisdiction of your Assembly, so that we can prepare the statistical information which our beloved Guardian gave every year from the World Centre to the believers on the occasion of the holding of Bahá'í Conventions during Ridván.

We are sure that particularly at this time when the friends feel deeply the loss of the one who guided and watched over them with such constant and loving care, that it would cheer their hearts to receive the good news of the progress of the Faith for which he so completely sacrificed himself.

If you have any other achievements to report, such as the opening of one of the countries listed as a goal of the Ten Year Crusade, or any new publication or translation etc., please include it in your letter.

We send you all our loving greetings for the Bahá'í New Year which will so soon be upon us, a year which we hope in spite of our sorrows will witness great victories won in the Cause of God.

Yours in the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hand of the Cause, Mr. Horace Holley

March 10, 1958

Revered Bahá'í Brother:

The Hands in the Holy Land are sending a detailed answer to the questions raised in the letter of February 24, 1958 addressed to us by the American Hands and the National Spiritual Assembly.

We believe that the points covered in our letter also meet the request made in your separate communication of February 25 to your fellow-Hands in Haifa.

Here, as you know, we receive letters from all parts of the world which reflect the approach of the believers of diverse backgrounds to the problems created by the beloved Guardian's passing. As a result, the Custodians have been made very conscious of the necessity to strive for unity in the approach to fundamental matters affecting the structure and future development of the Cause. The Custodians from East and West are aware of the wisdom of avoiding statements or points of view on basic issues which cannot be accepted equally by East and West, and indeed by all of the Bahá'í world, especially in this period, so soon after the ascension of the beloved Guardian, when we are still unable to grasp the full implications of the present situation.

It would have been a great help if you yourself could have served here in these early and critical months, and given us the benefit of your experience and clarity of thought on the many pressing issues with which we have had to cope.

You will now, we feel sure, understand our delicate position and the reasons why we felt it necessary to urge that the statement "A New Bahá'í Era" be withdrawn from circulation. Your fellow-Hands serving here are confident you will place this whole question and its world-wide implications before the members of your National Assembly in such a way that they will fully understand the reasons underlying the actions taken here.

No doubt when the entire body of the Hands gather at our next meeting later this year we will have many things to discuss, and

each one will have a greater contribution to make in view of this tragic year's experiences.

We all send you our devoted love and assure you that you are often remembered in our prayers.

Yours in the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

March 21, 1958

Beloved Fellow-Hands:

Daily our thoughts and our prayers have been with you since we separated from each other after our great ordeal at Bahjí. We know your thoughts and loving prayers have surrounded us as we struggle to meet the problems here at the World Centre and to find our way in service at so critical and heart-rending a time in the history of our beloved Faith.

It is being increasingly borne in upon us from news received here as well as the reports of those of us who have been out in the Bahá'í world to serve and returned again, such as Rúhíyyih Khánum, Jalál Kházeh, Paul Haney and Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í that the only possible way the work of this holy Faith, which our beloved Guardian inspired, organized and brought to such a high level, can be maintained and further consolidated, is by focusing both the consciousness of the believers and the work of the Cause of God upon its World Spiritual and Administrative Centre. The strength of a wheel and its power to roll forward are entirely dependent upon the hub, and the solidity of the spokes united in the hub. We have come to see that the supreme work of the Hands—all twenty-seven of them—is to maintain this focal Centre of Unity in the Holy Land at this dangerous time the Faith is passing through. There exists no other instrument for this purpose except ourselves.

As you can well imagine it has been a very trying time. The work is so sacred, the burden of responsibility so heavy on each Hand everywhere in the world—how much more here on the nine Custodians seeking to shoulder on behalf of all the Hands some of

those tasks our dearly loved Guardian carried out to such perfection! Slowly we have been able to get our work organized and daily a stronger pattern is emerging. We feel that to have nine here has not only a spiritual significance in itself but that it also greatly helps in making decisions as we get the benefit of the considered opinions of more of the Hands. There is also the influence on the morale of the believers all over the world which is exerted by their knowing that nine of us are constantly engaged in protecting and serving the interests of the Faith at its Heart. Unfortunately thus far it has not been possible to maintain this number at all times.

Of the permanent Custodians six are now here—Rúhíyyih Khánum, Amelia Collins, Jalál Kházeh, ‘Alí-Akbar Furútan, Paul Haney and Abu’l-Qásim Faizí, as well as the alternate Custodian Ugo Giachery. Mason Remey has just left for Sydney. Hasan Balyuzi has not yet been able to arrange his business and family affairs (he hopes to do this within a few months), and Leroy Ioas has had to go to a sanatorium in Switzerland to treat a heart condition which has been developing for some time. He is better now and we hope to have him with us about the beginning of May. John Ferraby and Shu‘á‘u’lláh ‘Alá’í have been acting as substitutes, but as one is the British National Spiritual Assembly Secretary and the other the Chairman of the Persian National Spiritual Assembly, they have been forced to return to their posts where they were urgently needed. In a few weeks Ugo Giachery will have to return to Europe *en route* to the Chicago Conference. We find that during the summer months we might even be reduced to six temporarily, in spite of the fact that ‘Alí Muhammad Varqá will be coming to act as a substitute for some months. We feel you should know this because it has a direct bearing on the work all of us are doing and on our future plans.

Daily we are more convinced of the need for the Hands to not only be strongly represented here by nine resident Hands as much of the time as possible, but that increasingly during the coming years until the Universal House of Justice can be formed, the other Hands must be made free to travel and circulate amongst the believers, so that they can not only watch over and protect the Faith better, but ensure that an uninterrupted flow of spiritual life continues to pour out from the World Centre. The beloved Guardian was in his person the very

heart of our Faith; we are but his most humble and inadequate servants, but the supreme function of the heart as the key organ of the whole must go on, and it is our duty at this time and ours alone to see that it does. There are many obstacles in the way of our accomplishing this, the two greatest being financial means and health. Some of the Hands are too frail to carry on heavy duties or travel. The funds of the Faith, already heavily committed, are not at the present in a position to support extensive travelling on the part of the Hands. We share these thoughts with you so that you can better understand our problems and the way the Custodians you have appointed see at least some of the urgent needs of the Faith.

From a recently issued statement of the American Hands and National Spiritual Assembly, from letters received regarding remarks made by some of the Asiatic and European Hands, it is becoming obvious that in a perfectly natural course of human events, and with no awareness of its perils, there has been a tendency for different interpretations of our present situation and different prognostications of the future to be made. At times such as this in history, when a firmly integrated organism is suddenly deprived of its pivot, there is a strong centrifugal force released, and we believe that the urgent and most sacred duty of the Hands now is to offset this process at all costs. We feel very strongly that unless we hear from you all about conditions in your areas in more detail and more frequently, we will not be able to discharge the heavy responsibilities you have given us.

The first step must surely be to think, to catch the vision of the Bahá'í world and its work as the Guardian himself saw it. Even those of us serving here at the World Centre—some of us privileged to have been guided by the Guardian himself—realize only now that he is no longer here, and we are forced to assume responsibility, how vast is the field and how tremendous the work required to preserve what has been won and carry on what has not yet been finished, thus ensuring that our beloved Guardian did not lay down his life in vain, and that his work is accomplished.

We feel a great adjustment in our thinking is required on the part of the Hands here and abroad; we must think deeply and quickly. The time is flying, and the need for action on a world scale

constantly before us. The minds of National Spiritual Assembly members are focused on carrying on the work within the area of their own jurisdiction. Very much the same thing is true of the Hands, as during the beloved Guardian's lifetime they were called upon to discharge continental duties. Now with the sudden irreparable loss of our beloved Guardian the Hands are compelled to see the Bahá'í world as a whole, as he always did, to forget regional consciousness (although of course they will continue to watch over the work in their respective areas), and to think on behalf of Shoghi Effendi of the world needs, world protection, world consolidation of this mighty Faith. God forbid that we should fall short of our duty. How will we ever account to him who appointed us if we do?

We feel that as you associate with the various National Spiritual Assemblies in the discharge of your duties, you should constantly remind them of these things and help them to bear in mind that if they are a national body, say in Latin America, the spiritual health and entire future of what they love most in this world—the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—depends not only on their own condition but on that of their counterparts in Europe, Asia or Africa, and that the tie binding them to those sister bodies passes straight through the heart of the Faith, through Haifa, its World Centre. To the degree to which the Bahá'í world begins to think this way, to just this degree will we Hands be able to protect it and hold it together until the House of Justice comes into being.

We feel that from now on the Hands of the Faith should consider arranging their personal affairs so that they may to as great a degree as possible be free to serve at the World Centre or throughout the Bahá'í world, travelling and inspiring the believers, and keeping before their eyes what we must first ourselves firmly grasp—the *world* picture of the Faith and its present needs. The question of finances must naturally be considered but we believe that support will not fail if the believers behold in the Hands those spiritual qualities commensurate with the high station conferred upon them as stewards of the Faith.

We believe that there would be a great advantage gained in having Hands from one continent visit another continent. We all know the impetus a local community receives through outside

visitors. The effect is infinitely greater if the visitor is a Hand of the Faith. Let us therefore ponder these things, reorient our thinking, and reorient it quickly.

After the ascension of the Guardian, we are still in a state of shock. Neither our enemies nor any doubters there may be in our midst have yet rallied their forces. The love of the friends for their beloved Guardian has welled up a mighty flow of devotion and determination to carry on his plans. The iron is hot, and if we do not strike now, we Hands may never as long as we live have another opportunity like this.

We believe this is a formative moment in both Bahá'í and world history. The five Intercontinental Conferences offer the unique opportunity to inspire and set afire the believers. This was one of the purposes of the Guardian in calling for them, and we must utilize them to the full, to raise up a new spirit of consecration which in turn will stimulate an increasing flow of pioneers and larger sums to carry on the work before us. We hope you will do all you can to encourage the friends to attend them and that those of you who are present yourselves will do your best to keep the discussion on a high spiritual plane and focus on the work to be done during the next five years. It seems to us that what has happened historically—the passing of the Guardian and his leaving no Will—has placed the Bahá'ís in a position which no mere intellectual approach can either mitigate or solve. Spiritual forces alone, resignation to the will of God, prayer, consecration, self-sacrifice, devotion, can carry us forward through this period.

We want you to know that in a most remarkable way the problems connected with protecting various properties at the World Centre and in the Cradle of the Faith have been overcome. It is not wise as yet to write in detail as it might jeopardize what is being done, but we will report to you in full in November when we meet at Bahjí. The preservation of this Centre and those functions it can and must still fulfil in the absence of him who was the interpreter of the Word of God is, we believe, not only our supreme duty, but that of each one of you equally.

None of us can ever be the same after last November 4th. We must then ask ourselves what are we going to be from now on?

What are the opportunities that lie before us? Not having our Guardian now in this physical world, we must cling the more tightly to each other, we the Hands he raised up for the protection of his work. Would that we were more adequate to meet the needs of this tragic hour!

To you, the closest kindred of our hearts, we send our love, and we pray for you all every time we visit the Holy Shrines, and daily as well.

Yours in the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

P.S. May we remind you that the text of this communication is addressed to the Hands alone.

**The Intercontinental Conference, Sydney, Australia
March 21-24, 1958**

To the Hands of the Cause, members of their Auxiliary Boards, members of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers, resident believers, and visitors attending the Intercontinental Conference in Sydney, March, 1958.

Beloved Friends:

Although but five months have elapsed since the passing of our beloved Guardian shook the Bahá'í world and caused turmoil in the hearts of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, the power of this supreme Faith to survive so grievous a blow is now clearly manifest. A new spirit of determination, dedication and resolve can be seen throughout the entire World Bahá'í Community. Deprived of him who was our Guardian, our guide and our true brother, we nevertheless feel his presence constantly in the smooth workings of the mighty Order he erected, according to the design of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in the writings, messages and letters he left us, and, above all, in the unfoldment of the Ten Year Crusade he so carefully planned, so untiringly promulgated and so energetically prosecuted through the intermediary of not only the Hands of the Cause and the Regional

and National Assemblies, as well as the Auxiliary Boards and Local Assemblies, but above all, through the vast and consecrated army of believers the world over. Our grief at the passing of the beloved Guardian remains fresh in our hearts, but with it is mixed a joy for his sake that he no longer has to suffer the travails and sorrows inseparable from the promulgation of the Word of God to a humanity that is rapidly losing touch with spiritual reality and being drained of the vital force of faith, and that he no longer must bear the weight of work which rested so crushingly on him for over a third of a century.

As we now survey the vast field of his accomplishments in the light of our great loss, we begin to realize what this one being, inspired by God, driven by forces beyond our understanding, accomplished in so brief a time. A staggering task now faces us. The Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land, however, have been amazed at the strong evidence of a new maturity amongst the believers and their firm and irrevocable determination to carry on to complete fulfilment the work of their dearly-loved Shoghi Effendi. There is no doubt in our minds or in the minds of any of the Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh, that this can be done as long as we all work together in a closely coordinated pattern following the design he set for us, keeping the life blood flowing into Haifa, the great Heart and permanent Spiritual and Administrative Centre of the Faith as he designated it, and out of it again on a world scale in the form of news, statistics and advice.

In the great work that lies before us, the Bahá'ís in the Antipodes have a very important part to play. The significance of this role has been strongly emphasized by the fact that whereas at the opening of the World Crusade in 1953, the beloved Guardian called for four Intercontinental Conferences to be held in Africa, America, Europe and Asia, this time at the Crusade's half-way point, he has added a fifth Intercontinental Conference to serve the rapidly growing needs of Australasia. The progress which has been achieved in this region has been truly phenomenal, and has kept pace with Shoghi Effendi's own thirty-six years of ministry of the Faith. From the days after the beloved Master's Ascension, when the first Centre was firmly established in Sydney, until last April, when the Guardian called for the election of the first historic National Spiritual Assembly of New

Zealand, the unfoldment has been steady; the loyalty, devotion, obedience and enthusiasm of the Australian and New Zealand believers were a constant source of pride to him, and attracted an ever-increasing measure of encouragement and attention on his part. His love and good-pleasure were poured upon them in many ways, the most impressive evidence being his plan to erect one of the three Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs to be constructed during the World Crusade, in Sydney. This project was particularly dear to his heart, knowing as he did that it will constitute a mighty silent teacher of the Faith, and be an haven of refuge spiritually to all the believers in that area. This Mother Temple, not only of the Antipodes, but of the entire Pacific region, will, by his express instructions, be specially and eternally blessed through having in its foundations some of the Sacred Dust from the innermost Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, and a fragment of plaster from the room of the Báb in the fortress of Máh-Kú where He was imprisoned. The Guardian in his last Message to the Bahá'í world particularly encouraged the believers attending these five historic Conferences, to rally to the support of the Temples now being erected and thus ensure their speedy completion.

In Shoghi Effendi's last message to the Australian National Spiritual Assembly he unfolded before their eyes, in his own inimitable way, a vast panorama of future development in the entire Pacific area: he pointed out that Australia and Japan constitute the northern and southern poles of a mighty spiritual axis running through the Pacific region and that through this axis the current of a close collaboration in the execution of the Divine Plan throughout that entire region must flow. He emphasized that within this area embraced by New Zealand and Australia in the south and Japan in the north, "an area endowed" as he wrote "with unimaginable potentialities, and which, owing to its strategic position, is bound to feel the impact of world-shaking forces, and to shape to a marked degree through the experience gained by its peoples in the school of adversity, the destinies of mankind." A tremendous responsibility inevitably rested on the two oldest and strongest communities represented by the Australian National Spiritual Assembly and the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of North-East Asia, to not only carry forward the teaching work in the islands scattered over the face

of the sea, but in their homelands as well. We cannot do better than recall his own weighty words on this subject: “A responsibility, at once weighty and inescapable, must rest on the communities which occupy so privileged a position in so vast and turbulent an area of the globe. However great the distance that separates them; however much they differ in race, language, custom and religion; however active the political forces which tend to keep them apart and foster racial and political antagonisms, the close and continued association of these communities in their common, their peculiar and paramount task of raising up and of consolidating the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh in those regions of the globe, is a matter of vital and urgent importance, which should receive on the part of the elected representatives of their communities, a most earnest and prayerful consideration.”

He reminded the Australian believers that theirs was a two-fold task: on the one hand, to consolidate, multiply and expand the institutions of the Faith at home and in the many islands beyond its confines, and on the other, to forge fresh links with its sister communities, particularly those in the north Pacific, in anticipation of the mission these communities are destined to collectively discharge.

He reminded both the Australian and New Zealand Communities of their immediate duties, affectionately naming New Zealand—whose recently elected National Spiritual Assembly will constitute a pillar of the future International House of Justice—that “far-away and promising Dominion”; he called upon its National Assembly to formulate a Six Year Plan aimed at multiplying the Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres, at incorporating both the National and Local Spiritual Assemblies, at obtaining recognition of both Bahá'í Holy Days and the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate, and at purchasing a site for a future House of Worship. He also strongly emphasized the need to concentrate on teaching the Maoris, to whom he attached great importance, and to increase the centres in the South Island. To the Australian National Spiritual Assembly he particularly recommended the needs of the far-flung teaching work in the Islands. He was immensely pleased and proud of the work accomplished and being carried on by the pioneers, and urged that

at all costs their labours be fully supported and re-inforced, that more literature in island tongues be added to the translations already so successfully undertaken, that the native believers be strengthened and increased, and that particular attention be given to the Bahá'í School in the New Hebrides, a school of which he was immensely proud and to which he attached great importance.

There can be no doubt that the Australian and New Zealand friends gathered here, as well as those who have come in from the islands for this historic occasion, see before them a glowing vista of future achievements painted in the words of our beloved Guardian. They must however bear in mind that the road will not be a smooth one. How repeatedly he warned us all that before the first mighty fruits of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh would appear must come a period of unparalleled trial and struggle for mankind; that tests and dangers would beset the believers from both within and without. We see now, the heaviest blow, his own passing, having already struck us, how difficult may be our path, how heavy our burdens. In his Convention Message last April he wrote: "Parallel with this process of progressive deterioration in human affairs, now visibly gathering momentum outside the pale of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and recalling the convulsions which, on a far more restricted scale, seized a declining empire in the opening centuries of the Christian era, far less spectacular in its manifestation, has been the process of integration, as demonstrated by the increasing cohesion, the multiplication, and the re-inforcement of the foundations, of the institutions of the embryonic Bahá'í World Order, which, now, under the impact of the forces released by a World Spiritual Crusade, deriving its authority from the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and launched for the express purpose of executing the Divine Plan bequeathed by Him to His followers in the evening of His life, is contributing, unnoticed by a generation forgetful of its God, and already in the shadow of His Visitation, to the building up, slowly but irresistibly, of that Ark of human salvation, ordained as the ultimate haven of a society destined, for the most part, to be submerged by the tidal wave of the abuses and evils which its own perversity has engendered."

Whatever may befall us, before this Ark of human salvation is safely launched as the only refuge mankind can know, we are assured that the ultimate victory will be ours, ours the glory of having served and sacrificed for this Most Holy Faith, ours the crown of having remained steadfast in the path laid down for us by our well-beloved Guardian, ours the reward of his radiant smile when we meet him face to face in a better world, ours the joy of hearing him say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 19, 1958

EVE BLESSED RIDVAN INVITE BELIEVERS CONTRIBUTE SPECIAL MEMORIAL FUND BELOVED GUARDIAN PURPOSE ERECTION MONUMENT HIS SACRED THOUGH WE TRUST NOT ULTIMATE RESTING-PLACE STOP ALL SURPLUS FUNDS CONTRIBUTED WILL BE EXPENDED AID COMPLETION THREE MOTHER TEMPLES IN FULFILMENT HIS OWN PLEDGE CONTRIBUTE ONE THIRD TOTAL AMOUNT ALSO ATTAINMENT OTHER OBJECTIVES CRUSADE SO DEAR HIS HEART FOR WHICH HE UTTERLY SACRIFICED TIME STRENGTH LIFE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

RIDVÁN MESSAGE

1958

To Annual Bahá'í Conventions

Dearly beloved Friends:

Ridván is the most joyful period of the Bahá'í year. It is not only the Spring period of the world, but commemorates that Divine Springtide when ninety-five years ago the Supreme Manifestation of God revealed Himself in Baghdád and gave the promise of that

Message which is destined to unite all peoples in universal peace and to enable them to live an existence ordered by Divine Law. It was particularly at this time every year that the thoughts and hearts of the believers turned to Haifa in loving anticipation of the beloved Guardian's Convention Message, of the news of the progress of the Faith the world over which he would send to them, and the inspiration, encouragement and guidance his words would bring them. How great is the shadow of his absence upon our hearts now! It would be hard to say whether you, gathered in so many far corners of the planet feel it more keenly or we, the handful of his servants at the World Centre, where every tree and pebble and flower reminds us that he has ascended to the Paradise of Bahá'u'lláh and been gathered to the glory of his Divine Forebears.

Many times during the last few years the beloved Guardian stated that while the Bahá'ís the world over were carrying out the provisions of the Divine Plan revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the activities of the present World Crusade, the Supreme Plan of God Himself was also being worked out, and that a point might come when these two Plans met and that perhaps the Plan of God would intervene in the events of the Lesser Plan. May not his sudden passing be seen as the fulfilment of his words? Bahá'u'lláh's Own hand has been stretched forth, the Designer has altered the design but the pattern remains in its strength and glory. Every single believer must, during the past six months, have been aware of how mighty is the stronghold of our Faith, how impregnable the walls our Guardian raised about it during the last thirty-six years in the form of the tightly-woven, divinely-ordained Administrative Order which has suffered no rupture because of the sudden cataclysm of his passing and which remains not only our fortress, built by the Word of God, but the refuge for all mankind in the days to come. The Hands of the Faith at the World Centre, however, have been in a position to witness to a unique degree how true this is. Greater than any praise which can ever be laid at our Guardian's door or any monument that will ever be built in his honour, is this testimony to his achievements as reflected in the spirit shown by the Bahá'ís, in East and West, whether old or new, their faithfulness to his wishes, their universal whole-hearted determination to carry out his plans, his hopes, his aims. A mighty

wave of poignant love has swept all hearts, drawing the believers closer, uniting them in purpose, spurring them on to far greater dedication, sacrifice and service in the path of God—that crimson-stained path in which the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá were immolated, in which twenty thousand souls laid down their lives and which has now received a deeper hue through the last great sacrifice, Shoghi Effendi's own precious life.

During the Conventions presently being held, the delegates, the outgoing and incoming National Spiritual Assemblies, and all the believers have a unique opportunity to concentrate their attention on the objectives of the Ten Year Plan, as they affect their area of the globe, to contemplate the as yet unfulfilled goals, to deliberate and make suggestions on ways and means of speedily attaining them, to both pledge and raise the sums of money required for the important, urgent and arduous tasks of the coming year, to give their hearts anew to the work of God—hearts freshly purged of the dross of self through their universal grief—to arise and fulfil the soul-stirring plea of the Master, so often quoted by Shoghi Effendi, *“O, that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and raising the call of ‘Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá’ in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it.”* Let them remember that, as our Guardian said, heroic souls have already, since the beginning of this Crusade, “either quaffed the cup of martyrdom, or laid down their lives, or been subjected to divers ordeals while combating for its Cause”, and let them determine to do likewise, while there is yet time, and win the crown of immortal glory promised to all those who arise in the name of Bahá'u'lláh, to spread His Faith.

After the sudden and soul-shattering news of the passing of our dearly loved Guardian, hearts stood still all over the world—what did the future hold? Then came the realization on the part of the friends that in his very last message, published on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the opening of the Holy Year, the Guardian had left an instrument and given instructions by which his work could be carried on, the Crusade safely prosecuted to the end, the Cause of God protected and the Design of Bahá'u'lláh, as embodied in His Most

Holy Book, executed. The details of the World Crusade, like a precious golden talisman, lie in our palm. The instrument for carrying the Faith through this difficult period—perhaps to be the darkest in its history—has been reinforced and its functions amplified through the references made to the Hands of the Faith as the “Chief Stewards of Bahá’u’lláh’s embryonic World Commonwealth”, through the appointment of eight more Hands scattered all over the globe, and through the addition of new Auxiliary Boards whose sole function is to protect the Cause of God.

Twenty-six of the twenty-seven Hands of the Faith gathered in Bahá’u’lláh’s Mansion at Bahjí and for one week, alone, in exhaustive hours of prayer, soul-searching and consultation, sought guidance for the immediate future. The conclusions unanimously born as a result of this agony and purging of heart were embodied in the Proclamation issued by the Hands. This document did not attempt to answer “why?”. Who can answer that question until another Manifestation of God appears? It did answer “how?”. It created a method which, with the cooperation of the believers, will ensure that the next stage in the Divine Plan of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as amplified and outlined by our Guardian in the provisions of the World Crusade, is carried out fully and successfully, paving the way for the election of that supreme Universal House of Justice whose deliberations, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá states in His Will and Testament, are under the infallible guidance of God.

Realizing that the administrative and spiritual heart of our Faith is forever fixed in the Holy Land according to the explicit text of our Teachings, the Hands felt the most urgent need was to protect this perfectly functioning heart, which the Guardian had for so many years and at such great cost to himself, built up and consolidated, and which is the centre from which the world-wide administrative functions of the Cause of God must be coordinated and maintained, and into which the reports, news and statistics of the Faith must be poured, if its international character is to be preserved. They therefore unanimously appointed nine of their members to serve in Haifa. These nine were given, as a purely legal measure in order to protect the Faith, the title of “Custodians”.

The friends can imagine, remembering their own state of grief and the sudden feeling of immense moral responsibility to their Faith which swept over them on hearing of the passing of their Guardian, what a burden has fallen on those Hands who serve here at the World Centre. But, even as the sun rises after the darkest night, so have emerged the clear evidences of the unfailing protection of Bahá'u'lláh vouchsafed to His broken-hearted servants. A great wave of sincere, shocked and deep-felt sympathy poured out to the Bahá'í Community from the officials of the State of Israel and its peoples; from the President, Prime Minister and cabinet members down to the simplest citizens, tributes and condolences poured in; at every point the Government of this State has responded to our requests, and cooperated with us in protecting the interests of the Faith at the International Centre. In different parts of the world, including the Cradle of the Faith, victory after victory has been won, raising hope and confidence in our crushed hearts, assuring us that our Guardian has not abandoned us or his own glorious work even though physically he is removed from our presence.

Like an athlete trained to meet the supreme test, the administrative institutions of the Faith, raised up and consolidated by the Guardian, responded to the appeal of the Hands, and with strength and assurance rallied to the support of the Administrative and Spiritual Heart of the Cause in its hour of danger by placing in the hands of the Custodians those documents needed to protect the institutions, properties and privileges possessed by the Bahá'í World Community at its World Centre. So strong has been the demonstration of unity on the part of the believers and their national representatives that no challenge to the actions taken or the decisions reached by the Hands has been made by the Covenant-breakers or other enemies of the Faith.

We now share with you the very encouraging and indeed thrilling news of the unfoldment of the World Crusade, on which, in the words of our Guardian, "the army of the Lord of Hosts has so joyously and confidently embarked". The friends should realize that the main portion of the statistics in this message come from him, as he had assiduously kept the record of the progress being made in various fields up until two days before his passing. It was with the help of

exhaustive lists he kept that we were able to assemble and add to the facts, brought up to date by him until the beginning of November, and thus give the believers the truly heartening picture of the steady, irresistible advance of our Faith all over the world. Many supplementary achievements of an outstanding nature have been added since his spirit was freed from the heavy bondage of his earthly life, eloquent witness of the immense love of the believers for that unique and priceless being the beloved Master left in their midst for thirty-six years.

The news of the World Centre, most of which is gleaned from notes prepared by Shoghi Effendi himself for his Annual Convention Message, is most inspiring. After more than sixty-five years of uninterrupted tenure of buildings adjacent to the Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, the Haram-i-Aqdas was at last purged of the remaining handful of Covenant-breakers in August, 1957, following the expropriation of their properties by the Israel Government. In accordance with the wishes of the beloved Guardian, these buildings were razed, and by the end of December no trace was left. The beautiful white Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh stood forth at last in all its symmetry, unsullied—the very building seemed to shine and breathe in a new peace. The gardens, as planned by the Guardian himself, have been and are still being enlarged in the area left open by the destruction of these buildings, and a third terrace, as planned by him, has been raised towards the east so that a magnificent view is obtained of the Holy Shrine, the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh, and the great arc of gardens created by him during the last few years. Moreover, the title deeds to all the Bahjí property expropriated by the Israel Government have been safely registered in the name of the Faith. Negotiations are being completed for extra plots of land towards the north and south of the present area of Bahjí owned by the Bahá'ís in order to protect the approaches to the Most Holy Tomb and the entrance to the building used by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the days after the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh.

In Haifa, the International Archives building is now entirely completed inside as well as out; the tall, stained glass window in its western wall, the smaller windows and the ornamental balustrade of its balconies, were built before the passing of the beloved Guardian;

the green tiles and six crystal chandeliers he ordered have since been placed in position; and the municipal authorities have granted tax exemption to this first of the international institutions of the Faith to be erected on Mt. Carmel in accordance with the promise of Bahá'u'lláh: *“Erelong will God sail His Ark upon thee”*. The gate which the beloved Guardian had ordered for the entrance to the “arc” around which the administrative institutions of the World Order are to cluster in the future, and which leads to the International Archives building, is now nearing completion. Since last Ridván three additional Israel Branches of various National Spiritual Assemblies have been added to those previously registered here and entitled to hold property, namely, those of Pakistan, Alaska and New Zealand. During the past year an unprecedented number of visitors have been received on the Bahá'í properties open to the public, and during the recent Passover Holiday, nearly eight thousand persons visited the Shrine of the Báb, more than eighteen hundred in one day.

The glad tidings of the progress our world-redeeming Faith has made during the past year in all parts of the globe is truly impressive, and comprises not only victories won before the passing of our most beloved Guardian and under his direct supervision, but others, equally impressive, won since his departure from our midst and bearing eloquent testimony to the inspiration of his spirit, to his watchful guidance from on High, and to the fact that his loving spirit is leading us on to do his work as he would wish it done.

Two of the great rallying points provided for by the Guardian in his last message to the Bahá'í world—namely, the five Intercontinental Conferences—have been held with outstanding success, and a great outpouring of spiritual bounty has undoubtedly been vouchsafed to all the believers, not only those who attended them, but also those who felt the impact of their spirit. The African Conference, at which were present more than four hundred and fifty African believers and an equal number of Persian believers and other visitors from abroad, witnessed the extraordinary feat of the raising of almost a third of a million dollars for the work in that continent, so loved by our Guardian, whilst the Australian Conference, which was attended by believers representing eighteen countries, witnessed an outpouring

of more than thirty thousand Australian pounds for the Mother Temple of that continent.

Still another pillar of the Universal House of Justice is being reared in the current Ridván period in France, the first European country to receive the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, bringing the total number of National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies to thrice nine, and fulfilling one of the most cherished plans of the Guardian.

The number of territories included within the world community of the Most Great Name has now been raised to two hundred and fifty-four. Of all the one hundred and thirty-one new territories listed by our beloved Guardian in the Ten Year Plan, only Spitzbergen and eleven areas included in the Soviet orbit remain unopened, as a result of the settlement, during the past year, of the Chagos Archipelago by the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Pouva Murday, and the opening of Nicobar Island by the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh Mrs. Bates and her daughter Jeanne Frankel.

The constant multiplication of localities where Bahá'ís reside in all parts of the globe has raised the total number of such centres to over forty-five hundred, an increase of thirteen hundred in the last three years. Of these localities—termed by our Guardian foci of the warming and healing light of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh—nearly one hundred and twenty are now established in the Goal Countries of Europe, nearly one hundred and thirty in the British Isles, over one hundred and thirty-five in Germany and Austria, one hundred and forty in Australasia, one hundred and forty-five in the Dominion of Canada, one hundred and sixty in the Indian subcontinent, one hundred and ninety in Latin America, nearly two hundred and eighty in the entire Pacific area, over seven hundred in the African continent, over ten hundred and fifty in Persia, and over fourteen hundred and sixty in the United States.

The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies established in all parts of the globe, constituting in the beloved Guardian's own words "the broad and indestructible foundation of the edifice of a rising Order", is now almost eleven hundred, an increase of nearly a hundred in one year. The total number of incorporated Spiritual Assemblies, both local and national, is now two hundred and sixteen, an increase of more than twenty during the past year, including several of the

thirteen National Assemblies newly established in the Ridván period of 1957.

The literature of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has now been translated into two hundred and forty-four languages, of which one hundred and fifty-five have been completed since the beginning of the Crusade. No less than seventy-eight of these represent supplementary achievements above those called for in the Ten Year Plan.

Of the forty-nine National Hazíratu'l-Quds enumerated as Crusade objectives, forty-eight have been acquired, leaving only the headquarters in Caracas, Venezuela still to be established. Of the fifty-one national Bahá'í endowments to be purchased during the Ten Year Crusade, fifty have now been established, leaving only one more to be acquired.

The number of countries and states, as well as cities in the United States, where the educational authorities have recognized the Bahá'í Holy Days is now nearly sixty, an increase of more than ten in the past year, including the entire country of Uganda.

The number of sovereign states and dependencies as well as territories, federal districts and states of the United States of America, where the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate is recognized is now forty, special legislation having been passed by the Legislature of Texas in the United States, permitting Bahá'í marriages to be legally performed in that State, and more recently, and of great significance in hastening the day when the independence of our beloved Faith will have been fully vindicated, is the pronouncement by a religious judge in the Sudan that as the Bahá'í Faith is an independent religion, two Bahá'ís of Islamic extraction should not be registered as Muslims but married as Bahá'ís, and the historic registration in the Republic of San Marino of the first Bahá'í marriage ever performed there, an event without precedence in the European continent.

Of the utmost significance, not only in the Ten Year Plan, but for future decades and centuries of the Bahá'í Era, is the striking progress made in acquiring the sites for future Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs. The execution, in March of this year, of the contract for purchase of the Temple site in Stockholm completes the list of eleven such sites originally enumerated by the beloved Guardian as Crusade

objectives. To this imposing list have been added no less than nine other sites acquired in such widely scattered areas of the globe as Alaska, Indonesia, Libya, Pakistan, Argentina, Brazil, Liberia, the British Isles, and Switzerland, that of Switzerland having the unique distinction of being the only Temple site ever purchased by the Guardian of the Faith himself, in the particular situation in Bern which he himself prescribed, overlooking the Alps. Many of these sites represent victories achieved in the subsidiary Six Year Plans given by our Guardian to the various new National and Regional Assemblies formed in the Ridván period a year ago.

In the African continent, where the unparalleled progress of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in recent years brought such joy to the beloved Guardian, the number of believers is now well over the five thousand mark, an increase of nearly two thousand in the past year, the vast majority of which are of the Negro race. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in that flourishing area is now approaching the two hundred mark and may well reach or exceed this level in the current Ridván period. A total of two hundred and three African tribes are now represented in the Bahá'í world community, an increase of one hundred and ninety-three since the inception of the Crusade. Land for a Bahá'í school in Uganda has been offered by one of the African members of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of that area, a contribution to the Faith which made the Guardian particularly happy.

In the Pacific area, that vast territory where the rapid spread of the Faith and the development of its institutions is, in the words of our Guardian, "competing for the palm of victory with the African continent itself", the evidences of new victories won continue to multiply. The number of believers has now passed the three thousand mark, the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside has reached the imposing total of two hundred and eighty, and the number of indigenous languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated is now well over fifty. Other significant evidences of the progressive increase of Bahá'í institutions in that area are the establishment of twenty-seven incorporated Spiritual Assemblies, the establishment of independent Bahá'í burial grounds in Indonesia and Malaya, and the founding of three additional Bahá'í schools,

doubling the number already existing, as well as the pending completion of construction of still another.

In the far-flung reaches of the Western Hemisphere, the total number of localities within the Community of the Most Great Name is now nearly eighteen hundred. The area is now served by seven National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies, and over three hundred Local Assemblies, of which over one hundred and thirty are incorporated. The number of American Indian tribes with which contact has been established now exceeds fifty, nearly twenty-five of which are now represented in the Faith. The first all-Indian Local Spiritual Assembly in South America has been formed in Huanuni, Bolivia. The many notable victories recorded during the past year in widely scattered areas of this vast hemisphere are far too numerous to summarize here, but the following may be mentioned to illustrate the range and diversity of these accomplishments: The formation of a group in the Arctic Village of Barrow; the granting to the Canadian National Assembly of tax exemption for the Maxwell House in Montreal as a result of a finding by the Superior Court that the Faith is an independent religion entitled to such exemption; the beginning of construction of the Home for the Aged, the first Dependency of the Mother Temple of the West, and the action by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Wilmette Village Trustees in effect upholding the firm Bahá'í position on the oneness of mankind taken by the elected national representatives of the American Bahá'í Community responsible for this important project; the holding of the first Bahá'í Summer School of Central America; and the establishment of a Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Although no doubt incomplete, we cannot refrain from sharing with the friends the list of teaching conferences and congresses which our beloved Guardian had so patiently, and meticulously, and at so much cost of effort to his precious self, assembled in preparation for his Convention Message. First and foremost must be mentioned the conferences held by the Hands of the Faith and their Auxiliary Board members at Bex les Bains, and in Bern, Switzerland, and those called since the passing of the Guardian and held in over forty places in the United States of America. The Teaching Conferences held in Bex les Bains, Switzerland; Sanary sur Mer, France; Darby

Hall, England; Belgaum, India; Rome, Italy; Panama, Canal Zone; that of the Maritimes, held in St. John, New Brunswick; and of Lower Burma, held in Rangoon; as well as the Teaching Conferences of Pakistan; of Benelux, held in Luxembourg Ville, Luxembourg; those of Alaska, held in Fairbanks, Anchorage and Ketchikan; the Regional Teaching Conferences held in areas so widely separated as Sydney, New South Wales; Queensland, Victoria; Adelaide, South Australia; and Tasmania; Northern Bavaria, convened in Nurenberg; and that of Regina, Saskatchewan; the National Teaching Conferences held in Frankfurt, Germany, St. Croix and Lucerne, Switzerland; the Bi-Area Teaching Conference held in Green Acre, Eliot, Maine; the Summer Conference held in Banff, Alberta for Western Canada; the Regional Teaching Congresses held in Curitiba, Brazil; Asunción, Paraguay; and in Panama, representative also of other Central American Republics; the historic All-Greece Teaching Conference held after the passing of the Guardian, and the Inter-Community Conference series held in Vancouver, British Columbia.

As the world-encircling Crusade passes its crucial midway point, the significance of which was outlined in such inspiring terms by the beloved Guardian himself in his last message to the Bahá'í world, and which has been thrown into such brilliant relief by the white glare of his ascension, we must all assess the tasks that lie ahead of us with clear minds and with courage and determination in our hearts. He himself pointed out to us that until this midway point was reached we had traversed three phases of our Ten Year Plan. The first phase, from 1953 to 1954, witnessed the unique feat of the addition of over one hundred countries to the roll of those opened to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh; the second phase, 1954 to 1956, was signaled by the purchase of the vast majority of the forty-nine National Hazíratu'l-Quds, and the fifty-one national endowments constituting goals of the World Crusade; the third phase, 1956 to 1958, was distinguished by the addition of almost 1,000 centres and sixteen new National and Regional Assemblies. The fourth phase, as our beloved Guardian pointed out in his October message to the Bahá'í world, "must be immortalized, on the one hand, by an unprecedented increase in the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour,

and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres, and, on the other, by a swift progress in the erection of the Mother Temples of Africa, and Australia, as well as by the initiation of the construction of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Europe.”

Already, at the two great Intercontinental Conferences held in Kampala and Sydney, substantial contributions to these three Temples have been made, but the needs of these infinitely precious and spiritually significant Houses of Worship—Temples whose designs were either chosen or approved by the Guardian himself, and to which he made the gift of Sacred Dust from the inmost Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh—are far from being met, and a sustained and self-sacrificing effort will be required on the part of the World Bahá'í Community to complete them.

In checking over the outline which the Guardian himself had been preparing in anticipation of his 1958 Ridván Message to the Bahá'í world it was found that in addition to the above-quoted tasks which constitute in his own words the fourth phase of the Crusade—a phase which must now carry it to its consummation—he had noted that three new National Spiritual Assemblies were to be formed in Ridván 1959, namely, those of Burma, Turkey and Austria, and one regional one, that of the South Pacific. We cannot refrain from complimenting the believers in these areas on the progress they have made and the spirit they have shown which attracted to them, just before his passing, the loving good-pleasure of their Guardian and presented them with such a unique opportunity to distinguish themselves in the service of the Faith.

Whilst we cannot but view with feelings of awe, pride and profound thanksgiving the extraordinary victories won during the last five years, it is certainly incumbent upon us at this time to bear in mind that only half of the Crusade has run its course, that our way through the world is harder and stonier than before, and that tremendous tasks still lie ahead. Let us recall the words of the beloved Guardian himself:

“The newly opened territories of the globe must, under no circumstances, be allowed to relapse into the state of spiritual deprivation from which they have so recently and laboriously been

rescued. Nay, the highly edifying evidences proclaiming the expansion and the consolidation of the superb historic work achieved in so many of these territories must be rapidly multiplied. The Local Assemblies that have been so diligently and patiently established must under no circumstances be allowed to dissolve, or their foundations be in any way endangered. The mighty and steady process involving the increase in the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith, and the multiplication of isolated centres, groups and Local Assemblies must, throughout this newly opened phase of the Plan, be markedly accelerated.”

And, finally, we ask each and every believer to ponder in his heart the solemn charge laid upon us by our Beloved when he was preparing us to shoulder the tasks of the Holy Crusade: “. . . 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 . . . has been fully consummated.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**Election of the Independent National Spiritual Assembly of
France
Ridván 1958**

To the First All-France Convention

Dearly beloved Friends:

On the historic occasion of the convening of the first all-France Bahá'í Convention and the election of the National Spiritual Assembly of this famous land, long one of the chief pillars of European civilization and a fountain-head of freedom and liberalism, our minds naturally turn to our beloved Guardian, whose ceaseless

encouragement, tireless efforts and unflinching determination made possible this event of such great spiritual significance. In spite of the fact that France had the unique and enviable position of being the first nation on the European continent to receive the warming and illuminating rays of the sun of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation, the friends gathered here, more particularly those of French extraction, are well aware of how difficult it has been to bring the work of our glorious Faith to this point of consummation.

Since the light of this New Revelation was first brought to France almost sixty years ago, this country has been blessed by many and varied events of profound spiritual significance. We may well, at this moment of victory, recall some of these which are of outstanding historic interest.

From France the very first party of Western pilgrims proceeded to the Turkish penal colony of 'Akká to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In 1899, upon the return of that handful of souls, now afire with the Glad Tidings of this New Revelation, May Bolles, with the approval and under the loving guidance of the Master Himself, began to teach the Faith in Paris. Before long a flourishing, enkindled and wholly dedicated group of souls was gathered there, including believers of such distinction as Hippolyte Dreyfus, the first native French believer, Thomas Breakwell, the first British believer, the Hand of the Cause Charles Mason Remey, and many others. 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself sent the greatest Bahá'í teacher of the East, Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl, to deepen the Faith of that early group. In those early years, Laura Barney, who later became the wife of Hippolyte Dreyfus, journeyed to 'Akká and during a long sojourn in the Holy Land, compiled that book of inestimable value *Some Answered Questions*.

In 1911 and 1912, Paris was blessed by the presence of the beloved Master Himself, Who remained there for considerable periods of time. Many Orientalists, scholars and men famous for their erudition throughout Europe sought His presence. It was there that He gave His famous Paris talks, lamenting the depths to which Europe had sunk in her pursuit of materialistic ideologies, and exhorting the people to awaken spiritually, in words which were the very breath of the Holy Spirit.

It was during one of His visits that the Master uttered these prophetic words: “Try to propagate the Teachings of God. . . . Now in Europe, it is the beginning of a new day. It is dawn. Erelong the Divine Light shall penetrate everywhere . . .” On another occasion He said: “Though you find Paris dormant now, eventually it will become revived, because I have spent many a sleepless night here, during which I supplicated the Almighty to shower His confirmations upon the people. I had no rest, no sleep—I was constantly supplicating.”

It was not until after World War II, with the inauguration of the Second Seven Year Plan given by the beloved Guardian to the American Bahá'í Community, one phase of which was aimed at the spiritual conquest of ten European “Goal” countries, that the work in France itself began to fulfil the prophecies of the Master. Though naturally herself not one of these goal countries, the vitalizing effects of the systematic prosecution of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan were felt throughout the length and breadth of France; the faithful and persistent groups of believers already established in such cities as Marseilles and Lyon, as well as the Paris community, began to be stimulated, not only by the general atmosphere of intense activity which was pervading adjacent countries, but also through direct help from travelling Bahá'í teachers and pioneers, and from the European Teaching Committee of the National Assembly of the United States.

The number of French Bahá'ís—the firm bedrock on which all activity in that country must ultimately rest—was increasing; the loyalty and devotion of these native friends greatly encouraged and pleased the Guardian, who saw in them the promise of the future and realized that the day when France would be able to have her own National Spiritual Assembly was fast approaching. From that time on he fixed his attention on France, showered his encouragement on the work of its believers, urged many American friends to pioneer there, and watched over the progress being made with both pride and interest, a pride and interest which culminated with his announcement that the first election of its independent National Assembly would take place in Ridván, 1958.

The believers of French extraction gathered in this Convention, as well as their loving and devoted co-workers from other countries who

have pioneered in France, without whose unsparing and dedicated efforts this victory could not have been won so soon, are aware that they are now electing the first National, as distinguished from Regional, Spiritual Assembly of the European continent, an Assembly which constitutes yet another pillar of the Universal House of Justice. This is a great distinction, a great honour and imposes a great responsibility, more particularly at this time when the Cause of God has received such a grievous blow through the sudden passing of its beloved Guardian, its guide and its shield. There is no doubt, however, that his love and his spirit are with you on this historic occasion, and that he will continue to watch over the advancement of this community which he so tenderly encouraged for so many years, and whose present coming of age was so eagerly anticipated by him.

Our beloved Guardian doubtless would have called upon the National Assembly elected at this historic first French Annual Convention to formulate its own Five Year Plan for the remainder of the World Crusade, as he did in the case of the newly-formed national bodies in Africa in 1956. Perhaps he would have specified the objectives himself, as he did for the subsidiary Six Year Plans given to each of the thirteen National and Regional Assemblies formed in the Ridván period of 1957. We may be sure, however, that his hopes for the future development of the Faith in France would, following his earlier pattern, encompass: (1) the devising of ways and means of ensuring the rapid spread of the Cause throughout that land; (2) the consolidation and multiplication of its Assemblies, groups and isolated centres; (3) the planting of the banner of the Faith in all the various Departments of the country, especially those which have as yet had no sustained teaching activity within their borders; (4) the incorporation of the new national body, as well as the Local Spiritual Assemblies; (5) the establishment of a site for a future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár; (6) the holding of summer schools to deepen the knowledge and understanding of the believers; and (7) above all the spreading of the light of this Divine Revelation far and wide amongst the people of that country, in order that the promises of the beloved Master may be speedily fulfilled, and the French

nation receive the redeeming grace of Bahá'u'lláh in this dark age through which it and the whole world is now passing.

As the assembled friends consult earnestly and prayerfully upon the unfinished tasks before them, they may well turn for inspiration and assurance to the words of the beloved Guardian, addressed to the National Conventions two years ago—a message in which he referred specifically to the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of France.

“Before the eyes of the warriors enlisting under its banner stretch fields of exploration and consolidation of such vastness as might well dazzle the eyes and strike awe into the heart of any soul less robust than those who have arisen to identify themselves with its Cause. The heights its champions must scale are indeed formidable. The pitfalls that bestrew their path are still numerous. The road leading to ultimate and total victory is tortuous, stony and narrow. Theirs, however, is the emphatic assurance, revealed by the Pen of the Most High—the Prime Mover of the forces unleashed by this world-girdling Crusade—that *‘Whosoever ariseth to aid our Cause God will render him victorious over ten times ten thousand souls, and, should he wax in his love for Me, him will We cause to triumph over all that is in heaven and all that is on earth.’*”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

After its election on April 26, 1958 the National Spiritual Assembly of France sent the following pledge of loyalty to the Hands of the Cause and the Custodians:

Dearly Beloved Hands of the Cause,

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of France in recognition of the proclamation made by the Hands of the Cause of God, the Chief Stewards of the Bahá'í World Faith, assembled at the Bahá'í World Centre on 25th November 1957, in which they have appointed nine members from their number to act on their behalf as “Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith”, has adopted the following resolution:

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith, elected by the Hands of the

Cause.

With warm Bahá'í love,

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of

France

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 27, 1958

SOHRAB RELENTLESS ENEMY FAITH AFTER WITNESSING
THIRD CENTURY IRRESISTIBLE SPREAD HOLY CAUSE
FORTYFIVE HUNDRED CENTRES GUIDANCE BELOVED
GUARDIAN DIED FIRST RIDVAN EVERY HOPE
FRUSTRATED EVERY PLAN EXTINGUISHED EVERY
AMBITION THWARTED STOP STRIKING EVIDENCE GODS
AVENGING WRATH ONE HAND ON OTHER UNFAILING
PROTECTION COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS REARED
BELOVED GUARDIAN INSPIRES BELIEVERS ARISE SERVE
RENEWED COURAGE DEDICATION ENSURE COMPLETE
SUCCESS CRUSADE STOP SHARE MESSAGE HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

**The Intercontinental Conference, Chicago, U.S.A.
May 2-4, 1958**

To the Hands of the Cause, members of their Auxiliary Boards, members of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers, resident believers, and visitors attending the Intercontinental Conference in Chicago, May, 1958.

Beloved Friends:

Upon the occasion of the convening of this second Intercontinental Conference in Chicago, our hearts and our thoughts inevitably go back to the first great conference which was held here in 1953 during the opening of the World Crusade under the direct

aegis of our beloved Guardian. His Messages, his cables, his words of loving reassurance, the news he sent us from Haifa at that time, the sense of his overpowering presence—all are fresh today in our memories, and our hearts overflow with love for him and with longing for his physical presence in this world. None of us, however, can doubt that during the six months since his sudden passing the evidences of the Divine protection promised to this Holy Faith of God have been overpowering. The structure Shoghi Effendi built, on the firm foundations laid in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, has withstood the earthquake of his passing and its attendant circumstances; the seamless robe of this greatest of all Revelations has not been torn; the administrative institutions so carefully reared by him, nascent though they still are, have rallied to the support of the World Centre, the heart and hub of the Faith, and have demonstrated, not only to the believers but to the observant and curious public, as well as to our enemies, that this Cause is firmly knit together, universal in its operations, united in one purpose and one great loyalty which nothing can destroy. We see in all this the living, breathing spirit of Shoghi Effendi, his protection and his love, which will never leave us.

The five mighty Intercontinental Conferences announced in the last message to the Bahá'í world from our beloved Guardian, we see now as providential rallying-points during this difficult year of sorrow and separation. The midway point of this mighty Crusade the Guardian conceived and set in motion has been characterized not only by extraordinary victories won, but by the falling of a wholly unexpected blow, brought about through the mysterious operations of the Divine Will, which no man dare question and no human mind can comprehend, a blow which may well prove to be the signal for the beginning of that period of turmoil and suffering Shoghi Effendi so often told us the world must pass through before its parts are forged into a single whole, ready for, and capable of putting into operation, the Plan of God for this Day.

Let us, at this solemn moment in our destinies, turn back to the words of our Guardian when he sounded the call for this greatest of all enterprises ever undertaken by the followers of any Faith since the dawn of history.

Let there be no mistake. The avowed, the primary aim of this Spiritual Crusade is none other than the conquest of the citadels of men's hearts. The theatre of its operations is the entire planet. Its duration a whole decade. Its commencement synchronizes with the Centenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission. Its culmination will coincide with the Centenary of the Declaration of that same Mission. The agencies assisting in its conduct are the nascent administrative institutions of a steadily evolving, divinely appointed Order. Its driving force is the energizing influence generated by the Revelation heralded by the Báb and proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. Its Marshal is none other than the Author of the Divine Plan. Its standard-bearers are the Hands of the Cause of God appointed in every continent of the globe. Its generals are the twelve National Spiritual Assemblies participating in the execution of its design. Its vanguard is the chief executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Master Plan, their allies and associates. Its legions are the rank and file of believers standing behind these same twelve National Assemblies and sharing in the global task embracing the American, the European, the African, the Asiatic and Australian fronts. The charter directing its course is the immortal Tablets that have flowed from the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant Himself. The armour with which its onrushing hosts have been invested is the glad tidings of God's Own Message in this Day, the principles underlying the Order proclaimed by His Messenger, and the laws and ordinances governing His Dispensation. The battle cry animating its heroes and heroines is the cry of Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá, Yá 'Alíyyu'l-A'lá.

“So vast, so momentous and challenging a crusade that will, God willing, illuminate the annals of the second epoch of the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and immortalize the second decade of the second Bahá'í century, and the termination of which will mark the closing of the first epoch in the evolution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, will, in itself, pave the way for, and constitute the prelude to, the initiation of the laborious and tremendously long process of establishing in the course of subsequent crusades in all the newly opened sovereign states, dependencies and islands of the planet, as well as in all the remaining territories of the globe, the framework of the Administrative Order of the Faith, with all its attendant agencies,

and of eventually erecting in these territories still more pillars to share in sustaining the weight and in broadening the foundation of the Universal House of Justice.”

Before we turn our thoughts to the purpose of this Conference as it affects the Bahá'ís of the Western Hemisphere, let us recall the stages through which this globe-encircling Crusade has already passed: Much to the joy and comfort of our overworked and most beloved Guardian, who had already sacrificed over thirty years of his life to the unremitting service of the Cause of God, the first phase of the Ten Year Plan, which lasted from 1953 to 1954, witnessed the planting of the banner of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in no less than one hundred additional countries, territories and islands of the globe, raising thereby the total number at that time to two hundred and twenty-eight; the distinguishing feature of the second phase of this Plan, which lasted from 1954 to 1956, was the extraordinary multiplication of National Hazíratu'l-Quds and endowments, the purchase of the majority of which was to all intents and purposes completed during this period, involving an outpouring of funds which many of the friends had believed could not possibly take place in so short a time; the third phase, which comprised the period from 1956 to 1958, was distinguished by a marked multiplication not only of Bahá'í centres all over the world, but by the establishment in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, of no less than thirteen Regional and four National Assemblies.

The phenomenal progress made and the extraordinary victories won during the last five years, have demonstrated to us all, not only the immense power of the Cause of God—a power which the Master said was mysterious and far above the understanding of men and of angels—but have shown us that through the canalization of this force by the Guardian into the mighty blueprint of the Divine Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, an immensely potent instrument has been devised in the form of this World Crusade which constitutes a step in the spiritual conquest of the entire planet. The pattern has been clearly defined, the design of God we see distinctly emerging before our eyes. Every act of obedience to the instructions of the Guardian, every fulfilment of a goal set by him, every execution of a phase of his plan, brings victory, breeds strength, creates new

spiritual life. He himself was immensely heartened and pleased over the victories won during the first half of this Holy Crusade, and characterized this five year period as one of marvellous progress achieved in so vast a field in so short a time by a small band of heroic souls.

We know that the Western World, the Western Hemisphere, particularly the “Great Republic of the West”, have been singled out by the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as regions of the globe whose peoples are endowed with special capacities in this Day with which to serve the Cause of God and through it their fellow-men. The attendants at this particular Conference must feel the weight of a very great responsibility resting on them at this midway point of the World Crusade, not only because of the mission conferred upon them by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, but because of the greatness of this affliction which has filled all hearts with grief and longing at this time, and in spite of which—nay, perhaps because of which—they must now arise, wiser, more mature, more consecrated than ever before, to carry out their preponderating share in the prosecution of the remainder of the Ten Year Plan.

There can be no escape from duty for any believer, least of all an American believer, at this critical juncture in the fortunes of our beloved Faith. We recall to your minds the stirring words of Shoghi Effendi addressed to the Annual Convention of the United States which preceded the first Intercontinental Conference held in 1953:

“May this Community—the spiritual descendants of the Dawn-breakers of the Heroic Age of the Bahá’í Faith, the chief repository of the immortal Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan, the foremost executors of the Mandate issued by the Centre of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant, the champion-builders of a divinely conceived Administrative Order, the standard-bearers of the all-conquering army of the Lord of Hosts, the torch-bearers of a future divinely inspired world civilization—arise, in the course of the momentous decade separating the Great from the Most Great Jubilee, to secure, as befits its rank, the lion’s share in the prosecution of a global crusade designed to diffuse the light of God’s Revelation over the surface of the entire planet.”

As the friends gathered at this supremely important Conference consider their future work and discuss ways and means of accomplishing it, the believers of the United States should, in particular, ponder the very critical position of the home front in their country and, in the Guardian's own words, "maintain their enviable position, as the vanguard of the army of Bahá'u'lláh's crusaders, in rescuing, while there is yet time, their home front from the precarious position in which it now finds itself . . ."

Let them remember that as he himself so clearly stated: "It is primarily a task that concerns the individual believer, wherever he may be, and whatever his calling, his resources, his race, or his age. Neither the local nor national representatives of the community, no matter how elaborate their plans, or persistent their appeals, or sagacious their counsels, nor even the Guardian himself, however much he may yearn for this consummation, can decide where the duty of the individual lies, or supplant him in the discharge of that task. The individual alone must assess its character, consult his conscience, prayerfully consider all its aspects, manfully struggle against the natural inertia that weighs him down in his effort to arise, shed, heroically and irrevocably, the trivial and superfluous attachments which hold him back, empty himself of every thought that may tend to obstruct his path . . ."

The weight resting on each one of us today is truly crushing and inescapable, the reward which each one of us can win for himself is equally great and of an everlasting nature. In the words of the Qur'án: *"Whoso maketh efforts for the faith, maketh them for his own good only. Verily God is rich enough to dispense with all creatures."*

In his last letter to the American National Spiritual Assembly the Guardian made an appeal, couched in more poignant terms than any he had ever used previously in addressing the members of that privileged Community who are the "Champion-builders of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh":

"Once again—and this time more fervently than ever before—I direct my plea to every single member of this strenuously labouring, clear-visioned, stout-hearted, spiritually endowed community, every man and woman, on whose individual efforts, resolution, self-sacrifice and perseverance the immediate destinies of the Faith of

God, now traversing so crucial a stage in its rise and establishment, primarily depends, not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost. I would rather entreat each and every one of them to immortalize this approaching, fateful hour in the evolution of a World Spiritual Crusade, by a fresh consecration to their God-given mission, coupled with an instantaneous plan of action, at once so dynamic and decisive, as to wipe out, . . . with one stroke, the deficiencies which have, to no small extent, bogged down the operations of the Crusade on the home front . . .”

Before turning to the global objectives still remaining, and which must be accomplished during the fourth phase of the Ten Year Plan, let us review the specific tasks given by our Guardian to the American Bahá'í Community, her chief ally, and her daughter communities in the Western Hemisphere:

The opening of Spitzbergen, the one remaining virgin territory other than those within the Soviet orbit, and the resettlement or consolidation of those goals now vacant or in need of supporting efforts by pioneers and visiting teachers; the speedy attainment of the objectives of the subsidiary Six Year Plans given by our Guardian to the new National and Regional Assemblies formed during the Ridván period of 1957 under the sponsorship of the National Assembly of the United States, the fulfilment of which is an indispensable prerequisite to the formation, on a firm footing, of the future pillars of the Universal House of Justice which are to be established in each and every Republic of Latin America and in each goal country of Europe by 1963—victories which can be assured only by a continuous flow of pioneers, as our Guardian repeatedly emphasized; the immediate construction of the first dependency of the Mother Temple of the West, designed to convincingly demonstrate to the public the spirit of service to humanity which underlies the Divinely-ordained institutions surrounding the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár; the establishment, during the Ridván period of 1959, of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of the South Pacific Islands, under the sponsorship of the American National Assembly, a task assigned to that Assembly by our Guardian in his message to the 1953 Annual Convention; a marked acceleration in the process

of enlisting in the ranks of the Faith an ever greater number of Indians, the original inhabitants of the Americas, of Eskimos in the far North, and of representatives of the Basque and Gipsy races in those areas assigned to the United States Bahá'í Community; a carefully planned and vigorously prosecuted campaign aimed at enlisting in the army of Bahá'u'lláh, large numbers of the Negro race—so much loved and admired by Shoghi Effendi—thereby fulfilling one of his frequently expressed and most ardent hopes; the incorporation of Local and National Assemblies, which must be accomplished as rapidly as possible in all areas of the Western Hemisphere in order to strengthen the structure of the Administrative Order, and the foundations upon which the edifice of the Universal House of Justice will rest; the proclamation of the Faith to the masses, so desperately in need of spiritual enlightenment and guidance, so sunk in the materialism of a world heedless of its God and oblivious of the Divine Message for this Day; and finally, the paramount task so constantly stressed by the Guardian, so dear to his heart, and which constitutes the supreme duty of every true believer—the propagation of the Faith, and the conversion of individual receptive souls to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

We have now entered, as Shoghi Effendi himself stated, the fourth phase of the World Crusade—a phase which must carry us through to victory, to the accomplishment of all the goals attainable, goals which he so carefully outlined for us with so much wisdom and so much love for this mighty Faith on whose altar he, like the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá before him, was utterly sacrificed. This fourth and final phase of the Ten Year Plan comprises two outstanding tasks: To raise the necessary funds for and to build the Mother Temples of Europe and of Australasia—that of Africa, as he himself said, having to all intents and purposes been assured—and to vastly increase the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith all over the world, in newly opened lands as well as in those countries blessed from its earliest dawn by the light of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation.

We Bahá'ís have witnessed many miracles in the course of the one hundred and fifteen years which have elapsed since the inception of this supreme Dispensation. As the spread of the Cause

of God gathered momentum the ever-increasing protection vouchsafed it from on High has been unfailing; over and over again its enemies have been laid low, their plans completely frustrated, their lives and their hopes snuffed out at the very instant when they had anticipated victory—the latest demonstration of this invariable spiritual law being the death a few days ago of Ahmad Sohrab at a moment when he must have felt his machinations held some promise of fruition. Over and over again the doors to service, to the accomplishment of a set task, to the overcoming of a specific obstacle, have, at the last moment, been flung open before the faces of the loyal, the persevering, the consecrated and obedient followers of Bahá'u'lláh. Every major crisis in our Faith, as the Guardian repeatedly pointed out to us, has invariably been followed by a great outpouring of Divine Mercy, and this in turn has led to victory. We have every right to believe that because God has visited us with such a mighty calamity this year, He will, in His unfailing Mercy, compensate for this suffering, this dire deprivation that has fallen upon us, and make the supreme sacrifice of Shoghi Effendi's life a leaven which will generate the force required to carry us through to victory and enable us thereby to gladden the heart of our beloved Guardian in the Abhá Kingdom—something which we did not always do while he was in our midst.

Beloved Friends! At the outset of this Most Holy, decade-long Crusade, our beloved Guardian raised this challenging call addressed directly to the members of the Communities of North and South America:

“It is incumbent upon the members of the American Bahá'í Community, the chief executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, the members of the Canadian Bahá'í Community acting as their allies, and the members of the Latin American Bahá'í Communities in their capacity as associates in the execution of this Plan, to brace themselves and initiate, in addition to the responsibilities they have assumed, and will assume, in other continents of the globe, an intercontinental campaign designed to carry a stage further the glorious work already inaugurated throughout the Western Hemisphere.”

“Standing on the threshold of a ten-year long, world-embracing Spiritual Crusade these Communities are now 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.”

With this vision before them, let each and every one of them arise, joyously and wholeheartedly, with fresh dedication and determination, and respond to these soul-stirring words of their Guardian:

“I direct my impassioned appeal to obey, as befits His warriors, the summons of the Lord of Hosts, and prepare for that Day of Days when His victorious battalions will, to the accompaniment of hosannas from the invisible angels in the Abhá Kingdom, celebrate the hour of final victory.”

Let them remember how often he said the immediate future was dark, but the distant future infinitely bright. No words could better describe the glory of the Order we are called upon to build than his own:

“How pressing and sacred the responsibility that now weighs upon those who are already acquainted with these teachings! How glorious the task of those who are called upon to vindicate their truth, and demonstrate their practicability to an unbelieving world! Nothing short of an immovable conviction in their divine origin, and their uniqueness in the annals of religion; nothing short of an unwavering purpose to execute and apply them to the administrative machinery of the Cause, can be sufficient to establish their reality, and ensure their success. How vast is the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh! How great the magnitude of His blessings showered upon humanity in this day! And yet, how poor, how inadequate our conception of their significance and glory! This generation stands too close to so colossal a Revelation to appreciate, in their full measure, the infinite possibilities of His Faith, the unprecedented character of His Cause, and the mysterious dispensations of His Providence.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

June 12, 1958

Beloved Fellow-Hands:

The response evoked by the message we were able, by the grace of Bahá'u'lláh, and thanks to the copious notes made by our beloved Guardian in anticipation of his annual Ridván communication, to send out to the twenty-seven Conventions was most heartening, and we feel sure the enclosed copies of cables received in reply from the Annual Conventions will bring you great joy also. They have shown us how complete is the protection and help being vouchsafed by our Beloved, whose spirit is surely reinforcing our efforts to discharge befittingly the sacred trust laid upon us by him.

Since our last letter to you of March 21, the tasks and problems engaging the attention of the Hands here have been many and varied. Generally speaking all the news has been good news, with the exception of one question which has weighed very heavily on our minds and hearts and which we wish to share with you.

You will remember we pointed out that from communications and reports received here it was becoming obvious that there was a tendency for different interpretations of our present situation and prognostications of the future to be made.

As most of you no doubt are aware, the American Hands issued, in conjunction with the American National Spiritual Assembly, a statement entitled "A New Bahá'í Era" in order to meet the many questions being raised by the believers and to assist them in focusing their attention on the future work of the Crusade. We feel you should know that this statement was read at forty conferences in the United States, and that copies were mailed to all National Spiritual Assemblies who were daughter Assemblies or allies of the American National Spiritual Assembly under the work of successive phases of the Divine Plan. This meant copies were received in Africa, Latin America and Europe. The Custodians had no foreknowledge of this statement, and felt it touched on points of such far-reaching importance that it should have come, if a statement of

this nature were to be issued at all, from the World Centre and not have been issued on a regional basis. We also felt a number of things should never have been said that were included, though by and large, the whole statement is very sound. We therefore cabled requesting that it be withdrawn from circulation and not appear in "Bahá'í News". The American Hands and National Spiritual Assembly immediately complied with this request and have since, in a most loving and understanding manner, expressed their agreement with us. Unfortunately, however, the statement has been widely published in Latin America. We have received letters, because of this statement, and because of the nature of the questions it attempted to answer, from the United States, the Canadian, the Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela and the Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay National Spiritual Assemblies, asking the Custodians to state something clearly for the friends on the question so much discussed, namely, the future of the Guardianship.

We have also received a number of reports from Europe, Asia, and the Western Hemisphere indicating that some of our dear fellow-Hands—no doubt under the pressure of emotion, and taken unawares by sudden questions asked of them—have made conflicting statements about the future of the Guardianship, at total variance with the thoughts published above the signature of the American Hands, and exceeding our own statements in the Proclamation, which we agreed to adhere to unitedly. We need not point out to you, who share with us the terrible and sacred responsibility of maintaining intact this unified Faith the Guardian left behind him, the great dangers involved in any expression of diversified opinions amongst ourselves on so important a subject.

Believing, ourselves, that as we decided in Bahjí, the less said on this subject the better, we have until now strictly refrained from going into the subject at all in any communications to Assemblies or individuals sent from Haifa. However, there is, as you will see from the enclosed excerpts from a letter from our fellow-Hand, William Sears, just received here a few days ago (he has been recently in the United States, Africa and Europe), a real danger of two schools of thought crystallizing on this all-important matter. We therefore feel

we can and must once again direct the friends' attention to the words of the Proclamation we issued, in order that these questions may be put aside by the friends and their full energies concentrated upon fulfilling the goals of the Ten Year Plan.

In meeting this problem, the body of the Hands of the Cause must exercise the greatest care to avoid the very pitfall against which we must warn the friends—that of interpretation of the Sacred Writings. What we can, and must, do is to direct the attention of the friends to the Sacred Text of the Master's Will itself, and remind them once again, and in even stronger terms than before, of the basic facts mentioned in the Proclamation.

Therefore, in view of this situation which has now arisen, and the fact that the prestige of the body of the Hands as such and the Custodians who serve on their behalf at the World Centre may be seriously weakened by our taking no action at this time and ignoring the pressing requests of various National Spiritual Assemblies for something which they can circulate among the believers, we have prepared the enclosed brief message in reply to the National Spiritual Assemblies who have written to us. We are not sending this message to all National Spiritual Assemblies, as this may be unnecessary, but leave it to your discretion, as Hands responsible for the work in different continents, to share this same message with the various National Spiritual Assemblies in your area if the need arises, or if you think it desirable to do so in any case.

The shelter to which the sorrow-stricken followers of Bahá'u'lláh turn in these days of anguish is the Hands of the Cause. It therefore behoves each one of us to guide the friends in the path laid out by our Beloved. Let us not give them our own deductions, but endeavour to pour into their hearts his spirit and his love, and strive to give them the necessary spiritual strength to carry the World Crusade to a victorious conclusion. We, the chosen Hands of our Guardian, must convey a warm and loving spirit of oneness to the friends, and constantly urge them to achieve ever greater heights of consecrated service.

Whenever we visit the Holy Shrines, we supplicate for the help and guidance which alone will enable all of us to discharge our sacred responsibilities, and we ask you to all please pray for us daily

as on your behalf and in your name we carry very heavy burdens here.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Statement regarding the Guardianship

June 12, 1958

Dearly beloved Friends:

It has come to our attention that there is amongst the believers discussion regarding the Guardianship which exceeds the statement made by the united body of the Chief Stewards of the Faith, the Hands of the Cause, which they issued from Bahjí last November after nine days of deep and heart-searching consultation following hours of supplication in the Holy Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh.

We therefore, acting on behalf of the Hands of the Faith, wish once again to call the attention of all the friends to the words in that Proclamation: "It was likewise certified that the beloved Guardian had left no heir. The Aghsán (branches) one and all are either dead or have been declared violators of the Covenant by the Guardian for their faithlessness to the Master's Will and Testament and their hostility to him named first Guardian in that Sacred Document. The first effect of the realization that no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him was to plunge the Hands of the Cause into the very abyss of despair."

The American Hands of the Faith have expressed this same thought very clearly in a message prepared for a series of teaching conferences held in the United States earlier this year.

"Shoghi Effendi appointed no successor in his own lifetime because he himself had no natural heir and because no member of the Holy Family qualified. The Master's Testament is the sole authority controlling the appointment of successive Guardians, and its specific provisions were scrupulously upheld by the Guardian in his non-appointment of a second Guardian. Since a successor could only be chosen and designated by Shoghi Effendi in his own lifetime,

the friends must dismiss all hopeful expectation that a will appointing a second Guardian may later be found."

We call upon all the believers, for the sake of preserving the unity of our beloved Faith for which the Báb was martyred, Bahá'u'lláh and the Master imprisoned, and for which the beloved Guardian so completely sacrificed himself, to concentrate on the thoughts expressed in the Proclamation, and to desist from all further speculation on the future development of the institutions of the Faith—speculation which can only give rise to those very differences of interpretation forbidden by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and against which they repeatedly warned us.

Bahá'u'lláh has left the Divine System He conceived, the Master elaborated and the Guardian clarified, but the Divinely-guided scion of His house, Shoghi Effendi has, for reasons none of us can fathom, been lifted from the pattern. What he has left us is more than sufficient for us, the Community of the Most Great Name, to establish the first stages of that world-redeeming Order Bahá'u'lláh has given to mankind. Our sacred obligation is to fulfil our Guardian's wishes, his plans, and his most cherished hopes, leaving the over-all scheme of God to unfold as He sees fit, in His mysterious ways, in the days to come. Let us be confident that if we do our part He will never fail in His, and with this assurance go forward unitedly, courageously and with complete consecration.

Let us also rejoice with grateful hearts over the truly remarkable measure of Divine protection vouchsafed to us since the passing of our beloved Guardian, an unfailing sign that Shoghi Effendi's spirit is with us, guiding and inspiring the believers everywhere, and assisting us to achieve total victory in the Holy Crusade bequeathed to us by him.

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

The Intercontinental Conference, Frankfurt, Germany

July 25-29, 1958

To the Hands of the Cause, members of their Auxiliary Boards, members of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers,

resident believers, and visitors attending the Intercontinental Conference in Frankfurt, July, 1958.

Beloved Friends:

More than nine months have passed since that heart-breaking day when, according to the inscrutable decrees of God, our most beloved and precious Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, passed to the realms on High. Though our sorrow is still fresh in our hearts we cannot but marvel, as we witness the vast number of friends gathered at the opening of this fourth great Intercontinental Conference being held in the very heart of the European continent, at the protection vouchsafed this holy Faith by the Almighty; at the tender wisdom which inspired our Guardian to provide us, during this first year of cruel and bitter separation, with these five great rallying points; at his forethought when he urged the believers to make every effort to attend them; and at the vigilance which moved him, so shortly before his passing and in his last great message to the Bahá'í world, to reinforce the institution of the Hands of the Faith through the appointment of eight more of these "Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth". This designation, never before applied to them by him, appears to have been calculated to enable them, with the loving support of the National Assemblies and the believers, to carry the Cause of God forward through this exceedingly difficult and stormy strait in the history of mankind to the calmer waters which lie ahead as the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh begins to take shape and the administrative bodies of the Faith multiply and gain in stature and experience.

We, in spite of the load of grief we still bear in our hearts—a grief which has bowed our heads and humbled our spirits—can nevertheless lift up our voices in thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh. We thank Him now not only, as was the Guardian's expressed wish, for the bounties bestowed during the first five years of this World Crusade, but for the measure of sure protection, of merciful grace, poured upon us since the beloved Guardian's passing. The Bahá'ís have everywhere stood firm in the Covenant of God; tested, tried, bereft and filled with longing for their so deeply loved guide and leader, they have demonstrated how great has been the effect of his

life and its works by their steadfastness, by the renewed dedication they have shown to the plans he laid down for them, by an unprecedented degree of unity amongst themselves, by a deeper determination to gladden Shoghi Effendi's heart than when he was with them physically in this world. They have arisen, East and West, to go forth and pioneer on both the home fronts and in the newly opened territories; they have supported the Bahá'í Funds from hearts that were loyal and overflowed with tenderness for their religion in its hour of need; they have rallied round the Hands of the Faith, the Custodians at the World Centre, and the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies; they have gathered in large numbers at these great Intercontinental Conferences; they have comforted each other in their loneliness; and they have arisen to spread the Word of God abroad with new zeal and dedication. Can there be any doubt that all this is the result of Shoghi Effendi's sacrifice—the over a-third-of-a-century-long sacrifice of his life, the sudden end, when his spirit in one breath freed itself from his tired and overladen heart? You all are gathered here today because of Shoghi Effendi, according to Shoghi Effendi's wish, Shoghi Effendi's Plan, Shoghi Effendi's hope!

Before turning our thoughts to what he desired should be considered at these great Conferences, let us recall the purpose of this vast globe-encircling Crusade. It is a step in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan laid down for us by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and whose execution He entrusted primarily to the people of the "Great Republic of the West", the most promising child of European civilization. It has already in five short years, carried us well on the way towards the accomplishment of our primary objective, which the Guardian said is no less than the spiritual conquest of the entire planet. Led by our beloved Commander-in-Chief, we have opened nearly all the independent sovereign states, the chief dependencies, the most important islands and territories of the world to our glorious Faith; even the wintry island of Spitzbergen has been settled, leaving only a few states inside the Soviet Union or within its orbit, still unopened. Of the forty-nine National Hazíratu'l-Quds to be purchased as part of the Ten Year Plan, forty-eight have been acquired; of the fifty-one national endowments, all have been acquired; of the eleven Temple

sites specifically mentioned by our beloved Guardian, all eleven have been acquired; the mighty task of translating and publishing the literature of the Faith, as called for in the provisions of the Ten Year Plan, is now nearing completion; the Bahá'í Publishing Trusts, except for those in Islamic countries where the believers are still oppressed, ignored and proscribed, have all been founded; and the task of incorporating National and Local Spiritual Assemblies is well on its way to fulfilment. Even the home fronts—the most challenging perhaps of all the tasks allotted to us by the beloved Guardian under the terms of this World Crusade—are, in many countries, meeting, nay surpassing, his expectations. Two of the three mighty Mother Temples are already being constructed, namely, those of Africa and the Antipodes. It was this overall pattern of marked success, of surging spiritual vitality which characterizes the activities of the World Bahá'í Community, that undoubtedly caused our Guardian to unite us in these five Intercontinental Conferences, not only to humbly thank Bahá'u'lláh for mercies received, not only to deliberate on ways and means of accomplishing the next five years' work, but as a reward for having served faithfully, with enthusiasm and consecration, this blessed Cause of God, and, as we now see, as a mercy in the hour of separation, a tender enfolding of us, his “dearly beloved co-workers” in the arms of that one who, in his modesty and purity of heart, called himself only “your true brother”.

The work of Bahá'u'lláh lies before us to be completed. No one generation will do this; a thousand years at least are required to carry out and mature the specific provisions of His Dispensation. But to each man his opportunity, to each generation its tasks. Shoghi Effendi has laid down for us in clear and unmistakable terms our next five years' work. To the degree to which we scrupulously adhere to his plan, obey his words, comprehend the implications of his perfect design, to that degree only will our affairs prosper, our work attract the blessings from on High, and the foundation of the World Order be solidly and lastingly laid.

The beloved Guardian in his last message to us all, made clear that the fourth phase of our Ten Year Plan which we have, with the holding of these great Conferences all over the world, now embarked upon, “must be immortalized, on the one hand, by an unprecedented

increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres, and, on the other, by a swift progress in the erection of the Mother Temples of Africa and Australia, as well as by the initiation of the construction of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Europe."

The commencement of work on the Temple to be erected in Germany is long over-due. We know from the Words of the Master that these Houses of Worship are the greatest silent teachers of the Faith. How infinitely precious is any building erected in the love of God and for the mention of His Name. How much more so these first continental "Mother Temples", being raised to the glory of Bahá'u'lláh. How infinitely so the Temples for whose construction the Guardian himself is responsible, whose location he has specified, whose design he himself has approved. It was one of his most cherished desires to have these Temples built. He himself pledged he would supply one-third of their estimated cost. We must now carry on his work, see that the budget, now being expended monthly for the construction of the Sydney Temple is met, and that at least the major part of the sum required for the European Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is raised, in anticipation of the early commencement of actual building operations. Time is flying. We do not know what the future world situation will be. What we do know is our immediate duty to the work specified for us by our Guardian.

The other half of the main task confronting us is the "unprecedented increase" in the number of believers throughout the world. Pioneers are needed everywhere, in all continents, in all the islands opened to the Faith, on the home fronts, and in the goal territories. Two things are required to get a pioneer to his post, an enkindled, consecrated soul, willing and ready to go out in the teaching field and, if he cannot supply them himself, the material means necessary to get him to his post and often to enable him to remain at it. This type of service to the Faith offers a wonderful opportunity for partnership between those who have some worldly means at their disposal, but feel for some reason unable to go forth themselves, and those who yearn to respond to the call for

pioneering, but are prevented from fulfilling their heart's desire because of lack of material resources.

Let us recall our Guardian's words, at the opening of the World Crusade, to the entire body of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. "I direct my appeal to arise and, in the course of these fast-fleeting years, in every phase of the campaigns that are to be fought in all the continents of the globe, prove their worth as gallant warriors battling for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Indeed, from this very hour until the eve of the Most Great Jubilee, each and every one of those enrolled in the Army of Light must seek no rest, must take no thought of self, must sacrifice to the uttermost, must allow nothing whatsoever to deflect him or her from meeting the pressing, the manifold, the paramount needs of this pre-eminent Crusade.

"'Light as the spirit', 'pure as air', 'blazing as fire', 'unrestrained as the wind'—for such is Bahá'u'lláh's Own admonition to His loved ones in His Tablets, and directed not to a select few but to the entire congregation of the faithful—let them scatter far and wide, proclaim the glory of God's Revelation in this Day, quicken the souls of men and ignite in their hearts the love of the One Who alone is their omnipotent and divinely appointed Redeemer."

At this time surely nothing is impossible to us. We have passed through nine months of fire since our beloved Guardian left us, but we have burned together. We have seen, and felt deeply in our hearts, our unity as a world community, as followers of the Most Great Name. We have neither been separated nor paralyzed through this great shock and grief. The World Centre of the Faith which he so assiduously built up and consolidated, the heart of the Bahá'í World Community, has not ceased to beat. The communion between the hearts of the friends and the great heart enshrining the Qiblih of the Bahá'í world, continues to gather strength. This has been a shining evidence to us all that Bahá'u'lláh's mercies have not ceased to be showered upon us; that what the Guardian built endures and will endure, a living organism, throughout the stages in the evolution of our Faith which lie ahead.

After this ordeal by fire which we have passed through, can we doubt that, with this fresh sense of oneness, with our purified hearts, we will not receive, if we arise now to serve as we should, an

extraordinary measure of the bounty of Almighty God? Great moments in history require great deeds; great men are not necessarily those best qualified to be great, but rather those who see their chance and seize it, with love and courage, when it offers itself. The records of our Faith show that its heroes and heroines, its saints and martyrs, sprang mostly from the rank and file, but what they possessed, which raised them to the summits of fame and glory, were vision and faith. Let the friends now follow the path of Shoghi Effendi, let them arise to complete his work as set forth in the Ten Year Plan, let them labour as he did, steadily, patiently, consecratedly, day after day, week after week, year after year, until his tasks are completed. The world now marvels at what this one man did in thirty-six years. Let his lovers arise and put their shoulder to the wheel and move this blessed Faith forward on the path of its destiny until, God willing, their hearts stop as did his, from the excess of their labours in the path of God.

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

August 8, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The following letter is addressed to each and every believer. We request that you share it with the friends in your area through your News Letter, or in any way you see fit.

Dearly beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Path of Bahá'u'lláh:

It is nine months since our world was shaken and hearts broken by the passing of our beloved Guardian. Those poignant words which he wrote after the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá now echo in our ears with a personal meaning to our generation: ". . . the shock has been too terrible and sudden for us all to recover from in so short a time, but whenever we recall His Sayings and read His Writings, hope springs in our hearts and gives us the peace that no other material comfort can give." Although the official period of mourning

has now ended, we know that inwardly each Bahá'í will always grieve deeply for the loss of that priceless embodiment of loving-kindness and divine wisdom.

The spontaneous declarations of love for our beloved Guardian and loyalty to the Hands of the Cause raised up by his sacred pen to be the "Chief Stewards of the embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh", which have been received from all parts of the world, many of them voiced in terms of surpassing beauty, have been a source of great comfort and strength to us.

The Hands of the Cause serving in the Holy Land, as well as the members of the International Bahá'í Council, have felt particularly the terrible physical absence of our beloved Guardian in this place most closely associated with him, where every object our eyes fall on recalls to us his labour, his perseverance, his final sacrifice. The great waves of prayer and of loving confidence which have come pouring in to us from the National Spiritual Assemblies and the believers all over the world have reassured and sustained us, and have given us strength and courage as we labour to protect the World Centre and maintain it as the unifying hub of the great wheel of the Cause our Guardian so carefully built up and set in motion. This has given us assurance that our Guardian himself is aiding us to aid him. We thank all the friends for the support and assistance they have given, for the wonderful spirit of steadfastness they have shown and the many deeds they have performed in the beloved Guardian's name since his passing. This united action which has resulted in so many victories, is reflected in the words of his secretary, written at the instruction of the beloved Guardian himself: "an added proof to the world that there is a mighty spirit that animates the friends, that there is nothing impossible to them."

The Custodians, the group of Hands serving at the World Centre on behalf of the Hands of the Cause throughout the world, have had to meet and surmount many problems. Some of the permanently appointed Custodians, because of attendance at various conferences to which they were sent by the beloved Guardian, and for reasons of health, have been unable to be in residence at Haifa at all times. We have been fortunate however in having their places filled temporarily by the following Hands, who have acted as

substitute Custodians: Ugo Giachery, John Ferraby, Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, Adelbert Mühlischlegel, 'Alí Muhammad Varqá, and William Sears. This arrangement has been most fortuitous as it has brought us first-hand reports of the status of the Faith in various areas and enabled these temporary Custodians to better sense the over-all needs of the Faith as seen from the World Centre.

Beloved friends, we are now, together, embarked upon the most important work which human beings have ever done in the history of our planet. Ours is the priceless privilege and the grave, inescapable responsibility of raising up that sacred Institution, the Universal House of Justice. This can be done only after the complete triumph of his Ten Year Plan, which is designed to lay the necessary foundation for that weighty and supreme Edifice of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

The measure of divine protection already accorded our precious Cause at the World Centre, in the Cradle of the Faith, and throughout the world, since the beloved Guardian's passing, has been truly miraculous. Surely this is that same divine protection spoken of by the Master in His letter to the entire Bahá'í world following the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. His words today bring us not only solace in our bereavement, but a firm and undying resolve to fulfil our high destiny.

“O ye beloved of the Lord! . . . Today is the day for steadfastness and constancy. Blessed are they that stand firm and immovable as the rock, and brave the storm and stress of this tempestuous hour . . . they, verily, shall receive His divine assistance, and shall be truly victorious. . . . In His Most Holy Book He calleth the firm and steadfast of His friends. ‘O people of the world! Should the radiance of My Beauty be veiled, and the temple of My body be hidden, feel not perturbed, nay arise and bestir yourselves, that My Cause may triumph, and My Word be heard by all mankind.’”

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

August 11, 1958

Dearly beloved Fellow-Hands:

The Annual Meeting of the Hands of the Cause called for in our memorandum of agreement will convene November 21st for a period of one week. All the Hands are invited to attend, but if any of you are unable to come for reasons of health or because of any other insurmountable circumstance, please let us know. Likewise, we would appreciate notification from all who do plan to attend.

You are welcome to arrive beginning November 19th. Please make your own arrangements for proceeding from the airport to Haifa, as it is not possible to meet the friends.

After careful thought and prayerful consideration, the Hands here feel it would be disloyal to the wishes of our beloved Guardian for us, or for the friends throughout the world, to gather on November 4th and officially commemorate his passing. His words given in *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* make this very clear: “. . . to commemorate any event associated with his life would be tantamount to a departure from those established truths that are enshrined within our beloved Faith.”

Therefore, in obedience to the beloved Guardian's wishes, we are informing the friends throughout the world that such official commemoration should not be held. However, each individual believer may, indeed we feel should, remember this unforgettable day with prayers and meditation, and seek to rededicate himself to the service of the Faith and to ponder ways and means by which he can aid in achieving the goals set by the beloved Guardian.

For this reason, our meeting will be held on the 21st, rather than on the 4th of November. The dates of the meeting will make it possible for all Hands to attend the commemoration of the Ascension of the Master at 1:00 a.m. on November 28th.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

August 11, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

After careful thought and prayerful consideration, the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land feel that it would be disloyal to the wishes of our beloved Guardian for us, or for the friends throughout the world, to gather on November fourth and officially commemorate his passing. His words given in *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* make this very clear: “. . . to commemorate any event associated with his life would be tantamount to a departure from those established truths that are enshrined within our beloved Faith.”

Therefore, in obedience to the beloved Guardian's wishes, we are asking you to communicate to the friends this decision, informing them that such official commemoration should not be held. However, each individual believer may, indeed we feel should, remember this unforgettable day with prayers and meditation, and seek to rededicate himself to the service of the Faith and to ponder ways and means by which he can aid in achieving the goals set by the beloved Guardian.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

AUGUST 24, 1958

ANNOUNCE BLESSED PILGRIMAGE HOLY SHRINES
REOPENING DECEMBER FIRST STOP NECESSARY
BELIEVERS FOLLOW PROCEDURE LAID DOWN BELOVED
GUARDIAN REQUEST PERMISSION VISIT FROM HANDS
HAIFA STOP SHARE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
EXCEPT MIDDLE EAST.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the National Spiritual Assemblies of Europe

August 31, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

It has been a source of great happiness to us to receive reports of the wonderful success of the Intercontinental Conference recently held in Frankfurt, and to know that the fondest hopes of our dearly beloved Guardian were fulfilled. The great attendance, the largest of any conference so far held during this period, the raising of DM 1,000,000 for the work of the Cause in Europe and the Mother Temples, the pioneers who arose and volunteered their services, the spirit of consecration and unity which pervaded the gatherings—all testify to the greatness of the Faith and the divine protection vouchsafed it unfailingly from on High.

We wish to inform you that aside from any ear-marked sums given for special purposes, the moneys contributed at the Frankfurt Conference will be divided amongst the European National and Regional Assemblies in order to assist them to prosecute the Ten Year Plan within their own areas. Pursuant to the beloved Guardian's own instructions in his Message calling for these five great Conferences to be held, the money specifically contributed for the Temples will be divided between the Mother Temple of Europe and the Mother Temple of Australia presently being constructed, and which will be completed by next March if all goes well. The needs of the African Temple have already been met. It will take some time for the pledges made by so many generous and loving believers at the Conference to be honoured and collected. However we felt that it would encourage your Assembly to know that as soon as possible you will be receiving a share of the contributions poured in at the Frankfurt Conference with so much faith and love by the believers from so many countries.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**The Intercontinental Conference, Singapore
September 21-29, 1958**

To the Hands of the Cause, members of their Auxiliary Boards, members of Regional and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers, resident believers, and visitors attending the Intercontinental Conference in Singapore, September, 1958.

[This Conference was originally called for Djakarta but due to unforeseeable complications was changed to Singapore.]

Beloved Friends:

As the last historic Conference marking the midway point of the Crusade opens, our thoughts and our hearts turn with a great wave of mingled emotions to our beloved Guardian—and beyond and above him to Bahá'u'lláh, the Supreme Manifestation, the Glory of the Father, the Eternal Beauty of God revealed in all its splendour to men in this age.

It is nearly a year since the historic “October Message” of 1957 was released to the Bahá'í world by our Guardian. We cannot but look back upon this year with feelings of awe and wonder; in spite of the great calamity which overtook us, our hearts are moved in profound thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh. Swiftly following upon the plans for the celebration of the half-way point of the Ten Year Plan came the paralyzing shock of the sudden passing of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, our guide and leader, our appointed protector and Guardian. Added to our grief and consternation, was a sense of bafflement at the ways of God—but only for a short time. East and West the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh demonstrated how deep was their belief in Him, and how well His Guardian had built the foundations of His Divine Order in the hearts of His servants. Chastened through their great sorrow, purified through their great love, the believers arose, as one man, to support unitedly the institution of the Hands carefully erected by the Guardian during the last decade of his life and strongly reinforced by him just before his passing. This profound unity manifest amongst the Hands of the Cause themselves and amongst all the widely scattered Bahá'í communities throughout the world immediately attracted the protection and blessings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The first of these five historic Conferences held in Africa less than three months after the passing of the Guardian, witnessed a great release of spiritual power in that continent so dear to his heart. This was swiftly followed by the equally successful Australian, American and European Conferences. An unprecedented number of believers gathered on these occasions, and large numbers of pioneers volunteered for service with a dedication reminiscent of that great wave of enthusiasm and consecration which in 1953 carried the pioneers to all corners of the earth, and in one brief year opened nearly all the virgin territories—a feat which was the source of immense pride to the beloved Guardian.

The Conferences held to date this year have also witnessed, pursuant to the expressed hope of the beloved Guardian, the raising of nearly three-quarters of a million dollars for the construction of the three Mother Temples of Africa, Europe and Australia, and the attainment of the other goals of the Ten Year Plan.

Had not Bahá'u'lláh overshadowed the followers of His Cause with His infinite love and bounty, at this time of grief and profound test, had not Shoghi Effendi's own spirit remained with us, guiding and protecting us, we would not be able in this last historic Conference called for during this year by the Guardian, to look back over the past eleven months of victory and say, Praise be to Thee, O God, for the outpourings of Thy Mercy and Bounty and Thine infinite protection.

The overflowing measure of Divine grace we have witnessed has ensured that the Plan of Shoghi Effendi for these great Conferences has been successfully fulfilled, the spirit he hoped would be generated by them has been generated, the pioneers he hoped would arise, have arisen, the funds he hoped would be raised have been forthcoming, and the ways and means for the furtherance of the work of the Crusade, which he urged should be discussed have been deliberated upon and are bearing fruit already in different parts of the Bahá'í world.

The beloved Guardian often said that whenever he suffered the work of the Cause went forward. We may ask ourselves if this unworthy world did not require the supreme sacrifice of the life of its Guardian to release those forces, at this critical juncture in human history, which are necessary to carry it forward into that Golden Age

of spiritual civilization which the Bahá'í Dispensation must give rise to. Whatever interpretation we place upon the passing of Shoghi Effendi, an event which in its very essence is one of the mysteries of God, one thing must be evident to all— the sacrifice of this infinitely precious life must not for an instant, to the slightest degree, be in vain. We must be the ransom that pays for that sacred blood. We, all the Bahá'ís everywhere, East and West, young and old, new in the Faith or veterans, must arise with complete unity, a more mature consecration, a deeper love for Bahá'u'lláh, and ensure that the vital objectives of the Ten Year Crusade are completed, and in many fields added to and markedly surpassed.

We have had a soul-shattering shock; deepest grief, longing for our beloved Guardian so suddenly removed from our midst, has moved us to the depths of our being and made our hearts restless with desire to do many things for him now which we neglected to do when he was alive. The Bahá'ís have rallied to his Conferences, helped in the protection of the Faith to which he gave his all in service, and have supported the appointed Hands of the Cause and the elected representatives of the believers. This, however, is only the first step. Before us lie almost five years of hard work, years we may well believe of turmoil in the world, years when, in the face of a steady process of deterioration in human affairs, our institutions must be painstakingly erected and consolidated, the foundations for the future Universal House of Justice securely built, in order that this Supreme Edifice when it comes into being may be in a position to fulfil its Divinely appointed functions, the spirit of the Faith made to burn brighter, its teachings disseminated far and wide and that process of mass conversion so often referred to by the Guardian, set in motion and given increasing momentum.

These will be hard years for us all, but love has matured us, grief steeled us. At these five Conferences we have gathered strength from the outpourings the Guardian promised us these gatherings would attract from on High, and from our association with each other. We must now go forth like good soldiers, a conquering army, each to his own post, to do his own battle, to keep his own tryst on the home or the pioneer front. This is not going to be easy. Every formation of something new involves a certain degree of death of the old self. The

old order is dying and we see how harsh are its death pangs. Something of our protected past may well be said to have died with the closing of this Conference. For over one hundred and fifteen years we Bahá'ís have been nursed and personally watched over. Now we are required to stand on our own feet and, in the path of service to this Holy Faith, we ourselves must watch over and assist our fellow-men to turn to the Supreme Manifestation of God for this Day, and seek their salvation through Bahá'u'lláh. That patience and fair-mindedness, that loving forgiveness and wise tolerance Shoghi Effendi invariably showered on us individually, we must emulate and show to each other as well as to the world. That justice he so impartially administered must be emulated by all elected Bahá'í bodies, that unflinching, adamant adherence to principle which won him the respect of government and layman alike, the believers, as individuals and when functioning as Assemblies, must show forth at all times. In other words, dear friends, the spirit of Shoghi Effendi must go with us from this Conference, not only with the attendants gathered here, but with the believers all over the world, who surely, inwardly if not outwardly, have participated in these five majestic, stirring, creative, commemorative Conferences. His spirit we must keep alive in our hearts, his love we must foster through loving him more, his radiant nature, which the Master so well knew, must always be remembered by us so that we may, as individuals, strive to acquire a little of that selfless radiance ourselves.

Purity of heart, honesty of mind, sincerity of motive were characteristics deeply prized by Shoghi Effendi. These characteristics he felt were strongly represented in the so-called primitive peoples; they drew him to them and increased his conviction that the Cause of God has a tremendous future amongst the dark-skinned peoples of the world and that they have great racial gifts of mind and heart to bring to the service of this Faith. It is significant to ponder that the first, the opening Conference of this half-way point of the World Crusade was chosen by him for the heart of Africa, and that the last, the closing Conference, was set midway in the Pacific-Asian region. He did not thus honour the old world and the new. No, he chose the black people and the brown people for this distinction. He visualized the African and the Pacific peoples

ving with each other in the spread of the Faith. Each marked increase in membership in one region was relayed by him to the other, with the hope of stimulating a fresh burst of enthusiastic teaching efforts. Much of his joy, during the last years of his life, came from the news of the remarkable progress the Faith was making in these two areas.

The African Conference released a great spiritual power among the Negro believers, who returned from it to their tribal homes to teach with new enthusiasm and understanding, and to convince their own peoples of the truth of Bahá'u'lláh's Message. We feel confident that the representatives of many of the peoples of the Pacific region attending this Conference will do likewise, and that this will mark the beginning of a vast process of conversion of the inhabitants of the islands of this immense Ocean to the Cause of God.

Who knows, perhaps it is the immediate destiny of our great Faith to be raised on the two wings of the black and brown races through a great wave of mass conversion which will have repercussions all over the world, and, releasing spiritual powers as yet untapped, enable the leaven of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to penetrate into the lives of the peoples of the older yellow and white civilizations, so materialistic, so disillusioned, so morally corrupt and spiritually bankrupt.

The first evidences of this mighty process envisaged by our beloved Guardian have already become manifest in the extraordinary, the truly heartening conversion of such a large number of people in the Mentawai Islands and the Gilbert and Ellice Islands to this new religion. Those who have had the privilege of carrying the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to them can testify how deep is the faith with which they have embraced it, how steadfast their intent to serve it and uphold its laws, how ripe their hearts to enfold its truth and make it a part of their lives.

Another evidence of the unfoldment of this process has been the formation of Bahá'í schools in the New Hebrides, in Mentawai and in the Gilbert and Ellice Archipelago—schools of which Shoghi Effendi was immensely proud. How many pilgrims watched enthralled as the strong, forceful and fascinating hand of the Guardian pointed to the spots on the map of the world he had filled in, and tapped the circle

which marked one of these precious schools. How bright the light that lit up his blessed face as he stated this was no mere summer school, but a real school, opened and maintained by Bahá'ís, in which the children of the indigenous people were being educated in both a normal curriculum and in the Bahá'í standards! It was his ardent hope that these schools should be maintained, reinforced, and similar ones established on a sound and permanent basis in other areas. He repeatedly made it clear that in these unspoiled regions of the world lay a great hope for the future. He constantly encouraged pioneers to move into them, and in these fertile fields of service, busy themselves with the teaching work where it promised the greatest success.

This culminating Conference of the five held during this sad but fruitful year must yield, for all believers present, as well as for those throughout the Bahá'í world, a special harvest. Our hearts, still bleeding in separation from our dearly beloved Guardian, we must anneal in the fire of self-sacrifice to this infinitely precious Faith. The need of our fellow-men to hear the Glad-Tidings of Bahá'u'lláh is greater than ever. The doors to pioneering, to the construction of the Mother Temples called for in the Ten Year Plan, to the founding of Bahá'í schools, to the dissemination of our literature, to the erection of our administrative institutions, still stand open. Before some world catastrophe closes them devastatingly, albeit temporarily, in our faces, let us not waste one precious moment!

Shoghi Effendi's love is burning in our hearts, his appeals still fresh in our ears. The vision he gave us of our present task is clear and perfect; let us keep it forever before our eyes.

“Let there be no mistake. The avowed, the primary aim of this Spiritual Crusade is none other than the conquest of the citadels of men's hearts. The theatre of its operations is the entire planet. Its duration a whole decade. Its commencement synchronizes with the Centenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission. Its culmination will coincide with the Centenary of the Declaration of that same Mission. The agencies assisting in its conduct are the nascent administrative institutions of a steadily evolving, divinely appointed Order. Its driving force is the energizing influence generated by the Revelation heralded by the Báb and proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. Its Marshal is

none other than the Author of the Divine Plan. Its standard-bearers are the Hands of the Cause of God appointed in every continent of the globe. Its generals are the . . . National Spiritual Assemblies participating in the execution of its design. Its vanguard is the chief executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Master Plan, their allies and associates. Its legions are the rank and file of believers standing behind these same . . . National Assemblies and sharing in the global task embracing the American, the European, the African, the Asiatic and Australian fronts. The charter directing its course is the immortal Tablets that have flowed from the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant Himself. The armour with which its onrushing hosts have been invested is the glad tidings of God's Own Message in this Day, the principles underlying the Order proclaimed by His Messenger, and the laws and ordinances governing His Dispensation. The battle cry animating its heroes and heroines is the cry of Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá, Yá 'Alíyyu'l-A'lá."

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . .

[To various National Spiritual Assemblies]

October 17, 1958

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

You will be very happy to know that the work on the sacred monument of our beloved Guardian has begun, and it is hoped that it will be completed in November.

The entire Bahá'í world has spontaneously responded with the greatest devotion to make this precious and holy undertaking a united expression of the immeasurable love which our beloved Guardian awakened in all of our hearts.

Now that the erection of this blessed memorial is under way, we would appreciate having your Assembly send whatever funds you may be holding for this purpose to the United States. It should be sent to the Treasurer's office of the National Spiritual Assembly, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois. If there are any exchange problems involved in this transaction, please let us know.

We shall offer prayers in the holy Shrines that this same spirit of consecration and oneness may inspire each of us to work as never before, so that every hope of the beloved Guardian for the fulfilment of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade may be speedily accomplished.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

HOLLEY CARE BAHÁ'I WILMETTE

NOVEMBER 1, 1958

WITH THANKFUL HEARTS ANNOUNCE FRIENDS
COMPLETION EXQUISITELY BEAUTIFUL MONUMENT
BELOVED GUARDIAN'S RESTING PLACE NOVEMBER FIRST
SACRED DUST BAHÁ'U'LLAH'S SHRINE PLACED
FOUNDATIONS PRESENCE FOUR HANDS CAUSE GARDEN
EMBELLISHMENT PRECINCTS PROGRESSING STOP
APPEAL BELIEVERS REDEDICATE THEMSELVES SERVICE
HOLY CAUSE FOR WHICH BELOVED ALL HEARTS
SACRIFICED HIS PRECIOUS LIFE.

[CABLE] HANDS HOLY LAND

A SIMILAR MESSAGE WAS SENT TO ALL CONTINENTS
REQUESTING THAT IT BE SHARED WITH THE HANDS
OF THE CAUSE AND THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL
ASSEMBLIES.

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

December 6, 1958

Beloved Friends:

On behalf of the entire body of the Hands of the Cause of God we send you this copy of the Message to the Bahá'ís of East and West, issued by the Hands at the conclusion of their second historic meeting in the Holy Land.

We ask that you bring this vitally important communication to the attention of all the believers in your area as quickly as possible, through your News Letter, or otherwise.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with you as you press forward to discharge the momentous tasks of this crucial year.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

CONCLAVE MESSAGE

1958

From the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel,

November 30, 1958

Beloved Friends:

Twenty-five of the twenty-seven Hands of the Cause of God have once again met in the blessed Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh near the holiest spot on this planet, and prayerfully considered the grave problems now facing the Bahá'ís of the world. Though no longer plunged in the agony of grief that afflicted our hearts last November, we are nevertheless profoundly concerned over the success of the tasks entrusted to the believers of the East and West by our beloved Guardian in the provisions of his mighty globe-encircling Crusade.

With feelings of deepest gratitude we realize that Bahá'u'lláh has vouchsafed to us during this past year—dark and overshadowed though it was by the passing of our beloved Guardian—many evidences of His unfailing grace and protection. The unity of the Cause of God has been maintained, and out of the fire of this mighty test, the believers have emerged with chastened and consecrated hearts, mature in spirit, with a deeper sense of oneness than ever before, eager to assist in winning every goal set for them by their beloved Guardian. God has indeed opened the doors of His mercy to us.

A befitting and magnificent monument to the beloved Guardian's precious memory has been raised up above the sacred earth in London which enshrines his blessed remains, a memorial to the erection of which the believers from every corner of the earth had the privilege of contributing.

The five mighty Conferences called by Shoghi Effendi, and whose purposes he outlined in his Message marking the midway point of the Crusade, were held with outstanding success, almost five thousand believers being privileged to attend them. The roll-call from among the followers of the black race in Africa and the brown race in the Pacific has more than doubled during the past year, a triumph which alone would have brought infinite joy to his blessed heart. Two of the three Mother Temples which he specified should be built, will be completed well within two years of his passing. The funds for these Temples, and for the teaching work to which he attached such supreme importance, have poured in abundantly from all parts of the world, a loving and loyal testimony to the determination of the Bahá'ís everywhere to carry out his every wish. Spitzbergen, the last and one of the most difficult of all the virgin territories to be opened during the Crusade, received its first pioneer less than six months after he left this world.

In spite of such heartening progress, we must face the fact that this year ahead may well prove to be the crucial turning-point of the entire Crusade, and upon which its completion critically hangs. Many of the most important goals still remain to be achieved: Work on the Mother Temple of Europe has not yet commenced, although it must rise in all its splendour to shed its spiritual blessings upon that continent before 1963. The Local Spiritual Assemblies still to be formed as part of the original plan number no less than 394. The number of National and Regional Assemblies which must be elected before the end of the Crusade, in the alarmingly short time of four and a half years, are no less than thirty-eight, four of which are to be formed as planned by the beloved Guardian this coming Ridván.

We are now embarked upon the fourth and final phase of this historic Crusade. Our beloved Guardian's own words tell us that this phase must be characterized by "a powerful impetus, the world over, to the vital process of individual conversion—the pre-eminent

purpose underlying the Plan in all its ramifications” and “must be immortalized, on the one hand, by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá’í centres . . .”

The fateful years of the beloved Guardian’s glorious Crusade are swiftly passing. “How staggering”, he told us, is “the responsibility that must weigh upon the present generation.” His stirring appeal for an “upsurge of enthusiasm and consecration, before which every single as well as collective exploit, associated with any of the three previous phases (of the Crusade), will pale” is directed to every believer on the planet, but especially “to their elected representatives, whether local, regional, or national, who, in their capacity as the custodians and members of the nascent institutions of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh” must shoulder “the chief responsibility in laying an unassailable foundation for that Universal House of Justice which, as its title implies, is to be the exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone ensure the security of, and establish the reign of law and order in, a strangely disordered world.” This House of Justice, he tells us, “posterity will regard as the last refuge of a tottering civilization.”

Upon these National and Regional Assemblies which we must now raise up, has been conferred the sacred privilege of electing the members of this Universal House of Justice. The guidance of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh will flow into the World Order established in the Bahá’í Dispensation through this Supreme Body, whose infallibility is assured by the Pen of Bahá’u’lláh Himself. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá declared in His Will and Testament that the members of the Universal House of Justice must “*deliberate upon all problems which have caused difference, questions that are obscure and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book. Whatsoever they decide has the same effect as the Text itself.*” “*That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority doth carry, that is verily the Truth and the Purpose of God Himself.*” Guided by the precious storehouse of Sacred and inviolable Texts given to us by Bahá’u’lláh and elaborated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, pouring our forces

into the execution of the Divine Plan of the Master, now in the twenty-second year of its unfoldment within the successive Plans laid down by our beloved Guardian, supported by the unfailing aid of the Supreme Concourse promised in our Writings, with our beloved Guardian's spirit watching over the work he so dearly loved and served so unsparingly for thirty-six years, we cannot fail.

The Hands of the Faith, solemnly mindful of the primary function conferred upon them in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to protect the Cause of God and promulgate its Teachings, and deeply conscious of their present great responsibility as Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, have already arranged for a number of the Hands to travel extensively during the coming year in order to carry the spirit of the beloved Guardian and the World Centre of our Faith to the believers and their elected representatives, particularly in those areas where so many of the future pillars of the International House of Justice must be erected, namely, Latin America and the goal countries of Europe.

The Hands of the Faith have also planned to give every aid within their power to the National Spiritual Assemblies in supporting and stimulating the work on the home fronts of such old and tried communities as those of Persia, the United States, Canada, India, Australia, Great Britain, and Germany. In rededicating themselves to their share of the heavy burden now resting upon each and every follower of Bahá'u'lláh, the Hands appeal to the National and Regional Assemblies to assist them in the mighty tasks that lie ahead through a closer and swifter cooperation with the Hands serving at the World Centre, who of necessity are called upon to coordinate the international work so laboriously built up, at such a great cost to himself, by our most beloved Guardian. Prompt consultation on teaching problems, reports concerning the progress being made and the present status of the work undertaken by each National or Regional Assembly, as well as appeals for advice and aid, should pour continually into the Holy Land in order that good news may be shared for the encouragement of all and any crises which arise in the Bahá'í world may be swiftly dealt with, and not a moment of our infinitely precious time between now and the

completion of the Crusade—just fifty-two short months away—be lost.

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the beloved Guardian have repeatedly warned us that the time is short, that these fast-fleeting hours in which we live will come to us no more, and we shall never again have a similar opportunity. The beloved Guardian has in no uncertain terms stated that the “pre-eminent task . . . in this day” is “a task . . . so urgent” as to be “accorded priority over every other Bahá'í activity.” Let us each one take to heart his passionate appeal.

“However arduous the task; however formidable the exertions demanded of them; . . . however afflictive the darts which their present enemies, as well as those whom Providence will, through His mysterious dispensation raise up from within or from without, may rain upon them; however grievous the ordeal of temporary separation from the heart and nerve-centre of their Faith which future unforeseeable disturbances may impose 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 . . . to resolve never to flinch, never to hesitate, never to relax, until each and every objective . . . has been fully consummated.”

Upon the immediate and continued response in each individual heart to this ringing call depends the victory of his precious and holy Crusade, the last world-encompassing Plan which his divinely-guided pen bequeathed to the believers. Never before in the history of the world have human beings been faced with such a staggering responsibility and such a blessed privilege. Now more than ever before the heroic pioneers must cling courageously to their vital outposts; a swift stream of new pioneers must flow out spontaneously, without a moment's delay, to reinforce them; travelling teachers must dedicate themselves to the work both in far-off lands and on the critical home fronts; ample resources must be poured forth with unprecedented generosity from hearts consecrated to nothing less than an overwhelming victory on every front. The

success of the Crusade depends upon the individual believer arising to teach. For, as the beloved Guardian himself has told us, "The unseen legions, standing rank upon rank, and eager to pour forth from the Kingdom on High the full measure of their celestial strength on the individual participants of this incomparably glorious Crusade, are powerless unless and until each potential crusader decides for himself, and perseveres in his determination, to rush into the arena of service ready to sacrifice his all for the Cause he is called upon to champion."

"This challenge, so severe and insistent, and yet so glorious, faces no doubt primarily the individual believer on whom, in the last resort, depends the fate of the entire community . . . He it is who serves as one of the multitude of bricks which support the structure and ensure the stability of the administrative edifice now being raised in every part of the world. Without his support, at once whole-hearted, continuous and generous, every measure adopted, and every plan formulated, by the body which acts as the national representative of the community to which he belongs, is foredoomed to failure. The World Centre of the Faith itself is paralyzed if such a support on the part of the rank and file of the community is denied it. The Author of the Divine Plan Himself is impeded in His purpose if the proper instruments for the execution of His design are lacking." The beloved Guardian ends with this stern warning, "The sustaining strength of Bahá'u'lláh Himself, the Founder of the Faith, will be withheld from every and each individual who fails in the long run to arise and play his part."

We feel confident that the friends in every corner of the Bahá'í world, fully aware of the gravity of the crisis facing them, and unified as never before by the sacrifice of the life of our beloved Guardian, will arise as one soul in many bodies in a mighty forward surge to complete as an immortal monument to his memory the triumph of his holy Crusade.

The Hands of the Faith eagerly and confidently anticipate that upon the unassailable foundation of this united victory brought about by the consecrated devotion of the friends, there will be raised up the crowning glory of all, the Universal House of Justice, and once again a precious source of divine infallibility will return to the earth with the

establishment of that Supreme Body on the occasion of the Most Great Jubilee in 1963—the World Congress called by our beloved Guardian himself, a glorious and befitting fulfilment of his life of complete sacrifice.

Of this Most Great Jubilee, the Guardian has written: “The Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings, has pledged unfailing aid to every crusader battling for His Cause. Invisible battalions are mustered, rank upon rank, ready to pour forth reinforcements from on High. 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.’*”

With grateful hearts for the love that has bound us all so closely together, with undeviating confidence and hope, the Hands of the Faith invoke the divine promise of the Revealer of our Faith: *“Unloose your tongues, and proclaim unceasingly His Cause. This shall be better for you than all the treasures of the past and of the future, if ye be of them that comprehend this truth.”* *“I swear by Him Who is the Truth! Erelong will God adorn the beginning of the Book of Existence with the mention of His loved ones who have suffered tribulation in His path, and journeyed through the countries in His Name and for His praise. Whoso hath attained their presence will glory in their meeting, and all that dwell in every land will be illumined by their memory.”* *“Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause. This is indeed what profiteth you in this world, and in that which is to come.”*

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

[Signed as follows]

Rúhiyyih

Amelia Collins

Horace Holley

Ugo Giachery

Leroy Ioas

Tarázu’lláh Samandarí

Mason Remey

Zikrullah Khadem

H. Collis Featherstone	Jalal Khazeh
Dr. A. Vargha	Hermann Grossmann
A. Furutan	Adelbert Mühlischlegel
M.B. [Músá Banání]	Enoch Olinga
Hasan M. Balyuzi	John Ferraby
Sh. Alai	Paul Haney
John Robarts	A. Q. Faizi
Mohajer	Agnes B. Alexander
William Sears	

To the Hands of the Faith

December 26, 1958

Beloved Friends:

In the month since we parted from you all after our meeting in Bahjí, we have been concentrating our efforts on arranging to give from Haifa a swift and dynamic impulse to the teaching work all over the world, as agreed upon by all of us, and also on catching up with the work which inevitably accumulated during the time when the Custodians were not able to work on their usual day-to-day tasks.

After the Conference of the European Hands at the end of December, Hermann Grossmann, Ugo Giachery and Adelbert Mühlischlegel will start on their important journeys to South and Central America and Scandinavia, respectively. In January (after a month's absence) Hasan Balyuzi will return to the Holy Land. Shortly Enoch Olinga will commence a tour of some of the West Africa countries. Tarázu'lláh Samandarí has proceeded to Persia where, in conjunction with Dhikru'lláh Khádem and Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í, he will visit many of the important centres and encourage the friends to arise and work intensively to achieve their home-front goal of 110 Spiritual Assemblies. They will divide the places to be visited between them so as to avoid duplication of effort. In a short time, as you know, William Sears will leave for the United States. In January, 'Alí-Akbar Furútan will proceed to Turkey for a visit of two months or so in order to assist the believers there in their preparations for the formation of their National Assembly in Ridván.

This means that nine of the Hands will be devoting all of their time and energy for some months to come to travelling amongst the believers and directly stimulating them to arise and accomplish the all-important task of teaching the Faith and creating new Assemblies, particularly in those places where so many national bodies must be formed before the end of the Plan.

We feel that, in addition to the constant services to the Faith being carried on by the Hands who will be left here, and those serving in their respective continents, these plans for extensive travel present, for the first time since the beloved Guardian's passing, a most heartening picture of the services of his Hands, in whom he placed such great trust and to whom he left such crushing responsibility.

The pilgrims who have so far come and gone have all left in a happy spirit, more conscious than ever before of the greatness of their beloved Guardian's accomplishments and more determined to help in prosecuting his Plan. This encourages us greatly.

We do feel, however, that each and every one of the Hands (including ourselves) cannot be too careful during this present year not to elaborate on the Message sent by us this November from Bahjí. Let us adhere strictly to our united statement regarding the future Universal House of Justice—and say neither more nor less on this subject, assuring the friends who may ask us questions that what was signed by all the Hands, after careful and prayerful consultation, is what they should turn to.

We appeal once again to all of you to let us have at frequent intervals your reports, your suggestions and your ideas. We must remember that serving all the time here has the advantage of being able to grasp the whole picture of the progress and needs of the Faith the world over—but the detailed needs—so vital in themselves—we may never see clearly if we do not receive your help, as it is you who are constantly in touch with the believers and the National and Regional Assemblies, and can better feel the pulse of local situations. Please give us your full cooperation in this respect, so that we may feel the beloved Guardian's Hands are indeed one soul in many bodies.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS
1959**

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Germany and Austria

[Similar letters were sent to all National Spiritual Assemblies, outlining to each the outstanding goals still to be achieved.]

January 6, 1959

Dearly beloved Friends:

These days are swiftly passing, and once gone, can never be recalled.

Only fifty-two months remain of the Ten Year Crusade our beloved Guardian gave to us as his last trust.

The Community of the Most Great Name has won many significant victories, but numerous as these have been, tremendous tasks remain to be accomplished by the Bahá'í world during these fast-fleeting months.

In opening the fourth phase of the Ten Year Crusade, upon which we are now embarked, the beloved Guardian called for

an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres . . .

Let us concentrate our minds and all our efforts on the achievement of these supreme goals.

The Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land have analyzed the situation now confronting the friends, especially in relation to the establishment of Local Assemblies, the bedrock on which the pillars of the Universal House of Justice must rest. On the German home front (excluding Austria) a total of at least twelve new Local Assemblies must be established before 1963, and those now existing must be strengthened and maintained, and many new localities must be opened to the Faith.

These are the original home-front goals set by our beloved Guardian when he launched the world-embracing Spiritual Crusade, and now in the remaining months of the Plan, these objectives become the most vital unfinished tasks, upon the accomplishment of which total victory in the Holy Crusade itself now depends.

The Local Assemblies which must be created are the particular responsibility of your Assembly, and the most urgent task before you is the development of promising groups into Assemblies and the opening of new centres. An intensive teaching campaign should be inaugurated, aimed at a steady increase in the number of Bahá'ís in these localities, so that the required number of Assemblies may be speedily formed and new centres created.

We therefore urge your national body to study this pressing problem immediately, and select for prompt action those localities or centres which are most promising. Pioneers should be sent, either from your own areas if they are available, or help should be sought from other national communities. Arrangements should also be made for travelling teachers to visit these centres continuously.

Experience in other areas has proved that a strong National Teaching Committee, with a membership largely centred in one locality, is the best instrument through which a National Assembly can work to carry a teaching plan through to a successful conclusion. When the time element is so important, such committees should be able to meet frequently, and constantly follow up and encourage the various projects and activities aimed at accomplishment of the goals. We suggest you review your present teaching structure to see if any changes can be made which will enable it to function more effectively. We give you an instance of what we mean by this. A National or Regional Teaching Committee (as the case may be) may meet once a month and consider its own plans. If it has to get approval for major projects or expenditures from the National Spiritual Assembly before the Committee can put the project into operation, there may be a lapse of not only some weeks, but even months. Such time gaps between a sound project for creating Assemblies and starting a teaching campaign can mean months are lost in reaching the all-important goals.

When you have consulted on ways and means of carrying out the urgent task ahead, please write to us in detail, giving all the facts, and your plans and suggestions.

In this critical and fate-laden period which lies ahead, all National and Regional Assemblies must constantly guard against the ever-present danger of becoming too much involved in administrative details. They must constantly encourage the friends to show individual initiative in teaching, and remind them that Bahá'u'lláh has made the teaching of His Faith the foremost obligation of every believer. Now more than ever before these divinely-ordained administrative institutions of our precious Faith must fulfil the supreme purpose of their creation, which is to serve as instruments for the spread of the Divine Teachings, and the establishment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

The time has come when we must surge forward as one victorious army of light, each and every one of us aspiring for more glorious service than ever before, with our minds, our hearts, our resources, bent upon the single purpose of winning the sacred goals of the Crusade.

What service could be more meritorious than sacrificing for the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, and what demonstration of love and devotion to the Guardian could be more wonderful than achieving all the objectives of his Ten Year Plan!

We live at an hour of great destiny. We pray that each one of us may valiantly play his or her part until total victory is won.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause throughout the World

March 17, 1959

Dearly beloved Fellow-Hands:

As Naw-Rúz approaches and we start a new Bahá'í year, our thoughts are very much with you all and we know yours are with us also. It is almost four months since we all parted after our meeting in

Bahjí, and we know you are eager for some news of what is going on here at the World Centre.

The work has been pressing and we try very hard not only to keep abreast of current problems and correspondence, but to do creative work, in the spirit of the decisions which we all made last November during our second Conclave, regarding expediting the execution of the Ten Year Plan.

As you no doubt know, Ugo Giachery is in Central America on the mission we arranged for him. His reports have been most illuminating and show clearly a number of things: That the Faith is firmly founded in the hearts of the local Bahá'ís; that they need encouragement and mature teachers very much; that there must be an influx of pioneers from outside if they hope to accomplish their goals; and that some of the Assemblies which existed on paper, according to the survey we presented to you at Bahjí, do not in fact exist at all, as they have less than nine members in the community. The picture is both grave and encouraging; grave because wide-scale action is required at once, encouraging because of the spirit of the friends and the firmness of the foundation laid in these countries by so many self-sacrificing American pioneers.

Hermann Grossmann has recently left on his trip to South America, and we are eagerly awaiting his reports. We assume his experience and observations will be much the same as those of Ugo.

Enoch Olinga is travelling extensively in West Africa and meeting with great success in the teaching work. The progress of the Faith in the Cameroons has been extraordinary, and he reports that in the past month and a half alone, over two hundred have been enrolled, and since the beloved Guardian's passing over seven hundred have embraced the Faith there.

Already the results of Enoch's visit to the Maoris of New Zealand is bearing fruit. Recently, at the request of some of the Maori leaders that a distinguished Bahá'í should visit them and tell them more of the Faith, Collis Featherstone has made a special trip to one of their largest centres and met with a most encouraging response on the part of some of the chiefs as well as the people. The Teachings are now being studied there.

John Robarts, after consultation with us, has now given up his business and is devoting his full time to the African work. Músá Banání will soon have much more help from 'Alí Nakhjavání in carrying on his share of the work of the Hands in Africa. We hope that the full-time efforts of these three Hands will now produce a momentum in the continental teaching work which will, in conjunction with the plans being undertaken by the Regional Assemblies, witness the inauguration of that great wave of mass conversion the beloved Guardian said must take place during this second half of the Ten Year Plan.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa wrote us so encouragingly about the possibilities of large-scale teaching in their area, if the funds were available, that we responded by sending them ten thousand dollars from the Memorial Fund of the beloved Guardian. You will recall that we assured the Bahá'ís that any sum over and above the amount required to erect the monument on his grave would be expended for the teaching work, so dear to his blessed heart, and the construction of the Temples. We believe this may enable the first great wave of mass conversion in Africa to take place at this time. For the teaching of the Africans in the area under the jurisdiction of the South and West Africa Regional Assembly, we have sent three thousand dollars from this same Fund.

Adelbert Mühlischlegel, on the eve of his departure for the Scandinavian countries, suffered another heart attack, but, thank God, is recovering satisfactorily from its effects. We hope he will soon be able to start his work in the North. Horace Holley likewise suffered another heart attack, but is at home again and able to go on with his work. Bill Sears, pursuant to our decision taken in Bahjí, has proceeded to the United States and commenced his important work there as a Hand serving in the Western Hemisphere.

When there are so few of us, it is most regrettable that illness should hinder us from carrying on our all-important and sacred work of seeing the beloved Guardian's Plan effectively prosecuted and consummated. News has reached us that some other Hands have not been well enough to travel and carry on their duties. We ask you to join us in praying that they may soon recover sufficiently to go about the work of Shoghi Effendi during this all-important year.

We feel it will encourage you to know that our dear Milly Collins and Mason Remey, in spite of advanced years, and the acute suffering of the former through arthritic attacks, are both with us, serving devotedly. Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, in response to our appeal, is now visiting many centres in Persia—in spite of his age and rheumatism which causes him much pain. The younger Hands of the Faith have every reason to be proud of the older Hands and their wonderful example of steadfastness and perseverance.

Although the correspondence from you is more frequent than last year, we still feel that, with a few exceptions, we are not getting enough reports from you indicating the status of the Plan in various countries, the state of the believers, and making any recommendations you may have in mind. Please remember that the more help we get from you here, the more we can assist in the execution of the various pressing tasks confronting the Bahá'í world, and the better our own work of coordinating and stimulating the activities of the believers can go forward.

The flow of pilgrims here has been steady, and the spirit they bring with them deeply touches our hearts and gives us new energy to struggle on with our own work. They take away with them, in their turn, new strength, vision and enthusiasm, and we hope, as the beloved Guardian wished, that they will carry out to the Bahá'í world a fresh impetus and stimulate the friends to arise and speedily accomplish his goals.

Generally speaking, the news received here indicates a stirring throughout the National, Regional and Local Assemblies and the rank and file of the believers in the direction of more active execution of the Plan. However, it is still moving at such a slow tempo as to alarm us. We cannot urge you too strongly to constantly remind the National Assemblies and the friends of the need for haste at this critical hour—days are slipping by unperceived, and now only four years remain to us in which to win this Holy Crusade! The formation of Local Assemblies, we all know, is a lengthy and difficult process. When we realize that most of these new Assemblies must constitute pillars of the new National Assemblies, which in their turn are the pillars of the Universal House of Justice, we begin to appreciate how little time we have not only to build them, but to build them solidly.

We do not wish to see some of the Assemblies on which the new National Spiritual Assemblies are built, and which thus form indirectly the foundations of the Universal House of Justice, crumble away as soon as that august Body is established. We must remember how painstakingly Shoghi Effendi—the Sign of God—built, and how much importance he attached to laying the widest and firmest possible foundation for National Assemblies.

The response to our recent letter to the European and Latin American Regional Assemblies, asking them to choose specific goal cities in which to establish Spiritual Assemblies at the earliest possible date, is bearing fruit, and we are beginning to get encouraging reports from them indicating progress in settling these vital goals.

In view of the extreme urgency for immediate action in the teaching field, and the fact that in most places lack of funds is perhaps the most serious impediment, we have allocated for this specific purpose and the settlement of pioneers three thousand dollars to each of the four Latin American Regional Assemblies, and a similar sum to the German, Benelux, Scandinavian and Italo-Swiss Regional Assemblies, as well as one thousand dollars to the Iberian Assembly.

Reports received here indicate that Board members everywhere are not travelling sufficiently, primarily through lack of financial support. We are therefore making available to the Continental Funds of the Hands the following sums to assist you all in carrying out your work more effectively:

\$3,000.	America
\$3,000.	Africa
\$3,000.	Europe
\$2,000.	Asia
\$1,000.	Australia

Please, beloved co-workers, let us receive more news of your activities and more reports of the work and progress being made in your region.

We send you our most loving Naw-Rúz greetings and we shall be praying for us all in the holy Shrines on that great Feast Day of the

New Year.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

RIDVÁN MESSAGE

1959

To Annual Bahá'í Conventions

Dearly beloved Friends:

The most glorious Feast of the Bahá'í Year, the *"King of Festivals"*, the Ridván commemoration of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, *"Whose Day every Prophet hath announced"* and for Whose advent *"the soul of every Divine Messenger hath thirsted"*, is once more upon us, the second Ridván since the passing of our precious, our most beloved Guardian. No report from the World Centre can ever take the place of the wonderful stream of inspiring words he poured out in his great messages to us at this period, when so many of the believers gather together at the Annual Bahá'í Conventions, and which conveyed to us not only the soul-stirring news of the progress the Faith had made during the past year, but called us to new heights of service, rallied our spirits and refreshed our souls with his own great vision of the future. Much as we long for his presence, his words, his inspiration, his loving care, we must realize that what has been given to us no man can take away. What Shoghi Effendi showered on us for thirty-six years of his Guardianship, what he built into the Faith and into its followers' hearts all over the world, is a permanent creation and one that has become on the one hand a part of history, and on the other a part of our personal lives. We must show our gratitude to him in a mighty renewal of deeds. We must rejoice over the continuing evidences of the never-failing grace of Bahá'u'lláh which carries the work of His Faith forward in spite of every test, trial and crisis.

This past year has witnessed the steady onward march of the Cause of God in every field. When we recall how grievous and

shattering was the blow we received in November, 1957, we cannot but marvel at the evidences, so clear for friend or enemy to behold, of the indomitable strength of this Cause which the Guardian knit so firmly together, and the foundations of whose Administrative Order he laid so securely during his lifetime that the earthquake of his passing neither shattered the unity nor shook the confidence of the Community of the followers of the Most Great Name. Let us bow our heads humbly in gratitude to the Author of our Faith for His protection and manifold mercies showered upon us during these days of supreme test and suffering.

The monument erected on the grave of the beloved Guardian was completed just two days before the anniversary of his passing; the gleaming pillar of pure white Carrara marble, resting on a base of three steps and surmounted by a Corinthian capital bearing a globe of the world, all of the same stone, rose up against the grey autumn skies of London, in its simplicity and beauty a befitting memorial to that great being who himself created so much beauty on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and around the Holiest Spot on this planet, the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh. Perched, as if about to take off in flight, or just settling from the skies, a gilded bronze eagle, the emblem of so many victories, crowns the monument. A dignified white stone balustrade, surmounted at the four corners by ornate stone urns, encloses the inner garden where the grave lies; adjoining this sanctuary, and constituting its approach, is a second larger garden surrounded by a red brick wall; a red path stretches from the two white steps leading down from the inner garden straight to the beautiful gilded wrought iron gates at the bottom of the second garden—which constitute the main entrance to the Guardian's resting-place. On either side of these gates two cypress trees, reminiscent of the hundreds of cypress trees the Guardian himself planted in the Shrine gardens at the World Centre of the Faith, stand guard. Two lovely weeping holly trees, two white pedestals with white Carrara marble vases planted with flowers, decorate the grounds as one approaches, through this outer garden, that sacred spot where the Beloved of our hearts is laid to rest. Many hundreds of Bahá'ís have already made a pilgrimage to this shrine. Many hundreds of non-Bahá'ís have likewise visited it, drawn by the powerful spirit they feel there,

attracted by what they see in the faces of the believers who come there to pray, and by the abundance of radiant flowers which constantly surround the foot of the monument.

The tribute of the believers has been completed outwardly, but the mighty, invisible tribute to his memory continues to be built. The friends will recall that when they were invited to contribute to the Memorial Fund for the erection of this monument, the Hands of the Faith stated that any sum received above that required to construct the monument itself and embellish its precincts would be spent to carry on the teaching work and erect the Temples he specified should be constructed during the Crusade. Sums have been received from the believers all over the world, and now that this blessed grave has been befittingly completed, we could think of no work dearer to Shoghi Effendi's heart at this time than that of the new teaching campaigns being launched in Africa, and aimed at that mass conversion he said in his last message to the Bahá'í world, should be undertaken as part of the work of the remaining five years of the Ten Year Plan. The first expenditure from this Memorial Fund was therefore made to assist some of the Regional African Assemblies in launching an intensive teaching campaign in those areas most receptive to the Faith; many of the African teachers are now travelling amongst their own people, financed from this Fund. What better memorial to Shoghi Effendi can be erected, now that his physical resting-place has been suitably completed, than this mighty spiritual one which will endure in the hearts of men and will help lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God in such distant and promising lands?

Aware of how eager the friends are to receive from the World Centre a report of the progress the Faith has made during the past year and the status of the beloved Guardian's world-girdling Crusade, we are happy to share with the believers attending the thirty-one Annual Bahá'í Conventions now being held in Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australasia, Europe and the Pacific region the following truly inspiring news, which testifies so eloquently to the greatness and the enduring quality of the work Shoghi Effendi achieved during his lifetime, and over which, we firmly believe, he constantly and lovingly watches from on High.

The number of countries, islands and dependencies where the Standard of Bahá'u'lláh has been unfurled now totals two hundred and fifty-five, as a result of the settlement during the past year of a pioneer in Spitzbergen, the one remaining virgin goal outside the Soviet orbit. This feat, achieved by the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Paul Adams, brings the total number of new territories opened to the Faith since the inception of the Ten Year Plan to one hundred and twenty-seven.

At the end of the sixth year of the Crusade the number of localities included within the pale of the Faith has reached the impressive total of over five thousand two hundred, fulfilling the wish of Shoghi Effendi, expressed in his last Ridván Message that “. . . strenuous efforts must be exerted for the purpose of multiplying the existing groups and isolated centres in all the continents of the globe, ensuring thereby the early attainment of the goal of five thousand Bahá'í centres in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.” Such a signal achievement represents an increase of almost seven hundred centres since his passing, centres referred to by him as pivots of Bahá'í teaching and administrative activity, and which have more than doubled since the launching of the World Crusade in 1953. This truly remarkable reflection of the victories won under the divinely-guided leadership of our Guardian has brought the number of such centres in the Goal Countries of Europe to over a hundred and twenty, in Germany and Austria to a hundred and thirty-five, in Australasia and in Canada, respectively, to nearly a hundred and forty-five, in the British Isles to nearly a hundred and fifty, in the Indian sub-continent to almost a hundred and seventy, in Latin America to nearly two hundred and forty, in the entire Pacific area to over four hundred and fifty, in the African continent to nearly nine hundred and fifty, in Persia to more than one thousand and fifty, and in the United States of America to more than one thousand five hundred.

The most striking increases during the past year, and indeed since the ascension of the beloved Guardian, have occurred in Africa and in the widely dispersed countries and islands of the Pacific—the two areas whose competition for “the palm of victory” brought such

happiness to his heart in the last years and months of his precious life.

The formation during the current Ridván period of the new National Spiritual Assemblies of Austria, Burma, and Turkey, and the Regional National Spiritual Assembly of the South Pacific, as specified by the beloved Guardian himself, brings the total of these forerunners and future pillars of the Universal House of Justice to thirty-one, sixteen of which are now incorporated, four having achieved this status during the past year. The total number of Local Spiritual Assemblies established throughout the world, and constituting, in the words of our Guardian, "the foundation of a rising Administrative Order", is now nearly twelve hundred and seventy-five, almost two hundred more than the number reported in last year's Convention Message. Over two hundred of these are now incorporated. Included in the substantial number of recent new registrations is that of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Port Victoria, Seychelles Islands, as a result of an enactment by the Legislative Council, and the approval of the Articles of Incorporation of the Local Assembly of Nuku'Alofa, Tonga Islands, representing significant victories won in important islands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, respectively.

The number of languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated now totals two hundred and sixty-one, an increase of one hundred and seventy-two in six years, over ninety of which represent supplementary languages added since the inception of the Crusade.

The acquisition of the Hazíratu'l-Quds in Caracas, Venezuela, and the endowment in Brussels, Belgium during the past year completes the list of such properties originally specified as goals of the Ten Year Crusade. In addition to these, located in the capitals and chief cities which are or will be the seats of the National and Regional Assemblies to be established by 1963, a significant number of Hazíratu'l-Quds have been acquired in recent years as supplementary goals in such widely scattered and important cities as Apia, Samoa; Osaka and Amagasaki, Japan; Callao, Peru; Kuching, Sarawak; Algiers, Algeria; Rabat, French Morocco; Larache, Spanish Morocco; Bathurst, Gambia; Victoria, British Cameroons; Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia; Rembang, Indonesia; Solano, Philippine

Islands; and six in Viet Nam, including Saigon and Tourane. A number of supplementary endowments and sites for future Hazíratu'l-Quds have also been acquired, including properties in Morocco, the Canary Islands, Liberia, Basutoland, the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Malaya, the Philippines, and Brazil.

Although not specified as goals of the Ten Year Plan, the establishment of separate Bahá'í burial grounds has given increasing emphasis to the independent status of the Faith and added to its prestige in the many different places where such properties have been acquired in recent years, such as Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika; Nairobi, Kenya; Kampala, Uganda; Rabat and Meknes, French Morocco; Tripoli, Libya; Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia; Khartoum North, in the Sudan; Djakarta, Indonesia; Singapore, Malaya; and Ashiya, Japan.

The independent character of the Faith is further attested by the growing number of countries, states, provinces and other governmental subdivisions where the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate is recognized. Such recognition has now been granted in over forty different jurisdictions throughout the five continents, the most recent being Poona, in Bombay State, India, and the Province of British Columbia in Canada. The Bahá'í Holy Days have been recognized by the educational authorities in nearly seventy countries, states or provinces, and cities. Noteworthy during the past year has been the achievement of such recognition throughout Japan, as a result of the inclusion of such a provision in the document incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of North East Asia.

The original Crusade goal calling for the acquisition of eleven Temple sites was fulfilled more than a year ago, with the purchase of the site of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Stockholm. In anticipation of the day when Bahá'í Houses of Worship will be built, not only in every continent, but in many different countries, the beloved Guardian included the purchase of additional Temple sites in the subsidiary Plans which he assigned to the new National and Regional Assemblies formed since 1953. Seventeen of these supplementary sites have now been acquired throughout the world, eight during the past year, in Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay and Uruguay in Latin America; New Zealand in the

Antipodes; and in Tunisia on the northern fringe of the African continent.

The steady consolidation and expansion of the Faith in the Pacific area and in Africa continues to furnish striking evidence that the rapid spiritual awakening which began in those regions in the last years of the blessed Guardian's life is continuing.

In the countries and islands under the jurisdiction of the four Regional National Assemblies of Africa, the number of declared believers is approaching nine thousand. This area now has almost three hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies, with a substantial increase assured during the current Ridván period. Two hundred and forty-three African tribes are now represented in the Bahá'í Community, an increase of forty-three during the past year. In Central and East Africa, the total number of believers has more than quadrupled in the three years since the formation of the Regional Assembly in 1956. In North West Africa, a gain of fifty percent has occurred since Ridván 1957. In the British Cameroons alone over seven hundred new Bahá'ís have been enrolled since the ascension of the beloved Guardian. In the southern part of the continent, in Swaziland, The Paramount Chief's Council, the legislative body for the Swazi nation, has recognized the Bahá'í Faith as one of the religions that can be taught in that country, and one of the prominent tribal chiefs has encouraged the teaching of the Faith amongst his people.

In the Pacific, exclusive of Australasia, the area where the beloved Guardian said that "Bahá'í exploits bid fair to outshine the feats achieved in any other ocean, and indeed in every continent of the globe", the number of centres has now risen to well over three hundred, seventy-four of which constitute Local Spiritual Assemblies. The ranks of the believers in the Mentawai Islands alone have swelled to more than three thousand; in all of Indonesia, including Mentawai, the number of declared Bahá'ís has more than trebled since Ridván 1957; and in Viet Nam the rate of gain has been even more striking. A seventh Bahá'í School has been opened in Mentawai, and two more schools have been established in Viet Nam in the past year. The extraordinary progress the Faith has made throughout the highly promising Pacific region has been markedly re-

inforced by the translation of Bahá'í literature into nearly seventy-five indigenous languages.

Throughout the Western Hemisphere, the Community of the Most Great Name now comprises over nineteen hundred Bahá'í centres. In Central and South America and the neighbouring islands, where a total of twenty new National Spiritual Assemblies must be formed before 1963, there are nearly two hundred and forty centres, sixty-five of which have their own Local Spiritual Assemblies. Since the beginning of the World Crusade, contact has been established with nearly sixty Indian tribes in North, Central and South America, of which nearly thirty are now represented in the Faith. The steady advancement in this field, to which the beloved Guardian attached so much importance, is evinced by the formation of the second all-Indian Local Spiritual Assembly in South America last Ridván in Vilcollo, Bolivia. Among many other evidences of the expansion of Bahá'í institutions throughout the Americas during the past year may be mentioned the inauguration of the first Summer School in Alaska; the beginning of active publication by the newly-established Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Buenos Aires; the first dependency of the Mother Temple of the West, the Bahá'í Home for the Aged, was officially opened a few months ago, an event of undoubted historic importance exemplifying those institutions of humanitarian service which Bahá'u'lláh Himself specified should cluster about the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in every city—and demonstrate the spirit of His Teachings.

As the friends will recall, the beloved Guardian attached such great importance to the various teaching conferences and institutes held all over the world that he included an enumeration of them in his annual Ridván Message. The following list of some of those held during the past year is most impressive, not only from the standpoint of the very large number of such gatherings which took place, but also in their wide geographical range.

The Conference held by the European Hands of the Cause in Brussels, Belgium, attended by their Auxiliary Board members and representatives of the National and Regional Assemblies of that continent; the National Teaching Conference in Blackpool, England; the Scottish Regional Teaching Conference in Glasgow; the Northern

Ireland Regional Teaching Conference in Bangor; and the Northwest Regional Teaching Conference in Manchester, as well as numerous week-end schools held throughout the British Isles; the teaching and study conferences held in the Benelux countries, in Charleroi, Liège, Antwerp, Brussels, and two at The Hague; the National Teaching Conference of France in Lyon, and of Italy in Rome, as well as the Swiss Teaching Conference in Bern; the Regional Teaching Conferences held in Germany, in Heilbronn, Wiesbaden, Tülingen, Köln, Darmstadt, Ludwigsburg, in Göppingen, Frankfurt, Karlsruhe and Ulm, as well as the three held in Nürnberg, and the two in Hannover; the teaching conferences held in India and Burma, in the cities of Rangoon, Devlali, Bangalore and Daidanaw, and in Colombo, Ceylon; the All-Pakistan Teaching Conference in Karachi; the many teaching conferences held throughout the length and breadth of the African continent and the surrounding islands, including two in Mauritius, one in Southern Rhodesia, four in South Africa, and one in the British Cameroons, in Tangiers, International Zone of Morocco, in Rabat, French Morocco, in Monrovia, Liberia, and in Mogadiscio, Italian Somaliland, as well as the seventeen week-end schools held in Central and East Africa; the Western Canada Summer Conference in Banff, the Maritimes Summer Conference in Shediac, New Brunswick, the Canadian Summer Teaching Conferences in Beaulac, Quebec, and in Ontario, as well as nearly twenty other teaching conferences held throughout the Dominion of Canada, from Prince Edward Island to British Columbia; the teaching conferences in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Ketchikan, the four major Bahá'í centres in Alaska; the Regional Teaching Conferences held in Rosario, Argentina, and in Quilpué, Chile, as well as the teaching conferences held in Asunción, Paraguay and in Montevideo, Uruguay; the Teaching Conference of Venezuela in Caracas, the All-Brazil Teaching Conference in Jundiai, and the International School held in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; to which should be added the teaching conferences and week-end schools held throughout the United States, too numerous to mention.

The work at the heart and nerve centre of the Faith has progressed steadily during the period from last Ridván. In November the plenary meeting of the Hands of the Cause was held, at Bahjí—

the second since the sudden passing of the beloved Guardian forced upon the Chief Stewards of the Faith such crushing responsibility. The mighty institution of Bahá'í pilgrimage, which began in the days of the Manifestation of God Himself, has been reopened, and a steady stream of friends from East and West has poured into the twin Holy Cities of Haifa and 'Akká to kneel at the Threshold of the sacred Shrines, to visit the historic sites located here, to gaze in reverence at the relics so carefully collected and preserved by the beloved Guardian, to marvel at the beauty of the Shrine of the Báb and the International Archives Building erected under his direction and according to his own matchless taste, as well as to enjoy the wonderful gardens he designed and created on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and in the plain of 'Akká; four thousand square metres of land on the ridge of Mount Carmel overlooking the resting-place of the Herald of the Faith, have been registered in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Írán; the sixty-six thousand square metres of land facing the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, negotiations for the purchase of which were carried out at the Guardian's instruction during his lifetime, have now been registered in the name of the Israel Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, in accordance with his wishes; the third terrace at Bahjí, artificially created, and which enables the visitor to obtain an imposing view of the Holy Shrine and its gardens, was built according to his own plan on top of the two he had himself completed, and the strip of garden to the east of the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh which he had planned to develop, was likewise completed, thus adding to the landscaped area at Bahjí another four thousand square metres of garden; the visitors to the Bahá'í Holy Places in both Haifa and 'Akká continue to pour in, the impressive number of over a hundred thousand having been received since last Ridván. During the past eighteen months, six Hands of the Cause have acted as substitutes for those who were permanently selected to serve in the Holy Land, but were temporarily absent either on some special mission or for reasons of health; five of the Hands of the Cause have, at the request of the Hands residing in the Holy Land, undertaken special teaching missions to assist the friends and

their elected representatives in areas where either the need, or the promise of results, was the greatest.

The last three of the five mighty Intercontinental Conferences, called for by the beloved Guardian at the midway point of the World Crusade, were held in Chicago, Frankfurt and Singapore, and proved the vehicles for a communion of heart amongst the sorrowing believers the world over such as had never before been experienced in Bahá'í history. Over six thousand of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh attended these Conferences, the greatest number being present at the one held in Europe on German soil, at which over twenty-five hundred Bahá'ís from Europe and Asia assembled; the next largest Conference was the one held in the heart of the North American continent, where almost two thousand were gathered, largely representative of believers from the Western Hemisphere; the African Intercontinental Conference, with the exception of some believers from Europe and America, and at which nine hundred friends assembled, was divided almost equally between African and Persian believers; at the Asian Intercontinental Conference about five hundred Bahá'ís, highly representative of the peoples of South East Asia and the North Pacific area, were able to view the portrait of Bahá'u'lláh, whose Faith they have espoused, and to have a share in the bounties of the Conference the beloved Guardian had called for them, whilst in far-off Australia an attendance of almost three hundred Bahá'ís, some of them from such distant places as Japan, Persia and the United States, reflected the progress the Cause of God has made in the Antipodes.

At all of these Conferences, in spite of the deep shadow of sorrow upon them, the believers, mindful of the beloved Guardian's words, praised and thanked the Founder of their Faith for His manifold blessings; reverently viewed His portrait, sent to them for this purpose as an act of loving-kindness, by the Guardian himself; consulted on ways and means of rapidly achieving the remaining goals of the Crusade; reviewed its great victories to date and poured forth over half a million dollars in contributions and pledges for the building of the Mother Temples of Africa, Australia and Europe, and the general work of the Ten Year Plan. So great has been the response to the beloved Guardian's appeal to the friends to rapidly

build these sacred Houses of Worship that the Kampala Temple and the Sydney Temple, the cornerstones of which were laid during the African and Australian Intercontinental Conferences, respectively, are expected to be completed before Naw-Rúz 1960, and a large sum is now available for the construction of the European Mother Temple.

There can be no doubt in anyone's mind, as we survey the status of the Cause of God six years after the inception of the World Crusade, that the most imposing and in many ways the most difficult part of its tasks were accomplished in the Guardian's own lifetime. One hundred and twenty-seven new territories have been included in the orbit of the Faith as a result of the departure of a veritable army of pioneers to all parts of the world. The Guardian, in the early years of the Ten Year Plan stated that this extraordinary achievement, "the most vital and spectacular objective of the Ten Year Plan", had been "virtually attained ere the termination of the first year of this decade-long, stupendous enterprise" through the opening of one hundred countries and islands. The dedication of two of the three Mother Temples called for in the provisions of this globe-encircling Plan will take place in the near future, and permission to build the third in Langenhain, near Frankfurt, has just been received from the County Council. All the Hazíratu'l-Quds, all the endowments, all the Temple sites originally called for in the World Crusade have been acquired. The Bahá'í Publishing Trusts enumerated by the beloved Guardian have been established. The number of Israel branches of various National Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in the Holy Land has been exceeded. The resting-place of the remains of the father of Bahá'u'lláh has been identified. Bahá'í women in Persia have been elected to the National and the Local Assemblies. The translation of Bahá'í literature into various languages has already exceeded the original objective set in 1953. Almost a third of the new National and Regional Assemblies which must be established before 1963 will have come into existence by the end of this Ridván.

This impressive tally of victories cannot but lift the hearts of all the believers and fill them with fresh courage to arise and win the remaining goals of the Crusade, in the name and for the sake of their beloved Guardian. Although the work before us may be less

spectacular than that already accomplished, there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that upon its successful conclusion depends the ultimate triumph or failure of the entire Crusade. It constitutes no less than the bedrock of future Bahá'í activities for centuries to come, for upon it depends the erection, on a firm and lasting foundation, of those new National Assemblies which are to be among the first pillars of that mighty institution of Bahá'u'lláh, the Universal House of Justice. The task is a two-fold one: In the republics of Latin America and the ten Goal Countries of Europe immediate action must be taken to reinforce and bring to Assembly status those groups which are at the present time the most promising nuclei for new Assemblies, and without the multiplication of which the new independent National Assemblies will lack the foundation the Guardian specified as prerequisites for their election. On the home front of such old and tried Bahá'í communities as Persia, the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Australia, India, Canada, Egypt and 'Iráq, the same process must take place—promising groups must be immediately raised to Assembly status.

Careful consideration of the nature of the work facing the Bahá'í world during the coming four years reveals that the paramount need, one might almost say the sole need, is to raise a second glorious all-conquering army of pioneers, who will arise and go forth with the same rapidity, dedication and zeal as did that first glorious army in the opening years of the Crusade, and this time conquer, not new territories and islands, but new cities, towns and villages in the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Asia, North Africa and the Antipodes. We feel the Bahá'ís should have placed before them a factual picture of the work to be done in this field: In the United States, termed by our Guardian the base for operations in every continent of the globe, a hundred and three new Local Spiritual Assemblies must be formed; in the Dominion of Canada, thirty-two; in Latin America, over twenty; in the British Isles, twenty-five; in Germany, twelve; in the European Goal Countries, forty-five; in Persia, the Cradle of the Faith, a hundred and ten; in India, at least twenty-five; and in Australia and New Zealand, over twenty. This presents to each and every Bahá'í a tremendous personal challenge. Is he or she going to have a part, before it is too late, in the Guardian's Global Crusade,

the purpose of which is primarily to lay that lasting foundation for the Universal House of Justice created in His Most Holy Book by Bahá'u'lláh? There is no longer time for hesitation, the sands of the Crusade are rapidly running out and with them each one's own great personal opportunity, never to recur. Every single believer must hold before himself the goal of either personally being responsible for the attainment of these objectives, through arising to pioneer himself, or through assisting his fellow-Bahá'ís to do so, and thus be instrumental in ensuring that by 1963 the followers of Bahá'u'lláh will be found in firmly grounded, well informed, actively functioning communities in every area where a National or Regional Assembly exists, and in many of the territories and major islands where His Cause has been established during the World Crusade.

We must face the fact that in Europe and Latin America where the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan requires that Regional Assemblies must be replaced by thirty-one National Assemblies, the needs of the various home fronts cannot be met locally. Bahá'u'lláh Himself has exhorted His followers to *"Centre your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumbfounded."* The Hands of the Cause, mindful of these words, have recently proposed a joint deputization project to the Assemblies representative of the two strongest Bahá'í communities in the world, namely, Persia and America. The oppressed, steadfast and devoted Persian friends are ready and eager to go forth as pioneers in large numbers, but the barrier of language and many other complications such as obtaining visas for the countries where pioneers are required prevent them from doing so. The North American believers are, on the contrary, because of their citizenship, in a much better position to gain entry to these places so urgently in need of teachers and settlers; therefore this great joint undertaking, the first of its kind between the East and the West, has been set in motion, whereby the friends in the Cradle of the Faith can deputize their Bahá'í brothers and sisters who are, as the Guardian said, the spiritual descendants of the Dawn-

breakers, to go forth and help win the Crusade. The Persian believers are now raising a fund to be transmitted through their National Assembly to the American National Assembly for this express purpose. It is our ardent hope that a tremendous response will be forthcoming, and that the North American Bahá'ís, mindful of the truly extraordinary role the Guardian himself has said they must play as "the champion-builders of a divinely conceived Administrative Order, the standard-bearers of the all-conquering army of the Lord of Hosts, the torch-bearers of a future divinely inspired world civilization" will arise in large numbers and place themselves at the disposal of the committee responsible for this mass migration, ere it is too late, and not only cover themselves with imperishable glory, but by doing so, share the lustre of this achievement and sacrifice with their devoted brethren who have suffered so much and so long in Bahá'u'lláh's native land.

No message from the World Centre of the Faith would be complete that did not call upon the pioneers, whoever and wherever they are, be they serving in foreign fields or on the home fronts, be they old or young, robust or in frail health, of the Negro, the white or the brown race, to remain at their posts at this critical hour. There can be no doubt that in the sight of Shoghi Effendi it was the pioneers who accomplished the most difficult tasks of the Crusade, and because of the sacrifices, the consecration and the enthusiasm of these devoted souls, one hundred and twenty-seven territories of the globe, as well as hundreds of cities and localities on various home fronts received the light of Bahá'u'lláh. The importance the Guardian attached to the opening of these virgin areas and to the work of consolidation in those countries already possessing National Assemblies cannot be sufficiently emphasized. How dear to his heart were the services the pioneers rendered! How he cherished each one labouring in this vast field, often at the cost of great personal sacrifice! It is not possible for us to describe the wistful sadness and the look of concern and care that would pass over his blessed face when he received news that a goal had been abandoned for whatever reason, and was lacking a pioneer. We therefore appeal to the friends to remain at their posts, however great the difficulties confronting them, and to persevere in this vital field of service in

order to fulfil the wishes of their beloved Guardian and to gladden his spirit in the Kingdom on High.

It is, we firmly believe, the supreme duty of all National and Regional Assemblies to concentrate their undivided attention during this particular year of the Crusade on procuring new pioneers and settling them with no delay whatsoever in those spots where their presence in the chosen objectives abroad or in the goal cities of the various home fronts will enable new Assemblies to be formed next Ridván. There can be no doubt that upon the success of such steps taken immediately depends the fortunes of our Guardian's Crusade, a Crusade which in its world-embracing scope, has carried the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá a mighty step forward in its unfoldment, and which must inevitably lead to the spiritual conquest of the entire planet.

The financial resources of the Bahá'í world must be mustered and expended at this time for the attainment of this mighty purpose. We can do no better than appeal to each and every individual believer in the Guardian's own words: "Let them resolve, instantly and unhesitatingly, to place, each according to his circumstances, his share on the altar of Bahá'í sacrifice, lest, on a sudden, unforeseen calamities rob them of a considerable portion of the earthly things they have amassed."

Victories, however glorious, won in other fields, will be empty of their meaning if this most great victory is not achieved. Every follower of the Faith is aware of that great spiritual truth that God in His mercy and all-encompassing love does not require of His creatures something that He will not empower them to do. We cannot and must not fail. How many times have we been assured that the Concourse on High is ready and eager to rush forth and assist us to seize the palm of victory. Our Guardian never doubted our ability to accomplish the Plan he set for us; he entrusted it to our care and left this world, after so many years of sorrow and toil, for realms where his spirit could operate more freely. We cannot betray his sacred trust, we cannot disappoint the hopes he pinned on us or prove unworthy of the supreme confidence he showed us! Let us arise and win his Crusade and meet the challenge and fulfil the promise enshrined in one of his last messages: "The heights its

champions must scale are indeed formidable. The pitfalls that bestrew their path are still numerous. The road leading to ultimate and total victory is tortuous, stony and narrow”, he tells us. “Theirs, however, is the emphatic assurance, revealed by the Pen of the Most High—the Prime Mover of the forces unleashed by this world-girdling Crusade—that *‘Whosoever ariseth to aid our Cause God will render him victorious over ten times ten thousand souls, and, should he wax in his love for Me, him will We cause to triumph over all that is in heaven and all that is on earth.’*”

“Putting on the armour of His love, firmly buckling on the shield of His mighty Covenant, mounted on the steed of steadfastness, holding aloft the lance of the Word of the Lord of Hosts, and with unquestioning reliance on His promises as the best provision for their journey, let them set their faces towards those fields that still remain unexplored and direct their steps to those goals that are as yet unattained, assured that He Who has led them to achieve such triumphs, and to store up such prizes in His Kingdom, will continue to assist them in enriching their spiritual birthright to a degree that no finite mind can imagine or human heart perceive.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Election of the Independent National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey Ridván 1959

To the First Convention of the Bahá'ís of Turkey

Beloved Friends:

The hearts of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh are uplifted in thanksgiving upon the occasion of the historic election of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Turkey. Next to the formation of the National Assembly of the Community of the Most Great Name in the Cradle of the Faith, and the National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of 'Iráq, the land which witnessed the unveiling of the station of the Blessed Beauty, no country, with the exception of the Holy Land, is more deeply associated with the sufferings of the

Manifestation of God, and the revelations of His grandeur, than this former stronghold of Islám and one-time seat of the Ottoman Empire.

It is well for us to recall in the midst of our rejoicing that the fruit of this hour was watered with the very blood of the heart of the Divine Beloved. It was from the City of Constantinople that Bahá'u'lláh set out, in the dead of winter, for the *“Land of Mystery”* (Adrianople), that grievous city on the European shores of Turkey, which He Himself wrote, in His protest to the Sultán against the wanton cruelty and injustice of this further exile, is a *“place which none entereth except such as have rebelled against the authority of the sovereign”*. *“They expelled us”*, He declared in the Súriy-i-Múlúk, *“from thy city (Constantinople) with an abasement with which no abasement on earth can compare.”* *“Neither My family, nor those who accompanied Me had the necessary raiment to protect them from the cold in that freezing weather.”* *“The eyes of Our enemies wept over Us, and beyond them those of every discerning person.”* The twelve-day journey over the blizzard-swept countryside was but the prelude to the years of the greatest sorrow in His life, when the *“most great separation”* took place and *“the most grievous veil”* was torn asunder—the *“Days of stress”*, as He characterized them, when His faithless brother, whom He designated the *“Most Great Idol”*, openly defied Him, calumniated Him, humiliated Him and finally made the attempt on His life which left its marks upon His health until the end of His days. It was in Adrianople that He wrote to one of His friends: *“The cruelties inflicted by My oppressors have bowed Me down, and turned My hair white. Shouldst thou present thyself before My throne, thou wouldst fail to recognize the Ancient Beauty, for the freshness of His countenance is altered, and its brightness hath faded, by reason of the oppression of the infidels. I swear by God! His heart, His soul, and His vitals are melted!”*

The crises of Adrianople, however, gave rise to evidences of the incomparable greatness of the Faith and the glory of the station of Bahá'u'lláh. It was in Adrianople that the believers began to be known as *“Bahá'ís”*, that the greeting *“Alláh-u-Abhá”* was first used, that the pilgrimage to the Presence of the newly revealed Manifestation of God began, that the Proclamation of the Faith took place, and it was there also that the majority of the challenging and

mighty Tablets to the Kings and Rulers of the world were revealed. Therefore we see how great is the blessedness of this country, which the beloved Guardian often stated is under the direct shadow of the Holy Land itself, and which is now to receive, after the lapse of almost one hundred years, the crowning blessing of its own National Spiritual Assembly.

The friends gathered at this first Convention held on Turkish soil, are particularly blessed in that the beloved Guardian himself, during the last days of his life, made note that in 1959 the election of this pillar of the future Universal House of Justice should take place. As the Turkish Community emerges into its independent national Bahá'í life, it carries therefore a special gift of confirmation from the Guardian of the Faith, and the knowledge of this added bounty must gladden the hearts of all those present on this memorable occasion, and encourage the members of the new Assembly to arise to great heights of service in their stewardship of the affairs of this glorious Faith in that country so dear to the hearts of all the believers the world over.

It is quite evident that the first concern of this new national body must be to protect the Faith. The greatest wisdom and circumspection must guide them in their management of Bahá'í affairs. They must likewise constantly remember that to their care must be entrusted some of the most sacred sites in the entire Bahá'í world, located and purchased at the instigation of the beloved Guardian himself, protected with such great difficulty and at the cost of so much effort and self-sacrifice, and to which he attached the greatest importance.

The most important task confronting the new National Assembly is undoubtedly the teaching work; all efforts in this field should be carried out in conformity with instructions already given by the beloved Guardian himself, in previous messages to the friends who undertook this mighty service to the Cause of God. With what eagerness the beloved Guardian encouraged the pioneers to establish Assemblies in every one of those blessed and historic centres through which the Abhá Beauty passed on His way to Constantinople; how much he rejoiced when news reached him of the settlement of one of these towns and the formation of a group or

Assembly. It is as if he had visualized the map of Turkey with a pathway winding across it—the journey of Bahá'u'lláh—pricked out in lights, each light an Assembly shining in His Name and radiating the splendour of His Faith. To keep these lights burning, to enkindle new ones, to increase their brilliance, is the foremost duty of the new national body. Its members must likewise constantly bear in mind that the beloved Guardian enjoined all pioneers and all travelling teachers to concentrate their attention on confirming the native people of the land; any community in which the local people do not comprise the majority of the Bahá'ís is a community whose foundations are insecure. The Persian pioneers, who heeded the appeals of the beloved Guardian, left their homes, and sacrificed so much in order to diffuse the Teachings of the Blessed Beauty throughout that land, must concentrate all their efforts on winning over the hearts of the Turkish people; they must learn their language, become a part of the life of that country, adopt its ways and thus predispose a naturally reserved and conservative people to listen to the Divine Glad-Tidings of which they are the bearers.

The newly elected National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey should, we feel, form a supplementary Four Year Plan for the purpose of swelling the number of believers in that historic land, in accordance with the instructions of the beloved Guardian; consolidating the work already achieved; markedly increasing the number of Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres throughout the country; incorporating, if circumstances permit, the new national body as well as those Local Assemblies which are firmly grounded; expanding the translation of Bahá'í literature into the Turkish language, in anticipation of the time when publishing can be undertaken; initiating if possible a Bahá'í summer school; completing the purchase of a suitable site for the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to be erected in Constantinople; and inaugurating an independent National Fund.

Well knowing the difficulties that confront it and the enthusiasm with which its newly elected members plan to carry forward the work of our glorious Faith in that promising region, a land so infinitely blessed and rich in promise, we are placing at its disposal in the name of our most beloved Guardian the sum of one thousand dollars as an inaugural gift to the new National Fund. We feel sure this

reminder of the constant love of Shoghi Effendi, of the high hopes he cherished for the future of the Faith there and the rapid unfoldment of its institutions under the aegis of this new national body will serve to stimulate the friends to shoulder a greater measure of responsibility, to rise to fresh heights of service and self-sacrifice and to prove worthy of all the blessings showered upon them by that wonderful being who served them with such selfless and self-sacrificing devotion for thirty-six years.

As the Turkish Bahá'í Community enters this new phase of its development, which marks its coming of age in the Administrative Order of the Faith, we cannot but recall those prophetic words of Bahá'u'lláh: “. . . *this Youth hath departed out of this country and deposited beneath every tree and every stone a trust, which God will ere long bring forth through the power of truth.*” Already some of those sacred “trusts” have been found, the establishment of the Turkish National Spiritual Assembly doubtless being one of them. That many more of these inestimable bounties of Bahá'u'lláh may soon be brought to light, and the country which witnessed some of His greatest moments of agony blossom in the Faith like a goodly tree and bring forth in days to come the full harvest He planned for its people, is the ardent prayer and hope of every believer.

Let those whose future is now associated with this new phase of the development of Bahá'u'lláh's mighty Faith in that land recall the glorious promise enshrined in His words: “*Whoso openeth his lips in this day, and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on High, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light.*” “*Arise, therefore, and, with the whole enthusiasm of your hearts, with all the eagerness of your souls, the full fervour of your will, and the concentrated efforts of your entire being, strive to attain the paradise of His presence, and endeavour to inhale the fragrance of the incorruptible Flower, to breathe the sweet savours of holiness, and to obtain a portion of this perfume of celestial glory.*” “*I swear by God! That which hath been destined for him who aideth My Cause excelleth the treasures of the earth.*”

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Election of the South Pacific Regional National Spiritual Assembly Ridván 1959

To the First Convention of the Bahá'ís of the South Pacific Islands

Dearly beloved Friends:

On the occasion of the historic formation of the South Pacific Regional National Spiritual Assembly the hearts of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh are uplifted in thanksgiving for this great victory which testifies to the progress of His world-encompassing Faith and to the powers He has released in this age, which will inevitably enable mankind to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth foretold by the Prophets of God in past Dispensations.

This latest achievement in the promulgation of the Divine Plan revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, and set in motion by our beloved Guardian through successive detailed plans, cannot but release untold blessings in that area of the world so dear to his heart and which absorbed so much of his attention during the last years of his life.

In the darkest period of the First World War, 'Abdu'l-Bahá called upon the members of the North American Bahá'í Community, in His Tablets of the Divine Plan, to *“travel through the three great Island groups of the Pacific Ocean—Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia, and . . . with hearts overflowing with the love of God . . . deliver the Glad Tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people.”* The first results of His ringing appeal were witnessed in the opening of Australia and New Zealand to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, the carrying of His Message to the Society Islands and the formation of a strong community in Hawaii, thus establishing a bridge of centres stretching from San Francisco to Sydney, and paving the way for the tremendous victories which have been won in this area under the direct guidance of the beloved Guardian during the first six years of his ten-year globe-encircling Plan. With the inception of this World

Crusade in 1953 and the allocation amongst the National Spiritual Assemblies of America, Canada, Persia and Australia of the major islands and island groups of the Pacific, the teaching work began to stride forward at a formidable pace. Pioneers from the older communities poured into the Pacific region and it is primarily due to the dedication, perseverance, self-sacrifice and initiative of these consecrated souls that this first Convention is being held just one year after the passing of the midway point of the Crusade. Great as is this fruition of their labours, we must not forget for a moment that the greatest achievement we are witnessing on this happy occasion is the fact that the delegates chosen to elect this first Regional Pacific Bahá'í Assembly are representative of the peoples of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia who have become afire with the love of Bahá'u'lláh, embraced His Faith and risen to establish it in their home islands. This is the glorious victory of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, the realization of his hopes, the consummation of his plan for this part of the world.

The extraordinary progress made throughout the Pacific region is evident to all, and must be a great source of pride and joy to those gathered together during these blessed Ridván days to hold their first Annual Convention. Let us recall some of the milestones that have led up to this crowning event: Your National Headquarters, the seat of your Assembly, has been purchased according to the beloved Guardian's own Plan and your national Bahá'í endowment, registered in the name of the Suva Assembly and likewise situated in Fiji, has been acquired as one of the goals of that same Plan; the rapid spread of the Faith in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, which led to the establishment of the first Bahá'í school in the entire Pacific area, on land contributed by one of the Gilbert Islanders and built through the efforts of the Bahá'ís themselves; the founding of the second Bahá'í school in this region—which has recently completed its new building on its own land—in the New Hebrides; the construction in Samoa of the first local Hazíratu'l-Quds of the South Pacific and the holding there of a Bahá'í summer school; the large and rapidly increasing number of Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres which have been established in such widely-scattered areas as Tonga, the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Samoa, the

Solomons, the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, the Cook Islands, the Loyalty and Marshall Islands and Fiji, all of which will now come under the guidance of their own Regional Assembly; the many translations of Bahá'í literature into the languages spoken throughout these island groups—when we recall all these evidences of the onward march of the Faith, our hearts are lifted up in thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh, Who made these victories possible, victories which bear eloquent testimony to the great spiritual promise this area of the globe holds for the future and lead us to believe that ere long its peoples will contribute, in the World Bahá'í Community, a particular, unique and important share to its counsels and render it great services in both the teaching and administrative fields.

The words of the beloved Guardian, so often reiterated in the last years of his life, that the continent of Africa and the Pacific Islands were vying with each other for the palm of victory in the teaching field, are still ringing in our ears. We have recently seen during the visit of an African Hand of the Faith to that area how electric is the effect produced on the minds and hearts when a representative of a different race, from a distant land, travels amongst Bahá'í communities of another region. It forecasts that happy day when Bahá'í teachers from the great ethnic groups of the Pacific will arise and travel to the far corners of the world, teaching the people the Glad-Tidings of this Divine Message, exchanging visits with their African brethren and, like bees in a garden of flowers, pollinating the hearts of men the world over with the love of Bahá'u'lláh.

The new Regional Assembly of the South Pacific should, we feel, form a supplementary Four Year Plan for the purpose of rapidly swelling the number of the adherents of the Faith throughout the area of its jurisdiction; consolidating the historic work already achieved in these newly opened territories; markedly increasing the number of Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres in the ten island territories which it represents; incorporating, whenever possible, those Local Assemblies which are firmly grounded; multiplying the translations of Bahá'í literature in the languages spoken in that region; founding additional local Hazíratu'l-Quds, Bahá'í schools and summer schools; purchasing the site of the

future Mother Temple of the South Pacific to be erected in Suva; and inaugurating an independent National Fund.

Well knowing the difficulties that confront it and the enthusiasm with which its newly elected members plan to carry forward the work of our glorious Faith in that promising area, we are placing at its disposal, in the name of our most beloved Guardian, the sum of one thousand dollars as an inaugural gift to its new National Fund. We feel sure this reminder of the constant love of Shoghi Effendi, of the high hopes he cherished for the future of the Faith there and the rapid unfoldment of its institutions under the aegis of this new Regional Assembly, will serve to stimulate the friends to shoulder a greater measure of responsibility, to rise to fresh heights of service and self-sacrifice, and to prove worthy of all the blessings showered upon them by that wonderful being who served them with such selfless and self-sacrificing devotion for thirty-six years.

You are now launching the barque of your own independent administrative existence. Although the American National Assembly—your Mother Assembly—will always be ready to give you advice and assistance, and although your fellow-Bahá'ís all over the world will surround you with their loving thoughts and moral encouragement, your destiny is nevertheless now in your own hands, the hands of the peoples of these islands who have become Bahá'ís, and who are the electors of this historic Regional South Pacific Assembly. We feel confident that, just as you have already produced from amongst yourselves many Bahá'í teachers, you will in the future, with the help of the devoted pioneers who have come to live amongst you, ever increasingly carry on your own work, and teach this Faith to the people in hundreds of the larger islands throughout this area. Your activities will gladden the soul of our beloved Guardian, vindicate the confidence he placed in you and the high hopes he cherished for your future, and attract upon you the blessings of the Author of our Faith.

We can do no better than recall some of Bahá'u'lláh's gem-like utterances when He appealed to His followers to arise and teach His Faith: *“Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the Message of Him Who hath caused the Dawn of Divine Guidance to break. Consider how the wind, faithful to that which God hath ordained,*

bloweth upon all the regions of the earth, be they inhabited or desolate. Neither the sight of desolation, nor the evidences of prosperity, can either pain or please it. It bloweth in every direction, as bidden by its Creator.” “O ye beloved of God! Repose not yourselves on your couches, nay bestir yourselves as soon as ye recognize your Lord, the Creator, and hear of the things which have befallen Him, and hasten to His assistance. Unloose your tongues, and proclaim unceasingly His Cause.” “Blessed is the spot, and the house, and the place, and the city, and the heart, and the mountain, and the refuge, and the cave, and the valley, and the land, and the sea, and the island, and the meadow where mention of God hath been made, and His praise glorified.” “Please God ye may all be strengthened to carry out that which is the Will of God, and may be graciously assisted to appreciate the rank conferred upon such of His loved ones as have arisen to serve Him and magnify His name. Upon them be the glory of God, the glory of all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth, and the glory of the inmates of the most exalted Paradise, the heaven of heavens.”

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**Election of the Independent National Spiritual Assembly of
Burma
Ridván 1959**

To the First Convention of the Bahá'ís of Burma

Dearly beloved Friends:

The hearts of the believers all over the world rejoice with you on this glorious occasion of the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Burma. Many have been the blessings showered upon this Community, from the inception of its existence over four score years ago, blessings which began with the arrival of Jamál Effendi, who journeyed to India and Burma in 1875 at the command of the Blessed Perfection Himself, to carry the Message of God to its peoples. You have never ceased to be under the watchful

and loving care of the Supreme Manifestation, of the Centre of His Covenant and of the Guardian of His Faith. After the setting of the Sun of Truth, the beloved Master constantly fostered your development and encouraged you through the Messages He sent you, through Tablets revealed to the early believers amongst you, through the dispatch of travellers and teachers, from both the East and the West, through the honour He conferred on the Mandalay Bahá'ís of being permitted to construct the alabaster sarcophagus for the remains of the Primal Point in which they are now laid to rest on Mt. Carmel. It was in the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, almost sixty years ago, that the illumined and dedicated teacher of the Cause, Siyyid Mustafá Rúmí, carried the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to Daidanaw, which became the first all-Bahá'í village in the world outside the Cradle of the Faith, and was a great source of joy to the beloved Master.

After His Ascension, the beloved Guardian continued to shower that same love and care upon you. How often he praised the activities and spirit of the friends of Burma to Bahá'ís of other lands, extolling you as examples of purity of heart and steadfastness, encouraging many teachers to visit you, giving you a special objective of your own—namely, the formation of your National Assembly in the World Crusade. How greatly he grieved to learn of your sufferings during the war, the destruction of the Bahá'í school and Hazíratu'l-Quds in Daidanaw, the assassination of some of the believers, the wide-scale spoliation that took place, and particularly of the ruthless murder of your beloved teacher, Siyyid Mustafá Rúmí, that “distinguished pioneer”, that “high-minded and noble soul”, as he so beautifully characterized him, whom he elevated to the rank of Hand of the Cause, whom he affirmed had attained the station of martyrdom, and whose resting-place he declared was the “foremost shrine” of the Burmese Bahá'í Community. And last but not least, how blessed you have been to have had the date for the election of your historic National Assembly fixed by the beloved Guardian himself just a short time before his passing.

Gathered in this first historic Convention of your own, your hearts no doubt turn in praise and thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh for these manifold and repeated evidences of His love and His all-

encompassing grace. The formation of the Burmese National Spiritual Assembly must inevitably witness a new quickening in the Community of the Most Great Name there, and release forces which will enable the friends to spread the Faith much faster in their native land.

As the community emerges into independent national Bahá'í life, the thoughts of its elected representatives must turn to the mighty tasks that lie ahead. It is our conviction that the beloved Guardian would wish the members of the new National Spiritual Assembly of Burma to formulate a supplementary Four Year Plan in order to carry out, within their own area, the general provisions of the World Crusade. They should purchase, however modest in size, a plot of land in Rangoon to serve as the site of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the capital city of Burma; they should concentrate the efforts of all of the believers on carrying forward an active and comprehensive teaching plan, aimed at the establishment of new Assemblies and groups, the multiplication of isolated centres, and above all, at increasing at a rapid rate the number of Bahá'ís in their native land; they should carefully consolidate the historic work already most painstakingly achieved in a period of almost four score years; they should make every effort to translate and print a wider range of the literature of the Faith in order to reinforce their teaching work and strengthen the friends in their understanding of the fundamental verities underlying the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh; they should plan and hold Bahá'í summer schools for the education of the believers and close contacts; they should take the steps necessary to incorporate the new national body, as well as those Local Assemblies which are firmly established; and they should immediately inaugurate a National Bahá'í Fund to finance the work of the Cause in Burma, and encourage the followers of the Faith to support this essential Bahá'í institution.

Well knowing the difficulties that confront this new Assembly and the enthusiasm with which its elected members plan to carry forward the work of our glorious Faith in that promising region, we are placing at its disposal in the name of our most beloved Guardian the sum of one thousand dollars as an inaugural gift to its new National Fund. We feel sure this reminder of the constant love of Shoghi

Effendi, of the high hopes he cherished for the future of the Faith there and the rapid unfoldment of its institutions, will serve to stimulate the friends to shoulder a greater measure of individual responsibility, and to rise to fresh heights of service and self-sacrifice.

We know from the words of the Founders of our Faith that all Asia must be set ablaze with the fire of this supreme Revelation given to mankind at the time of its coming of age. We feel sure that the Burmese Bahá'ís—members of a nation which forms a bridge between the peoples of the Indian sub-continent and the teeming millions of Mongolian extraction who are as yet, for the most part, unaware of the existence of this glorious Cause, and are in sore need of its life-giving teachings—will play their part in spreading the Faith, not only amongst their countrymen, but amongst the peoples of those countries lying eastward and southward of their homeland.

Let each one recall the touching and wonderful words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when He voiced His longing to teach His Father's Faith and expressed the hope His followers might arise and accomplish it in His stead: *"O, that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of 'Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá' in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it."* *"Whosoever ariseth to aid Our Cause"*, is Bahá'u'lláh's Own emphatic promise, *"God will render him victorious over ten times ten thousand souls, and, should he wax in his love for Me, him will We cause to triumph over all that is in heaven and all that is on earth."* *"Let trust in God be his shield, and reliance on God his provision, and the fear of God his raiment. Let patience be his helper, and praiseworthy conduct his succourer, and goodly deeds his army. Then will the Concourse on High sustain him. Then will the denizens of the Kingdom of Names march forth with him, and the banners of Divine guidance and inspiration be unfurled on his right hand and before him."*

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

ELECTION OF THE INDEPENDENT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF AUSTRIA RIDVÁN 1959

To the First Convention of the Bahá'ís of Austria

Dearly beloved Friends:

On the occasion of the holding of the first Austrian National Convention in the city of Vienna, our thoughts inevitably go back not only to the many associations this capital city has had with the progress of our Faith on the European continent, but to its historic past as a meeting point, down through the centuries, between East and West. During His visit to the occidental world 'Abdu'l-Bahá travelled to this city and blessed it with His presence; from that time until this day of spiritual victory it has been the object of the solicitous care and interest of both the Master and Shoghi Effendi—an interest which culminated, during the last days of the Guardian's life, by his noting that in Ridván 1959 the National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Austria should be elected. The Community in this country has therefore received a special blessing and impetus from Shoghi Effendi himself on the eve of its independent existence as it takes its place among the family of National Assemblies responsible for the organized work of the Cause of God, and the election of that Supreme Administrative Body which, we confidently hope, will come into being as the culmination of all Bahá'í endeavours exerted during the Ten Year Plan, and thus worthily crown the glorious global Crusade inaugurated by our beloved Guardian.

Many are the tasks which must face this new national body. Hitherto the Austrian Bahá'í Community has received its main impetus from its sister community in Germany; it has shared the same National Assembly, been served by the same committees, been financed from the same fund, and partaken of a joint community life. Now the new National Spiritual Assembly of Austria must shoulder independently its own load of responsibility, guide its own affairs, appoint its own committees, establish its own National Fund. This presents at once a tremendous challenge to its members

and a glorious opportunity to vindicate the hopes cherished for it by the Guardian.

Undoubtedly the primary obligation of this new body is in the teaching field. Due to the self-sacrificing efforts of a great many pioneers—the vast majority of which are of Persian extraction—the formation of this Assembly has been made possible and its foundation, the Local Spiritual Assemblies, been firmly laid. A wonderful spirit of dedication to the Faith and obedience to the call of the Guardian for pioneers characterizes the Austrian Bahá'í Community, but in spite of this great spiritual vitality, its position is not as strong as it should be because the majority of the believers are not native Austrians. If the political situation in the world changes, if the antagonism of the ecclesiastical powers becomes focused on the Cause at this critical stage in its development there, the devoted pioneers and settlers from abroad may find themselves forced to leave, the painstakingly erected new pillar of the Universal House of Justice be suddenly undermined, and the work of half a century placed in jeopardy. It is therefore evident that the first and paramount duty of the new National Spiritual Assembly is to concentrate its attention on teaching the Faith to the Austrian people and reversing the present precarious situation in which they constitute the minority instead of the majority of the Bahá'í Community in that country.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Austria should, we firmly believe, formulate a supplementary Four Year Plan for the purpose of consolidating the work already achieved; rapidly increasing the number of adherents of the Faith among the Austrian people; founding new Assemblies and groups, as well as isolated centres; incorporating as soon as feasible the new national body, and those Local Assemblies which are firmly grounded; registering the site of the future Mother Temple of Austria in the name of the National Assembly; and inaugurating an independent National Fund.

Well knowing the difficulties that confront it and the enthusiasm with which its newly elected members plan to carry forward the work of our glorious Faith in that historic country, we are placing at its disposal in the name of our most beloved Guardian the sum of one thousand dollars as an inaugural gift to its new National Fund. We feel sure this reminder of the constant love of Shoghi Effendi, of the

high hopes he cherished for the future of the Faith there and the rapid unfoldment of its institutions, will serve to stimulate the friends to shoulder a greater measure of responsibility, to rise to fresh heights of service and self-sacrifice, and to prove worthy of all the blessings showered upon them by that wonderful being who led us from victory to victory with such selfless and self-sacrificing devotion for thirty-six years.

The bonds of long and close association with the sister community of Germany must not be severed; on the contrary these two great German-speaking countries should continue to cooperate in the teaching work, in the field of Bahá'í publications, and in the tasks allotted to them by the Master, as well as the Guardian, at the time when they formed one unit, namely, the propagation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh not only throughout Europe but particularly in the Balkan area and eastwards into the Russian zone of influence and the Soviet Republic itself.

In their constant efforts to propagate the Cause of God in a land that forms a meeting place between East and West, where ancient customs and new philosophies meet, and where they must seek to attract people from all walks of life, the members of this community can find no better guidance than in these inspiring words of their Guardian: "They must be neither provocative nor supine, neither fanatical nor excessively liberal, in their exposition of the fundamental and distinguishing features of their Faith. They must be either wary or bold, they must act swiftly or mark time, they must use the direct or indirect method, they must be challenging or conciliatory, in strict accordance with the spiritual receptivity of the soul with whom they come in contact, whether he be a nobleman or a commoner . . . a layman or a priest, a capitalist or a socialist, a statesman or a prince, an artisan or a beggar. In their presentation of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh they must neither hesitate nor falter. They must be neither contemptuous of the poor nor timid before the great. In their exposition of its verities they must neither overstress nor whittle down the truth which they champion, whether their hearer belong to royalty, or be a prince of the church, or a politician, or a tradesman, or a man of the street. To all alike, high or low, rich or poor, they must proffer, with open hands, with a radiant heart, with

an eloquent tongue, with infinite patience, with uncompromising loyalty, with great wisdom, with unshakeable courage, the Cup of Salvation at so critical an hour, to the confused, the hungry, the distraught and fear-stricken multitudes, in the north, in the west, in the south and in the heart, of that sorely tried continent.”

Bahá'u'lláh has promised them victory; let them go forward with His assurance in their hearts: “This is the Day in which God’s most excellent favours have been poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things.” “This is the Day whereon the Ocean of God’s mercy hath been manifested unto men, the Day in which the Day Star of His loving-kindness hath shed its radiance upon them, the Day in which the clouds of His bountiful favour have overshadowed the whole of mankind.” “Speed ye forth from the horizon of power, in the name of your Lord, the Unconstrained, and announce unto His servants, with wisdom and eloquence, the tidings of this Cause, whose splendour hath been shed upon the world of being.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JUNE 7, 1959

GRATEFUL REMARKABLE RESPONSE BELIEVERS APPEAL
RIDVAN MESSAGE SECOND ARMY PIONEERS NEW
IMPETUS TEACHING ACTIVITY HOMEFRONTS STOP
STRONG EVIDENCE BAHA'U'LLAH'S INVINCIBLE HOSTS
GATHERING FORCES PREPARATION CONQUEST
REMAINING GOALS BELOVED GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE
STOP PERSIAN AMERICAN DEPUTIZATION PLAN
RECEIVING ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE LONG-SUFFERING
DEDICATED SELF-SACRIFICING FRIENDS CRADLE FAITH
WHOSE INITIAL PLEDGE WILL ASSIST MANY PIONEERS
PROCEED POSTS VITAL GOAL AREAS EUROPE LATIN
AMERICA STOP ENCOURAGING NEWS RECEIVED WORLD
CENTRE IMPELS US SHARE FOLLOWING HIGHLIGHTS
CONTINUOUS PROGRESS GLOBAL CRUSADE STOP OVER

THREE SCORE NEW LOCAL ASSEMBLIES FORMED
PERSIAN HOMEFRONT SURPASSING ALL PREVIOUS
RECORDS STOP IN CENTRAL EAST AFRICAN
TERRITORIES ALONE OVER 2300 NEW BELIEVERS
ENROLLED PAST YEAR TOTAL NOW NEARLY 6500 STOP
77 NEW LOCAL ASSEMBLIES FORMED KENYA
TANGANYIKA UGANDA TOTAL ENTIRE AREA NOW
EXCEEDS 250 STOP IN INDONESIA NUMBER CENTRES
INCREASED FROM 30 TO 150 IN BRIEF SPAN ONE YEAR
STOP IN JAVA ALONE 97 CENTRES NOW ESTABLISHED
COMPARED ONLY 8 YEARS AGO NUMBER ADHERENTS
FAITH THAT COUNTRY NOW OVER 900 REPRESENTING
NINE-FOLD INCREASE PAST YEAR STOP CALL UPON
BELIEVERS EAST WEST ARISE SHOULDER GOD-GIVEN
RESPONSIBILITIES SUPPORT PRESENT PLANS FOR
SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION PRECIOUS UNIQUE HISTORY-
MAKING CRUSADE BEING UNDERTAKEN THIRTY-ONE
NATIONAL REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES CREATED BY BELOVED
GUARDIAN STOP CONFIDENT TOTAL VICTORY WITHIN
REACH IF ALL HEARTS TURN BAHA'U'LLAH SUPPLICATING
HIS UNFAILING ASSISTANCE UNITED WHOLEHEARTED
DEDICATED EFFORT FULFIL PRESENT PHASE ABDU'L-
BAHA'S DIVINE PLAN STOP SHARE MESSAGE HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JUNE 14, 1959

ANNOUNCE WITH PROFOUND GRATITUDE FULFILMENT
ONE MOST DIFFICULT GOALS BELOVED GUARDIAN'S
WORLD CRUSADE IDENTIFICATION REMAINS COUSIN BAB
SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER CEMETERY EVIDENCE UNFAILING
GRACE BAHA'U'LLAH VOUCHSAFED HIS FAITHFUL
FOLLOWERS STOP SHARE JOYFUL NEWS HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause throughout the World

June 30, 1959

Beloved Co-workers:

As you know, it is the responsibility of the Custodians to call the Annual Meeting of the Hands of the Cause. After prayerful consultation we have selected the period of October 23-November 1, 1959 (both dates inclusive) as the time for this year's Conclave.

This is just a brief notice to enable all of you to make your plans. Later we shall send you a suggested agenda for this important meeting.

With our warmest greetings and loving prayers,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**To the National Spiritual Assemblies formed during Ridván,
1959**

September 2, 1959

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Shortly after the passing of the beloved Guardian, the Hands in the Holy Land, acting upon the advice of our attorney, secured from each of the National Assemblies then in existence a letter recognizing the body of nine Hands serving in the Holy Land as the supreme body of the Faith, pending the establishment of the Universal House of Justice.

We enclose a photostat of a legal document, signed by the twenty-six Hands of the Cause present at the Conference in the Mansion of Bahjí in November, 1957, setting up the body of nine Hands to act on behalf of all the Hands of the Cause, under the legal title "The Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith".

Our attorney advises us that we should have a similar letter from each new National Assembly after it is formed. We therefore request

that your Assembly adopt such a resolution, which should include the following sentence:

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith selected by the Hands of the Cause.

This should be incorporated in a letter sent to us by your Assembly, signed by the Chairman and the Secretary.

The names of the nine Hands originally chosen appear on the photostat enclosed. The Custodians are empowered to call upon any of the other Hands to serve temporarily as a substitute for those unable for the time being to be present in the Holy Land.

Please keep the enclosed photostat in a safe place, but we ask you not to display it or give it general circulation.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**GERMAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY CARE BAHÁ'IRAT
FRANKFURT**

SEPTEMBER 2, 1959

ADDRESS SPECIAL APPEAL GERMAN BAHÁ'IS OLD WELL-
TRIED FAITHFUL COMMUNITY HEART EUROPEAN
CONTINENT ARISE SEND PIONEERS ASSIST YOUTHFUL
NEIGHBOURING BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITIES SCANDINAVIAN
BENELUX ITALO SWISS AREAS STOP CONVINCED THEIR
SELF-SACRIFICING SERVICES TEACHING FIELD THIS
CRITICAL JUNCTURE EXECUTION BELOVED GUARDIAN'S
WORLD CRUSADE CAN BE INSTRUMENTAL ENSURING
ESTABLISHMENT NEW ASSEMBLIES SPECIFIED BY
GUARDIAN ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE FORMATION
FORTHCOMING INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
CONSTITUTING PILLARS UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE
STOP RECALLING REPEATED BLESSINGS SHOWERED

UPON THEM BY CENTRE COVENANT WHO PERSONALLY VISITED ENCOURAGED THEM PROMISED THEM GREAT VICTORIES AND MINDFUL IMPORTANT ROLE DEVELOPMENT FAITH EUROPE CONFERRED UPON THEM BY BELOVED GUARDIAN LET THEM NOW DEMONSTRATE THEIR GRATITUDE WORTHINESS DIVINE BESTOWALS THROUGH RUSHING AID FELLOW EUROPEAN BELIEVERS FEW IN NUMBER BUT VALIANTLY STRUGGLING WIN GOALS THEIR HOMEFRONTS STOP PLACING SPECIAL FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS GERMAN PIONEER FUND DISPOSAL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FACILITATE DEPARTURE VOLUNTEERS THIS HISTORIC SERVICE PRAYING SHRINES ASSISTANCE BAHU'LLAH IMMEDIATE RESPONSE THIS CALL RAISED IN NAME MEMORY DEARLY LOVED GUARDIAN.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

September 11, 1959

Beloved Co-workers:

Enclosed is a suggested agenda for this year's Annual Meeting of the Hands of the Cause. The Custodians have prepared this tentative list of subjects in order that all of the Hands may give prayerful thought, in advance of the meeting, to the many matters upon which we must consult.

For obvious reasons this agenda should be kept completely confidential, and we request each of you to take special care that only the Hands themselves see it, or have knowledge of its contents.

We look forward to seeing you all in Haifa next month, and eagerly await the opportunity of consulting on ways and means of winning all the goals of our beloved Guardian's Plan.

Meanwhile we send you our warmest greetings and loving prayers.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

AGENDA - 1959 CONCLAVE

GENERAL SUBJECTS PRESENTED BY THE HANDS

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

ELECTION OF INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

STATUS OF WORLD CRUSADE

Local Assemblies

Temples

Formation of National Spiritual Assemblies

Other Unfinished Goals

ACTIVITIES OF THE HANDS

The Custodians

Functions of the Hands

Auxiliary Boards

Travel of Hands

To the National Spiritual Assemblies Formed in Recent Years

October 8, 1959

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

In connection with the plans formulated by your Assembly for the progress of the work in your area during the remaining years of the Crusade, we would like to call your attention to the fact that, although the beloved Guardian himself encouraged some of the Assemblies elected after the commencement of the Crusade to purchase Temple sites, he made it amply clear that such Temple sites should be in the nature of token purchases of land.

In other words, it is not necessary at the present stage of the unfold-ment of the Faith all over the world, when the principal objectives of the World Bahá'í Community are to spread the Cause of God and establish new Assemblies and national bodies, that the

Temple sites purchased be considered permanent in nature. A small area—even as little as two or three acres—would fulfil this goal for the time being. It could be purchased for a modest sum, and at a future date, if the situation were suitable, it could be added to by further purchases of land, or the original plot could be sold or exchanged, and a better site obtained by the believers.

We feel that it is very important for the elected representatives of the Bahá'ís to bear this instruction of the beloved Guardian in mind, so that the limited financial resources of the Faith can be used during the remaining years of the Crusade for the attainment of those objectives which are absolutely essential and were specified by him in the Ten Year Plan.

With warm Bahá'í greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

P.S. It should also be clearly understood that the financing of supplementary goals such as Temple sites must be assumed by the National Assemblies to whom these goals were assigned, without calling upon outside sources.

BAHA'I WILMETTE

OCTOBER 9, 1959

REJOICE ANNOUNCE ATTAINMENT DIFFICULT IMPORTANT
GOAL BELOVED GUARDIAN'S WORLD CRUSADE THROUGH
REMOVAL AFTER LAPSE OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS
REMAINS MIRZA BUZURG FATHER BAHA'U'LLAH AND
LOVING BEFITTING REINTERMENT BAHA'I BURIAL GROUND
VICINITY MOST GREAT HOUSE STOP SHARE HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

NOVEMBER 5, 1959

ANNOUNCE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES SELECTION
HORACE HOLLEY JOHN FERRABY MEMBERS BODY NINE
HANDS HOLY LAND REPLACING MASON REMEY HASAN
BALYUZI BOTH UNABLE SERVE PERMANENT CAPACITY
STOP HASAN BALYUZI HENCEFORTH WILL SERVE AS
ALTERNATE HAND HOLY LAND STOP HAPPY INFORM
BAHA'I WORLD HERMANN GROSSMANN PROCEEDING
LATIN AMERICA RESIDE DURATION CRUSADE ASSIST
PROSECUTION URGENT IMPORTANT TASKS WESTERN
HEMISPHERE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

November 7, 1959

Beloved Friends:

Enclosed is the Message sent by the body of the Hands of the Cause of God to the Bahá'ís of East and West from their third historic meeting in the Holy Land.

The vital decisions announced in this communication, affecting the course of Bahá'í history for centuries to come, will be such a source of joy to all the friends in your area that we ask you to share it with them immediately through your News Letter, or otherwise.

We are confident that the friends everywhere will now arise to make still greater sacrifices in the path of service and, with renewed zeal and dedication, carry forward the Holy Crusade of our beloved Guardian to total victory, and that glorious consummation which is promised for 1963.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

CONCLAVE MESSAGE

1959

From the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel

November 4, 1959

Beloved Friends:

The Hands of the Cause gathered in the precincts of the holiest spot on the entire planet have, after long and prayerful deliberations, made plans embracing those final steps which they feel must be taken by all the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in East and West in order to bring to a successful conclusion the World Crusade of our beloved Guardian.

Alarming little time is now left to us in which to accomplish his design. Well aware of the fact that this great Faith of Bahá'u'lláh stands in sore need of the erection of that infallible and supreme legislative Body which in the words of the Centre of the Covenant Himself "*God hath ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error*", and which the Guardian said "posterity will regard as the last refuge of a tottering civilization", we have fixed the date for the election of the Universal House of Justice as Ridván, 1963, coinciding with the termination of our glorious World Crusade and the celebration of the Most Great Jubilee commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.

As we look back over the past two years which have elapsed since that unforgettable and heart-breaking moment when we realized our beloved Guardian had been taken from us, we cannot but marvel at the protection which has been vouchsafed this Holy Cause. As one man the believers have rallied to the support of their Faith, closed their ranks, stood firm in the hour of supreme test and arisen to carry forward the World Crusade. The enemies of the Cause have been powerless to harm it, so complete has been the unity between the Bahá'ís of the world, so strong the confidence and support with which they have surrounded the Hands of the Cause. The numerous properties and resources of the Faith have been completely protected; the Government authorities of the State in

which the World Centre is situated have acknowledged the stewardship of the Faith as represented by the Hands of the Cause serving in the Holy Land on behalf of the Chief Stewards; the National and Regional Assemblies have supported, assisted and worked in the closest cooperation with this nucleus of Hands resident at the World Centre; a great wave of pioneers unprecedented since the inception of the Crusade, has arisen and is even now beginning to pour out to those goals most urgently in need of settlers and teachers; the Temples, so dear to the heart of the beloved Guardian, are in two continents rapidly reaching completion, and in a third, plans for its erection are now at long last being implemented. Profoundly thankful and encouraged as we are for these manifold blessings showered on us from on High in our hour of greatest darkness and need, we are nevertheless aware that from this instant until the end of the World Crusade there can be no rest for any of us if we are to achieve the goals of the Crusade.

We have therefore formulated the following plan of action which will enable the Bahá'í world to establish the Universal House of Justice in 1963, and which we now share with our fellow-believers.

We call for the election in Ridván 1961 of the twenty-one National Spiritual Assemblies of Latin America which will constitute some of the pillars of the Universal House of Justice in that region. This historic decision is based on the fact that we have every reason to hope and believe that the devoted band of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in those countries will succeed during the Ridván period of 1960 in forming those Spiritual Assemblies required of them by our beloved Guardian in the specific provisions he laid down for them in the World Crusade. Reports we have received from the Hands of the Cause who have visited those countries during the past year, as well as from the four Regional Assemblies responsible for the work in that area, have convinced us the time is ripe to make this joyous announcement to the Bahá'í world. We therefore urge the two Regional Assemblies of South America and the Regional Assembly of Central America as well as that of the Greater Antilles, in collaboration with the Hands of the Cause in the Western Hemisphere and the National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, to concentrate their attention, during the remaining months of

this Bahá'í year, on ensuring that those Local Assemblies which form the bedrock of these future national bodies may be formed next April.

In studying the world-wide state of the Ten Year Plan, we have been forced to realize that the election of the eleven independent National Assemblies which must, in accordance with the Plan of the Guardian, be established in the European continent before the end of the Crusade, is much more difficult and presents a greater challenge than is the case in Latin America as the Local Assemblies must be quadrupled rather than doubled. We have therefore set the date for the election of these European national bodies for Ridván, 1962. It is our conviction that with constant and concentrated effort and sacrifice, our objectives can be accomplished there and the requisite number of Local Assemblies be brought into being by Ridván, 1961. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ceylon will likewise be elected in 1962.

With the formation of these national bodies, and we trust, circumstances permitting, of the two others specified in the provisions of the Ten Year Plan, a wide and representative foundation for the Universal House of Justice will have been laid.

We are also happy to announce that another milestone in Bahá'í history will be reached with the election of the International Bahá'í Council during Ridván, 1961. The embryonic institution established and so highly extolled by the beloved Guardian will thus enter its final stage preceding the election of the Universal House of Justice. The members of all the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world, duly constituted in Ridván, 1960, will take part in a postal ballot to elect nine members to the International Council. This International Bahá'í Council is to work under the direction and supervision of the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, serve a two year term of office, and cease to exist upon the occasion of the election of the Universal House of Justice. All the Bahá'ís of the world, men and women alike, are eligible for election. As the Chief Stewards of the Faith are wholly occupied with specific tasks assigned them by the beloved Guardian and perforce assumed since his passing, they should not be considered for election to this Council. Two of the functions originally allotted to the Council by the

beloved Guardian, namely, to forge links with authorities of the State in which the World Centre is situated, and to conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities will still be discharged, and to them are added the following: To assist the Hands of the Cause in the care of the properties at the World Centre, and in the establishment of the Universal House of Justice; and in any other functions which the Hands may assign from time to time.

We wish to assure the believers that every effort will be made to establish a Bahá'í Court in the Holy Land prior to the date set for this election. We should however bear in mind that the Guardian himself clearly indicated this goal, due to the strong trend towards the secularization of Religious Courts in this part of the world, might not be achieved.

At this turning-point in the Crusade when all our forces must be unitedly concentrated on winning its goals, the friends should not be deflected from the vital tasks confronting them by discussion of such subjects as can only be considered when the Universal House of Justice is established. Therefore we feel it is necessary to recall the words in the Proclamation we sent out after the passing of the beloved Guardian: "When that divinely-ordained Body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause." This includes the subject of the Guardianship.

Aside from the pressing demands of the world-wide work of the Faith which must be met and administered from the Holy Land, and which require so much attention on the part of the Chief Stewards, plans are being formulated for the Hands to travel to various countries and lend the National Spiritual Assemblies their personal assistance during the months immediately ahead—and indeed until the end of the Crusade. These plans include visits to the Cradle of the Faith, where the vast majority of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh reside, to the Bahá'í communities in the United States and Canada, who constitute the chief prosecutors of the Divine Plan, to the Latin American countries where by 1961 so many National Assemblies must be formed, and to Europe, where another eleven of the future pillars of the Universal House of Justice must be erected by 1962.

In addition to these plans, the Hands, pursuant to the wishes of our beloved Guardian, are contemplating a much more intensive and wider use of the Auxiliary Board members in carrying out the work of the World Crusade, and a much closer cooperation between the Institution of the Hands and the National Spiritual Assemblies.

The importance of the plans made for the election of these National Assemblies as well as that of the International Bahá'í Council cannot be overestimated, because the above plans constitute the end of a forty-two-year-long prelude to that glorious consummation which will take place with the election of the Universal House of Justice in Ridván, 1963. Through the creation of this mighty Institution, the Formative Age of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh will have entered a new stage in its development; the thirty-six years of Shoghi Effendi's heart-breaking, self-sacrificing ministry will bear one of its fairest fruits, and that wondrous prophecy of Bahá'u'lláh be fulfilled: *"Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Erelong will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names."*

On the eve of the great victories which lie ahead and which we will befittingly celebrate on the occasion of the *"Most Great Festival"*, the *"King of Festivals"*, the *"Festival of God"* Himself, let us recall the glorious appeal and promise in these words of our Guardian: "Dearly-beloved friends! . . . Ours is the duty to fix our gaze with undeviating attention on the duties and responsibilities confronting us at this present hour, to concentrate our resources, both material and spiritual, on the tasks that lie immediately ahead, to ensure that no time is wasted, that no opportunity is missed, that no obligation is evaded, that no task is half-heartedly performed, that no decision is procrastinated. The task summoning us to a challenge, unprecedented in its gravity and force, is too vast and sacred, the time too short, the hour too perilous, the workers too few, the call too insistent, the resources too inadequate, for us to allow these precious and fleeting hours to slip from our grasp, and to suffer the prizes within our reach to be endangered or forfeited. So much

depends upon us, so pregnant with possibilities is the present stage in the evolution of the Plan, that great and small, individuals, groups and Assemblies, white and coloured, young and old, neophytes and veterans, settlers, pioneers, itinerant teachers and administrators, as isolated believers, as organizers of groups, and as contributors to the formation of Local or National Assemblies, as builders of the Temple, as labourers on the home teaching front . . . all, without exception and in every sphere of activity, however modest, restricted, or inconspicuous, must participate and labour, assiduously and continually, until every ounce of our energy is spent, until, tired but blissful, our promised harvest is brought in, and our pledge to our Beloved fully redeemed.”

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih	A. Furutan
Amelia Collins	Zikrullah Khadem
Leroy Ioas	William Sears
Horace Holley	John Robarts
Sh. Alai	John Ferraby
Ugo Giachery	Jalal Khazeh
Adelbert Mühlischlegel	Enoch Olinga
H. Collis Featherstone	Agnes B. Alexander
Paul E. Haney	Tarázu'lláh Samandarí
A. Q. Faizi	M. B. [Músá Banání]
Hermann Grossmann	Hasan M. Balyuzi

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

December 4, 1959

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Since the passing of our dearly beloved Guardian, we feel ever increasingly the necessity of protecting the many invaluable instructions and interpretations which he gave to the Bahá'ís all over the world during the thirty-six years of his Guardianship. No copies for the most part were kept by him of his letters, whether written in handwriting or typed by his various secretaries. This includes the precious postscripts on these letters which were written in his own handwriting.

This sacred reservoir of his guidance must be preserved for posterity, and we feel no time should be lost in making fresh appeals to the be-lievers to send immediately either the original letters they have received from Shoghi Effendi regardless of subject matter, or authenticated copies to your National Assembly for preservation in your archives.

We would like you to send a duplicate copy or the original, whichever you prefer, to us of any material of this nature you receive, so that it can be preserved in the International Archives here.

We also take this opportunity of asking your Assembly to take immediate steps to see that all copies of his letters to your body are forwarded to the World Centre for our information and for careful preservation here.

We know that in many cases in the history of our Faith, words of supreme importance regarding the conduct of its affairs were written by the Founders of our Faith, the Master and the Guardian in letters to individuals and Assemblies. Now that the time is drawing near for the formation of the Universal House of Justice, all material available pertaining to the Cause, its direction, the interpretation of its teachings etc. is urgently needed for future reference. We request you therefore to start collecting such material yourself at once and send copies on to us as soon as possible.

With loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**To the Hands of the Cause of God and the National Assemblies
of the Bahá'í World**

December 22, 1959

Dearly loved Friends:

Forty months are left to us to finish our beloved Guardian's holy Crusade. In these months that lie immediately ahead we have to bend every effort in order to achieve that supreme task. Time is swiftly passing, and every moment of these fast-fleeting days is immeasurably precious. That which stands supremely important over

and above everything else, to which we must look every day of the year until the appointed time is reached, is the fulfilment of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade.

Forty years ago in the darkest days of the First World War, the Master revealed the Tablets of the Divine Plan. The beloved Guardian laboured over thirty-six agony-laden years to raise the Administrative Order and make it a fit instrument for the implementation of the Plan which the Master had laid down for us. *“The most important of all things”,* says ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, *“is the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world. Teaching the Cause is of utmost importance for it is the head cornerstone of the foundation itself.”* For the accomplishment of this paramount purpose, the beloved Guardian assiduously built the Local and the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá’í world. He often reminded us that the perfecting of the Administrative Order and the administrative procedure, was not to be an end in itself.

Our Beloved in the very last message which he sent to the Bahá’ís of the World, in October, 1957, told us that we were about to enter the fourth phase of the Crusade, and in that weighty, vital and fate-laden message, his last command and his last behest was that this fourth phase “must be immortalized . . . by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the countries of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá’í centres . . .” To the accomplishment of this command, and the fulfilment of this behest, we must now direct our undivided attention. Thus we will be assured of victory everywhere, in new fields as well as old, in countries whose goal is to establish independent National Assemblies, as well as those where the home-front goals are themselves a major task. Whilst valiant pioneers go out, determined and dedicated, to their posts, a movement that must be well planned and urgently accelerated, every effort must be made to greatly intensify the work of teaching everywhere. It is the sacred duty of every Bahá’í to teach. It is also the inescapable duty of all Assemblies, Local and National, not only to organize the work of teaching, but to give all

possible assistance to individuals who arise to carry out this pre-eminent task.

We should bear in mind that by naming the Hands of the Cause the “Chief Stewards of Bahá’u’lláh’s embryonic World Commonwealth”, the beloved Guardian has conferred upon them, as the last act of his life, specific and particular responsibilities which they must discharge. But another specific duty which devolves equally and unequivocally upon both the Hands of the Cause of God and the National Spiritual Assemblies, is to implement fully and immediately the instruction of the beloved Guardian, contained in his message of June 4th, 1957:

“Call upon Hands and National Assemblies, each continent separately, to establish henceforth direct contact and deliberate, whenever feasible, as frequently as possible, to exchange reports to be submitted by their respective Auxiliary Boards and national committees, to exercise unrelaxing vigilance and carry out unflinchingly their sacred, inescapable duties. The security of our precious Faith, the preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá’í communities, the vitality of the faith of its individual members, the proper functioning of its laboriously erected institutions, the fruition of its world-wide enterprises, the fulfilment of its ultimate destiny, all are directly dependent upon the befitting discharge of the weighty responsibilities now resting upon the members of these two institutions, occupying, with the Universal House of Justice, next to the Institution of the Guardianship, foremost rank in the divinely ordained administrative hierarchy of the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh.”

The words of the beloved Guardian and the action they indicate, are manifestly clear. The Hands of the Cause and the National Spiritual Assemblies must for the welfare of our beloved Faith and in compliance with our Guardian’s instruction, establish this close collaboration at the earliest possible moment. Meeting as frequently as possible, they should at the same time exchange their reports, and keep one another informed of all the developments in every aspect of the work so dear to all our hearts. These two institutions must therefore assist each other in every way to speedily accomplish the remaining goals of the Crusade.

We are on the last lap, and the road that leads to the completion of the Beloved's Holy Crusade, to total triumph, to the Most Great Jubilee, to the crowning glory of the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, is indeed difficult and beset by many formidable obstacles. But the beam of our Guardian's guidance shines as bright as ever, and as long as we keep within the path of that light and follow its course, there is nothing to fear and we are assured of victory.

The requisites of this pressing hour are unwavering resolve, clear vision, prompt action. We pray ardently at the Sacred Thresholds that our combined efforts may be blessed, and that we may all give adequate expression in our deeds, to the love that we bear in our hearts for our Guardian.

With deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS**

1960

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

January 8, 1960

Beloved Co-workers:

Reports received from all parts of the Bahá'í world tell of the enthusiasm of the friends over the message sent from the recent gathering of the Hands held in Bahjí. The National Assemblies, as well as many of the believers, have assured us that this message has greatly inspired them and they have pledged the fullest support in carrying out the detailed plans we have made for the fulfilment of the supremely important objective of establishing the requisite number of Local and National Assemblies by Ridván, 1962. This response has greatly encouraged us and we hasten to share this good news with you all.

As we all realized in Bahjí, the complete unity of the Hands of the Faith at this crucial time is essential to ensure the triumph of the Plan of our beloved Guardian and the glorious consummation of the establishment of the Universal House of Justice in 1963. Above all, we must adhere strictly to the solemn agreement we made to limit all discussions of the Guardianship to the references made in the messages from our three Conclaves. The same of course applies with equal force to our agreement that none of us would express any view individually concerning the question of the eligibility of the Hands for membership on the Universal House of Justice, but would simply refer the friends to the Writings of the Central Figures of the Faith, including those of the beloved Guardian.

We have recently written a letter to all National and Regional Assemblies, asking them to refrain from publishing or printing any new treatises or statements relating to the Administrative Order in its present stage and to the question of the Guardianship. There have been one or two instances of such things being published which might cause confusion and unnecessary discussion amongst the friends. We therefore felt it imperative to take action before other material of this nature appeared. The response of the Assemblies concerned has been very cooperative when we called this matter to their attention.

We have received word that some of the Hands have not been sufficiently careful in strictly observing the understandings which we reached, particularly that no comment whatsoever would be made concerning the Guardianship or its future except as outlined in our three messages.

We call this to your attention because we are fearful that the least infraction of this most important matter on the part of any Hand may lead to very serious consequences throughout the Bahá'í world.

When we visit the sacred Shrines, we pray most ardently for each and every one of you and for the success of the great work you are carrying forward in such a sacrificial and effective manner.

We send loving Bahá'í greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

February 11, 1960

Dear Fellow-Hands:

It was agreed at the Conclave that the Hands residing in the Holy Land should from time to time circulate some of the news contained in the reports and letters that flow in to the World Centre. We enclose the first of these News Letters which we trust you will find helpful in your teaching and other activities.

We are asking the National Assemblies to share this with the friends through their own News Letters.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

February 11, 1960

Beloved Friends:

Enclosed is a communication from the World Centre, giving some highlights on the progress of the Faith, gleaned from news reaching Haifa from all over the Bahá'í world.

We feel that such a News Letter from the Holy Land, which we plan to issue from time to time, will be of interest to the friends and provide a source of inspiration and encouragement.

Please share this bulletin with the believers in your area through your News Letter.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

NEWS FROM THE WORLD CENTRE OF THE FAITH

February 11, 1960

Dearly beloved Friends:

The Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land have received many requests for news direct from the World Centre, and it has been our hope for some time to share with the believers selections from the glad-tidings which reach us here.

The two years which have elapsed since the passing of our dearly beloved Guardian have imposed such heavy burdens that it has been impossible hitherto for us to undertake this informal news letter to the friends, which we hope to be able to send out from time to time in the future.

Through the grace of Bahá'u'lláh, the day-to-day work of the World Centre has continued very much as it did in the time of our beloved Guardian, but of course without the divine inspiration, the wondrous wisdom and love which it then received through the Sign of God on earth.

As the friends have no doubt noticed from the correspondence coming from the Hands in the Holy Land, we have been blessed with the assistance on different occasions of many of our fellow-Hands. That is why the signatures on the letters are not the same at different

times. Some of us are occasionally absent for necessary reasons, and then one or more of the Hands from another place has come to our assistance and acted as a substitute. This has greatly enriched our meetings by bringing us the viewpoints of our fellow-Hands, and enabling them to acquire an intimate experience with the problems facing the Bahá'í world in the course of the prosecution of the Ten Year Crusade.

In view of the vast territories of the Western Hemisphere, and the fact that two of the Hands of the Faith of that area have moved to the Holy Land, for service at the World Centre, it was decided at the recent Conclave of the Hands that in addition to William Sears, Hermann Grossmann should serve as a Hand of the Western Hemisphere for the remainder of the Crusade. He is now in South America, actively assisting the two South American Regional Assemblies in the attainment of their Crusade goals.

Many of the Hands, realizing how little time is left to us to achieve the World Crusade goals of our beloved Guardian are now engaged in extensive travels. Ugo Giachery is making a tour of Central America. John Robarts has left Africa for an extended visit to Canada to assist the friends in attaining their home-front goals. Adelbert Mühlischlegel is spending some months in Scandinavia and Finland, assisting the Regional Assembly of these countries in the all-important work of teaching and consolidation. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, one of the Hands serving in the Holy Land, is at present making a lengthy visit to Iran, encouraging the believers to arise as pioneers for centres abroad, as well as in Iran itself. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í is visiting centres in the Indian sub-continent, the Northern Pacific region, and Japan. The other continental Hands are carrying on their activities at a heightened pace. At the present time the Hand of the Cause Tarázu'lláh Samandarí is working in Haifa on the identification of the handwriting of the innumerable Tablets collected in the International Bahá'í Archives. His long association with the Faith, dating from the days of the Blessed Beauty Himself, has made him familiar to a unique degree with the penmanship of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and their various amanuenses, and ideally fits him for this important service.

The prominence of the edifices associated with the World Centre of the Faith is steadily increasing in Israel, like a constellation that mounts the heavens as the hours advance. The peace and beauty which streams from the inner Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the splendour of the Haram-i-Aqdas which surrounds it; the Shrine of the Báb, the International Archives Building, and the extensive surrounding gardens of both buildings, are becoming recognized more and more as outstanding sites in this country. Indeed it can be truly said that nothing comparable to these buildings and gardens exists anywhere in Israel, or for that matter on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Innumerable postcards, greeting cards, photographs and books publicize the Holy Shrines and their environs in Haifa and 'Akká. A ceaseless stream of tourists from abroad and from different towns in Israel flows into the Shrine gardens daily; tour buses and school buses pour hundreds of sight-seers into the Bahá'í Holy Places; and there can be no doubt that just as the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in America is a great silent teacher, as the Master said it would be, so the Shrines here have likewise become mighty teachers of the Faith. We feel sure that in the future a rich harvest will be reaped from the many souls who have visited their sacred precincts. It is surprising how many of the visitors inform the friends who show them around that they have Bahá'í friends or relatives in other countries. Ten years ago this was a remark rarely heard, but it is now becoming commonplace, and testifies to the extraordinary progress the Faith has made all over the world—a progress directly attributable to the unremitting labours, the determination and the self-sacrifice of our beloved Guardian.

The plans made by him are continually bearing fruit. Since his passing, with the exception of a few remaining territories in the Soviet zone of influence, every single virgin country specified by him in the Ten Year Crusade has been opened to the Faith. Paul Adams succeeded, as the friends know, in opening Spitzbergen in 1958, and this devoted young Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, after overcoming many difficulties, was able to return this winter to that far northern outpost. During the last few months Jeanne Frankel and her mother, Margaret Bates, were able to enter the Cocos Islands. This goal of the Ten Year Plan had been previously opened to the Faith by Frank

Wyss, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh from Australia. Unfortunately he was refused permission to remain, but Jeanne has been more fortunate, and the wonderful news has recently reached us that she now has a group of Bahá'ís in that far-off tropical island. Great indeed is the power of Bahá'u'lláh!

It is not possible to go into details of the progress being made all over the world; however, some of the highlights are indeed thrilling. Recently in Swaziland the Faith has been listed as a fourth religion by the Government. Last year it was possible for Collis Featherstone to visit, at the invitation of some of the Maori chiefs in New Zealand, a centre of Maori culture and to present the Faith to the leaders of the people. As all religious teaching has been forbidden in that area because of the conflicts the different Christian sects aroused amongst the people, this was indeed a unique honour conferred by the Maori leaders upon a representative of our Faith. The chiefs were deeply impressed and requested that literature be left for their people to study. The third all-American Indian Bahá'í Assembly was formed last April in Bolivia, and since then many hundreds of Indians have entered the Faith—outstanding steps toward fulfilment of one of the dearest hopes of the beloved Guardian, who urged the friends on many occasions to remember the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Divine Plan, that if the original inhabitants of America accepted the Faith they would become as enkindled as the original inhabitants of Arabia who accepted the Prophet Muhammad.

Among the many outstanding advances in Africa may be cited the extraordinary number of enrolments in Uganda and Kenya, which are now on such a scale as to present a serious problem to the administrative bodies responsible. There are just not enough Bahá'ís to keep up with the work of checking the declaration cards that come in! The mass conversion desired and foretold by the beloved Guardian is now taking place in this area, as well as in the Malayan Archipelago and other areas of the Pacific. It presents a great challenge and a wonderful hope for the future. Schools run by Bahá'ís for the Africans are perforce increasing throughout the continent as the Faith spreads and the Bahá'í membership increases so rapidly.

In view of the urgent need for pioneers to fill the goals in Latin America and Europe, it is encouraging to note that there is a strong internal movement of pioneers. At least ten German Bahá'ís have arisen and volunteered to go to the aid of their sister communities in neighbouring countries. This is a great step forward, as the German Bahá'í Community has had special responsibilities and honours conferred upon it by both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian. In Latin America also, many pioneers are leaving the established communities, to settle in the goal cities where Local Assemblies must be formed this coming Ridván.

Plans for the construction of the Mother Temple of Europe in Frankfurt are at last beginning to take concrete form. The German National Spiritual Assembly, in view of past frustrating experiences had refused to purchase outright the Temple property until such time as permission to build was assured from the authorities. This now having at last been obtained, the deeds to the property have been transferred to the name of the Assembly. The architect's working drawings are well under way, and as soon as weather permits, actual work on the site will be commenced. As the friends are aware, the Mother Temple of Africa, situated in Kampala, will be dedicated at the beginning of next summer. The Mother Temple of Australia is advancing at a rapid pace, and although the exterior of the building may be completed by the coming Ridván, plans for its dedication are being made for the following year, in other words, 1961. The funds for these two Temples, thanks to the munificence of the beloved Guardian himself, and the generosity of the believers, have been assured; but the greater part of the funds needed to construct the German Temple has still to be raised, and this presents a serious challenge to the Bahá'ís throughout the world in completing this vital goal of the Fourth Phase of the Crusade before 1963.

The many pilgrims who visited the Holy Land will remember how often the beloved Guardian mentioned his heavy burdens, and that he was over-worked and concerned over the multitudinous problems which faced him. This work and these problems have fallen to the lot of the Hands of the Faith, who have been obliged and privileged to assume the burden at the World Centre. We ask the believers to remember us in their prayers as we remember them in ours in the

Holy Shrines. We realize that only the grace of Bahá'u'lláh can assist us all—His followers all over the world—to bring to a successful conclusion the mighty plan of our beloved Guardian. We also realize, however, that the grace of God must be attracted by a magnet in this world. The magnet, we know, is purity of heart, dedication in service, obedience to the Divine commands, and willingness to sacrifice. We urge all of the friends, whoever they are and wherever they are serving, whatever their station in life, their age, their education or abilities, to remember their individual and collective responsibility for executing the Plan of God. Let them study the Guardian's World Crusade, and determine in what manner locally, nationally, on the home front or in the international arena they can most effectively assist in laying the foundation of that supreme edifice, the Universal House of Justice.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

February 21, 1960

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We would like to remind you of our request that all National Spiritual Assemblies submit semi-annual reports to reach the Holy Land not later than October 15 and March 15. The information you send us each year in the March 15 report is of great assistance in preparing our Ridván Message to the Annual Conventions, which summarizes the progress of the Faith throughout the world. It is vital that these reports reach Haifa not later than March 15.

Our previous communications have outlined the specific information to be included in these reports. This next report should include, in addition to the number of Assemblies, groups and isolated centres, a brief summary of the status of the settlement of the goal cities chosen to achieve the vitally important home-front objectives in your area, as well as a list of teaching conferences and schools held in your territory since last Ridván. The report should also include any particularly noteworthy or interesting achievements during the past

year, whether they represent World Crusade victories or the achievement of supplementary goals.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

RIDVÁN MESSAGE 1960

To Annual Bahá'í Conventions

Dearly beloved Friends:

Another twelve months of important Bahá'í events have revolved upon the mighty axis of our beloved Guardian's divinely inspired, world encompassing Crusade. Once again, at this blessed Ridván period, we pause to survey the accomplishments of the past year, to enumerate its victories and to assess the tasks that still lie ahead ere we reach the goal of 1963 and enter upon the celebration of the supreme Jubilee of our Faith, the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission—a Mission which casts its light forward over five hundred thousand years of human destiny. We Bahá'ís may well raise our hearts in thanksgiving to Him for the constant evidences of His unfailing grace, protection and guidance vouchsafed to us, the small but faithful band of His followers scattered throughout the populous and ancient centres of culture in both the East and the West, throughout the wildernesses of Africa and the New World, and the far-flung islands of the seas. In spite of the heavy blow we received so recently through earthly separation from our Guardian—a blow from which our hearts still bleed; in spite of our frailty as chosen instruments of God; in spite of the fewness of our numbers in the face of the teeming millions as yet unaware of the advent of the Promised One of all ages; in spite of the circumscribed nature of our material resources—in spite of all these things we witness that this Faith of ours is receiving an uninterrupted impetus from the Will of Bahá'u'lláh and that its nascent institutions, given to us by Him, elaborated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and erected by

Shoghi Effendi, are multiplying in number, growing in strength, casting down deeper roots into the life of society, increasing in prestige and demonstrating the power nascent within them which must flower eventually into a World Civilization and bring about that Golden Age which will in truth be the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth.

The process of knitting the Bahá'í world together and coordinating its far-flung activities, which was carried on from the World Centre of our Faith by the beloved Guardian, has steadily continued since his passing and bears witness to the enduring foundations he laid during the thirty-six years of unremitting toil and self-sacrifice which characterized his ministry. The brilliance of his planning, the far-reaching vision which inspired his decisions, the vitality of the Administrative Order he built up during his lifetime, continue to bear fruit. The "heart and nerve centre" of the Faith, the hub into which the spokes of this mighty wheel of God, this New World Order, fit has continued to function with unabated vitality, receiving its spiritual impetus from the twin Holy Shrines in which are laid to rest the Twin Manifestations of God for this Day, and pouring this life-force into the world-wide Community of the followers of the Most Great Name, in spite of having so recently passed through one of the worst crises in one hundred and seventeen years of Bahá'í history. The Ten Year Plan, the latest step in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan designed to bring about the spiritual conquest of the entire globe, has forged ahead in a truly miraculous manner since that grievous and fateful November day in 1957 which witnessed the removal of its guiding force, its Commander-in-Chief, the designer of its every phase, and the one to whom its prosecutors, whether Hands, Board members, administrative bodies, pioneers or teachers, looked for words of encouragement and guidance and from whom they eagerly anticipated receiving that measure of reward or acclaim that he in his wisdom and love might bestow upon them.

Not only has the unity of the Faith been protected, the plans of its enemies forestalled and its properties safeguarded, but the spirit of the believers has not faltered in the darkest hour of test. We may truly say that it is this great pact of faith in the hearts of the friends that has held the Cause steadily on the course chartered for it by its

Guardian, and has been the magnet attracting so many new souls to the Faith during the past two years. It is this force of faith in Bahá'u'lláh and love for Him that has swept the Bahá'ís of the world forward to such astonishing victories as the establishment during this present Ridván period of the entire number of Spiritual Assemblies specified by the beloved Guardian in the Ten Year Plan as the necessary foundation for the future independent national Bahá'í bodies of Latin America. Those responsible for this feat obeyed his behest to “. . . set their faces towards those fields that still remain unexplored and direct their steps to those goals that are as yet unattained, assured that He Who has led them to achieve such triumphs . . . will continue to assist them in enriching their spiritual birthright to a degree that no finite mind can imagine or human heart perceive.” How shining are the evidences that this promised support has been vouchsafed to them by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. Last Ridván, with so many Local Assemblies still needed in Latin America, the heights still to be scaled seemed unattainable; this Ridván the banner of conquest floats proudly from every hilltop. How greatly must Shoghi Effendi's heart rejoice!

The truly extraordinary evidences of progress throughout the entire range of Bahá'í activity should cause us all to ponder anew the mysterious power of this Faith, to marvel at the secret springs that so constantly feed its needs, and to supplicate that during the coming year a still greater measure of Bahá'u'lláh's loving protection, His all-conquering strength, His unfailing guidance, may be vouchsafed to us in the prosecution of the beloved Guardian's mighty Crusade. With humble gratitude for the untiring and consecrated labours of our fellow-believers and deep joy in their achievements, we share with the friends the truly remarkable list of the major events and victories of this past year.

The number of territories comprising the World Community of the Most Great Name has now risen to the impressive total of two hundred and fifty-six, including all of the one hundred and thirty-one original virgin goals of the World Crusade listed by our beloved Guardian, with the exception of ten territories within the Soviet orbit. One of the most difficult objectives of the Ten Year Plan, Hainan Island, has recently been opened by a stalwart Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

of Chinese origin, adding another pearl to that chain of islands girdling the Asiatic mainland.

The steady process of multiplication of localities where Bahá'ís reside in all parts of the globe has raised the total of these centres to over five thousand eight hundred, far exceeding “the goal of five thousand Bahá'í centres in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres” called for by our beloved Guardian in his Ridván Message three short years ago. More than thirteen hundred localities have been added since his passing, over six hundred of these during the past year alone.

This uninterrupted expansion, brought about by the twin processes of dispersion and enrolment of new believers, has brought the number of such centres in the Goal Countries of Europe to more than a hundred and forty; in Germany and Austria, to a hundred and forty-eight; in the British Isles to a hundred and fifty-one; in Australasia and in the Dominion of Canada, respectively, to nearly a hundred and sixty; in the Indian sub-continent to a hundred and eighty; in Latin America to nearly three hundred and forty; in the Pacific area to over five hundred; in Persia to more than one thousand and seventy; in the African continent to eleven hundred and forty; and in the United States of America to nearly fifteen hundred and seventy.

In the African continent and throughout the Pacific region, areas encompassing almost half of the original one hundred and thirty-one virgin territories to be opened during the World Crusade, extraordinary progress continues to be made, the rate of increase far surpassing that in any other parts of the world and bearing conclusive witness to the spiritual vitality in the hearts of their indigenous peoples. As evidence of this mighty process of conversion now taking place, we may cite the fact that over four hundred new centres have been added in Africa during the past two years, and over two hundred in the Pacific region during the last twelve months. In Latin America, the scene next year of the formation of no less than twenty-one new National Spiritual Assemblies, more than a hundred centres have been added since last Ridván, a feat the magnitude of which cannot be sufficiently stressed when one considers the vast territory involved and the

relatively small number of believers able to carry forward the work of the Crusade.

The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, referred to by our Guardian as the “foundation of the edifice of a rising Order”, is rapidly approaching one thousand five hundred, reflecting an increase of almost two hundred in each of the last two Ridván periods. Of these more than two hundred and forty are now incorporated.

Over half of the thirty-one National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies now established have achieved the Crusade goal of incorporation, seventeen having so far secured this legal registration, the latest being the energetic National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Burma, which has just received, less than a year after its own formation, official recognition by the Government of the Union of Burma.

Translations of the continually expanding literature of the Faith have now been made in two hundred and sixty-eight different languages, representing an increase of nearly one hundred and eighty since the inception of the Crusade. Ninety-six of these are supplementary to those originally specified by our beloved Guardian in the Ten Year Plan. During the Crusade years Bahá'í literature has been translated into all of the European languages called for in the Plan; into eighty-two of the indigenous languages of Asia; sixty-five of Africa; and over twenty in the Americas.

Progress in erecting the three great Mother Temples of Africa, Australasia and Europe is steadily continuing. Practically three years before the end of the World Crusade the beautiful and highly suitable Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at present reaching completion in the heart of Africa, will be dedicated, during this coming August, at a ceremony attended by believers from many districts and territories of what was once known as the “dark continent” but now shines as one of the brightest regions of the entire Bahá'í world. The Temple in Sydney, Australia, is rising at a rapid pace, and already this great “silent teacher” of the Antipodes is attracting wide publicity and the attention of thousands of people who pass by it daily on an adjacent main highway. It is anticipated that its dedication will take place early in 1961. The plans for the European Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, long the

subject of opposition on the part of certain church elements in Germany, are now well advanced and it is hoped that construction can commence during the coming months at the Temple site near Frankfurt. These historic first steps in the process of erecting Houses of Worship and their attendant institutions, which play such an important part in the Bahá'í society envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, are being followed up and supported through the purchase of many sites for future Temples. During the past year, Japan, Austria, Bolivia, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic have acquired plots of land for this purpose, raising the number of such sites since the inauguration of the Ten Year Plan to the truly impressive total of thirty-three.

Among the many other properties added in various parts of the world during the past year to the already impressive list of Bahá'í holdings, the following are of special interest because of the official recognition which their acquisition has involved, giving increasing emphasis to the independent character of the Faith, and adding to its prestige: The approval, by the District Commissioner of Kenya, of the allocation of two plots of land in village areas for Bahá'í purposes, and the pending approval of a third plot; the authorization, confirmed through a special decree issued by the Ministry of Finance in Laos, for the Bahá'í Community in Vientiane to own in its name a plot of land as an endowment; and the recognition by Governmental authorities of Bahá'í burial grounds as such in Abbottabad, Nawabshah and Montgomery, in Pakistan, and in Seremban, Malaya, the three latter sites being direct allocations of Government land for the purpose of establishing separate Bahá'í cemeteries.

Another evidence of the growing recognition of the independent character of the Faith is the continued expansion in the number of territories, states, provinces and other civic units where the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate is legally accepted. Such recognition has now been granted in nearly forty-five different countries and political subdivisions, the latest additions being the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in the Dominion of Canada. The Bahá'í Holy Days are now officially recognized by school authorities in eighty different countries, states and cities. In the United States, including Alaska, more than ten new areas have been added since last Ridván.

In the African continent, the onward march of the Faith bears eloquent testimony to the spiritual receptivity of its inhabitants, so strongly emphasized by our beloved Guardian, and reflected, even before his passing, in the beginnings of that mass conversion confidently predicted by him. As a result of the intensive teaching campaigns launched by the four African Regional Assemblies, the number of declared believers throughout this vast continent has risen to well over fifteen thousand, seven thousand having been added since last Ridván. In Central and East Africa, the number of enrolled believers has more than doubled in the short space of a year. Over four thousand new declarations have been recorded in Uganda alone since April 1959, nearly twelve hundred in Kenya, and well over two hundred in Tanganyika. In the Belgian Congo, also, the beginnings of mass conversion are becoming evident. In the far-flung territories under the jurisdiction of the Regional Assembly of South and West Africa, a gain of over sixty percent has occurred during the past twelve months in the total number of adherents of the Faith. The zeal of the new believers in this area is well illustrated by the recent settlement of the Island of Sesse in Lake Victoria, an accomplishment of a nature ever dear to Shoghi Effendi's heart. The number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in the whole of Africa has reached a total of three hundred and seventy-six, an increase of well over two hundred since the passing of the beloved Guardian. Representatives of two hundred and seventy-three different African tribes are now included in the membership of the Bahá'í Community. Noteworthy among the many new instances of official recognition accorded the Faith during the past year are: The establishment and registration of the first Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Africa, in Kampala, Uganda; the inclusion of "Bahá'í" on the official census sheet as one of the religions of Swaziland; and the registration of the Hazíratu'l-Quds of Port Victoria, Seychelles as a religious property, thereby exempting it from all taxation.

The Pacific area, exclusive of Australasia, competing with the African continent for that "Palm of victory" so often mentioned by the beloved Guardian himself, continues to fulfil the high expectations held by him for the rapid advancement of the Faith throughout its widely dispersed countries, islands and territories. Last year the

number of Local Spiritual Assemblies in this region had reached one short of the hundred mark—double the number which existed in 1957, and a further substantial increase is anticipated during the present Ridván period. In the region of South-East Asia, the number of declared believers now exceeds seven thousand five hundred, including over forty-eight hundred in the Mentawai Islands alone. In addition to the astounding progress being made there, more than a thousand new believers have entered the Faith in Indonesia during the period since Ridván, 1959. In the ten island groups comprising the territory of the Regional Assembly of the South Pacific, there are now nearly sixty localities. A three-fold increase in the number of centres in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands has occurred in the past year, and news has recently been received that on one of these islands, to which the first Gilbertese Bahá'í was banished because of his association with the Faith, nearly fifty new believers have recently been enrolled, due to his single-handed efforts. One Hazíratu'l-Quds has already been completed in this remote outpost, and two more are under construction.

In the vast territory of the Western Hemisphere, including within its confines the Cradle of the Administrative Order, as well as those republics whose rulers were addressed by Bahá'u'lláh in such insistent and weighty terms, the number of localities to which the light of His Faith has penetrated now totals nearly two thousand one hundred, well over three hundred of which constitute Local Spiritual Assemblies; almost a hundred and forty of these are now incorporated. The rapid spread of the Faith among the Indians of South America in recent months has rivalled the extraordinary progress made in the heart of the African continent and the islands of the Pacific, and may well foreshadow a parallel process of mass conversion in the New World. In Bolivia, a seven-fold increase in the number of Indian believers has occurred since last Ridván, bringing the total to over the one thousand mark, drawn from almost a hundred different localities. As many as twenty-five new all-Indian Local Spiritual Assemblies may be formed in this country alone during the current Ridván period. Throughout the Americas contact has been established with more than sixty different tribes since the inception of the Crusade, evidence of the steady progress made in

carrying the Teachings to these indigenous peoples to whose enrolment in the Faith both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and our beloved Guardian attached such great importance.

Among the many instances of an ever-wider proclamation of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh during recent months, the following may be cited as an indication of the wide geographical area now being reached, and a testimony to the increasing official and public recognition of the Faith as an independent religion: The Australia-wide press and publicity campaign recently initiated by the National Assembly of that country; the first publicity received over both radio and television in the British Isles; the broadcast of a program consisting of Bahá'í Sacred Writings over the All-India Radio from New Delhi; the presentation of the Message to the people of Japan on Radio Tokyo, and from a national television station in that country; the time accorded to a Bahá'í speaker in Switzerland over Radio Lausanne, as well as the television interview granted a travelling teacher in France, which was telecast from two principal stations in that country; the allocation of radio broadcast time to the Local Spiritual Assembly of Suva, Fiji Islands, along with other religions, including Christian, Hindu and Muslim; and the notable increase in publicity freely accorded the Faith in the United States of America, particularly in connection with such Bahá'í-sponsored events as World Religion Day, Race Amity Day, and the Bahá'í observance of United Nations Week.

An enumeration of the various teaching conferences, institutes and week-end schools held throughout the world during the last twelve months is most impressive, not only because of the very large number which took place, but also because nearly every part of the world-wide Bahá'í Community is represented. Though not necessarily complete, the following is a representative list of these gatherings, which our beloved Guardian considered to be a demonstration of the zeal and earnestness of the believers in "discharging their primary obligation to propagate their Faith": The Austrian Teaching Conferences held during the past winter in Vienna, and in Linz, as well as the first Austrian Youth Winter School in Krieglach; the Benelux Teaching Conference in Brussels; the striking total of one hundred and sixteen teaching conferences, one-

day and week-end schools held in twenty-four different cities and towns in the British Isles; the Regional Teaching Conferences held in Germany, in Hannover, Heilbronn, Köln, Stuttgart, Ulm, and two in Frankfurt; the two Regional Teaching Conferences held in France, in Orleans and Montpellier; the six Regional Teaching Conferences held in the Iberian Peninsula; the Teaching Conference for the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland, in Zurich, and that for French Switzerland, in Lausanne; the Italian Teaching Conference, in Rome; the Finnish Teaching Conference, in Helsinki; the three Teaching Conferences of India, in New Delhi, Kanpur, and Mysore; the Teaching Conferences of Japan, in Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki; the Teaching Conference of East Pakistan, at Dacca, and of West Pakistan, at Lyallpore; the forty-five teaching conferences and week-end schools held in Central and East Africa, including thirty-five in Uganda, four in Kenya, four in Tanganyika, and one in Ruanda-Urundi; the teaching conferences and teacher training schools held in Mauritius, Mozambique, both Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Swaziland, the Union of South Africa, and Zululand; the many teaching conferences in the Australian continent, including three in each of the States of Victoria, and Queensland, respectively, two each in New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia, and the same number in Tasmania; the teaching conferences held in all of the main centres of the North Island of New Zealand; the first All-Philippine Teaching Conference, in Manila, and the conferences held in Indonesia, Malaya, and other areas of Southeast Asia; the Teaching Conferences of the South Pacific Islands, at Tuarabu Village, in the Gilbert and Ellice group, in Apia, Western Samoa, the three conferences held in the Tongan Islands, and the Fiji Teaching Conference in Suva; the Winter Workshop held on the campus of the University of Alaska, at Fairbanks; the Winter Conference in Ketchikan, Alaska; the All-Argentine Teaching Conference, in Rosario, and similar conferences held in Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay; the National Teaching Conferences of Peru, in Lima, and of Brazil, in Niteroi; the twenty-five teaching conferences held in Canada, covering every province of the Dominion, and including thirteen in Ontario alone; the Costa Rica Teaching Conference in San José; the Teaching Conference of

Nicaragua, held in Managua; the All-Mexico Conference, in Mexico City; the Youth Congress held in Guatemala City; the Intercommunity Teaching Conference of Panama, in La Chorrera; the Honduran Teaching Conference, held in Taulabe; the three International Schools of the Greater Antilles, one in Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic, and two in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as well as two National Teaching Conferences in the same area; and the series of nationwide conferences, nearly sixty in number, held in the United States of America, sponsored by the National Spiritual Assembly, and aimed at creating a deeper understanding of the needs of the Cause at this present stage of the World Crusade, and designed to lend a marked impetus to the teaching work, both abroad and on the home front, as well as approximately sixty additional Area Teaching Conferences held throughout the length and breadth of that country.

The recapitulation of facts such as these, concrete evidence of the astonishing forward march of this irresistible, divinely-inspired Plan, cannot but fill our souls with courage and determination to arise and carry out the remaining tasks of the World Crusade with greater vigour and dedication than ever before.

The supreme importance and significance of the World Centre of the Faith, irrevocably fixed by Bahá'u'lláh Himself in the Holy Land, and constantly stressed by the Guardian in his writings, has emerged since his passing and looms before us in its stupendous outlines, as the Most Great Jubilee approaches and the institutions of the World Centre evolve. It is incumbent upon the Bahá'ís, particularly their elected National and Regional representatives, to realize that the unity of the Faith and the necessary uniform spread of its activities depend upon the proper co-ordination and protection which is given from the World Centre. National or Regional plans or interests cannot be permitted to sacrifice the overall interests of a closely-knit, smoothly functioning World Community. The eagerness of the Assemblies, and the believers they represent, each striving to attain in its own area a greater measure of development, to raise up new institutions such as Hazíratu'l-Quds, Temples, schools and endowments, must be at once fostered and contained; fostered so that the Faith may arise locally in all its glory and power in different parts of the world; contained and directed so that each part whilst

expanding and developing as fast as possible may not place in jeopardy the work of another area or undertake over-expansion or expenditure at the expense of another member of this single entity—a World Community. A constant consultative flow of communications must ever-increasingly, as the Crusade draws to its close, pass in and out of Haifa between the various National and Regional Assemblies and the Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land upon whom has devolved the task at this critical juncture in Bahá'í history of safeguarding and promoting the world interests and world-wide progress of the Cause of God.

During this year of momentous preparation for the election of no less than twenty-one new National Spiritual Assemblies in Central America, the Antilles and South America, a ceaseless effort must be exerted on the part of all those responsible for the fulfilment of these supremely important goals of the Crusade in order to ensure that the newly elected Local Assemblies, as well as those previously elected, remain at their present level, that they be deepened in faith and understanding of the Administrative Order, that the Communities they represent are increased in number and the rank and file of the believers more deeply confirmed in the spirit of the Faith and encouraged to serve its interests and spread its knowledge among the peoples of their respective countries. This is going to require arduous work on the part of those devoted and consecrated pioneers who constitute the vanguard of Bahá'u'lláh's advancing hosts; it is going to mean more pioneers and teachers may still be required in this strategic field of service; it will entail on the part of the Mother Community in North America an unabated flow of assistance in the form of loving consultation, cooperation and guidance, as well as a supply of material means from this more prosperous and richly blessed community to these struggling new daughter communities, rich in spirit and in promise, but often lacking in the financial resources necessary to attain their objectives and maintain their centres; it is going to necessitate further outpourings of treasure from the devoted self-sacrificing followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the Cradle of the Faith who already, through the operation of the Persia-America deputization plan, have been responsible during the past eighteen months for much of the present spectacular success we now enjoy in

the Latin American field; it will entail a greater measure of activity on the part of both the Board members and the elected representatives of the present four Regional National Assemblies functioning in this area. It must inevitably draw heavily upon the strength and the time—so fleeting, so short and therefore so precious—of the Hands of the Faith, both those serving at the World Centre and those allotted to the Western Hemisphere. We are confident, however, that these needs can and will be met and the glorious prize now well within our reach be seized in all its perfection and the new National Assemblies emerge next Ridván in all their promise, prepared to assume their function as pillars of that Universal House of Justice so soon to be born.

We are evidently entering a new phase in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan for the spiritual conquest of the entire planet. A movement can be seen in different parts of the world such as has not been witnessed since the inception of this Cause in Persia. The masses are beginning to stir, to raise their eyes and look questioningly upon the Message we are presenting to them; at first by hundreds, now in some places by thousands, they are embracing this Faith, fulfilling the prophecies of the Master and the words of the Guardian. Although at the present time this new process is taking place largely amongst the so-called more primitive members of human society, introducing into the Bahá'í family of peoples much-needed qualities of both heart and mind, we have every reason to believe it presages similar movements of mass conversion in other territories.

The impact of the passing of our beloved Guardian, the electric shock it administered to the entire body of the believers, the fire of sorrow and test through which they passed and from which they are emerging stronger than ever before, cannot but release, as has every major crisis in the past history of our Faith, a fresh flow of those forces which mysteriously and irresistibly lead it to new victories, widen the pale of its influence, and swell the ranks of its followers. In view of this conspicuous process now taking place we call upon those pioneers and believers struggling in distant and difficult fields and particularly those in the recently opened territories, to persevere in their labours, to take fresh heart, to appreciate the

spiritual significance of the service they are rendering and remain steadfastly at their posts—posts so dear to our beloved Guardian and to which he attached such great importance. Though the soil of men’s hearts be infertile, the spiritual climate of their thoughts inhospitable and the promised harvest seem but a distant dream, let them remember their sacred responsibility as Bahá’u’lláh’s “forward-marching warriors” and steadfastly persevere in their task until they not only achieve success, but God willing, in the end bless the land they have served so faithfully by laying their bones to rest in it, as many a pioneer has done before them, and their graves become places of visitation for future generations.

The recent, little short of miraculous, achievements in Latin America demonstrate to us what hidden springs of strength are released in us when we obey the behests of our Guardian. They prove to us that the promised aid of the Supreme Concourse is at hand, eager to assist us, and that in the words of Shoghi Effendi its “invisible battalions are mustered, rank upon rank, ready to pour forth reinforcements from on High” and sustain even the humblest service undertaken in the Path of God.

Very little time remains to us if we are to accomplish fully and with resounding success the tasks allotted to us by Shoghi Effendi in the last, mighty Plan we received from him, the final fruit of his divinely-inspired mind. We need not, we cannot, and we will not fail him. It lies within our power to seal with complete victory his world-encircling Crusade. This can only be done, however, if mighty and ceaseless efforts are made by each and every believer and more particularly those who form a part of such richly blessed and favoured Communities as those in the Cradle of the Faith and in the Cradle of its Administrative Order. Aside from the task of consolidating and maintaining the work in Latin America, prior to the election in Ridván, 1961 of the twenty-one independent National Assemblies to be formed there, a tremendous amount of work faces the Bahá’ís, whether they be Hands, national bodies entrusted with specific tasks, teachers or pioneers. In Europe, where no less than eleven National Assemblies must be formed in the spring of 1962, the requisite number of Local Assemblies, the foundation for these new institutions, is far from being complete. Approximately forty must

be constituted by next April. The field is difficult, the people, sunk in materialism, often cynical and disillusioned as a result of two world wars, are indifferent to religious truth and preoccupied with the economic problems and social diversions of a highly civilized continent. All these factors constitute one of the greatest challenges of the entire Crusade. A Faith, however, for which twenty thousand of its adherents died as martyrs, which has planted its banner in a little over a hundred years in two hundred and fifty-six territories of the globe, embracing every independent nation, every dominion, mandate and trust territory and all the major islands of the world, whose valiant pioneers and teachers are scattered like life-giving seed in every corner of the planet, has the power within it to sweep away every obstacle in its path. If the present National Assemblies focus their strength and concentrate their thoughts, resources and energies on the goals they must attain; if the individual believers consult their hearts and their consciences and arise and proceed to the battle-fronts most in need of their assistance; then the power placed by God in the Ten Year Plan, the third and final stage of the initial epoch in the evolution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Master Plan, will, like a mighty tidal wave, sweep away every remaining obstacle and carry us to glorious victory.

We must face the fact that a still greater measure of self-sacrifice is required of us than perhaps at any previous time in the prosecution of the World Crusade. Two-thirds of this Crusade is already won; the opening of the virgin territories, the translation of our literature into so many diversified languages, the erection of continental Houses of Worship, the multiplication of Assemblies and centres, the increasing recognition of the independent character of our Faith, the incorporation of its administrative bodies, the formation of new national bodies, are either accomplished facts or now lie well within our grasp. The last third, however, still remains. The new National Assemblies must be securely raised on their specified foundations; the home fronts, the very bedrock of existing older National Assemblies, which have lagged far behind the general rate of progress achieved in other fields, must now receive the assistance which alone can fulfil their objectives, namely, a wide increase in settlers and an influx of new souls enlisted under the banner of

Bahá'u'lláh through a renewed and unremitting teaching effort. And finally, the European Temple, one of the most important goals of the Ten Year Plan, still remains to be erected. The accomplishment of these tasks not only requires a fresh dedication to our work on the part of every single believer, but of necessity will demand a great outpouring of our material resources. The strength of the Cause of God in all Dispensations, however, has been in the rank and file of its adherents; it is the meek, the obscure, the poor, indeed often the needy, who have arisen like veritable spiritual giants and established its institutions, raised its first precious edifices, carried its Message to the masses, laid down their lives for its Teachings, and demonstrated the regenerating spiritual power of the Word of its Manifestation. So today, as our Guardian's Crusade approaches its end, it is to the rank and file of the believers that we must look. From them will come its heroes, saints and martyrs; they will be the ones to fulfil the hopes of Shoghi Effendi, to realize the promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to lay the foundations of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh on an unshakeable foundation, to win the ultimate victory.

The beloved Guardian made quite clear the supreme role of every single Bahá'í. He said, one year after the inception of the World Crusade, that "This challenge, so severe and insistent, and yet so glorious, faces no doubt primarily the individual believer on whom, in the last resort, depends the fate of the entire community. He it is who constitutes the warp and woof on which the quality and pattern of the whole fabric must depend. He it is who acts as one of the countless links in the mighty chain that now girdles the globe. He it is who serves as one of the multitude of bricks which support the structure and ensure the stability of the administrative edifice now being raised in every part of the world. Without his support, at once whole-hearted, continuous and generous, every measure adopted, and every plan formulated, by the body which acts as the national representative of the community to which he belongs, is foredoomed to failure. The World Centre of the Faith itself is paralyzed if such a support on the part of the rank and file of the community is denied it. The Author of the Divine Plan Himself is impeded in His purpose if the proper instruments for the execution of His design are lacking. The sustaining strength of Bahá'u'lláh Himself, the Founder of the

Faith, will be withheld from every and each individual who fails in the long run to arise and play his part.”

The Master has made clear in an impelling and impassioned appeal, the overwhelming potency of the forces released by Bahá'u'lláh, which activate those who respond to His call. These words surely leave none of us any excuse for failing in our duty to God, Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause: *“The undying Fire which the Lord of the Kingdom hath kindled in the midst of the holy Tree is burning fiercely in the midmost heart of the world. The conflagration it will provoke will envelop the whole earth. Its blazing flames will illuminate its peoples and kindreds. All the signs have been revealed; every prophetic allusion hath been manifested. Whatever hath been enshrined in all the Scriptures of the past hath been made evident. To doubt or hesitate is no more possible . . . Time is pressing. The Divine Charger is impatient, and can tarry no longer. Ours is the duty to rush forward and, ere it is too late, win the victory.”*

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Continental Hands and All National Spiritual Assemblies

April 28, 1960

DEEPLY REGRET NECESSITY INFORM BAHAI WORLD
HAND CAUSE MASON REMEY NOW ASSERTING HE IS
GUARDIAN FAITH STOP THIS PREPOSTEROUS CLAIM
CLEARLY CONTRARY SACRED TEXTS CAN ONLY BE
REGARDED AS EVIDENCE CONDITION PROFOUND
EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE STOP CALL UPON BELIEVERS
EVERYWHERE JOIN HANDS HOLY LAND COMPLETE
REPUDIATION THIS MISGUIDED ACTION STOP SHARE THIS
MESSAGE FRIENDS.

[CABLE] HANDS HOLY LAND

To the Hand of the Cause Mason Remy

April 30, 1960

Dear Mason:

For your information we quote below the text of a cable sent by the Hands in the Holy Land to the Continental Hands and to all National Assemblies on April 28:

Deeply regret necessity inform Bahá'í world Hand Cause Mason Remey now asserting he is Guardian Faith Stop This preposterous claim clearly contrary Sacred Texts can only be regarded as evidence condition profound emotional disturbance Stop Call upon believers everywhere join Hands Holy Land complete repudiation this misguided action Stop Share this message friends.

Before their departure for Canada and the United States, Rúhíyyih Khánum and Mrs. Collins participated in the decision to take this action, making it unanimous.

With heartfelt regret,

Faithfully yours,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the National Spiritual Assembly and the Believers of France

May 5, 1960

Dear Friends:

The Hands in the Holy Land are sending the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí to France, to meet with the National Spiritual Assembly and the Bahá'ís of France, and to act on behalf of the Hands for the protection of the Faith in the situation created by Mr. Remey's unfounded claim.

Mr. Faizí will act in accordance with instructions given him by the Hands in the Holy Land. He is empowered to take whatever steps may be necessary to carry out these instructions.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God and the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í World

May 10, 1960

Dearly beloved Friends:

In order that the Bahá'í world may know the reaction of the various National Assemblies and Conventions to Mr. Remey's misguided action proclaiming himself to be the Guardian of the Faith, we are sharing with you the texts of the messages already received by the Hands in the Holy Land, reflecting widespread repudiation of this baseless claim, and pledging loyalty to the divinely-ordained institution of the Hands. We know the friends will rejoice in the world-wide expressions of solidarity and steadfastness with which this fantastic and ill-advised claim was met. God indeed protects His Cause!

It is clear that by claiming that he is the Guardian, Mr. Remey has abandoned his station as a Hand of the Cause, and therefore cannot receive recognition as a Hand until he renounces the self-conferred title of Guardian. The Hands of the Holy Land will notify the National Assemblies if this occurs.

For the protection of our beloved Faith we call upon the friends everywhere to have no association with Mr. Remey as long as he continues to press his false claim to the station of Guardianship. We also request the believers to forward to the World Centre through their National Assemblies any communications which they may receive from Mr. Remey.

Naturally we hope that the emotional disturbance that led to Mr. Remey's regrettable action will prove not to be permanent and that we shall soon be able to inform the friends that he has withdrawn the claim and that communication with him is again permitted. Meanwhile you should be watchful, and keep us informed of any developments.

Such episodes as this can, through firmness, steadfastness and loyalty to the Covenant, prove of great benefit to the Cause of God,

and through the consecrated efforts of the friends attract the bounties of Bahá'u'lláh that alone can ensure its triumph.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

The following are the messages already received by the Hands in the Holy Land from the various National Assemblies repudiating the Remey claim and pledging loyalty to the institution of the Hands. In many cases the news of Mr. Remey's action was received while the National Conventions were in session. The separate messages received from these Conventions are also included.

Alaska *APRIL 30, 1960*

COMPLETELY REPUDIATE RIDICULOUS CLAIM STOP
PROCLAMATION RECEIVED REMEY NOT BEING
CIRCULATED STOP WIRING MESSAGE ALL LOCAL
ASSEMBLIES STOP ASSURING HANDS FAITH
CONTINUED STEADFASTNESS ALASKAN COMMUNITY.

Alaska Convention *MAY 1, 1960*

LOVING GREETINGS FROM 8 DELEGATES 52
ASSEMBLED GUESTS FOURTH ANNUAL ALASKA BAHÁ'I
CONVENTION STOP CONVENTION HAPPY JOYOUS
NEWS VICTORIES ACCOMPLISHMENTS PAST YEAR
STOP EACH BELIEVER ENTHUSED INCREASE EFFORT
DURING COMING YEAR STOP DETERMINED ACHIEVE
REMAINING GOALS STOP PLEDGE PRAYERS SUPPORT
INSTITUTION HANDS FAITH STOP PRAYERS FOR
HEALTH EACH HAND.

Arabian Peninsula *MAY 4, 1960*

ON BEHALF EACH EVERY MEMBER OUR COMMUNITY
WE AFFIRM OUR DISREGARD COMPLETE
REPUDIATION MISGUIDED ACTION HAND CAUSE
MASON REMEY STOP ALL FRIENDS HERE PRESENT

UNEQUIVOCAL OBEDIENCE FAITHFULNESS
STEADFASTNESS SACRED TEXTS REVERED
CUSTODIANS RESIDING HOLY LAND.

Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay *APRIL 30, 1960*

EXTREMELY REGRET NEWS HAND CAUSE MASON
REMEY STOP SHARING MESSAGE FRIENDS STOP
ASSURING HUMBLE LOYALTY.

Australia *APRIL 30, 1960*

NSA DEEPLY SYMPATHETIC YOUR DISTRESS REMEY
STOP MEMBERS PRAY DIVINE COMPASSION MASON
ASSURE DEVOTED ALLEGIANCE PRAYERS
PROTECTION.

Australian Convention *APRIL 30, 1960*

ASSEMBLED DELEGATES FRIENDS GRIEVED
MISGUIDED ACTIONS DEVOTED SERVANT MASON
REMEY STOP PRAYING HIS RETURN SHELTER
COVENANT STOP PLEDGE UNSWERVING ALLEGIANCE
INSTITUTIONS HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
FERVENTLY PRAYING PROTECTION HANDS AND FAITH.

Austria *APRIL 29, 1960*

RECEIVED MESSAGE SHARE WITH FRIENDS JOIN
HANDS HOLY LAND COMPLETE REPUDIATION
MISGUIDED ACTION DEVOTEDLY.

Benelux *APRIL 29, 1960*

REMEY'S PROCLAMATION ONLY REINFORCES OUR
UNSWERVING LOYALTY FAITHFULNESS CONSECRATED
DEVOTION CUSTODIANS FAITH HAIFA AND FIRMNESS
IN COVENANT STOP UNDEVIATINGLY DETERMINED
ACHIEVE GOAL UNDER DIRECTION GUIDANCE WORLD
CENTRE PRAYING PROTECTION CAUSE.

Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela *MAY 1, 1960*
REGRET INFORMATION RECEIVED IN YOUR CABLE
ALL BELIEVERS ASSEMBLED CONVENTION AND NSA
PLEDGE LOYALTY AND SUPPORT TO HANDS DEEPEST
LOVE.

British Isles *MAY 8, 1960*
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN SESSION CONFIRMS
UNRESERVEDLY EXPRESSION LOYALTY TO HANDS
ALREADY SENT BY LETTER REJECTS COMPLETELY
BASELESS CLAIM MASON REMEY STOP CONFIDENT
LOYALTY ENTIRE BRITISH BAHAI COMMUNITY STOP
ASSEMBLY GOING TODAY BELOVED GUARDIAN'S
GRAVE OFFER PRAYERS COMFORT BELOVED HANDS
PROTECTION BAHAI WORLD STOP SINCERE
DEVOTION DEEPEST LOVE.

Burma *APRIL 30, 1960*
BURMESE BAHAI'S FIRM STEADFAST LOYAL ASSURE
OUR ALLEGIANCE.

Canada *MAY 3, 1960*
ASSURE HANDS HOLY LAND UNDIVIDED SUPPORT
COMPLETE REPUDIATION REMEY PROCLAMATION
STOP CANADIAN CONVENTION INFORMED
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED SIMILAR ACTION STOP
WRITING CANADIAN BELIEVERS IMMEDIATELY
CONFIDENT THEIR FULL UNALTERED LOYALTY
SHOGHI EFFENDI HANDS HAIFA.

Canadian Convention *MAY 3, 1960*
FOLLOWING READING MASON REMEY'S REGRETTABLE
DOCUMENT CANADIAN NATIONAL CONVENTION
DELEGATES AND FRIENDS PLEDGE TO OUR BELOVED
GUARDIAN SHOGHI EFFENDI AND HANDS OF THE
CAUSE FIRM LOYALTY ABSOLUTE DEVOTION FERVENT
PRAYERS PROTECTION FAITH.

Central America, Mexico and Panama MAY 2, 1960
RECEIVED CABLE ABOUT MASON REMEY STOP
PLEDGE COMPLETE SUPPORT WORLD CENTRE.

Central and East Africa MAY 5, 1960
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BEHALF COMMUNITY CENTRAL
EAST AFRICA WHOLEHEARTEDLY REPUDIATE CLAIM
REMEY ASSURE CHIEF STEWARDS LOVING LOYALTY.

Greater Antilles Convention MAY 1, 1960
PLEDGE COMPLETE LOYALTY FIRMNESS COVENANT
TEST BRINGS GREATER CRUSADE VICTORY.

India APRIL 30, 1960
SADDENED NEWS MASON REMEYS PREPOSTEROUS
CLAIM STOP BEHALF INDIAN BELIEVERS ASSURE
HANDSFAITH UNFLINCHING STEADFASTNESS LOYALTY
STOP CONFIDENT UNITY FAITH DESPITE SEVERE
TESTS AS IN PAST STOP PRAYING ARDENTLY.

Írán MAY 5, 1960
YOUR MESSAGE CONCERNING MASON RECEIVED WE
SUBMIT OUR UTMOST DEVOTION LOYALTY TO CAUSE
WILL TESTAMENT AND BELOVED ALL HEARTS THE
GUARDIAN STOP MOST GRATEFUL THAT REVERED
BODY PROTECTORS FAITH CONFERRED UPON THEM
CHIEF STEWARDSHIP WORLD ORDER BAHÁ'U'LLAH
HAVE AT ONCE ARISEN PROTECT CAUSE FROM
ATTACK DISLOYAL UNFAITHFUL PERSONS STOP
HEREBY DECLARE OUR SUBMISSIVENESS OBEDIENCE
DECISIONS THAT REVERED BODY.

Italo-Swiss MAY 5, 1960
ASSEMBLY REPUDIATES COMPLETELY REMEY CLAIM
STOP PLEDGES UNFAILING TRUST IN CHIEF
STEWARDS DEEPEST LOVE.

North East Africa *MAY 9, 1960*

REGRET DEEPLY MASON REMEYS FALSE ATTITUDE
ALL BAHA'IS STEADFAST AS EVER.

North East Asia *MAY 2, 1960*

THIS NSA WILL FULLY SUPPORT ANY ACTION TAKEN
BY HANDSFAITH HOLY LAND IN REPUDIATING
PREPOSTEROUS CLAIM MASON REMEY.

Pakistan *MAY 3, 1960*

RECEIVED MESSAGE REGARDING HAND CAUSE
REMEY STOP ASSURING STEADFASTNESS
COMMUNITY COMPLETE LOYALTY SUPPORT
HANDSFAITH HOLYLAND.

Scandinavia and Finland *APRIL 29, 1960*

SADLY ANNOUNCE REMEY PROCLAMATION CLAIMING
GUARDIANSHIP RECEIVED DEFYING AUTHORITY
HANDSFAITH ANNULLING PLANS FULFILMENT
CRUSADE GOALS DEMANDING ALLEGIANCE HIS
INFALLIBILITY STOP FORWARDING PROCLAMATION
STOP ASSURING CHIEF STEWARDS STEADFAST
OBEDIENCE DEVOTED LOVE HEARTFELT SYMPATHY
NSA REELECTED FOUR NEW ASSEMBLIES
ESTABLISHED.

South East Asia *MAY 2, 1960*

BEHALF BAHA'I COMMUNITIES SOUTH EAST ASIA
EXPRESS LOYALTY REVERED CUSTODIANS SUPPORT
FIRM ACTION REPUDIATING REMEYS PREPOSTEROUS
CLAIM.

South Pacific Islands *APRIL 30, 1960*

ASSURE HANDS FAITH ABIDING LOYALTY WILL
TESTAMENT CHIEF STEWARDS BAHA'U'LLAH
COMPLETELY REPUDIATE CLAIM GUARDIANSHIP

MISGUIDED ACTION MASON REMEY PRAYING
REMOVER DIFFICULTIES.

South Pacific Islands Convention MAY 3, 1960
DELEGATES BELIEVERS ASSEMBLED CONVENTION
ASSURE LOYALTY LOVE.

United States MAY 1, 1960
NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN BORRAH
KAVELIN VICECHAIRMAN DAVID RUHE SECRETARY
CHARLES WOLCOTT TREASURER ARTHUR DAHL
RECORDING SECRETARY EDNA TRUE ASSISTANT
SECRETARY CHARLOTTE LINFOOT OTHER THREE
MEMBERS FLORENCE MAYBERRY ELLSWORTH
BLACKWELL AMOZ GIBSON ALL PLEDGE LOYALTY
COOPERATION DEEPEST LOVE TO HANDS OF FAITH.

United States Convention APRIL 29, 1960
ASSEMBLED DELEGATES 52ND ANNUAL CONVENTION
PLEDGE ANEW UNDEVIATING LOYALTY INSTITUTION
OF HANDS ESPECIALLY STEWARDS LABOURING IN
HOLY LAND STOP CONVENTION UNANIMOUSLY
REPUDIATES REMEY PROCLAMATION JOINING
PRAYERS WITH YOURS FOR DIVINE HEALING STOP
DEEPEST LOVE
(SIGNED) CONVENTION DELEGATES.

Germany MAY 10, 1960
ASSURE COMPLETE REPUDIATION (REMEY)
PROCLAMATION AND LOYALTY TO CHIEF STEWARDS
HOPE GETTING FURTHER CLARIFYING NEWS FROM
BODY HANDS LOVING GREETINGS AND PRAYERS
PROTECTION CAUSE.

To the Hands of the Cause of God
May 14, 1960

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Some of you already know that most of the National Assemblies have repudiated Mason Remey's claim and cabled their loyalty to the institution of the Hands. Up to the date this letter was written, twenty-five National Assemblies had sent such messages, and we are confident five of the remaining six will be received soon.

To our surprise however the French National Assembly voted to recognize the claim. Our first news of this was a cable from Mr. Barafrukhteh, a member of the National Assembly, telling us that eight of its members were recognizing Mason Remey. Confirmation came from Mr. Navidi, Protection Board member, who was asked to go to France to investigate and report. He cabled that the French National Assembly was circulating the French believers to accept the claim; and as the situation seemed to be dangerous, and as Ugo and Hasan were not well and Adelbert was in Scandinavia, the Hands in the Holy Land decided to send Abu'l-Qásim Faizí to deal with the situation on their behalf.

Some of the National Assembly members repented their action and cabled the Hands for forgiveness, but five remained unyieldingly obstinate in their recognition of the claim and obstructed the actions taken by the Hands to protect the Faith. These were led by Mr. J. Marangella, General M. Darakhshan and Mr. B. Fillon, all of whom Faizí felt to be spiritually diseased and contaminating others. Steps are being taken to find out whether the European Hands join Faizí in recommending their expulsion in accordance with the decision of the first Bahjí Conclave, that the Hands in the Holy Land were responsible for denouncing Covenant-breakers upon recommendation by the Hands of the continent concerned. A recommendation will if necessary be obtained later about Mr. Soghomonian and Mr. Harvey, the other two members of the National Assembly who support the claim.

Meanwhile the French National Assembly has been dissolved and the five offending members declared ineligible for re-election. The Paris Assembly, which is loyal, is acting for the time being as the Central Assembly for France, under Faizí's guidance. Faizí will visit all the French communities before a new election is held.

We believe that the prompt action of sending Faizí to France has prevented the infection from spreading far; cables of loyalty have been received from all the National Assemblies of Europe except the Iberian Peninsula, and the exception is believed to be due to difficulties of communication as our original "cable" had to be sent by mail. Adelbert has returned to Germany at our request to watch the situation there because of the previous strong feeling about the Guardianship in that country.

Episodes such as the present tragic claim of Mason Remey serve to strengthen the Cause, and it is gratifying that his claim has secured no greater following. Even in France, we are hoping the disturbance will prove of limited extent.

This letter is sent to keep the Continental Hands informed of the situation and to ask for their special prayers for France. Any further action taken regarding the three ringleaders will be communicated to you later. Meanwhile the possibility of the infection spreading to individual believers in other lands should be borne in mind.

We send you all our warmest and deepest love.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**To the Hands of the Cause of God and the National
Spiritual Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í World**

May 28, 1960

Dearly beloved Friends:

Two weeks ago we shared with you messages received up to that time from twenty-four National Spiritual Assemblies repudiating the preposterous claim of Mr. Remey and pledging undeviating loyalty to the Institution of the Hands of the Cause. Since then similar messages have been received in Haifa from all of the remaining national and regional bodies with the exception of the National Assembly of France. The full texts of these communications are attached.

In spite of this world-wide demonstration of solidarity and steadfastness in the Covenant, a group of five members of the

French National Assembly accepted Mr. Remey as the Guardian of the Faith, and the National Assembly informed the believers of France of the advent of a new Guardian.

Acting immediately to protect the Faith, the Hands in the Holy Land sent the Hand of the Cause Abu'l-Qásim Faizí to France as their representative, with specific instructions to dissolve the National Assembly and call for a new election if the five members persisted in their dangerous and disloyal course of action. These misguided believers remained adamant in their views, refused to cooperate with the Hands, resigned as members of the National Assembly, and are now actively opposing the efforts of the Hands to protect the Faith.

The vast majority of the French believers have remained firm, and coinciding with the Commemoration of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, a new election will be held, and a reconstituted National Assembly will come into existence. The thirty-one national and regional bodies will then form an impregnable and closely-knit World Community, dedicated to the fulfilment of the divinely-guided Plan of our beloved Guardian, and triumphant over any forces seeking to disrupt its basic unity.

The cables and other messages received from the various National and Regional Assemblies, as well as numerous communications sent to the Hands from individual believers in various parts of the world, reflect general acceptance and understanding of the reasons why Mr. Remey's regrettable claim, and his so-called proclamation announcing it, are insupportable and contrary, not only to the Sacred Texts of our Faith, but also to specific instructions and messages of our beloved Guardian.

For the information of the friends everywhere we bring to their attention some of the points which refute this unfortunate and baseless claim.

(1) The quality or station of infallibility, we are told by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is of two kinds, one the Most Great Infallibility, which is the one possessed inherently by the Manifestations of God, and the other the conferred infallibility, such as that given to the Master, to the Guardian of the Cause of God, and to the Universal House of Justice. In the Bahá'í Dispensation, only the authorized interpretations of the Holy Word by the Master and the Guardian,

and legislation by the Universal House of Justice have been given this conferred infallibility. There is nothing in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, nor in the messages or instructions of our beloved Guardian, which gives Mr. Remey any basis whatsoever for claiming to be the infallible Guardian. Indeed no one can claim such a station; it can only be conferred by an infallible source, in this Dispensation in accordance with explicit, divinely-revealed Texts.

(2) Mr. Remey makes the preposterous claim that since the International Bahá'í Council was referred to by our beloved Guardian as the forerunner of the supreme administrative institution of the Universal House of Justice, his appointment or designation by Shoghi Effendi as President of this appointed body meant that he would automatically become the head of the Universal House of Justice when it is elected, and therefore is now to be considered as the Guardian of the Faith. This ridiculous and insupportable contention completely overlooks the fact that the beloved Guardian created the International Council as an appointed body, to serve for a temporary period, with functions clearly defined by him, and that he announced it would be transformed into a "duly elected body". Thus the membership and officers of the elected body would be created only by election, not appointment. There is not the slightest indication in any text or message of the beloved Guardian that Mr. Remey's designation as President of the appointed International Council was any more permanent than that of any of the other appointed members or officers.

(3) Mr. Remey himself signed the Proclamation of the Hands of the Cause in November, 1957 which contained the definite statement that "no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him". This document also clearly stated that "The entire body of the Hands assembled by the nine Hands of the World Centre will decide when and how the International Bahá'í Council is to evolve through the successive stages outlined by the Guardian, culminating in the call to election of the Universal House of Justice by the membership of all National Spiritual Assemblies." This pledge is being fulfilled by the plans announced in the message of the Hands to the Bahá'í world following their last Conclave.

It is clear that Mr. Remey's claim to be the infallible Guardian must be dismissed as completely without foundation, since there is no written authority in the Sacred Texts to support it. We can only repeat the hope expressed in our letter of May 10 that the profound emotional disturbance which undoubtedly prompted his regrettable action will prove to be temporary in character.

We are confident that the friends will now direct all their thoughts and efforts toward the attainment of final victory in the Holy Crusade entrusted to us by our beloved Guardian, and be ever mindful of these words addressed to us by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament:

O ye beloved of the Lord! The greatest of all things is the protection of the True Faith of God, the preservation of His Law, the safeguarding of His Cause and service unto His Word.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

The following are the messages received at the World Centre from the remaining National Assemblies of the Bahá'í world (except France) which had not been heard from at the time our communication of May 10 was sent. These messages from the remaining six national or regional bodies, all contain repudiations of the Remey claim and express loyalty to the Institution of the Hands. The text of the official action of the International Bahá'í Council on the Remey claim is also included.

International Bahá'í Council *MAY 13, 1960*

At a meeting of the International Bahá'í Council held on April 27, 1960, the following Motion was passed by unanimous vote:

“That the members present wish to record in these Minutes their complete and final rejection of Mr. Remey's unsupportable claim to be Guardian of the Faith, a claim which has no foundation in the Sacred Texts of our Faith, including the Will and Testament

of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant, nor in the instructions or actions of the beloved Guardian."

Iberian Peninsula *MAY 16, 1960*

(The message from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Iberian Peninsula was received in garbled form but is quoted below exactly as it was received in Haifa):

FRIENDS OF IBERIAN PENINSULA ASSERT AND
RENEW OUR ADHESION JOIN HANDS HOLY LAND.

'Iráq *MAY 21, 1960*

NSA CONVENED 19TH FIRMLY REPUDIATE REMEY
LATELY RECEIVED REGRETTABLE CLAIM STOP
PLEDGE BEHALF BELIEVERS IRAQ AND JURISDICTION
UNSHAKEABLE FAITH RENEWED UNWAVERING
LOYALTY LOVE WRITING.

New Zealand *MAY 14, 1960*

ASSEMBLY REAFFIRMS UNSWERVING ALLEGIANCE
INSTITUTION HANDS STOP PRAYERS FOR SPEEDY
REMOVAL ALL DIFFICULTIES.

North West Africa *MAY 17, 1960*

NSA NORTHWEST AFRICA CABLES QUOTE PLEASE
ASSURE HANDS FAITH OUR REPUDIATION REMEY
CLAIM OUR LOYALTY UNCONDITIONAL ATTACHMENT
CHIEF STEWARDS STOP ACTION TAKEN ALL NSAS
HAVE ALSO WRITTEN HANDS UNQUOTE BANANI.

South and West Africa *MAY 12, 1960*

DEEPLY GRIEVE SERIOUS EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE
HAND CAUSE MASON REMEY STOP JOIN HANDS
HOLYLAND COMPLETE REPUDIATION CLAIM STOP
ASKING PRAYERS REGION COMPLETE HEALING
MENTALLY DISTRACTED SOUL.

Turkey *MAY 13, 1960*

(Following is a translation of the message received from the National Assembly of Turkey, which was written in Persian):

Your telegram dated April 28th, 1960 was received and its contents carefully noted. In accordance with your instructions, all the Local Spiritual Assemblies, Bahá'í centres and individual believers immediately received the translation of the telegram, as well as a complete explanation of its contents. This Assembly, with profound humility, clings to the threshold of the Almighty and, by turning for guidance towards your exalted and divinely appointed body, expresses as ever before, unswerving servitude and attachment to God's Holy Covenant. We humbly supplicate the Divine Threshold to guide us to whatsoever is His Will and His Pleasure.

To the Hands of the Cause of God

June 15, 1960

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

You will be pleased to hear that the new French National Assembly has been elected and is now functioning. It seems that only about fifteen believers throughout the world have accepted Mason Remey's claim, of whom about ten are in France and five in the United States. Those in the United States have never been leading figures in the Cause there and are unlikely to attract sympathizers.

Support on this scale will not permit even the enemies of the Faith to say there has been a rift in the Cause, but in view of Mason Remey's position in the Bahá'í World Community during the lifetime of the beloved Guardian, we feel it would be advisable to have on record written statements from all the Hands that they reject his claim.

We will therefore appreciate it if you will let us have such a statement for permanent record.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

P.S. Since the above was typed we have received a visit from the head of the Bahá'í Department of the Ministry of Religions in Israel, who told us that Mason Remey had written to the President of Israel, the Minister of Religions, and the head of the Bahá'í Department announcing that Shoghi Effendi in his lifetime appointed him Guardian of the Faith. The Israel Government appears to appreciate the true situation, but this action makes it even more important to have on record your rejection of the claim. We are watching the situation closely.

A letter has been sent to the Ministry of Religions repudiating Mason Remey's claim and enclosing copies of the cables of repudiation from all the thirty-one National Assemblies. This will be brought to the attention of the President.

Postscript to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm^[15]:

We feel that the above action is all that is needed at present. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

July 5, 1960

Beloved Friends:

We have already sent you an account of the reaction of the Bahá'í world to Mason Remey's claim. It is now clear that a mere handful of believers supported it, but that these have been working actively to get others to join them.

It must be obvious to the friends everywhere that acceptance of this baseless claim, and particularly activity in support of it designed to influence others, constitutes a betrayal of the Sacred Texts upholding the structure of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. This has been unanimously attested by all the National Assemblies in their repudiation of Mr. Remey's action.

In discharging their responsibility to safeguard the Bahá'í Community, the Hands of the Cause at an early stage instructed that the friends in France should refrain from associating with the former members of the National Assembly there who were active in their

support of Mr. Remey. The Hands in the Holy Land feel that the time has now come to extend this policy to all individuals who openly support this false claim. The believers everywhere should immediately cease associating, either by direct contact or by correspondence, with anyone who supports Mason Remey's claim to be the Guardian of the Faith, because the actions of these misguided people, whatever their intent, can only lead to discord and division within the Cause of God. We may indeed rejoice that this latest attempt to create division has, like all others before it, failed utterly to destroy the basic unity of the Faith.

The response of the friends in all parts of the world reflects how faithfully they have heeded the injunction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament: *"Guard ye the Cause of God, protect His law and have the utmost fear of discord."*

By unity such as the believers have shown, all attempts to create division can be foiled, and the waverers saved from becoming subject to that most terrible of all punishments described by the Master in His Will when He wrote: *"Should any, within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause of God disobey and seek division, the wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in the true Faith of God."*

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

July 7, 1960

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Beloved Co-workers:

In accordance with our principles of procedure, the Hands in the Holy Land have the duty and responsibility of calling the Annual Meeting of the entire body of the Hands. After consideration of all factors, we have chosen the period October 18-27 as the dates for this year's Conclave, with the understanding that the time will be

extended if necessary. Before this meeting we will as usual send to each Hand a tentative or suggested agenda for consideration.

It has been recommended that this year a special effort be made by all the Continental Hands to arrange for visits to as many Bahá'í centres as possible on their way to or from the Conclave. We feel that such visits at this time will have great influence in unifying the friends and deepening them in their understanding of the Covenant. We urge each Hand to work out as extensive an itinerary as possible.

You have been kept informed of the main developments to date in the Remey matter through our various communications, but we feel the time has now come to refer to the entire body of our fellow-Hands the information, views and recommendations received from various individual Hands calling for further action.

As most of you undoubtedly know, Mason has followed up his original proclamation with other documents including one entitled "The Question of the Guardianship", and another document which he calls his first "Encyclical" to the Bahá'í world. In the latter document he definitely classifies all of the Hands as violators, calls upon the believers to abandon their activities in support of the plans announced by the Hands for the remainder of the beloved Guardian's Crusade, to withdraw their financial support of these activities, and directs them to turn to him alone for guidance and instructions. He is distributing these documents widely, and his leading supporters are writing to the believers, urging them to investigate the Remey claim and accept his station as the second Guardian of the Faith. We are enclosing for your information a copy of another communication which we have just sent to all National Assemblies, calling upon the friends to refrain from any association with those who support Mason's claim.

In France, the reconstituted National Assembly has taken action depriving the five disloyal former members of that Assembly of their voting right and membership in the Community.

We wish to report that our representative, Mr. Faizí, recommended expulsion of the disloyal individuals in France, who in his view are suffering from a real spiritual illness. He was joined in this recommendation by Dr. Giachery, but the other two European

Hands, Mr. Balyuzi and Dr. Mühlischlegel, did not concur; therefore the European Hands as a body did not recommend expulsion. The attached excerpts from communications received in Haifa will give you their views and recommendations, and those of Mr. Faizí.

All of you will recall that at our first Conclave a formal action was recorded, giving the Hands in the Holy Land the responsibility for expelling people from the Faith, but only on recommendation of the Continental Hands concerned, after investigation by them. Thus in the case of the disloyal members in France, the Hands in the Holy Land were bound by the action of the majority of the European Hands in not recommending expulsion at this time.

With regard to Mason himself, since we had no instructions covering defection by one of the Hands of the Cause, we have felt that any action in his case beyond the steps already taken, should be by the body of the Hands itself. In view of the increasingly insistent recommendations received from the Hands now in the Western Hemisphere calling for Mason's immediate expulsion, we believe this question must now be referred to the body of the Hands for advice and decision. Attached are copies of their views and recommendations.

To these we wish to add our own view that Mason's claim and activities in opposition to the decisions and Plans of our beloved Guardian, constitute a basis for expulsion from the Faith, because they are in fact a protest against the decision of Shoghi Effendi in not appointing a successor to him as the Guardian of the Faith. Our Beloved did not make such an appointment because to do so in the circumstances with which he was faced would have been a violation of the Sacred Texts; thus his non-appointment of a successor upheld the Text of the written Covenant of God. This was explicitly stated in the Proclamation issued from our first Conclave in which we said that "no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him". This Proclamation was signed by Mason, who now states in one of his documents that he has known for the past twelve years that he was to be the second Guardian of the Faith, and the successor to Shoghi Effendi in that station!

We believe that Mason's claim and activities fall within the warning and injunction contained in these words of the sacred Will and

Testament of the Master: *“It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsán, the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the Guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His Word and will become a manifestation of the Centre of Sedition. Beware, beware, lest the days after the Ascension (of Bahá’u’lláh) be repeated when the Centre of Sedition waxed haughty and rebellious and with Divine Unity for his excuse deprived himself and perturbed and poisoned others. No doubt every vain-glorious one that purposeth dissension and discord will not openly declare his evil purposes, nay rather, even as impure gold, will he seize upon divers measures and various pretexts that he may separate the gathering of the people of Bahá. My object is to show that the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!”*

As you know, there are many other passages in the Will and Testament more strongly condemning Covenant-breakers, in which it is said they should be cut off from the Community of the believers, shunned and avoided entirely.

The questions now referred to you, our fellow-Hands, for decision are:

(1) Whether you wish to support the recommendations for immediate expulsion of Mason and announcement of this to the believers, or

(2) Whether you wish action on this whole question to be deferred until the Conclave in October.

We request you to study this letter and the attached recommendations carefully and prayerfully, and then send us your reply immediately by cable.

We send you our warmest greetings and loving prayers.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Excerpts from Communications Received from Various Hands Containing Comments and Recommendations on Mason Remey's Status (and that of his chief supporters).

A. Q. Faizi

MAY 7, 1960

DARAKHSHAN MARANGELLA FILLON DANGEROUSLY SPIRITUALLY DISEASED INFECTING OTHERS SOGHOMONIAN HARVEY GIVEN CHANCE REPENTANCE TEN TONIGHT WILL SEND FULL REPORT EXECUTION DECISIONS PLEASE PRAY. FAIZI

MAY 8, 1960

FIVE NSA MEMBERS UNCHANGEABLE SAKE GOD PROTECTION CAUSE EXPEL IMMEDIATELY MARANGELLA DARAKHSHAN FILLON STOP DO NOT BE TAKEN BY PITY STOP ANNOUNCE THEIR EXPULSION BAHAI WORLD STOP THEIR DEVIOUS CONTAGION SPREADS IF NOT STOPPED TO OTHERS SOGHOMONIAN HARVEY ADVISE LATER. FAIZI

MAY 9, 1960

MET COMMUNITY PARIS FIVE NEFARIOUS MEMBERS ABSENT CONTAMINATED ATMOSPHERE PURIFIED RESULTS EXCELLENT DETAILED REPORTS FOLLOW EXPULSION THREE IMPERATIVE BECAUSE INFECT BELIEVERS EUROPE AMERICA. FAIZI

MAY 10, 1960

WHY DELAY EXPULSION PLEASE EXPEL MARANGELLA DARAKHSHAN FILLON AT ONCE. FAIZI

Dr. Ugo Giachery

MAY 10, 1960

FULLY SUPPORT FAIZI'S PROPOSAL CUSTODIANS
EXPEL MARANGELLA DARAKHSHAN FILLON PREVENT
SPREAD INFECTIOUS DISEASE STOP WOULD URGE
YOU REQUEST MUHLSCHLEGEL NOW OSLO RETURN
IMMEDIATELY GERMANY MEET NSA FORESTALL
OTHER DEFECTIONS.
GIACHERY

(Dr. Mühlischlegel was requested to proceed immediately to Germany, which he did, and found that the German National Spiritual Assembly and believers were loyal.)

Hasan Balyuzi

MAY 12, 1960

STRONGLY DISAPPROVE BEG NO ACTION UNTIL
RECEIVE MY LETTER.

BALYUZI

MAY 15, 1960

Mason's claim is laughable, preposterous, abominable. It shows that his mind has deteriorated. . . . The action of those who uphold this ridiculous claim is indeed abominable. But I cannot bring myself to accept the thesis that the Hands have the authority to expel anyone for this reason. Where do the Hands obtain their authority to expel anyone from the Community? From the Will and the Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. These are the exact words of the Master, which I have read and read, and which I quote: *"My object is to show that the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!"* Perhaps I'm mistaken, but nowhere else have I found the express authority given to the Hands of the Cause to expel people for any reason other than opposition to the Guardian. The Hands can and must

expel anyone who associates with Covenant-breakers, old and new. They can and must expel anyone who disregards a definite injunction of the beloved Guardian. Such acts constitute opposition to Shoghi Effendi. But I'm convinced (and perfectly ready and willing at the same time to believe otherwise, if conclusive proofs are shown to me) that the Hands have no authority to expel anyone for any other reason, albeit they are exercising their indubitable right to protect the Faith. By so doing, the Hands will be setting up a new category of Covenant-breakers, for which they have no authority, as far as I can see it. Now if the majority of the Hands agree in a Conclave that they are knowingly taking upon themselves powers, not given them by the Sacred Text, because it is forced upon them through circumstances beyond their control, I will have to submit to the majority decision, although under protest, and then I shall know where I stand. But at the present time unless you convince me to the contrary, I cannot accept this thesis as resting upon the sanction of the Sacred Text. Hasan M. Balyuzi

European Hands

JUNE 7, 1960

LOVING GREETINGS COMPLETION MOST SUCCESSFUL
CONFERENCE STOP REQUEST MR FAIZI REMAIN
LONGER EUROPE STOP FULLY AGREE DEPRIVE
VOTING RIGHTS RING LEADERS FRANCE ALLOWING
TIME LIMIT OTHERS DEEPEST LOVE. EUROPEAN
HANDS

Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel

JUNE 21, 1960

At the Brussels conference, as you have been informed, presumably, Faizí reported the situation in France. Joel Marangella has been removed as Board member, the French National Spiritual Assembly got the suggestion from the Hands to deprive the five disloyal members of the former National Spiritual Assembly of their administrative rights, but the Hands

did not recommend to the Hands in the Holy Land the expulsion of these five, at present.

Leroy loas

MAY 11, 1960

GREATLY DISTRESSED FRANCE STOP OFFER FOLLOWING (1) AGREE FAZI IMMEDIATE EXPULSION THREE URGENT NECESSARY PROTECTION FAITH FRANCE EUROPE (2) IF NOT ALREADY DONE IMMEDIATE REMOVAL MARANGELLA BOARD (3) OTHER TWO GIVEN TIME LIMIT RECANT OR EXPELLED (4) TIME LIMIT GIVEN REMEY WITHDRAW CLAIM OR EXPELLED STOP ILLOGICAL EXPEL SATELLITES AND NOT PRINCIPAL. LEROY

MAY 31, 1960

MASON ISSUED FIRST SERIES ENCYCLICALS BAHAI WORLD FURTHERANCE FALLACIOUS CLAIM BRANDING ALL HANDS COVENANT BREAKERS AND INSTRUCTING FRIENDS CEASE ASSOCIATION HANDS STOP SUGGEST (1) EXCOMMUNICATION REMEY (2) EXCOMMUNICATION THREE FRANCE RECOMMENDED BY FAZI (3) CABLE ADVICE THESE ACTIONS ALL NATIONALS (4) ABSENCE SUCH ACTION AND ADVICE CAUSING CONFUSION. LEROY

JUNE 23, 1960

It is a sad turn of events that a man of Mr. Charles Mason Remey's stature in the Faith—with such a remarkably long period of service under the loving guidance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi— should now transgress the laws of the Faith—and its institutions—and even more particularly, the confidence the Centres of the Faith reposed in him—by now proclaiming himself the second Guardian of the Faith. . . . This ridiculous claim, of course, I reject and strongly condemn.

With his continuing destructive activities I do not see how we can dismiss them—by simply asking the Friends not to associate with him. As I have cabled previously, he must be put out of the Faith entirely—as a Covenant-breaker—and the same

action must be taken with regard to those who uphold his blasphemous claims.

The question of Covenant-breaking is not one of votes—it is a case of disobedience—and Mr. Remey and his associates have disobeyed the teachings of the Faith—have stirred up difficulties—are centres of hate of the progress of the Faith—and the sacrificial services of the Friends. . . . This matter should not drift as is being allowed.

Leroy loas

Asian Hands

MAY 3, 1960

DEEPLY REGRET MASON'S BESOTTED ATTITUDE AND ACTION AGAINST COVENANT AND REPUDIATION WILL TESTAMENT THUS DEPRIVING HIMSELF MERCY BOUNTY BLESSED BEAUTY THIS WORLD AND WORLDS TO COME.

HANDS ASIA ALAI VARQA KHADEM

William Sears

(Undated – presumably written early in June)

You will have received by now Mason's second letter, and the other correspondence from the United States National Spiritual Assembly. I did not send it, as I have been in Wilmette since this letter came out working closely with them as things develop. I have also been in touch with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum and with Leroy. I have kept Hermann informed and am awaiting his reply. It is my personal feeling now that we see the result of this act of Mason's that we should delay no longer in putting him out of the Faith if he does not repudiate. This would also be the action, I feel, which should be taken against those who support him, and who after proper warning, persist in their support. Several of them are waging campaigns with their friends to get them to support Mason. So far it is minor, scattered and sporadic; but it has a growing potential if we do not take firm action. The friends will feel there must be something more to Mason's claim unless there is some strong, firm, clear-cut reaction on the part of the Hands. . . . It is a growing thing. It

needs action. He must either repudiate at once or be removed. There can be no more delay in this action, in my opinion. We are losing valuable ground that will be hard to reclaim.

William Sears

JUNE 11, 1960

UNited VIEW HANDSWEST UNLESS REMEY
REPUDIATES IMMEDIATELY SHOULD BE EXPELLED.

SEARS

JUNE 29, 1960

REMEY WRITTEN UDO SCHAEFER 10 PAGE LETTER
PRAISING HIS DOCUMENT GUARDIANSHIP HISTORIC
ORDERING HUNDRED COPIES FOR CIRCULATION
INFECTION SPREADING ALARMINGLY HERE WITHOUT
RESTRAINT MARANGELLA INFLUENCE CONSTANT
CORRESPONDENCE SPREADING WIDELY INSIDIOUSLY
THREE QUESTIONABLE BELIEVERS ASKED SOUVENIR
MASTER IF REMEY CLAIM BASELESS WHY NO
ACTION BY HANDS WAS IT FROM FEAR OR WERE
THEY DISUNITED IMPERATIVE DEFINITE ACTION BE
TAKEN REMEY AND ALL WHO SUPPORT HIM
INDECISIVENESS HANDS WEAKENING POSITION
INSTITUTIONS ENCOURAGING BOLDNESS ENEMIES
URGE CABLE ALL HANDS CALLING FOR EXPULSION
REMEY AND ALL WHO SUPPORT HIM SCHAEFER
APPARENTLY FAITHFUL.

SEARS

JUNE 30, 1960

I have read Mason's 10-page letter which attacks the Hands, saying that we have agreed, but not announced it to the friends, that the Guardianship is ended and are working to make this a reality around the world. Mason says in the letter that he is sending 100 copies of Udo Schaefer's document to selected contacts. His letter is to Schaefer, scolding him for abandoning his stand on the Guardianship, and supporting the Hands. This letter has been duplicated and has been sent to friends in Connecticut. . . . My own opinion is that there is no deep-seated problem, and that if definite action is taken on the matter so they

(the believers) feel comforted by this show of strength and unity, it will abate. However, if they feel free to discuss it at Feasts, write each other about it, exchange Joel Marangella's letter (etc.) with no warning of the consequences, it can grow to proportions far out of line with its importance. In other words, it is not so important what Mason is doing now, but what we do. Hence the appeal for united action.

I completely agree that all the Hands should unite in this action, as they (the entire body) are the ones who must accept this responsibility as "Chief Stewards". However, to await a meeting this Fall would be to delay it too long, I feel. Surely if all the Hands repudiate Mason and call for his expulsion if he does not repudiate, it is sufficient.

The Master gave the Hands the power to "cast out" anyone who "opposed" the Guardian or caused a "division". Mason has "opposed" the beloved Guardian for two years, insisting, as you well know, that we the Hands should choose a Guardian. He called us "violators" at the last meeting because we wouldn't choose a Guardian, in spite of the beloved Guardian's written words that the Hands could not choose a Guardian, and against the sacred Will and Testament that only the Guardian could choose his successor. Mason has truly caused a "division" however small by appointing himself, declaring himself infallible, circulating the National Spiritual Assemblies and the Bahá'ís, sending out his encyclical letter, and now approaching the Government of Israel. He has "opposed" the Guardian and caused a "division" and under our sacred right as Hands, we should "cast him out" and "accept no excuse whatsoever" from him.

So far there has been no publicity, but if he and his cohorts are free to go on unchecked until October it could become serious just through neglect. My heart tells me that we should be more vigilant and forceful as a warning to other usurpers—as it is not only our duty, but our sacred right as conferred in the Will and Testament.

William Sears

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JULY 13, 1960

GRIEVED ANNOUNCE PASSING HAIFA MUCH-LOVED
DISTINGUISHED HAND CAUSE GOD HORACE HOLLEY
OUTSTANDING CHAMPION FAITH SINCE DAYS MASTER
PRAISED BY BELOVED GUARDIAN FOR UNIQUE
CONTRIBUTION DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
STOP HIS INDEFATIGABLE SERVICES PROTECTION
TEACHING ADMINISTRATIVE FIELDS CULMINATING
SERVICE HOLY LAND INSPIRING EXAMPLE PRESENT
FUTURE GENERATIONS BAHA'IS STOP SHARE ABOVE
MESSAGE HANDS ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES STOP
URGE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS TEMPLE LOCAL
COMMUNITIES UNITED STATES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause throughout the World

July 21, 1960

Dear Fellow-Hands:

Enclosed is the second letter issued from the Holy Land containing the news of the progress of the Faith received at the World Centre since our Ridván Message was prepared. These letters are not being issued on a regular schedule, but are sent out when we have sufficient interesting and stimulating news to put together a communication which will be a source of encouragement and inspiration to the friends.

As in the case of the first News Letter, issued earlier this year, we are asking the National Assemblies to share this Bulletin with the believers in their area through their own News Letters.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

July 21, 1960

Beloved Friends:

Enclosed is another News Letter from the Holy Land, giving the heartening news of the progress of the Faith which has come to the World Centre since our Ridván Message was prepared.

This is the second of a series of such letters which we have informed you that we plan to issue from time to time. We hope this letter will prove to be a source of inspiration and encouragement to the friends.

Please share this Bulletin with the believers in your area through your News Letter.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

NEWS FROM THE WORLD CENTRE OF THE FAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

July 21, 1960

Dearly beloved Friends:

Since our first News Letter of February last, our Ridván message has brought you news of the progress of the Faith all over the world, and now we send you news of more recent events.

At the World Centre, the flow of visitors to the Shrines and Gardens has continued. Among those who came were many distinguished foreign visitors, including Ambassadors and Cabinet Ministers. The House of 'Abbúd, in which Bahá'u'lláh lived for nearly seven years during His incarceration in 'Akká and in which the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* was revealed, has been extensively renovated and restored. The palace of Mazra'ih, where Bahá'u'lláh lived in the period between His leaving 'Akká and taking up residence in Bahjí, has also

been extensively renovated. The pilgrim season, that began after the Conclave of the Hands in Bahjí, ended with the commemoration of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh; during the season pilgrims from every continent passed their allotted nine days of pilgrimage in the Holy Land. Outstanding among the missions carried out by the Hands of the Cause in recent months has been the visit of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum to North America, where she found a wonderful spirit of determination among the friends. In both the United States and Canada she met with the believers at key centres and addressed many large public meetings. Her visit brought a great deal of favourable publicity for the Faith. She spent some time with the Indians, from whom the Master confidently expected so much; John Robarts also visited a number of Indian groups in the course of his mission in Canada. William Sears has travelled very extensively in Latin America, including Central America, the Greater Antilles and the northern countries of South America. The friends there are jubilant at the victories achieved last Ridván. Hermann Grossmann, in the course of his tour of South America, recently visited the friends in the disaster area of Chile. Mr. Samandarí spent some time in Turkey on his way from the Holy Land to his post, and Dr. Muhájir is now visiting the countries of South East Asia. Collis Featherstone journeyed to New Zealand, attended the Convention there, and visited the Maoris, the indigenous people who have shown great receptivity to the Faith.

Reports from the various National Spiritual Assemblies during the Ridván period brought much joyful and encouraging news. Firstly there was the achievement of all the Local Assembly goals, and more, in Latin America. Venezuela, for instance, formed four new Local Assemblies, three over the goal. As a result of these great victories the new National Spiritual Assemblies can be established next Ridván, based on an adequate number of Local Assemblies. In the United States forty new Assemblies were elected, more than in any year since the beginning of the Crusade. In the whole Western Hemisphere nearly eighty new Assemblies were formed, and the number of new believers during the year was almost 2,000. An interesting feature has been the continued spread of the Faith amongst Indians in various parts of the Western Hemisphere, from

the Far North where the Yukon's first Indian believer has been accepted, through Mexico, which has its first Indian believer, to Bolivia, where hundreds of the Indians in the Andes have embraced the Faith. A start has been made in teaching the Carib Indians of the West Indies in Dominica.

As usual, Africa has led the Bahá'í world in growth and numbers. In the one year since Ridván, 1959 the number of Local Assemblies in Central and East Africa has grown from 240 to 400. In number of centres, the United States still leads with 1,560, but Africa with 1,140, has now moved up to second place. The area of Central and East Africa, the scene of so many historic events in the Faith, has recently witnessed great success in the Eastern Belgian Congo, where hitherto little progress had been made. The energetic teaching activity of some of the believers from Usumbura, in neighbouring Ruanda-Urundi, has in a few months set on fire over 500 new believers, and thirteen new Local Assemblies have been elected. This is one of the most spectacular teaching developments in the history of the Faith in Africa, or indeed anywhere, and is the first real growth in any of the French-speaking territories in that part of Africa. To quote the Central and East African National Spiritual Assembly: "The Faith in this Region is like a giant river overflowing its banks, flooding out across the countryside, carrying the Word of God wherever the receptivity of the people takes it."

The Region of North West Africa, which at the formation of its National Assembly in 1956 had 920 believers, now has approximately 3,000, of which 1,800 are in the British Cameroons. The number of Local Assemblies has grown from 38 to 113. There are 18 properties owned by the Faith in this Region, including the National Hazíratu'l-Quds in Tunis and five other Hazíratu'l-Quds, the Temple land in Tunis, two burial grounds, two endowments, and six Bahá'í centres in the British Cameroons. Dahomey, a part of the French Union, has its first believers. Truly Africa, the Dark Continent, is now, as foretold by the beloved Guardian, a beacon of light in the Bahá'í world!

The third area of outstanding growth in recent years has been South East Asia. Here there are more than eleven times as many centres as in 1957 when the Regional Assembly was formed; there

are ten times more Local Assemblies, and the number of believers has grown from 1,500 to 7,500. In one island in Indonesia half of the population of 10,000 are Bahá'ís; there are 16 Local Assemblies and at least 10 Bahá'í schools. Among the most exciting developments in the Region has been the growth of the Faith in Java, which at the time of the beloved Guardian's passing had less than 20 believers; now there are almost 1,300, mainly young people. Java is one of the most densely populated countries in the world and offers unlimited opportunities for the expansion of the Faith.

In other parts of the world too, there has been progress, even if on a smaller scale. In Europe, where eleven National Assemblies are scheduled to be formed in 1962, there is still a challenging distance to be covered before all goals are achieved, but Belgium now has the number of Assemblies needed, Scandinavia had four new ones last Ridván, Portugal two, and Italy four. India established 11 new Local Assemblies, more than in any recent year.

In other ways too, progress is being made toward the achievement of Crusade goals. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the course of building near Kampala, Uganda, is well on the way to completion. The tiling of the dome in four shades of colour has been finished, various fittings chosen and ordered, and it is now hoped to dedicate it in January, 1961. Equally good progress is being made on the Temple at Sydney, Australia. History was made and much publicity was attracted when, for the first time in Australia, a helicopter was used to lift into position the flèche on the top of the dome. Newspapers all over Australia mentioned this and three Sydney television stations reported it in detail. It is expected that the dedication will take place during Ridván, 1961. In Germany, where the third Temple of the Crusade is to be built, serious obstacles have been encountered; fortunately these now seem to be almost at an end, and there is a good prospect that building may begin soon.

As we pursue our goals of the Ten Year Crusade, events not directly connected with these goals also demonstrate the progress of the Cause.

World Religion Day was happily and successfully celebrated in many places, but in Vientiane, capital of Laos, it became an outstanding event. A distinguished gathering of about 300, including

members of the King's Council, Consular and United Nations officials, and representatives of various sects of six religions, took part and heard a message from H.M. the King of Laos, brought to the meeting by H.R.H. Prince Chantharangai.

As a non-governmental organization accepted by United Nations, the Bahá'í International Community was invited to send representatives to a Round Table Conference organized by the World Federalists in Paris, on the subject of a permanent force for United Nations. The Bahá'í point of view much impressed those present.

As the Faith has proved many times in its history, difficulties ultimately bring it victory. An American pioneer in El Salvador was ordered to leave because of false accusations made against him. Subsequently he was cleared of all suspicion and allowed to return. The National Spiritual Assembly of Central America then sought an interview with high officials of the Salvador Government, which resulted in an assurance that Bahá'ís are completely free to follow their Faith and to teach it in that country.

In the past months there has been news of natural disasters in various parts of the world. In March the islands of Mauritius and Madagascar were swept by cyclones. In both places some of the friends lost their homes, but they were undeterred, continuing to keep the Fast and to hold their meetings, often in the open air. One community in Madagascar held a Nineteen Day Feast during a cyclone, with only three absentees. Earthquakes have occurred in widely separated parts of the world, in Persia, in Morocco, and in Chile, bringing death and destruction to many. In all these calamities we were deeply thankful to hear from the respective National Assemblies that, though some had their homes damaged, there had been no loss of life amongst the Bahá'ís. The Regional Spiritual Assembly has sent a representative to the disaster area of Chile to ascertain what help the friends there need, and the Hands at the World Centre have sent a sum of money for their relief.

The Crusade progresses on the way to its goals but the time grows ever shorter. Bahá'u'lláh Himself has left us in no doubt of our duty, and is specific in promises of the divine help on which we can draw.

Teach ye the Cause of God, O people of Bahá, for God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds.

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. . . . If he be kindled with the fire of His love, if he forgoeth all created things, the words he uttereth shall set on fire them that hear him.

Whoso openeth his lips in this Day and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**TO ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, C/O BAHÁ'Í
WILMETTE**

JULY 26, 1960

ENTIRE BODY HANDS OBEDIENT PROVISIONS WILL
TESTAMENT CENTRE COVENANT COMMUNICATIONS
BELOVED GUARDIAN ENJOINING THEM PROTECT
HOLY CAUSE ATTACKS ENEMIES WITHIN WITHOUT
ANNOUNCE BAHÁ'Í WORLD MASON REMEY COVENANT
BREAKER EXPELLED FAITH STOP ACTION FOLLOWS
LONG PERIOD PATIENCE FORBEARANCE
OPPORTUNITY GIVEN HIM WITHDRAW SHAMEFUL
PRETENSION SACRED STATION GUARDIANSHIP
CONSTITUTING HERETICAL CLAIM CONTRARY
EXPLICIT PROVISIONS WILL MASTER STOP DESPITE
UNIVERSAL REPUDIATION DENUNCIATION BY ALL
HANDS INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES REMEY CONTINUING AGITATE

UNFOUNDED CLAIM ACTIVELY SEEKING CREATE
DIVISION RANKS FAITHFUL SOW SEEDS DOUBT
HEARTS BELIEVERS UNDERMINE ACTIVITIES
INSTITUTION HANDS CHIEF STEWARDS DEDICATED
FULFILMENT BELOVED GUARDIAN'S TEN YEAR PLAN
STOP ACCORDANCE INJUNCTION WILL TESTAMENT
ABDU'L-BAHA CALL UPON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE
SHUN REMEY AND ANYONE ASSOCIATING WITH HIM
OR ACTIVELY SUPPORTING HIS CLAIMS STOP
CONFIDENT COMMUNITY MOST GREAT NAME UNITED
WHOLEHEARTED CONDEMNATION THIS LATEST ILL-
FATED ATTEMPT DISRUPT GOD'S HOLY CAUSE WILL
EMERGE TRIUMPHANT STRENGTHENED GALVANIZED
ISSUE FORTH WIN REMAINING GOALS GLORIOUS
WORLD ENCIRCLING CRUSADE STOP CABLE
MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

**TO ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, C/O BAHAI
WILMETTE**

AUGUST 3, 1960

BELOVED GUARDIAN'S GLORIOUS EPISTLE GOD PASSES
BY CLEARLY STATES HOLY CAUSE CONSTANTLY SUBJECT
CRISES GIVING RISE GREATER VICTORIES STOP HISTORY
DEFECTION DISTINGUISHED BELIEVERS FOLLOWING
ASCENSION FORERUNNER FAITH SUPREME
MANIFESTATION CENTRE COVENANT NOW REPEATED
AFTER ASCENSION PRECIOUS SHOGHI EFFENDI
THROUGH MASON REMEY'S DEFECTION HIS
PREPOSTEROUS UTTERLY UNFOUNDED CLAIMS STOP
PROTECTION BELIEVERS FROM ACTIVITIES MISGUIDED
MISCHIEF MAKERS GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY REPENT
NOW REQUIRES EXPULSION FAITH REMEY'S HENCHMEN
JOHN CARRE BERNARD FILLON MONEER DARAKHSHAN
JOEL MARANGELLA JACQUES SOGHOMONIAN DONALD

HARVEY JOHN BYERS IN FRANCE AND MARY WILKIN
UNITED STATES STOP HENCEFORTH ANYONE
ASSOCIATING THESE PEOPLE OR SUPPORTING REMEY
CLAIM LIKEWISE CONSIDERED COVENANT BREAKER STOP
CONFIDENT FAITHFUL DEVOTED BODY BELIEVERS
MINDFUL INFINITE BOUNTIES PRAISES SHOWERED
BELOVED GUARD-IAN WILL DEMONSTRATE THROUGH
UNITED ACTION IMPREGNABLE SOLIDARITY ARISE
ACHIEVE GLORIOUS GOALS GOD-INSPIRED CRUSADE
STOP CABLE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God

August 9, 1960

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Dearly beloved Fellow-Hands:

We know that you are anxious to receive news of the situation which has developed as a result of the tragic defection of Mason Remey and his preposterous claim to be the one chosen to fill the place of our beloved Guardian who was the divinely appointed scion of God on earth.

It seems that his agitation, far from ceasing and far from being—as we at first hoped and believed—the evidence of great emotional disturbance and unbalance—is a persistent and well-thought-out campaign. Not only does he personally continue to send out communications asserting his claim and adding ridiculous arguments to support it, but his attacks on the Hands and all who support them are becoming more violent and insidious all the time, and his chief supporters in France, Joel Marangella, Don Harvey and others, have now been joined by Mary Magdalene Wilkin in the United States. These henchmen are circularizing the Bahá'í world widely with violent attacks on the Hands, their decisions and their right to carry on the beloved Guardian's Crusade while at the same time deducing so-called "proofs" of the authenticity of Mason's claims and position.

In view of this critical situation and the urgent need to close this door through which spiritual pollution was pouring unhindered into the Bahá'í world, following receipt of your replies to our July 7th letter we expelled both him and his supporters from the Faith. We felt we could not take the risk of deferring this drastic action until the time when we all meet together—even if the date of the meeting had been advanced to early September (we could not have gotten the Annual Meeting ready before then).

We thank you for the prompt expressions of opinion we received here from all of you in response to our letter which enabled us to take this action for the protection of the Faith on behalf of the entire body of the Hands. We therefore sent the two following cables to all National Spiritual Assemblies:

JULY 26, 1960

ENTIRE BODY HANDS OBEDIENT PROVISIONS WILL
TESTAMENT CENTRE COVENANT COMMUNICATIONS
BELOVED GUARDIAN ENJOINING THEM PROTECT
HOLY CAUSE ATTACKS ENEMIES WITHIN WITHOUT
ANNOUNCE BAHA'I WORLD MASON REMEY COVENANT
BREAKER EXPELLED FAITH STOP ACTION FOLLOWS
LONG PERIOD PATIENCE FORBEARANCE
OPPORTUNITY GIVEN HIM WITHDRAW SHAMEFUL
PRETENSION SACRED STATION GUARDIANSHIP
CONSTITUTING HERETICAL CLAIM CONTRARY
EXPLICIT PROVISIONS WILL MASTER STOP DESPITE
UNIVERSAL REPUDIATION DENUNCIATION BY ALL
HANDS INTERNATIONAL BAHA'I COUNCIL ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES REMEY CONTINUING AGITATE
UNFOUNDED CLAIM ACTIVELY SEEKING CREATE
DIVISION RANKS FAITHFUL SOW SEEDS DOUBT
HEARTS BELIEVERS UNDERMINE ACTIVITIES
INSTITUTION HANDS CHIEF STEWARDS DEDICATED
FULFILMENT BELOVED GUARDIAN'S TEN YEAR PLAN
STOP ACCORDANCE INJUNCTION WILL TESTAMENT
ABDU'L-BAHA CALL UPON FRIENDS EVERYWHERE
SHUN REMEY AND ANYONE ASSOCIATING WITH HIM

OR ACTIVELY SUPPORTING HIS CLAIMS STOP
CONFIDENT COMMUNITY MOST GREAT NAME UNITED
WHOLEHEARTED CONDEMNATION THIS LATEST ILL-
FATED ATTEMPT DISRUPT GOD'S HOLY CAUSE WILL
EMERGE TRIUMPHANT STRENGTHENED GALVANIZED
ISSUE FORTH WIN REMAINING GOALS GLORIOUS
WORLD ENCIRCLING CRUSADE STOP CABLE
MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

HANDSFAITH

AUGUST 3, 1960

BELOVED GUARDIAN'S GLORIOUS EPISTLE GOD
PASSES BY CLEARLY STATES HOLY CAUSE
CONSTANTLY SUBJECT CRISES GIVING RISE GREATER
VICTORIES STOP HISTORY DEFECTION
DISTINGUISHED BELIEVERS FOLLOWING ASCENSION
FORERUNNER FAITH SUPREME MANIFESTATION
CENTRE COVENANT NOW REPEATED AFTER
ASCENSION PRECIOUS SHOGHI EFFENDI THROUGH
MASON REMEY'S DEFECTION HIS PREPOSTEROUS
UTTERLY UNFOUNDED CLAIMS STOP PROTECTION
BELIEVERS FROM ACTIVITIES MISGUIDED MISCHIEF
MAKERS GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY REPENT NOW
REQUIRES EXPULSION FAITH REMEY'S HENCHMEN
JOHN CARRE BERNARD FILLON MONEER
DARAKHSHAN JOEL MA-RANGELLA JACQUES
SOGHOMONIAN DONALD HARVEY JOHN BYERS IN
FRANCE AND MARY WILKIN UNITED STATES STOP
HENCEFORTH ANYONE ASSOCIATING THESE PEOPLE
OR SUPPORTING REMEY CLAIM LIKEWISE
CONSIDERED COVENANT BREAKER STOP CONFIDENT
FAITHFUL DEVOTED BODY BELIEVERS MINDFUL
INFINITE BOUNTIES PRAISES SHOWERED BELOVED
GUARDIAN WILL DEMONSTRATE THROUGH UNITED
ACTION IMPREGNABLE SOLIDARITY ARISE ACHIEVE
GLORIOUS GOALS GOD-INSPIRED CRUSADE STOP
CABLE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

HANDSFAITH

Replies expressing gratitude for and approval of this action are now beginning to come in from the National Spiritual Assemblies.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum cut short a much-needed rest after her exhaustive tour of the United States and Canada when we informed her of the sudden death of our dear co-worker Horace Holley, and flew back from Canada as soon as she could arrange her travelling plans. Bill Sears, who had planned to visit some of the European centres prior to our Bahjí meeting, hastened his arrival after being informed of Horace's death, and got here three days before Rúhíyyih Khánum. Faizí (whose re-entry visa held him up) arrived a few days later. Their report made it clear that responsible believers were considerably puzzled and distressed by the lack of action from the World Centre in expelling what had obviously become a most active and threatening group of Covenant-breakers. In addition to this, the American National Spiritual Assembly, in whose area this poisonous material was being most widely circulated, cabled us as follows:

JULY 18, 1960

CONSIDERED JUDGEMENT OUR ASSEMBLY ACTIONS
TAKEN THUS FAR BY HANDS HOLY LAND
INADEQUATE DEAL DECISIVELY SATISFACTORILY
NUMEROUS BELIEVERS ATTRACTED REMEY CLAIM
STOP SITUATION FRAUGHT CONFUSION DOUBT
DANGER STOP RESPECTFULLY URGE DEFINITE
DRASTIC IMMEDIATE ACTION HANDS DECLARING
REMEY VIOLATOR SAME FATE ALL THOSE
CONTINUING SUPPORT HIM DEVOTED LOVE.

WOLCOTT [SECRETARY]

We all knew after the passing of our beloved Guardian false claims would surely be made; but we never dreamed they would come from one of ourselves, from a Hand honoured by both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. History has repeated itself once again, and from the text of that glorious epistle *God Passes By* we are assured that any crisis this may momentarily precipitate in Bahá'í

affairs will inevitably be succeeded by a resounding victory and a great forward surge in the work of this holy Faith.

We need not tell you how difficult has been this whole series of events for those serving here at the World Centre! You can well imagine. In the midst of this crisis, with four Custodians absent—Milly Collins and Leroy Ioas for reasons of health and Rúhíyyih Khánúm and Faizí on specific missions—our very dear co-worker Horace Holley, suddenly died. As you know his heart was in a state where this could have happened at any moment during the past years. For a few days he had felt too weak to get up and be about, but his condition did not lead us, or his physician, to believe his death was imminent. On the evening of the 12th of July he collapsed on leaving the bathroom and died immediately. A very beautiful and moving service was held in the hall of the Master's Home; and less than twenty-four hours after his passing we laid him to rest in the Bahá'í Cemetery, right near the graves of Dr. Esslemont and the Afnán who built the 'Ishqábád Temple. We are deeply grateful to Bahá'u'lláh that we had the valued, mature and wise advice of dear Horace during the most difficult period of this whole Remey affair and that he was able, through his example and counsels, to render at the end of his life yet another great service to the Faith he had worked for so constantly, with such outstanding distinction and devotion, and for so many years—a Faith whose Guardian had heaped upon him so many honours. May God in His mercy give each one of us an end as blessed as his!

All this has made us feel very keenly, and we know the same feeling is in your hearts too, that we must draw ever closer to each other—we who were chosen by our beloved Guardian, poor and unworthy though we are, to carry on his work, to serve as Hands of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and help crown with victory this latest stage in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan. Our essential unity, the love we have for Shoghi Effendi and in his love for each other, must grow daily stronger, so that we can fulfil our primary function of protecting and propagating the Cause of God. We feel our forthcoming Annual Meeting will inevitably, after this serious onslaught on the Faith and the Institution of the Hands, be productive of great results for the forthcoming year, and that we will

be assisted to make truly inspiring plans for the tremendous work that lies ahead of the entire Bahá'í world during the closing years of the Crusade.

We are eagerly looking forward to your arrival here. As soon as possible we will send you the agenda for the meeting. Now that this defection of Mason and the handful of his supporters (about 15 people in all, some of them wives of the chief dissidents) has been put in its proper light before the Bahá'í world, we can go on to other matters for which there has been no time during the past critical three months when we were investigating the situation, studying Faizí's detailed reports on the condition in France and answering a tremendous amount of correspondence pouring in in connection with winning the Crusade goals, Mason's claims, and so on.

We ask you to pray for all of us, but particularly for the health of Ugo and Bill; the former is slowly recovering from a very grave infection contracted during his tour of Central America, the latter has just left for a sanatorium in Europe to care for a disturbing liver condition seriously impairing his health. Our dear fellow-Hand Músá Banání has suffered a stroke and is at present in a hospital in Frankfurt receiving medical care for his paralyzed right side. We ask your ardent supplications on his behalf. Please also pray for the improvement in health of Milly, Leroy and Enoch.

In the holy Shrines we always supplicate for all of the Hands, as you know, and beseech Bahá'u'lláh's confirmations, protection and grace.

With deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

August 27, 1960

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

For your information and for the protection of the Cause, we wish to inform you of the recent steps taken by the Egyptian Government

against the Faith, and to indicate what course of action should be followed by the National Assemblies of the Bahá'í world.

According to press dispatches, the Government of the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria) has issued a decree which closes all Bahá'í centres, forbids any Bahá'í activity in Egypt or Syria, and gives the Government the right to confiscate Bahá'í property. Substantial penalties (fine, imprisonment, or both) are imposed for any disobedience of this law.

We now have confirmation of these actions and a request that all Assemblies and individual believers refrain from any correspondence with the friends in Egypt or Syria. It is essential that this instruction be followed without any exceptions, in order to avoid further restrictions on the Bahá'ís in those countries. Furthermore, no steps should be taken by any National Assembly to protest against or publicize the action of the Government of the United Arab Republic.

We are requesting the representatives of the Bahá'í International Community in the United States to take the matter up with the appropriate agencies of the United Nations, stressing the non-political character of the Faith, and that the basic right of freedom of religion has been violated. This is the only official action which we feel is wise at this time, but if any inquiries are received, the answer can be given that appropriate steps are being taken through the United Nations.

All of us can, however, pray for the protection of the friends and the removal of these unfortunate restrictions.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

August 31, 1960

Beloved Co-Workers:

As you know, this year's Conclave of the Hands is to take place during the period October 18-27. In accordance with our usual

practice we are sending to each Hand the following suggestions for the agenda of the meeting.

AGENDA – 1960 CONCLAVE

SUGGESTIONS OF THE HANDS

THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

WINNING THE REMAINING CRUSADE GOALS

Formation of National Spiritual Assemblies
and Local Spiritual Assemblies
European Temple

ACTIVITIES OF THE HANDS

Hands in the Holy Land
Travel of Hands
Auxiliary Boards

FINANCIAL SITUATION

World Centre Report
Crusade Obligations

We are looking forward eagerly to welcoming you in Haifa and to the opportunity of praying and consulting together on the vital work which lies ahead for us all.

With our warmest and deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Bahá'ís throughout the East and the West

September 7, 1960

Beloved Friends:

They that have forsaken their country for the purpose of teaching Our Cause—these shall the Faithful Spirit strengthen through its power. . . . Such a service is, indeed, the prince of all goodly deeds, and the ornament of every goodly act.

Should anyone arise for the triumph of Our Cause, him will God render victorious though tens of thousands of enemies be leagued against him.

Bahá'u'lláh

In the past months, since the Annual Conventions were held, many events have taken place which have caused the friends to rejoice anew over the truly unassailable foundation upon which our glorious Faith has been laid. The individual believers in every part of the world have arisen with renewed consecration and redoubled zeal to devote themselves to winning the goals of our beloved Guardian's holy Crusade.

The news of the progress being made in winning these goals has been truly inspiring; a steady flow of pioneers from North America and Persia is going out to support the work in those crucial places where new National Assemblies must be formed either next April or in Ridván, 1962. In addition to this, local pioneers in Latin America and Europe are reinforcing the work, and through their familiarity with the languages and customs of the people are proving of invaluable assistance in building up new Assemblies and strengthening existing ones.

We clearly see that the words of our beloved Guardian resound with thrilling fulfilment around the Bahá'í world: "From the record of its tumultuous history, almost every page of which portrays a fresh crisis . . . recounts the tale of a base betrayal . . . there emerges, clear and incontrovertible, the supreme truth that with every fresh outbreak of hostility to the Faith, whether from within or from without, a corresponding measure of outpouring grace, sustaining its defenders and confounding its adversaries, has been providentially released, communicating a fresh impulse to the onward march of the Faith . . ."

What bounties we share, what privileges we have been given, what blessings have been showered upon us! Is it any wonder that 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked us over and over, "*Do you know in what day you are living?*"

Where such manifold blessings are given, an equally deep responsibility and challenge confronts us. This is the hour for every single believer to arise as never before and rededicate himself to the unfinished tasks of the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan, so that the rising tide of victories which made the past year unprecedented in the Faith, may sweep us on to greater triumphs and even more brilliant accomplishments on every front.

The eyes of the Bahá'í world are particularly directed to the goal cities of Europe where we still have twenty-seven Local Spiritual Assemblies to establish in nine countries. The most urgent need is for heroic pioneers to arise, determined to overcome every obstacle that stands in their path and volunteer their services through their own National Spiritual Assembly. At the start of this great Global Crusade, the beloved Guardian said that pioneering was the single most important service in the Bahá'í world in that hour. That service remains unique and priceless.

Time is getting terrifyingly short; we must all hasten on our individual and collective paths of service in order to win all the goals of our beloved Guardian. We ask each one of you to reconsider how you may be of greater help, as a pioneer, as a teacher, through greater support of the Fund, in any and every way possible, so that these coming months may see a great upsurge of activity and the kindling of a mighty flame of devotion which will sweep like wildfire throughout the Bahá'í world and carry us all to victory.

At the Annual Meeting of the Hands of the Cause, starting on October the 18th, momentous decisions will have to be made, and exhaustive plans formulated. We ask the believers everywhere in the world to join us on the evening of October 19th in saying the "Tablet of Ahmad" or another prayer, supplicating that all difficulties may be removed, all obstacles overcome, in the vital months that lie ahead—months which must witness the election of twenty-one new National Assemblies in the Latin American area and the creation of twenty-seven new Local Assemblies in the goal countries of Europe,

Assemblies which are to be the foundation of the new European National Assemblies to be elected in Ridván, 1962. We felt that this day, October 19th, would carry a special blessing, as it is the anniversary, according to the solar calendar, of the birthday of the precious Báb. The Hands will, after sunset on that day, be praying at Bahjí in the holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. Please join us then in thought, spirit and prayer.

Confident of final victory, and resolved to show forth, in the words of the beloved Guardian, "a dazzling display of the qualities which must distinguish a worthy stewardship of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh", let the friends everywhere arise with one accord, and conclude triumphantly those tasks which the Will of the Most High has ordained it should be their privilege to perform.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

October 15, 1960

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

In view of the proclamation issued by Mason Remey in which he claims to be the second guardian of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and the present circulation of what he calls encyclical letters, as well as various letters being written by his misguided supporters, the Hands of the Cause feel it imperative to place before the believers certain facts and passages from the Sacred Writings of our Faith in refutation of these spurious and highly misleading statements.

Mason Remey has had the temerity to assert that the beloved Guardian of the Cause appointed him during his own lifetime as his successor. He builds up his claim by saying that because he was appointed President of the first International Bahá'í Council, he becomes automatically the President of the elected International Bahá'í Council, and later, on its election, Chairman of the Universal House of Justice. To quote his own argument:

He who is President of the Universal House of Justice is the Guardian of the Faith for he who is the Guardian of the Faith is President of the Universal House of Justice. These two offices are one and the same. Therefore, when the beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi appointed me President of the Bahá'í International Council, that, he explained, was the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice that was the Embrionic [sic] Universal House of Justice that would eventually develop into the Universal House of Justice. I or one of my successors in Guardianship would be President of this divinely instituted infallible body, the Universal House of Justice; therefore the Guardianship of the Bahá'í Faith and the Presidency of the Universal House of Justice are one and the same position in the Faith.

This contention requires a careful study of the Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Will and Testament, because this sacred document sets forth the conditions requisite for Guardianship in no uncertain terms. We must never forget for a moment that it was the Master Who established the Station of the Guardianship; and in fact appointed the successor of Shoghi Effendi, as between Shoghi Effendi's first born, or another branch (Ghosn).

In the Will He clearly states:

He is the expounder of the Words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants. . . .

It is incumbent upon the Guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the Guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words: "The child is the secret essence of its sire", that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the Guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not

be matched with a goodly character, then must he (the Guardian of the Cause of God), choose another branch to succeed him.

It has become clear during the past months that lack of knowledge of the meaning of the word “branch” as used in the Master’s Will and Testament has led to great confusion in certain quarters in the West.

The word “Ghosn” (plural “Aghsán”) is an Arabic word, meaning “branch”.

Bahá’u’lláh used this word specifically to designate his own male descendants. It does not apply to any other category of people. He gave the title to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá of *“the Most Great Branch”*. His second son, Muhammad ‘Alí was known as *“the Greater Branch”*; His third son, Mihdí, *“the Purest Branch”*, etc. The Guardian himself is designated in the Master’s Will as *“the Chosen Branch”*.

All the male relatives of the Báb are invariably referred to as “Afnán”, which means “twigs”.

These two designations are not interchangeable.

Over and over in Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablets these terms “Aghsán” and “Afnán” are specifically used in this sense.

For instance, in the Tablet of the Branch, the original word is “Ghosn” (i.e. branch), referring to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The ordinary English usage of the word “branch” has caused a great deal of confusion, whereas there is not a shadow of ambiguity in the Persian and Arabic texts.

Because of ignorance of the Arabic and Persian languages and the use of these two terms in our Sacred Texts, spurious arguments have been put forth by those making the false claim that Shoghi Effendi could have appointed a successor other than a blood descendant of Bahá’u’lláh.

It should likewise be pointed out that neither in Persian nor Arabic are there ever any capital letters, so that it is impossible to deduce any arguments from a capitalization or lack of capitalization in the English texts.

We direct attention to the first Proclamation issued by all the Hands of the Bahá’í world from Bahjí, November 25, 1957 (including Mason Remey).

The same Hands (one of whom was Mason Remey), rejoining the other Hands assembled in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, certified that Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament. It was likewise certified that the beloved Guardian had left no heir. The Aghsán (branches) one and all are either dead, or have been declared violators of the Covenant by the Guardian for their faithlessness to the Master's Will and Testament and their hostility to him named first Guardian in that sacred document.

. . . the realization that no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him . . .

Thus it is clear that no one but a blood descendant of Bahá'u'lláh could possibly have been appointed by Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Faith.

Bahá'u'lláh, *in writing*, in unambiguous terms established the Master as the Centre of His Covenant. 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His turn, *in His Own handwriting* created the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, as the Centre of His Covenant and specified the conditions of future Guardianship.

Without one written word from the Guardian, Mason Remey claims that because he was the President of the International Bahá'í Council, and because this body is the embryonic international institution, it automatically makes him the President of that future body, and hence, Guardian of the Faith.

If the President of the International Bahá'í Council is *ipso facto* the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, then the beloved Guardian, himself, Shoghi Effendi, would have had to be the President of this first International Bahá'í Council.

If the presidency of the first International Bahá'í Council, which was not an elected body but appointed by Shoghi Effendi, was a permanent thing, why did the beloved Guardian himself call for an elected International Bahá'í Council in the future as part of the evolution of this institution and its eventual efflorescence into the Universal House of Justice?

We have not even an intimation in any writing of Shoghi Effendi that the officers of the first appointed International Bahá'í Council would be carried forward into the elected International Bahá'í Council.

There is nothing to indicate anywhere in the Teachings that the officers of the elected International Bahá'í Council would not be elected according to the pattern of election of every other Bahá'í elected body.

The manner of the election of the Universal House of Justice has been laid down by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself.

There is no possible reason for concluding that Mason Remey or any other Council member would automatically be carried forward into membership in that body.

If the presidency of either an appointed or an elected International Bahá'í Council were synonymous with the presidency of the Universal House of Justice, then it follows the beloved Guardian himself would have assumed this position.

Mason Remey signed the first communication sent out by 26 Hands of the Faith, from Bahjí in November, 1957, in which it was stated that as the beloved Guardian had left no Will and no successor, the Hands of the Faith, designated by Shoghi Effendi as the Chief Stewards of Bahá-'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, would carry on the work of the Crusade until the formation of that infallible Body, the Universal House of Justice.

Although Mason Remey, himself a Hand of the Cause, acted as one of the nine Hands in the Holy Land until the end of October, 1959, he never intimated his claim to be the second Guardian to any individual Hand, to the group of Hands serving at the World Centre, or to the body of the Hands gathered in Bahjí at their Conclaves.

The first intimation any of us received of this astounding claim was when he mailed us a copy of his proclamation, at a time when it was already in the mail to National Assemblies and individuals.

How can Mason Remey reconcile his assertion that he was appointed by Shoghi Effendi as his successor during his lifetime with the provisions in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that during the lifetime of the Guardian, nine of the Hands of the Cause of God must be elected by their fellow-Hands, and give their assent to the

choice made by him of his successor? If the Guardian appointed Mason Remey, why did he go against the provisions of the Will in this important respect? Such an implication is a flagrant attack on Shoghi Effendi himself.

The terrible dangers of accepting so manifestly false a claim as that which Mason Remey has made are thus clear for all to see.

In addition to having set aside the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will in making this claim, in addition to not having one single written word in evidence that the beloved Guardian intended to make him his successor, Mason Remey has written that he will appoint his own successor to the Guardianship.

Every believer, into whose mind has crept for even a second, a shadow of doubt as regards the personal status of Mason Remey may see for himself to what a degree he has entirely brushed aside every single foundation laid by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will for the Guardianship.

The glorious Báb forbade association with Covenant-breakers. Bahá'u'lláh strictly forbade association with the Covenant-breakers, and even warned the friends against entering if possible a city where Covenant-breakers resided, as their poison polluted the entire area. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's teaching with regard to shunning and having no contact whatsoever with the Covenant-breakers is contained in hundreds of Tablets. The beloved Guardian forbade all association with Covenant-breakers and warned that their poison was so deadly, that it was not permissible to have even their literature in one's possession.

The Chief Stewards of the Faith, mindful of their paramount responsibility to protect the believers, have taken action to expel from the Faith Mason Remey and his supporters because of their Covenant-breaking activities, and to forbid all association with them.

The beloved Master, in His Will and Testament, issued this clear warning to all the friends:

Beware, beware, lest the days after the Ascension (of Bahá'u'lláh) be repeated when the Centre of Sedition waxed haughty and rebellious and with Divine Unity for his excuse deprived himself and perturbed and poisoned others.

O God, my God! I call Thee, Thy Prophets and Thy Messengers, Thy Saints and Thy Holy Ones, to witness that I have declared conclusively Thy Proofs unto Thy loved ones and set forth clearly all things unto them, that they may watch over Thy Faith, guard Thy Straight Path and protect Thy Resplendent Law. Thou art, verily, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise!

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

OCTOBER 29, 1960

SHARE JOYOUS NEWS BELIEVERS OBSTACLES
ATTAINMENT ONE BELOVED GUARDIAN'S MAJOR
CRUSADE GOALS ERECTION MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE
NOW OVERCOME STOP EXCAVATION FOUNDATIONS
ALREADY COMMENCED STOP HAND CAUSE AMELIA
COLLINS REPRESENTATIVE GUARDIAN FRANKFURT
CONFERENCE WILL ATTEND HISTORIC CEREMONY LAYING
CORNER STONE NOVEMBER TWENTIETH AND PLACE
SACRED DUST MOST HOLY SHRINE PREVIOUSLY
ENTRUSTED GERMAN ASSEMBLY THIS PURPOSE STOP
FOLLOWING SEVEN YEARS' DELAY ALL HEARTS UPLIFTED
THANKSGIVING BAHA'U'LLAH GREAT VICTORY STOP
SHARE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

November 4, 1960

Beloved Friends:

We enclose a copy of the Message to the Bahá'ís of East and West from the Hands of the Cause assembled for the fourth time at Bahjí.

The tasks outlined in this communication, and the enumeration of the victories won in the beloved Guardian's World Crusade, are of such vital significance to the believers that we ask you to share it with them immediately through your News Letter, or otherwise.

We look forward to hearing in due course of further great victories won for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh through the dedicated consecrated efforts of the Bahá'ís in every land united in determination to overcome whatever obstacles lie between them and the fulfilment of the Ten Year Crusade.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

CONCLAVE MESSAGE

1960

From the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel

November 2, 1960

Dearly beloved Friends:

Fully aware of the fact that the destinies of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh for decades to come hinge upon the actions which must be taken during the coming twelve months, the Hands of the Cause of God, meeting in Bahjí in the precincts of the Most Holy Shrine, at their fourth Annual Gathering held since the passing of our beloved Guardian, have considered those measures necessary to enable us to attain the goals of this divinely inspired, globe-encircling Crusade. After joining the Bahá'ís of the entire world in supplication for the victory of the Ten Year Plan, after sixteen days of profound and exhaustive consultation, we are now in a position to share with our

fellow-believers the nature of the tasks facing us and the plans formulated to ensure their achievement.

The unprecedented global victories which thrilled and uplifted the hearts of the believers everywhere last Ridván are gathering momentum as this holy Crusade approaches its end. The world-wide Bahá'í Community, faced by yet another severe test during the past year, has risen to new heights of accomplishment. The evidences of the watchful protection of the Twin Founders of our Faith and the assistance of the Supreme Concourse, promised to all those who arise to promote it, are to be seen on every side. We now stand on the threshold of one of the most significant and critical moments in our history, fraught with golden opportunities, demanding tremendous self-sacrifice.

Our beloved Guardian led us year after year, along the most arduous paths, to victories which, to the people of the world, must have appeared impossible of achievement. Yet victory was ours at every step of the way. Before we muster our strength for the tasks that lie immediately ahead, let us for a moment contemplate what has already been accomplished by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh since the inception of the Ten Year Plan: The banner of the Faith has been unfurled in the astounding number of two hundred and fifty-six countries of the globe; the Mother Temples of both Africa and Australia are to all intents and purposes completed; at long last the soil has been turned on the site of the Mother Temple of the European continent and its corner-stone will be laid this month—just three years after the passing of our most beloved Guardian, an event which culminates seven years of heart-breaking effort to secure a property where permission to build could finally be obtained, and which marks another great victory of the Cause of God over the consistent opposition of certain ecclesiastical elements. Well nigh three thousand pioneers have left their homes since 1953 and scattered over the face of the planet, to the barren lands of the world, to regions within the Arctic Circle, to distant deserts and lonely islands, to populous cities and jungle villages. Heroes and martyrs, individuals drawn from every stratum of society, old people and young children, representatives of not only the Asiatic and European civilizations, but Africans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders and

Eskimos, have swelled the ranks of pioneers, each in his own way and in his own part of the world, contributing to this glorious testimonial of belief in the Manifestation of God in this day. The initial evidences of that great wave of mass conversion which must sweep the planet have been seen through the enrolment, since the inception of the Crusade, amongst the Africans, the people of Indonesia, and the Indians of South America, of over 30,000 believers, almost 20,000 of whom have embraced the Faith since the passing of the beloved of our hearts; the centres where believers reside have been more than doubled since 1953; hundreds of new Spiritual Assemblies have been formed; schools opened and run by Bahá'ís have been multiplied, not only in the Pacific area and in Africa, but more recently in India and in Latin America; the first dependency of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette—harbinger of the great cultural and humanitarian centres that will cluster about Bahá'í Houses of Worship in the future—has been completed. And last but not least, the Spiritual Assemblies specified by the beloved Guardian for Latin America have been elected and upon this firm foundation can now be erected next Ridván the twenty-one new pillars of the Universal House of Justice. All these are but a part of the tremendous victories won for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh by His small band of devoted, heroic followers in less than eight years.

The Crusade has reached the point where the Hands of the Cause can no longer operate on a regional basis alone, but must render their services on a global scale. This indeed seems the next step in the “development”, as the beloved Guardian wrote, “of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause” which he, in his great wisdom, made an objective of the Ten Year Plan and which he elaborated upon increasingly during the last years of his life, particularly stressing it in his message of June 4, 1957 and in the very last communication he sent to the Bahá'í world on the eve of his passing. So great and so crushing are the responsibilities which have fallen upon the Hands since his passing, so increasingly vast the field in which they are called upon to serve, that it is no longer possible to confine their activities to a specific region. The answer to this problem seems to be more travelling on their part, and the

concentration of their forces on those places where the need is greatest.

The passing of our very dear co-worker Horace Holley has left us without a ninth member of the body of Hands serving in the Holy Land. In order to fill this vacancy, far-reaching changes have been made in the disposition of the Hands in such a way as to not only protect the World Centre, but also serve the best interests of the continental work in various parts of the globe. William Sears has been chosen to replace Horace Holley at the World Centre; John Robarts is returning to the Western Hemisphere, his original home, in order to ensure that the vital work in the Americas receives adequate support at this time. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir is being transferred to Africa, with the understanding he will spend some months of each year travelling and teaching in his former area.

The Auxiliary Board members, mindful of the words of the Guardian concerning their functions as “deputies, assistants and advisers of the Hands”, and remembering the conspicuous part they have already played in winning the resounding victories of the Crusade, henceforth should concentrate their forces, as we approach the pinnacle of achievement, on the specific tasks given them, namely, teaching and protecting the Faith.

The significance and the vital importance of the proper relationship between the Institution of the Hands, with its Boards, and the National Spiritual Assemblies with their committees, was set forth in most pregnant terms by Shoghi Effendi in one of his last messages: “Call upon Hands and National Assemblies, each continent separately, to establish henceforth direct contact and deliberate, whenever feasible, as frequently as possible, to exchange reports to be submitted by their respective Auxiliary Boards and national committees, to exercise unrelaxing vigilance and carry out unflinchingly their sacred, inescapable duties. The security of our precious Faith, the preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá'í communities, the vitality of the faith of its individual members, the proper functioning of its laboriously erected institutions, the fruition of its world-wide enterprises, the fulfilment of its ultimate destiny, all are directly dependent upon the befitting

discharge of the weighty responsibilities now resting upon the members of these two institutions . . .”

Our strength has always lain in obedience to the commands of the Centre of the Covenant; if the Hands and their Boards, the National Assemblies and their committees, each functioning in the field delineated for it by the Guardian, will cooperate to the full extent implied in his above words, great spiritual powers will be released and a tremendous new impetus be given to the work of the Crusade in all its aspects.

The opportunities that call us to swift and sustained action in the teaching field are unique, infinitely precious, immeasurably glorious. In these fast-fleeting months which lie ahead of us we have to match the magnitude and the challenge of our beloved Guardian’s command with an effort unequalled in Bahá’í history, for this, the fourth and last phase of his world-encircling Crusade, he has told us “must be immortalized . . . by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society . . .”

The Manifestation of God Himself has said: *“Teach ye the Cause of God, O people of Bahá, for God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds.”* No one can afford to ignore this command. *“Of all the gifts of God”,* wrote the beloved Master in His Will and Testament, *“the greatest is the gift of Teaching. It draweth unto us the Grace of God and is our first obligation. Of such a gift how can we deprive ourselves? Nay, our lives, our goods, our comforts, our rest, we offer them all as a sacrifice for the Abhá Beauty and teach the Cause of God.”* Bahá’u’lláh Himself indicated the path every believer must follow when He revealed these words: *“Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumbfounded.”* The urgent need of the present hour necessitates not only an immediate upsurge of individual action, but also the re-orientation of all the administrative

agencies of our Faith towards the supreme obligation of spreading the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, and the exertion on their part of a maximum effort in the teaching field. As the travels and movements of teachers engaged in awakening the masses increase and multiply, blessings will correspondingly flow. To this the Master Himself bore witness. Time is short and herculean the task, but the promise of the Blessed Perfection rings in our hearts and fortifies our resolve: *“Whoso openeth his lips in this Day and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My Name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on High, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light.”*

In connection with the tremendous task of forming twenty-one new National Spiritual Assemblies, assisting the teaching work in those countries where many goals of the home front still remain to be won, and furthering the process of mass conversion so dear to the Guardian's heart, the Hands of the Faith have planned extensive travels during the coming months in order to aid and stimulate the world-wide activities of the Faith to the greatest possible extent.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum will attend the dedication of the Mashriq'l-Adhkár at Kampala, the Mother Temple of Africa, in January and visit various areas in that continent where mass conversion is taking place; she likewise plans to be present at the dedication of the Mashriq'l-Adhkár in Sydney, the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, which will be held next September, meeting the friends in Australia and New Zealand, as well as certain centres in South East Asia. Amelia Collins will lay the corner-stone of the Mother Temple of Europe, during this present month, in Frankfurt; Tarázu'lláh Samandarí will shortly leave for a prolonged tour of Pakistan, India, Burma and Ceylon to assist the work in those countries. Leroy Ioas will visit centres in Europe during the summer months.

On the occasion of the formation next Ridván of the largest number of National Assemblies to be elected at one time during any period of Bahá'í history, eleven Hands of the Cause, pursuant to the policy of the beloved Guardian, will attend the sessions of the different Conventions as follows: Hermann Grossmann in Argentina

and Chile; Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir in Paraguay and Bolivia; Hasan Balyuzi in Peru and Ecuador; Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í in Venezuela and Colombia; Ugo Giachery in the Dominican Republic and Haiti; Enoch Olinga in Jamaica and Cuba; Dhikru'lláh Khádem in Panama and Costa Rica; John Robarts in Nicaragua and Honduras; William Sears in El Salvador and Guatemala; Paul Haney in Mexico and also in Wilmette; 'Alí-Akbar Furútan in Brazil and Uruguay.

These Hands of the Cause, in addition to spending some time in each of the twenty-one countries where these historic gatherings are being held will, as the occasion permits, make a point of visiting not only the goal countries of Europe, but also the home fronts in Britain and Germany, the United States and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, as well as Alaska and certain islands of the Pacific. Enoch Olinga will travel for four months in the Greater Antilles and Central America. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir will travel across Africa, and later make a prolonged tour among the Bolivian Indians.

One of the most significant events during this coming Ridván period will take place when the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world elect the International Bahá'í Council. We shall witness for the first time in the history of the Faith an election on a global scale, and the hearts of the believers will echo the words of the beloved Guardian at the time when he appointed the first International Bahá'í Council: "Hail with thankful, joyous heart" this historic moment. This Council, which the beloved Guardian characterized as the "most significant milestone" in the evolution of the Administrative Order since the Master's passing, will now undergo, in his own words, its "transformation into a duly elected body"; it will be international in character, and have its headquarters at the World Centre of the Faith. In addition to those functions which were announced last year, it will be given certain administrative duties to discharge in facilitating the work at the World Centre in relation to National Assemblies abroad. It would be well for the believers, pondering at this time the importance of the step that is being taken through this election, to bear in mind that however significant this first universally elected body may be, it must never be compared with that Supreme Body upon which we are promised the

Twin Manifestations of God will confer infallibility in the discharge of those duties ordained for it in the Holy Text.

In considering the immediate needs of this Faith so infinitely dear to all our hearts, it has become evident that from now until the end of the Crusade in Ridván, 1963, not only a tremendous united effort on all fronts is going to be required, but above all a great self-sacrificing outpouring of our material substance. The cost of erecting the Mother Temple of Europe, enshrined in the heart of that continent which is the cradle of western civilization, has increased, since the beloved Guardian approved its design, between 30 and 40 percent, owing to steadily rising prices in Germany. Because of this it has become imperative, in order to prevent a still greater increase in cost, to purchase all the raw materials at the present time and to ensure that neither delay in commencing building operations nor any interruption in the construction of the superstructure takes place. This means that in a period of one year the funds of the Faith are being called upon to provide the major expense involved in its erection. The Hands of the Cause, mindful that Shoghi Effendi pledged a third of the estimated sum of one million dollars for the three historic Temples to be forever associated with the world-wide labours of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh during the Ten Year Plan, will provide the remainder of his pledge still to be paid for this purpose. In addition to the urgent demands being made upon the resources of the Faith in this connection, it must be borne in mind that the vanguard of valiant pioneers who in many places form the backbone of the existing Local Assemblies in Latin America and the nucleus of those which must be formed this year in eleven European countries, must at all costs be enabled to remain at their posts. To withdraw any of these forces at this time from strategic areas would be disastrous and might place in jeopardy those National Assemblies so soon to act as pillars of the Universal House of Justice. The International Bahá'í Council, fulfilling yet another stage in its evolution and efflorescence into the Universal House of Justice, must be elected and means be provided for at least a quorum of its members to function in Haifa. In addition to this, the World Centre, the heart and nerve centre of the Faith, its holy Shrines and

institutions, its multiple properties and magnificent gardens must be maintained and preserved for posterity.

To not present this picture of our obligations and needs, our responsibilities and the mighty challenge confronting us, to our fellow-believers, would, we feel, be neither fair nor realistic. However great the burden resting on our shoulders as Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth, it does not rest on us alone; each and every believer has his or her own responsibility towards the Cause of God, each one of us, in differing degrees but in universal measure, is called upon to bring a personal sacrifice to the altar of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh at this time. We know that it is indeed spiritually far more important for each believer to give a token offering than for those more blessed with material means to carry the brunt of the burden alone. It is our ardent hope that our Bahá'í brothers and sisters in Africa and the Pacific area, in the Andes, in the jungles and the deserts, on the Indian reservations of North America, in distant wastelands, and the regions of the Arctic Circle will, as a symbol of our great brotherhood and our unity under the banner of the Blessed Perfection, likewise contribute regularly, if only one penny, to further the achievement of the remaining goals of our beloved Guardian's Crusade and to enable us to win a victory in 1963 such as has never been recorded in the annals of any religion in the memory of man. We call upon all the friends to join in a year of austerity and self-sacrifice. The opportunity to render unique service has been offered to this generation at this time. It will never come again in this Dispensation. The final and crowning service of our Guardian's life was this Holy Crusade he left to us as a priceless legacy. To win it is our infinite privilege, our greatest blessing in this world and in the world to come.

In ever greater measure the promises of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá are being fulfilled. The specific goals set by our Guardian are being realized one by one with unbelievable rapidity. The assurance given us in our teachings that every test releases forces latent with new victories is being demonstrated before our very eyes. This world-girdling Crusade, the essential object of which is no less than the spiritualization of the entire planet, is now gathering the final

momentum necessary to carry it forward in one stupendous surge to a resounding victory on all fronts.

If ever a year of glorious enterprise has faced the Community of the Most Great Name, it is this year. We can look back in pride upon a steadily mounting, uninterrupted tide of victories unequalled since the days of the Heroic Age of our Faith. We can look forward with hope and confidence to the tremendous achievements that lie ahead of us during the coming twelve months. These recent victories, these future achievements are the fruit of the labours of our dearly beloved Guardian. His was the hand that sowed the seeds, and in his name the harvest will be gathered in.

Let us remember the promise Shoghi Effendi himself gave us: "The all-conquering potency of the grace of God, vouchsafed through the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, will, undoubtedly, mysteriously and surprisingly, enable whosoever arises to champion His Cause to win complete and total victory."

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih

A. Vargha

Amelia Collins

Mohajer

Leroy Ioas

Zikrullah Khadem

H. Collis Featherstone

Hasan M. Balyuzi

Ugo Giachery

Enoch Olinga

Adelbert Mühlischlegel

[Musa Banani, signed in English on his behalf]

Agnes B. Alexander

Sh. Alai

A. Furutan

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí

John A. Robarts

Hermann Grossmann

John Ferraby

A. Q. Faizi
William Sears
Paul Haney
Jalal Khazeh

**To the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the
Bahá'í World**

November 13, 1960

Dear Co-workers:

In accordance with the decisions of the body of the Hands of the Cause of God regarding the election of the International Bahá'í Council, we are sending to the Secretary of each National or Regional Spiritual Assembly nine ballot papers, one for each member. These ballot papers carry all the necessary instructions.

They should be collected by the Secretaries of the Assemblies in envelopes that are specially provided with the ballots. The envelopes must be sealed. Should any one or some of the members fail to send in their votes, the Secretary ought not to delay the dispatch of the ballots received. These should be mailed together to the World Centre in ample time to reach here before April 21st, 1961.

The results will be announced during the Ridván period.

With loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**BAHA'I WILMETTE
NOVEMBER 21, 1960**

GRIEVE ANNOUNCE PASSING HAND CAUSE CLARA DUNN
DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AMERICAN BAHA'I COMMUNITY
WHO WITH HYDE DUNN SPIRITUAL CONQUEROR
AUSTRALIA RESPONDED MASTERS APPEAL DIVINE PLAN
AROSE CARRIED FAITH ANTIPODES RENDERED UNIQUE
UNFORGETTABLE PIONEER SERVICE OVER FORTY YEAR

PERIOD STOP ADVISE HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERING
TEMPLE STOP SHARE MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'IRAT FRANKFURT

NOVEMBER 24, 1960

OVERJOYED GLORIOUS VICTORY LAYING CORNERSTONE
MOTHER TEMPLE EUROPE ASSURE PRAYERS SHRINES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS**

1961

To the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í World

January 1, 1961

Dear Co-workers:

In a communication dated November 13, 1960, we informed all National and Regional Assemblies that we were sending them nine ballot papers for the election of the International Bahá'í Council, one for each Assembly member.

In order to ensure that all existing National Assemblies participate fully in this supremely important election, we request that the Secretary of each Assembly inform us immediately whether these ballots have been received and distributed to the individual members. As indicated previously, the Secretaries are responsible for collecting the sealed ballots and mailing them in ample time to reach the World Centre before April 21, 1961.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

January 4, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

On the occasion of the historic dedication for Bahá'í and public worship of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the African continent, we suggest that you either write or cable the National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa, congratulating them on the completion at so early a date of this Mother House of Worship, so dear to our beloved Guardian's heart.

We feel sure your messages will encourage and inspire the African believers throughout the continent, and bring to them a sense of the great solidarity of the believers all over the world and the degree to which they share each others' joys and victories.

We send you all our loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JANUARY 12, 1961

ANNOUNCE JOYOUS NEWS CORNERSTONE MOTHER
TEMPLE EUROPE LAID IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY
ATTENDED NEARLY ONE THOUSAND BAHA'I GUESTS
SACRED DUST SHRINE BAHA'U'LLAH PLACED
FOUNDATION BY BELOVED HAND AMELIA COLLINS STOP
EXCAVATIONS FOUNDATIONS WALLS BEING RAPIDLY
COMPLETED PLANS LAID EARLY CONSTRUCTION
SUPERSTRUCTURE BUT ACTUAL BEGINNING THIS WORK
DEPENDENT AVAILABILITY SUFFICIENT FUNDS STOP
HEAVY INCREASE BUILDING COSTS DURING
UNAVOIDABLE SEVEN YEAR DELAY OVERCOMING
SERIOUS OBSTACLES NOW REQUIRES STEADY
UNINTERRUPTED FLOW CONTRIBUTIONS STOP
COMPLETION THIS HISTORIC STRUCTURE DURING
CRUSADE NOW NECESSITATES FULFILMENT BELOVED
GUARDIAN'S STIRRING CALL FOR GREAT OUTPOURING
TREASURE BY BELIEVERS THROUGHOUT WORLD STOP
REQUEST ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES IMMEDIATELY
INAUGURATE SPECIAL FUND CONSTRUCTION MOTHER
TEMPLE EUROPE URGE ALL FRIENDS SUPPORT THIS
FUND LIBERALLY CONTINUOUSLY STOP ATTAINMENT THIS
VITAL GOAL TEN YEAR PLAN WILL RELEASE UNTOLD
SPIRITUAL POWER ADD PRESTIGE FAITH DEMONSTRATE
VITALITY EVER VICTORIOUS WORLD BAHA'I COMMUNITY
ATTRACT DIVINE CONFIRMATIONS BLESSINGS PROMISED
BY ABDU'L-BAHA TO ALL THOSE WHO SACRIFICE FOR
HOUSE OF THE LORD STOP AIRMAIL MESSAGE ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

DEDICATION OF THE MOTHER TEMPLE OF AFRICA

Kampala, Uganda

January 14, 1961

To the Hands of the Cause, Auxiliary Board Members, Members of National Assemblies, and believers attending the Dedication of the Mother Temple of Africa and the Africa Teaching Conference.

Beloved Friends:

On the historic occasion of the opening for public worship of the Mother Temple of Africa and the gathering together for the third time in a period of seven years, of so many African believers and Bahá'í guests from other countries, our hearts turn in thanksgiving to our beloved Guardian who made this great victory possible.

At the inception of the Ten Year Plan, coincident with the Centenary celebration of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation, it was Africa which was chosen by Shoghi Effendi as the scene of the first of the four mighty Intercontinental Conferences which constituted part of the inauguration of that long-anticipated intercontinental stage in the administrative evolution of the Faith. On the occasion of that Conference he gave to Africa no less than 77 specific goals, almost all of which have already been achieved, and some far exceeded.

It was Africa which was once again given the honour of holding the first of the second series of Intercontinental Conferences called by Shoghi Effendi in celebration of the midway point of the World Crusade. It was Africa whose Temple was first ready to have its corner-stone laid, and receive the Sacred Dust from the holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, as his last loving gift.

As the Bahá'í Dispensation unfolds, the deep spiritual significance of this African Temple, the first Temple to be completed during the World Crusade, will be increasingly revealed. We should ponder the fact that the people of Africa have attracted the grace of Bahá'u'lláh to such a marked degree that after the construction in Asia—the continent which has been the Cradle of the Manifestations of God—of the first Bahá'í Temple to be erected, and the completion in

America, the Cradle of the Administrative Order, of the second Bahá'í House of Worship, it was Africa which was singled out for the unique honour of completing the third Mother Temple to be raised in the name and to the glory of the Supreme Manifestation of God for this Day.

All the friends, particularly those who have come from Persia to attend the dedication of this blessed Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, should recall that in addition to its significance as the Mother Temple of Africa and the third of the Bahá'í world, it has a special, precious and most tender association with the long-suffering followers of Bahá'u'lláh in His native land. Our beloved Guardian, at a time when what he characterized as the worst crisis since the inception of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation, was sweeping Persia, particularly stated that this Temple was to constitute a "supreme consolation" to our oppressed and valiant brethren in the Cradle of the Faith. How befitting that the majority of Bahá'ís present on this occasion should be of African and Persian extraction. How mysterious the link binding these two important branches of the Bahá'í family to each other—on the one hand, the Community that gave over 20,000 martyrs to this glorious Cause, on the other the representatives of those spiritually fertile peoples, over 15,000 of whom have, in the brief space of nine years, flocked to the Standard of Bahá'u'lláh, arisen to teach His Faith in their own countries, and gone forth as pioneers in His Name throughout their vast continent.

In conjunction with the opening of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to public worship, a teaching conference affording unique opportunities for consultation between Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, representing the Hands at the World Centre, the African Hands of the Cause, Board members, Regional Assembly members, pioneers, teachers and believers, is being held. We feel particular attention should be given to the supreme task of mass conversion, and ways and means of extending this work, so dear to our Guardian's heart, as well as better methods of consolidating the communities being so rapidly formed, and deepening the new believers in knowledge and understanding of the teachings.

Shoghi Effendi's vision, his determination, his overwhelming confidence in the wonderful qualities of the African people have

brought us to the present hour of consummation. Who can doubt that this fulfilment of his fondest hope, this fruition of his cherished plan for Africa—the completion of this Mother Temple—will now cast over the entire continent a mighty blessing, and release a new and powerful wave of spiritual vitality. To the great “silent teacher” in the heart of the American continent, as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá called the first Temple of the Western World, standing on the shores of Lake Michigan and attracting more notice to the Faith each year, has now been added a sister edifice in the heart of Africa. Her message of Oneness will increasingly flow out over that continent and affect its people, consciously and unconsciously.

The African believers, as well as those pioneers from abroad who have settled among them and been so largely instrumental in propagating the Faith there, must seize upon this opportunity, when they are together in the shadow of this newly-completed House of Worship, and discuss their problems and plans exhaustively. They must ponder the spirit as well as the letter of the many precious instructions and words of encouragement they received from Shoghi Effendi, and devise ways of carrying out the great tasks that lie ahead of them. They must remember this is only the beginning of the work in Africa; surveying what has been accomplished in seven years. With what joy and enthusiasm must they look forward to the future, with its new victories, its fresh conquests of men’s hearts, which will widen the bases on which many independent African national bodies must rest—national bodies to be established in the course of plans which must be undertaken during the years following the termination of the Ten Year Crusade. These future, glorious campaigns, will form a part, in the words of our beloved Guardian, of that “laborious and tremendously long process of establishing in the course of subsequent crusades in all the newly opened sovereign states, dependencies and islands of the planet, as well as in all the remaining territories of the globe, the framework of the Administrative Order of the Faith, with all its attendant agencies, and of eventually erecting in these territories still more pillars to share in sustaining the weight and in broadening the foundation of the Universal House of Justice.”

How vast the scope for service which lies before the African believers, labouring in a continent comprising over fifty nations and territories, how great the part they must play in ushering in that blissful consummation described by him as “the long-awaited advent of the Christ-promised Kingdom of God on earth—the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh—mirroring however faintly upon this humble handful of dust the glories of the Abhá Kingdom.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA’I WILMETTE

JANUARY 24, 1961

JOYOUSLY SHARE BAHA’I WORLD NEWS COMPLETION
DEDICATION MOTHER TEMPLE AFRICA MARKING
SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS
FAITH THAT RICHLY BLESSED CONTINENT STOP
MEMORABLE DEDI-CATION CEREMONY ATTENDED
AMATU’L-BAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM AND NEARLY FIVE
HUNDRED BELIEVERS REPRESENTING NINETEEN
COUNTRIES STOP PRESENCE MORE THAN THOUSAND
VISITORS INAUGURAL SERVICE PUBLIC WORSHIP WIDE
PUBLICITY PRESS RADIO ATTEST GROWING RECOG-
NITION IMPORTANCE AFRICAN BAHA’I COMMUNITY STOP
URGE FRIENDS EVERYWHERE JOIN PRAYERS
THANKSGIVING ATTAINMENT THIS CHERISHED GOAL
BELOVED GUARDIAN’S PLAN AIRMAIL MESSAGE ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies

February 12, 1961

Dear Bahá’í Friends:

The Hands of the Faith, from their Conclave in Bahjí last October, made the joyous announcement to the Bahá’í world that the many

obstacles in the way of actual construction work on the Mother Temple of Europe, in Frankfurt, Germany, had been overcome, and the seven-year-long delay at last ended.

On November 20, 1960 the corner-stone was laid at an impressive ceremony, attended by nearly one thousand Bahá'ís and their guests, at which the Sacred Dust from the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, entrusted to the German National Assembly for this purpose by Shoghi Effendi himself, was placed in the foundation by the beloved Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins.

Since that day, work at the site has gone forward on the foundations, and weather permitting, this phase will soon be completed. Contracts have been signed for the erection of the superstructure, work on which is to start in early Spring, with completion scheduled in the late Fall of 1961.

The problem now is one of a steady and uninterrupted flow of funds. The beloved Guardian stated that the attainment of this goal will require "a great outpouring of treasure" on the part of the world-wide Bahá'í Community. The friends everywhere should realize that while this Temple is being constructed in Frankfurt, it is not a German Temple; and while it is the Mother Temple of Europe, its construction is the responsibility of the entire Bahá'í world, as it was given as one of the major goals of the Ten Year Crusade.

The Hands of the Faith are fully aware of the degree to which the friends everywhere are already sacrificing for the attainment of the goals of the Ten Year Plan. However, all of us are now called upon for a far greater degree of sacrifice than heretofore throughout the fast-fleeting twenty-seven months remaining for the successful completion of the World's Greatest Spiritual Crusade.

Funds are needed, and amply, at once, for the continuance of the work on the Temple in Frankfurt.

We call on the friends to contribute freely and liberally to this noble undertaking, from which such great spiritual bounties are promised, not only for the Bahá'ís, but for all the peoples of the world.

To a continent twice baptized in the fire of the world's most terrible wars, this Temple will be the dawning place of the praises of God, and a focal point for the radiation of the spirit of peace and unity.

As the friends contribute to the fund you have established for the Mother Temple of Europe, we request that you send each month to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany, all monies received.

A steady flow of funds is essential to ensure that the work will go forward without interruption. Owing to the heavy concentration of payments involved in the contract for the erection of the superstructure, a minimum of \$300,000 is needed in the calendar year 1961. An additional \$125,000 will be needed in 1962.

As we contemplate the unprecedented sacrifices which must still be made before the divinely-conceived Plan of our beloved Guardian can be crowned with total victory in 1963; and as we arise to participate in that "great outpouring" called for by our Beloved, which alone will make possible the completion of this blessed edifice in the heart of the European continent, let us bear in mind the stirring promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, describing the spiritual blessings which these Temples, "Dawning-places of the praises of God", release to the world.

Temples are the symbols of the divine uniting force . . .

This is the spiritual foundation, for that reason it is the most important of all foundations; from that spiritual foundation will come forth all manner of advancement and progress in the world of humanity. . . . Not only does the building of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár have an effect upon those who build it, but upon the whole world.

. . . The friends of God must endeavour with all their hearts and souls that this structure may be raised and completed.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies

March 6, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, one of the great victories of the Ten Year Plan of our beloved Guardian will be achieved this coming Ridván with the simultaneous formation of 21 new National Spiritual Assemblies in Latin America. This historic event offers an unparalleled opportunity for publicity and effective proclamation activities, based on the news value of what is taking place in 21 countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Not only should it be possible to obtain publicity in the press, but doubtless in some countries and cities opportunities can be developed for radio and possibly television coverage, in connection with general Bahá'í-sponsored programs.

We are asking the National Assembly of the United States to undertake the task of furnishing the other National and Regional Assemblies with factual publicity material, which can then be adapted by each Assembly for appropriate use within its own territory. Obviously there will be certain countries and regions, such as Arabia, 'Iráq and Iran, where it will not be possible to give any publicity to these events. Each National Assembly will of course know what is possible and appropriate in its own territory.

It has been the practice in the past for each existing national body to send a message of greeting to new National Assemblies at the time of their formation. These messages give the newly-established Assembly and the friends present at the Conventions during which they are elected, a feeling of oneness with their sister National Assemblies as an integral part of the world-wide Bahá'í Community. We suggest that you send such messages of greeting to the new Assembly of each of the 21 countries. They should be sent immediately in each case in care of the appropriate present Regional Assembly. In the event that you do not have the necessary information, the attached sheet indicates the address of the four existing Regional Assemblies, and the countries where the National Assemblies are to be formed under their sponsorship.

We send you loving greetings and the assurance of our ardent prayers for the success of your efforts to proclaim this important milestone in the unfoldment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Central America, Mexico and Panama

Costa Rica
Mexico
El Salvador
Nicaragua
Guatemala
Panama
Honduras

Greater Antilles

Cuba
Haiti
Dominican Republic
Jamaica

Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay

Argentina
Paraguay
Bolivia
Uruguay
Chile

Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela

Brazil
Ecuador
Peru
Venezuela
Colombia

BAHA'I WILMETTE

MARCH 13, 1961

WITH HUMBLE HEARTS TURN BAHA'U'LLAH IN
THANKSGIVING BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS BESTOWED HIS
FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS THROUGHOUT WORLD DURING

PAST YEAR ENABLING THEM WIN UNPRECEDENTED
VICTORIES ALL FRONTS STOP MOTHER TEMPLE AFRICA
BEFITTINGLY DEDICATED MOTHER TEMPLE AUSTRALIA
NEARING COMPLETION CONSTRUCTION WORK MOTHER
TEMPLE EUROPE RAPIDLY PROGRESSING STOP MASS
CONVERSION SO ARDENTLY CALLED FOR BY BELOVED
GUARDIAN CONTINUING AFRICAN CONTINENT EXPANDING
SOUTH AMERICA INDONESIA MALAYA NOW BEGINNING
INDIA STOP IN SENDING LOVING NAWRUZ GREETINGS
URGE FRIENDS JOIN IN FERVENT PRAYERS BAHU'ULLAH
SUPPLICATE FURTHER OUTPOURING HIS BOUNTIES
ASSURING IN COMING YEAR EVEN GREATER VICTORIES
RAISING HIGHER BANNER HIS GLORIOUS FAITH IN EVERY
LAND AS BEACON AND SOLE HOPE PEACE UNITY
DISTRACTED WORLD STOP AIRMAIL MESSAGE ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 4, 1961

GRIEVED LOSS DISTINGUISHED DISCIPLE ABDU'L-BAHA
HAND CAUSE CORINNE TRUE HER LONG ASSOCIATION
EARLY HISTORY FAITH AMERICA RAISING MOTHER
TEMPLE WEST STAUNCH UNFAILING CHAMPIONSHIP
COVENANT STEADFAST SUPPORT BELOVED GUARDIAN
EVERY STAGE UNFOLDMENT WORLD ORDER
UNFORGETTABLE ENRICH ANNALS FAITH WESTERN
WORLD STOP URGE HOLD BEFITTING MEMORIAL
GATHERING MASHRIQU'L-ADHKAR.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 6, 1961

OUR CABLE PASSING MOTHER TRUE ADD FOLLOWING
QUOTE AIRMAIL MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES
UNQUOTE . . .

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

**To the Representatives of the Sponsoring Regional Assemblies
at each Convention of Latin America**

April 10, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Enclosed is the Ridván Message of the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land to the Annual Conventions of the Bahá'í world. The special message to the Latin American Conventions has already been sent to you. Both of these messages should be presented by the Hand of the Cause attending each Convention, though not necessarily read by him because of the language problem.

We wish to inform the Conventions and the new National Assemblies that the Hands of the Cause are making a contribution of one thousand dollars to each of these twenty-one new administrative bodies, to inaugurate their National Funds. The announcement of this gift should be made by the Hand present at the Convention.

The Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins also wishes to inform the new Assemblies that she is making a separate contribution of one thousand dollars to each of the new National Funds, in loving appreciation of the great spiritual victory which has been won.

To facilitate transfer of these gifts, and in order to establish contact with the World Centre as quickly as possible, we request each new National Assembly to forward to Haifa the name and postal address of its Secretary and Treasurer, as well as the cable address of its National Office.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

RIDVÁN MESSAGE 1961

To Annual Bahá'í Conventions

Dearly beloved Friends:

“Every nation in the Western Hemisphere is illumined by the rays and woven into the fabric of Bahá'u'lláh's triumphant Administrative Order.” Such, in the beloved Guardian's own words, is the nature of the unique victory the entire Bahá'í world is celebrating during this blessed Ridván period, when twenty-one new and independent National Spiritual Assemblies are being elected throughout the length and breadth of Latin America. An enterprise officially inaugurated twenty-four years ago, through the launching of the first Seven Year Plan, has been gloriously consummated. The “onward marching legions of the army of Bahá-'u'lláh” pause in wonder and survey with grateful hearts their majestic conquests. “That pioneer movement for which” Shoghi Effendi stated “the entire machinery” of the Administrative Order had “been primarily designed and erected” has yielded a mighty harvest. No less than twenty-four independent National Spiritual Assemblies now comprise the links in the mighty chain of Bahá'í solidarity, stretching from the Arctic Circle to the Strait of Magallanes. Humbly, and with infinite gratitude, the followers of the Blessed Beauty lay before His throne this blazing crown in the name and in the memory of their Guardian, for it is essentially his victory, the witness of his faithful and superhuman efforts to implement that Divine Plan for the spiritual conquest of the entire planet which 'Abdu'l-Bahá entrusted to his care, to him who was the Sign of God on earth.

An occasion for such rejoicing cannot be allowed to pass without reviewing the antecedents of this overwhelming victory in the Western Hemisphere, which comprises half of the globe, which embraces the entire New World, and which the Guardian said was “the first region in the Western World to be warmed and illumined by the rays of God's infant Faith.” He stated that in a sense the original impetus of the world teaching plan of the Master was given when the

Báb, in the opening years of the first Bahá'í century, directed the “*peoples of the West*’ to issue forth *‘from your cities and aid His Cause.*” Many times he pointed out that ever since “the momentous and stirring summons” was “issued by the Author of the Revelation in His Most Holy Book, addressed to the rulers of all the Republics of the Western Hemisphere,” the uninterrupted blessings of God had been poured upon the American continent. Bahá'u'lláh Himself testified that “*In the East the Light of His Revelation hath broken; in the West the signs of His dominion have appeared*”, whilst ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1917, in one of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, made the extraordinary pronouncement that “the continent of America is, in the eyes of the one True God, the land wherein the splendours of His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled . . .” “The American continent”, He affirmed, “*gives signs and evidences of very great advancement. Its future is even more promising . . . It will lead all nations spiritually.*”

Within the northern confines of a continent upon which had already been conferred such a remarkable station, the American Bahá'í Community was singled out for unique honours; it was “a community”, Shoghi Effendi wrote, “invested with spiritual primacy by the Author of the immortal Tablets constituting the Charter of the Master Plan of the appointed Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.” In majestic and ringing words the Guardian himself gave the rank and titles of this favoured community, whose mission is so unbelievably great, whose responsibilities are so staggering. Its members were, he said: “the spiritual descendants of the Dawn-breakers of the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith, the chief repository of the immortal Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá's Divine Plan, the foremost executors of the Mandate issued by the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, the champion-builders of a divinely conceived Administrative Order, the standard-bearers of the all-conquering army of the Lord of Hosts, the torchbearers of a future divinely inspired world civilization . . .”

A community, called by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá “Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh” and specifically instructed by Him in the Tablets of the Divine Plan to carry the Message of His Father to all the Republics of Latin America and the islands fringing them in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, was launched officially in 1937 on its mission of spiritual conquest

when the Guardian set in motion the first Seven Year Plan. The precursor of this historic event was a letter from him written in May, 1936, to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada in which he said a "systematic, carefully conceived . . . plan should be devised" whose "supreme . . . objective should be the permanent establishment of at least one centre in every State of the American Republic and in every Republic of the American continent . . ." The significance of this first Plan was increasingly revealed to the Bahá'í world. When two years had elapsed Shoghi Effendi wrote: "The five remaining years should essentially be consecrated to the imperative, the spiritual needs of the remaining Republics of both Central and South America, for whose entry into the fellowship of Bahá'u'lláh the Plan was primarily formulated." As the "carrying of the sacred Fire to all the Republics of the Western Hemisphere" went forward, the tone of jubilation in the Guardian's Messages mounted. "From Alaska to Chile," he wrote in 1942, "the Americas are astir with the leavening influences of the rising Order of the new-born Revelation." He said the "first fruits of the Divine Plan" had been garnered there in abundance and that the first Seven Year Plan, commenced on the eve of the greatest war the human race had ever experienced, had, "despite six years of chaos and tribulation, been crowned with a success far exceeding the most sanguine hopes of its ardent promoters. Within so short a period, during such troublous years, such exploits were achieved as will forever illuminate the pages of Bahá'í history." On the eve of the holding of the first All-America Convention in 1944, celebrating the Centenary of the "first, most shining century of the Bahá'í Era", in that "great turning point in the history of our Faith" when "a spiritual front extending the entire length of the Western Hemisphere" had been established, when "the crowning act of an entire century" had been accomplished, when the administrative structure of the Faith was already "raising its triumphant head in the Central and South American Republics", when his heart was "filled with joy, love, pride and gratitude", when "the greatest collective enterprise ever launched in the course of the history of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh" had been successfully concluded, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "A victory of undying fame has marked the culmination of the fifty-year-long

labours of the American Bahá'í community in the service of Bahá'u'lláh and has shed imperishable lustre on the immortal records of His Faith during the first hundred years of its existence." In words such as these he sang the praises of the Community of the Most Great Name in the North American continent and indicated to the Bahá'í world the nature of the victories won during the first Seven Year Plan, not the least of which were the brilliant achievements in the southern part of the Western Hemisphere.

Two years later the American Bahá'í community was called upon to launch the second Seven Year Plan—a plan which the Guardian said surpassed every enterprise undertaken during the first Bahá'í century. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan was steadily gathering momentum. Whereas at the end of the first Seven Year Plan fourteen of the Latin American republics had established Local Assemblies, the remainder possessing groups only, whilst the total number of localities had risen to a little over fifty, by June 1947 there were thirty-seven Spiritual Assemblies and believers were to be found in over a hundred localities. To this extraordinary progress the beloved Guardian at that time paid a unique tribute: "No community", he wrote, "since the inception of the hundred-year-old Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, not even the community of the Most Great Name in the North American continent, can boast of an evolution as rapid, a consolidation as sound, a multiplication of centres as swift, as those that have marked the birth and rise of the community of His followers in Latin America" whose motherlands had "been chosen as the scene of the earliest victories won by the prosecutors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan". He called upon them to "bestir themselves for the collective, the historic and gigantic tasks that await them". He said the constitution of their National Spiritual Assemblies for the northern and southern zones was "one of the most vital objectives of the Second Seven Year Plan". He said these two National Assemblies were the "precursors of the institutions which must participate in the election, and contribute to the support, of the Universal House of Justice", and that they must lead, "gradually and uninterruptedly, . . . to the constitution in each of the republics of Central and South America, of a properly elected, fully

representative National Assembly, constituting thereby the last stage in the administrative evolution” of the Faith in Latin America.

Slowly the magnitude of Latin America’s destiny unfolded. Upon the occasion of the formation in 1951 of the two first Regional Assemblies in that part of the world, he wrote them that “these communities may be said to have been invested with rights and duties which no community in any continent of the Eastern Hemisphere can claim to possess.” He pointed out that these “newly-fledged, spiritually alert communities in Central and South America . . . are expected by their brethren, in both the East and the West, to worthily play their part as associates of the chief executors of the Plan bequeathed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.” With the launching of the World Crusade in 1953 new honours and responsibilities fell to the lot of these communities and the national bodies that represented them; in addition to the truly staggering plans made for them in their homelands, no less than nineteen new and previously opened territories were apportioned them as their share in this new globe-encircling phase of the Divine Plan—territories so far afield that some of them were situated in the very heart of the Pacific Ocean. Yet after the lapse of eight years nearly every major task at home and abroad set for them by their beloved Guardian has been fully and nobly achieved and the few remaining tasks required to perfect their labours are now well within their reach.

Such, briefly, is the history leading up to the formation of these twenty-one supreme administrative bodies. The mysterious impetus imparted by the Báb in the Qayyúmu’l-Asmá’, the singular, significant and dynamic statements of Bahá’u’lláh, the innumerable references of the beloved Master culminating in His Plan for the spiritual conquest of the entire globe, the detailed, brilliant and inspiring strategy worked out by Shoghi Effendi during his thirty-six-years Guardianship, the “daring exploits” of so many valiant Bahá’í pioneers, teachers and administrators—all have contributed to bring the Bahá’í world to this magnificent consummation, this unique event.

Though this is the end of a long journey, it is only the beginning of a glorious future for these new national bodies, and the communities they represent. They must remember that they share with the North

American Bahá'í Community, as its appointed "associates", a special responsibility in the prosecution of every phase in the successive unfoldment of the plans which form stages in the evolution of what the Guardian called the "Grand Design delineated in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's immortal Tablets"; the members of these new communities share in what Shoghi Effendi characterized as "the phenomenal destiny which the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the New World are to fulfil." They are, now, he wrote, "launched on their crusade for the spiritual conquest of the whole planet".

Before passing on to survey the victories won in other fields during the past year, we should recognize that aside from the fact that twenty nations and one dependency are electing their supreme Bahá'í administrative bodies, an additional event of far-reaching significance is taking place. "*The islands of the West Indies*", 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, ". . . have great importance; especially the two black republics, Haiti and Santo Domingo . . ." It is these republics which are now rearing up two of those autonomous pillars so soon to bear the weight of the Universal House of Justice. Who can doubt that these two new national communities, seconded by their sister community in Jamaica, and representative of that race which Bahá'u'lláh Himself likened to the "*pupil of the eye*" through which He claimed "*the light of the spirit shineth forth*", will greatly enrich the supra-national world-wide fellowship of His Faith and herald the day when innumerable other black nations of the continent of Africa elect their own independent National Assemblies.

The remarkable record of victories achieved since last Ridván in the prosecution of the World Crusade of our beloved Guardian—the completion of which he indicated would mark the end of the first epoch in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—bears eloquent testimony to the devotion and sacrifice with which the friends in every part of the globe have striven to fulfil his cherished hopes and high expectations. As the eighth year of the Ten Year Plan draws to a close, the believers everywhere may gain fresh inspiration and encouragement from the imposing list of achievements recorded during the past year.

The light of the Faith, now radiating from two hundred and fifty-seven countries, islands and dependencies, now covers the face of the globe, bringing to fulfilment the many prophecies foreshadowing the world-wide spread of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh ere the close of the first century following the declaration of His Mission, referred to by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as "*the dawn of the Sun of Truth*".

In his last Ridván Message the beloved Guardian called upon the friends in all continents to exert strenuous efforts to assure the "early attainment of the goal of five thousand Bahá'í centres in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres." By Ridván two years later, less than eighteen months after his passing, this goal was not only attained but exceeded, when the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside reached a total of over five thousand two hundred. This Ridván, as a result of the con-tinuing dispersion of pioneers and the winning of fresh recruits to the ranks of the Faith, the total has risen to the truly impressive level of nearly six thousand five hundred, a gain of no less than four thousand centres since the inception of the World Crusade in 1953.

This rapid process of multiplication of centres has brought the number of localities in Germany and Austria to a hundred and fifty; in the British Isles to a hundred and fifty-three; in Australasia to nearly a hundred and sixty; in Canada to a hundred and seventy-one; in the goal countries of Europe to nearly a hundred and seventy-five; in the fast-awakening Indian sub-continent to nearly two hundred and thirty; in Latin America to nearly three hundred and sixty; in the entire Pacific area to nearly six hundred; in Persia to more than one thousand and eighty; in the rapidly developing African continent to over fifteen hundred; and in the United States of America to nearly one thousand six hundred.

Particularly noteworthy is the rate of increase which has occurred in the four widely dispersed areas of the Indian sub-continent, Latin America, the Pacific area, and the continent of Africa. Since the announcement made by the Guardian in his Ridván Message of 1957, the number of centres in the Indian sub-continent has almost doubled. In Latin America, the gain has been even more striking, from approximately a hundred and thirty to almost three hundred and sixty, a truly remarkable achievement in so short a space of time,

and one contributing significantly to the fulfilment of the goal of a National Assembly in every republic of Central and South America. Throughout the Pacific region there has been an increase of more than three hundred centres in a four-year period, testifying to those spiritual potentialities mentioned in Shoghi Effendi's frequent references to the establishment and spread of the Faith in the countries of the Asiatic mainland and the islands of the Pacific. The total of more than fifteen hundred centres in Africa reflects the addition of nearly one thousand localities since 1957 when he so proudly announced in his last Ridván Message that the total had reached a level of more than five hundred and fifty.

After the formation during the current Ridván period of twenty-one National Spiritual Assemblies in Latin America, a total of forty-eight National and Regional Assemblies will be functioning throughout the Bahá'í world as the supreme, divinely-ordained administrative institutions of their respective countries and areas.

The total number of Local Spiritual Assemblies, the foundation upon which the entire Bahá'í administrative structure rests, is now nearly one thousand eight hundred and fifty, an increase of three hundred and eighty-five over the number reported in last year's Convention Message, and a further substantial increase will occur this year, as the fruit of the stupendous efforts exerted in all the continents of the globe to fulfil both the original and the supplementary goals of the Ten Year Plan. Two hundred and sixty-five of these local bodies are now incorporated, an objective to which the beloved Guardian attached great importance. Nearly twenty new registrations were secured during the past year, chiefly in the Western Hemisphere, in regions as widespread as Alaska, Canada, the United States, Brazil, Peru, and Chile. The incorporation of the four Brazilian Assemblies of Curitiba, São Caetano, Campinas and Niteroi in one year, bringing the total in that country to eight, as well as the registration of the Local Assembly of Chiclayo, Peru, represent particularly significant victories, as both Brazil and Peru now have the unique distinction of being the first sovereign countries in the Bahá'í world to attain the goal of incorporation of every one of the Local Spiritual Assemblies within their borders. Another notable achievement of the past year was the incorporation of the Local

Spiritual Assembly of Victoria, British Cameroons, the first in this region of West Africa, and one which undoubtedly will open the way for legal recognition of the Faith in other countries and dependencies of that important area.

The goal of translating the literature of the Faith into the indigenous languages of the territories included in the Ten Year Plan has, in most cases, been accomplished, and the supplemental achievements in this important field have exceeded all expectations. Since the inauguration of the Crusade translations have been completed in no less than one hundred and eighty-four different languages, eighty-one of which represent original or revised objectives, and the remaining one hundred and three supplementary achievements. All of the goals for translation have been fulfilled in the languages specified for Europe and the Americas, and nearly all of those for Africa; only ten in Asia remain to be completed. Including those already in existence before the opening of the Crusade, Bahá'í literature has now been translated into two hundred and seventy-three different languages, one hundred and twenty-five of these since the passing of the beloved Guardian.

The Ten Year Plan called for the acquisition of eleven sites for future Bahá'í Houses of Worship. Most of these were purchased in the early years of the Crusade, the last one having been added in 1958. Acquisition of Temple sites was also an objective of many of the supplementary plans given to various National and Regional Assemblies. Including the original eleven, no less than forty such sites have now been acquired, among these plots in all but two of the twenty republics of Latin America, foreshadowing the day when peoples in all the continents and major areas of the world can assemble for worship under the dome of future Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs.

Recognition of the independent character of the Faith by civil authorities, an objective constantly urged upon the friends by the beloved Guardian, has been further advanced during the past year through the action of school officials in twelve additional cities of the United States giving recognition to the Bahá'í Holy Days. Over ninety jurisdictions throughout the world now grant the Faith this form of recognition. During the past year the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate has been legalized in Louisiana in the United States, bringing to twenty-

nine the number of states and federal districts in that country which recognize the right of Bahá'í Assemblies to conduct legal marriage ceremonies.

The extraordinary increase in the number of Bahá'í summer schools, winter schools, week-end schools, teaching conferences and congresses throughout the Bahá'í world, in both the East and the West, precludes detailed enumeration at this time, but bears witness to the greatly increased community activity of the believers and the range of that phase of their teaching efforts, aimed at deepening the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in their knowledge and understanding of His Faith. Also of significance has been the increase of endowments, a number of which have been contributed by devoted, newly-enrolled African believers who have, out of their meagre holdings, insisted on donating land for local Hazíratu'l-Quds and schools.

In reviewing the extraordinary progress which has been made in achieving so many objectives of the Ten Year Plan, sufficient tribute could never be paid to the services rendered by the followers of the Faith in Bahá'u'lláh's native land. This oldest community in the Bahá'í world, from whose ranks its early saints, heroes and martyrs were drawn, has poured forth its substance, and an army of pioneers, in a steadily mounting stream for the support of every undertaking embarked upon in every continent of the globe.

The eighth year of the world-embracing Crusade now drawing to a close has witnessed an unprecedented movement of pioneers from both Persia and America into the goal cities of Europe, paralleling and indeed surpassing that which occurred in Latin America in the months preceding the great victory won in that region last Ridván. This stupendous effort, the first of its kind to join the two foremost communities of the Bahá'í world in an international undertaking of such transcendent importance has, through the operation of the Joint Deputization Fund and the settlement of pioneers, assured the formation of the requisite number of Local Assemblies specified by the beloved Guardian as objectives of the home-front campaigns in the goal countries of the European continent, aimed at quadrupling the number of Local Assemblies existing at the beginning of the

Crusade—the highest objective set by him for any home front in the Bahá'í World Community.

This glorious victory represents a significant milestone in that “fate-laden” process set in motion by the beloved Guardian in 1946 when he made “the initiation of systematic teaching activity in war-torn, spiritually famished European continent” a primary objective of the second Seven Year Plan launched in that year, and which constituted the second stage in the unfoldment of the world mission given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the American believers. In calling for a vanguard of pioneers to inaugurate the “spiritual conquest of the old world”, he looked forward to the time when, “in the years to come”, a host of Bahá'u'lláh's standard-bearers would “spiritually raise up the sorely ravaged continent of Europe.” This confident hope of our beloved Guardian will become a reality this Ridván when, as the fruit of the labours of this host of pioneers, the foundations for eleven future pillars of the Universal House of Justice will be laid, paving the way for the establishment of these divinely-ordained institutions in the Ridván period of 1962.

The evolution of the World Centre of the Faith so often alluded to by the beloved Guardian in his references to the rise and development of the institutions functioning in the Holy Land, will enter another stage this Ridván when the International Bahá'í Council, the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice, will be transformed into a duly elected body. This highly significant event, the first international election in Bahá'í history, has placed upon the members of the National and Regional Assemblies formed last Ridván the obligation of participating in the election of a body to whose membership believers in every part of the world are eligible.

The process of erecting a Bahá'í House of Worship in each of the five continents of the globe, a task of far-reaching spiritual significance and one to which the beloved Guardian attached immense importance, may be said to have entered its final stage with the opening in Kampala, Uganda, of the completed Mother Temple of Africa last January, the contemplated dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes in Sydney, Australia next September, and the laying of the corner-stone of the Mother Temple of Europe in Frankfurt, Germany last November. No one could have

foreseen, when the vast panorama of the World Crusade was spread before our eyes in 1953, that in the eighth year of its prosecution Africa would snatch the palm of victory in yet another field.

The beautiful and dignified African Temple, enthroned like a queen on Kikaya Hill, overlooking the City of Kampala and the rolling green countryside, seems to emanate a warm and personal welcome to all who behold it, and is already demonstrating the truth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words that these Temples are great silent teachers of the Faith. On the day of its dedication the words of Bahá'u'lláh, recited in Persian, Arabic, many African languages and English, flowed over the assembled believers from East Africa, Abyssinia, Eritrea, Rhodesia, Ruanda-Urundi, South Africa, the Sudan, Arabia, Persia, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the United States and other places, in mighty waves of benediction, lifting all hearts in praise of Him, and filling the souls of the friends with awe at the contemplation of the bounties of God poured forth in this Day of Days in such supreme abundance. On the day following this profound experience of Bahá'í fellowship, the Temple was formally opened to the public for worship; the crowds, representative of not only the African peoples, but of European, Indian, Sikh, and other elements in the population, filled the Temple to its open doors and overflowed onto its surrounding terrace, an attentive, colourful and reverent throng united, for perhaps the first time, in a service of worship dedicated to the oneness of mankind, to the establishment of world peace and the creation of a society founded on the brotherhood of all men and the fatherhood of their common Creator.

The blessings which this Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is now releasing in the heart of what once was termed the "dark continent" but which now may be truly said to have become the "bright continent" are indeed incalculable. Already similar blessings are beginning to flow out from the first Bahá'í House of Worship to be erected in the Southern Hemisphere, where thousands of people, in anticipation of its forthcoming dedication, are visiting the Sydney Temple, receiving literature, asking questions and broadcasting news of the progress of Bahá'í activities throughout Australia.

There remains the construction, in the centre of that continent which is the cradle of western civilization, amongst peoples highly

gifted but sorely disillusioned, often hopeless and cynical through direct experience of two cataclysmic wars, of the third great House of Worship which Shoghi Effendi called upon us to erect during this period of unparalleled expansion in all fields of Bahá'í activity. We have witnessed how far-reaching has been the effect of the completion in the heart of America of that most holy Temple dedicated by the Centre of the Covenant Himself; we now see before our eyes the new and powerful teaching influence which the African and Australian Temples are releasing. We cannot for a moment contemplate depriving the European continent and its spiritually famished multitudes of a similar blessing. A supreme effort is required, however, if we are to accomplish this purpose. The fanatical and calculated opposition of certain ecclesiastical elements in Germany has delayed, until the eighth year of the World Crusade, purchase of a site for and permission to build a Bahá'í House of Worship there. At long last the work has commenced, and there are bright prospects for the speedy erection of this building, whose design was approved by the beloved Guardian himself and for the support of which he urged the entire Bahá'í world to rally its forces. Unfortunately, the steady rise in prices in Europe, and particularly in Germany, since the passing of the Guardian, will now entail a tremendous increase in cost. This, as well as the maintenance abroad of that precious corps of pioneers in Latin America and Europe, whose steadfast and devoted services are the buttress of the newly elected Local Assemblies upon which the future pillars of the Universal House of Justice must rest, as well as the support of the various activities which are the mainstay of the mass conversion beginning at long last to take place will, if we are to meet our obligations and achieve our goals, require on the part of every single believer, whatever his or her personal circumstances, whether in the East or the West, a tremendous and unprecedented degree of self-sacrifice in the support of the various funds, the bedrock upon which all Bahá'í activity inevitably rests. Face to face with the gravity of our present obligations, we must never for a moment lose heart. We have never failed. Our record is unblemished. Miraculously, at the last hour, battles greater and more critical in the fortunes of our Faith have been won.

That the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, the “priceless gem of Divine Revelation enshrining”, as the Guardian wrote, “the Spirit of God and incarnating His Purpose for mankind in this age”, “feeds itself upon . . . hidden springs of celestial strength” and “propagates itself by ways mysterious and utterly at variance with the standards accepted by the generality of mankind” is, in every field of Bahá'í activity, being constantly demonstrated, but perhaps in no field as clearly as that of the teaching work. The vast process of mass conversion, in fulfilment of Shoghi Effendi's expressed wish that during this fourth phase of the Ten Year Plan “an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour” should take place, is beginning to yield its first fruits.

Little wonder that these fruits are, for the most part, being garnered in lands and amongst peoples who have retained, he said, their “primitive simplicity and remained uncontaminated by the evils of a gross, a rampant and cancerous materialism undermining the fabric of human society alike in the East and in the West, eating into the vitals of the conflicting peoples and races inhabiting the American, the European and the Asiatic continents, and alas threatening to engulf in one common catastrophic convulsion the generality of mankind.”

In a little over a decade the ranks of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the African continent—now representing no less than two hundred and eighty-six tribes—have swelled to twenty thousand, ten thousand alone having been added since the passing of the beloved Guardian in 1957. “The pure-hearted and the spiritually receptive Negro race” which, he testified, was “so dearly loved by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, for whose conversion to His Father's Faith He so deeply yearned”, is now beginning to take its rightful place in the Bahá'í world; already seven national and regional bodies are representative of areas where the majority of the electorate belong to this distinguished race. The possibilities for an unprecedented enrolment of new believers in these areas are practically limitless, particularly in the African continent, and may be said to be solely dependent on a wider dispersal of Bahá'í pioneers and teachers and the provision of the necessary financial assistance in support of plans that are

already formulated and only held in abeyance through lack of sufficient manpower and means.

Concomitant with the remarkable advances made in Africa, the Pacific region, upon which the Guardian lavished so much praise and encouragement during the last years of his life, and of whose newly-won victories he was so immensely proud, is witnessing a comparable expansion amongst the many peoples scattered throughout its islands and peninsulas who are as yet unspoiled by the blighting winds of Western materialism. In the Island of Mentawai alone there are now over five thousand Bahá'ís, whilst in the entire Southeast Asian area the number of the adherents of the Faith has swelled to well over eight thousand. Throughout the islands of the Pacific Ocean the far-flung Bahá'í communities are rapidly expanding and steadily increasing numbers of their varied races are being enrolled under the banner of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. In the Indian sub-continent, one of the earliest regions to receive His Message during His Own lifetime, a wave of conversion is spreading amongst some of its more primitive people in the Madhya Pradesh area, over five hundred of whom have embraced the Cause during the last few months.

In conjunction with the extraordinary progress which has taken place in the spread and consolidation of the Faith throughout the Western Hemisphere during the last few years, a less conspicuous but equally important advance can be seen in a field to which both the Master and the Guardian attached the highest significance. Almost half a century ago 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed the believers in the United States and Canada to "*attach great importance to the . . . original inhabitants of America*", promising that the Indians, like the original inhabitants of Arabia who accepted and supported Muhammad would, when educated and guided, "*become so enlightened that the whole earth will be illumined.*" The nineteenth objective of that portion of the World Crusade entrusted in 1953 to the American Bahá'í Community by its Guardian was the "conversion to the Faith of members of the leading Indian tribes." At a steadily accelerating pace this immensely significant process of conversion has gone on until at the present time we are witnesses of an event of extraordinary historic importance, the election in Bolivia of a National

Bahá'í Assembly representative of a community the vast majority of whom belong to the Aymara race. No less than thirteen hundred of these Indians, in over one hundred localities have, with enthusiasm and conviction, embraced the Faith and are responsible for the formation during this present Ridván of over twenty Local Assemblies, thus directly fulfilling the expressed wish of the Guardian that the Indians be elected to the councils of the Faith and lend their support to its administrative activities.

The establishment of Indian Assemblies in Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico—areas which were the scene of such mighty pre-Colombian civilizations as those of the Incas, the Mayas, and the Aztecs; the formation of no less than four Assemblies representative of Canadian Indians in the Yukon, Alberta and Saskatchewan; the fact that there are now over forty Indian and Eskimo tribes represented in the Bahá'í Community throughout the Western Hemisphere—more than double the number in 1957—all testify that the devoted followers of Bahá'u'lláh, in both the East and the West, are mindful of the tremendously significant words of their beloved Guardian at the inception of the World Crusade, and are devoting special attention to the teaching work in these infinitely fertile fields.

At the moment when such great victories have been won, when such significant events are taking place, when the Ten Year Plan, the detailed, unique and precious Plan of Shoghi Effendi, embodying his fondest hopes, and setting forth so clearly those tasks the accomplishment of which in their entirety must constitute the rock foundation of the work to come for generations, is drawing to a close—at such a moment we should pause and weigh once again the implications of those words he addressed to the first Intercontinental Teaching Conference held in Africa at the opening of the World Crusade: “I welcome”, he said, “with open arms the unexpectedly large number of the representatives of the pure-hearted and the spiritually receptive Negro race . . . I acclaim the preponderance of the members of this same race at so significant a Conference . . . auguring well for a corresponding multiplication in the number of the representatives of the yellow, the red and brown races of mankind dwelling respectively in the Far East, in the Far West and in the islands of the South Pacific Ocean, a multiplication designed

ultimately to bring to a proper equipoise the divers ethnic elements comprised within the highly diversified world-embracing Bahá'í fellowship.”

There can be no doubt that one of the deepest sources of satisfaction to the heart of our beloved Guardian during the closing years of his life was the remarkable progress being made in carrying the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the members of these races. Their enrolment as Bahá'ís, however, was far from being his ultimate goal. He desired their “active participation in the administration of the affairs of Bahá'í communities.” This desire of his is now being rapidly fulfilled all over the world.

Significant as these other plans and considerations may be, there was a dream of the future in Shoghi Effendi's mind, a vision of things to come. This Crusade, he pointed out at its very inception, has been launched “for the systematic propagation of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh over the surface of the entire planet. . . .” “It must, as it approaches its climax, carry the torch of the Faith to regions so remote, so backward, so inhospitable that neither the light of Christianity or Islám has, after the revolution of centuries, as yet penetrated.” Already in Africa, in the Pacific, and in the Americas, the first attacks on these remote outposts of paganism have been made and members of tribes as yet unconverted to any of the great living religions of the world have accepted, with steadfast and illumined hearts, the regenerating truths enshrined in the Revelation of God for this Day. But beyond all this there were still heights and depths of service not yet attained, shining prizes within our reach, which Shoghi Effendi longed for us to seize, to which his eyes travelled with yearning and hope as he gazed upon the vision of our future. To all his “dearly loved . . . onward marching legions of the army of Bahá'u'lláh—whether they laboured beyond the Arctic Circle, in the torrid zones of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, on the borders or in the heart of the jungles of Burma, Malaya, India or the Amazon, on the fringes of the African and Arabian deserts, in the lonely islands dotting the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans or the North Sea, whether they scaled the mountains of Tibet, penetrated the interior of China, Mongolia and Japan, sat with the leper, consorted with the outcast, traversed the steppes of Russia or the

wastes of Siberia—"I direct", he wrote, "my impassioned appeal to obey, as befits His warriors, the summons of the Lord of Hosts, and prepare for that Day of Days when His victorious battalions will, to the accompaniment of hosannas from the invisible angels in the Abhá Kingdom, celebrate the hour of final victory."

The brilliant plans, the daring campaigns, initiated by the Guardian during the thirty-six years of his ministry to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have borne fruit, during the eighth year of his World Crusade, in a manner and to a degree the staunchest believer would never have dreamed possible during that dark and fateful period associated with his passing. Great, however, as our present victories are, we must never for a moment lose sight of the fact that the crown of so much labour and sacrifice will elude our grasp if the remaining objectives of the Ten Year Plan are not achieved and the prizes already won are not safeguarded during the two years that lie ahead of us.

The consolidation of the various home fronts, a task of such fundamental importance that 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself repeatedly stressed it as early as 1916 in His Tablets of the Divine Plan, must receive the special attention of all national bodies, whether presently or previously formed, throughout the entire Bahá'í world, for the home fronts, and primarily the formation of the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies specified by the Guardian himself for each one of them, are the bedrock upon which rest those pillars which must, at the end of the Crusade, sustain the weight of the Universal House of Justice itself. The Crusade "must," he wrote, "as it approaches its conclusion, pave the way for the laying, on an unassailable foundation, of the structural basis of an Administrative Order whose fabric must, in the course of successive Crusades, be laboriously erected throughout the entire globe . . ."

The process of carrying the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to all the peoples of the world must be accelerated, for He Himself ordained teaching as one of the primary duties of every single one of His followers. When broken in strength and advanced in years 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in those Tablets which constitute the Charter of teaching activities for centuries to come, recalled in most touching terms His own labours to spread the Faith of His Father and warned the believers against the vanity of all other preoccupations. "*You have*

observed”, He wrote, “that while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in the utmost bodily weakness and feebleness, while He was indisposed, and had not the power to move . . . He travelled through many countries . . .” “What result”, He asked, “is forthcoming from material rest, tranquillity, luxury and attachment to this corporeal world! It is evident that the man who pursues these things will in the end become afflicted with regret and loss.”

Shoghi Effendi pointed out to us, at the very inception of the Crusade, that the prosecution of all the other vital tasks he had enumerated as objectives of his world-embracing Plan, would “fail to achieve their supreme purpose if not supplemented by the equally vital task . . . of winning to the Faith fresh recruits to the slowly yet steadily advancing army of the Lord of Hosts, Whose reinforcing strength is so essential to the safeguarding of the victories which the band of heroic Bahá’í conquerors are winning in the course of their several campaigns in all continents of the globe.”

No words could better direct the attention of the friends to the significance of the immediate three-fold task that confronts the entire Bahá’í world—the consolidation of the home fronts, the process of mass conversion and the rearing of the Mother Temple of Europe—than these written by our beloved Guardian himself long ago, on another occasion, but in words so pregnant with meaning for this hour in which we find ourselves that they seem to have been written yesterday: “Ours is the duty to fix our gaze with undeviating attention on the duties and responsibilities confronting us at this present hour, to concentrate our resources, both material and spiritual, on the tasks that lie immediately ahead, to ensure that no time is wasted, that no opportunity is missed, that no obligation is evaded, that no task is half-heartedly performed, that no decision is procrastinated. The task summoning us to a challenge, unprecedented in its gravity and force, is too vast and sacred, the time too short, the hour too perilous, the workers too few, the call too insistent, the resources too inadequate, for us to allow these precious and fleeting hours to slip from our grasp, and to suffer the prizes within our reach to be endangered or forfeited. So much depends upon us, so pregnant with possibilities is the present stage in the evolution of the Plan, that great and small, individuals, groups and Assemblies, white and

coloured, young and old, neophytes and veterans, settlers, pioneers, itinerant teachers and administrators, as isolated believers, as organizers of groups, and as contributors to the formation of Local or National Assemblies, as builders of the Temple . . . all, without exception and in every sphere of activity, however modest, restricted, or inconspicuous, must participate and labour, assiduously and continually, until every ounce of our energy is spent, until, tired but blissful, our promised harvest is brought in, and our pledge to our Beloved fully redeemed.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**ELECTION OF THE 21 INDEPENDENT LATIN AMERICAN
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES
RIDVÁN 1961**

To the Hands of the Cause, Auxiliary Board Members,
Representatives of National Assemblies, Delegates and Believers
Gathered During Ridván, 118, at the Historic Conventions for the
Election of Independent National Spiritual Assemblies in the
Following Countries:

Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Cuba
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica

Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay
Venezuela

Beloved Friends:

On the glorious and historic occasion of the formation of no less than 21 independent National Spiritual Assemblies throughout Latin America let us lift up our hearts in praise to Bahá'u'lláh for the blessings He has poured forth so abundantly on the labours of His servants and for the fruition of yet another cherished plan of our beloved Guardian.

It is now almost ninety years since Bahá'u'lláh in the Mother Book of His Revelation, raised His "*clarion call*", addressed collectively to the rulers of the Republics of the Western Hemisphere, and summoned them to take "*advantage of the Day of God*". From the moment when the Supreme Manifestation poured forth His bounties upon the Western Hemisphere until this auspicious day when no less than 24 independent national Bahá'í bodies, stretching from Alaska to Chile, have been constituted, the New World has received a never-ending stream of blessings from on High.

Before we look to the future of the work in Latin America we would do well to cast a glance over the past and remember the exploits that have led up to this present hour of consummation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, planted the seed of victory when He called upon the believers to make every effort "*so that those Republics may become so illumined with the splendours and the effulgences of the Sun of Reality that they may become the objects of the praise and commendation of all other countries*". Already, during His Own lifetime, a few consecrated souls, among them she whom the Guardian characterized as "that star servant of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, the incomparable Martha Root" had visited some of the Latin American republics and begun to teach there. However, it was not until the inauguration by the beloved Guardian in 1937 of the first

“Seven Year Plan”, the object of which, as he wrote, was “the establishment of a minimum of one Bahá’í centre in each of the Republics of Middle and South America” . . . “for whose entry into the fellowship of Bahá’u’lláh the Plan was primarily formulated”, that the few isolated Bahá’ís scattered throughout that vast area were reinforced in their labours by an official and systematic campaign conducted by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada under the direct guidance of Shoghi Effendi himself. In 1938 he called upon the friends to “launch an offensive against the powers of darkness, of corruption, and of ignorance, an offensive that must extend to the uttermost end of the Southern continent, and embrace within its scope each of the twenty nations that compose it”. By 1944, the end of the first Seven Year Plan, which coincided with the glorious first centenary of the inception of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, the devoted band of North American pioneers now reinforced by many new native Bahá’ís, had succeeded in establishing no less than fifteen Spiritual Assemblies in the Republics of Central and South America, and in forming groups in the remaining five.

These early victories so stirred the heart of the beloved Guardian that he said the opening of Latin America would “come to be regarded as one of the most glorious chapters in the international history of their Faith”. By 1947, soon after the second Seven Year Plan was launched at his instruction, the Centres in Latin America had grown to over a hundred and the Assemblies had reached thirty-seven, an increase of twenty-two in a three-year period. One of the most “vital objectives”, to use his own words, of this second Seven Year Plan, was the formation of two Latin American National Assemblies, one to be representative of the believers of Central and the other of South America. Fourteen years ago the beloved Guardian heralded those two bodies as “precursors of the institutions which must participate in the election, and contribute to the support, of the Universal House of Justice”, and stated their function was to lead to the constitution of a “properly elected, fully representative National Assembly” in each republic of Central and South America. This, he said, would constitute the last stage in the administrative evolution of the Faith in Latin America.

The victories achieved during the first Seven Year Plan, the remarkable progress made during the interim before the second Seven Year Plan was launched, so rejoiced the heart of the beloved Guardian that he lifted up his voice and testified—in words that must forever be a crown upon the heads of the Bahá'ís of all Latin America—to the greatness of their achievements. “No Community”, he wrote, “since the inception of the hundred-year-old Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, not even the community of the Most Great Name in the North American continent, can boast of an evolution as rapid, a consolidation as sound, a multiplication of centres as swift, as those that have marked the birth and rise of the community of His followers in Latin America”, a Community he called “this privileged, this youngest, this dynamic and highly promising member of the organic Bahá'í World Community”. His love flowed out to them in a mighty wave, in glowing words he welcomed that Community into full partnership in the affairs of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and asserted that “. . . the eager, the warm-hearted, the spiritually minded and staunch members of these Latin American Bahá'í communities . . .” were now “launched on their crusade for the spiritual conquest of the whole planet . . .”

With the release of the stupendous program of the World Crusade in Ridván, 1953, the destiny of the Latin American Republics became clear. Magnificent, staggering—a youthful Community gazed in awe at the tasks allotted it! Fourteen virgin territories became its responsibility to open to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in a ten-year period, territories most of the Bahá'ís of the world had never heard of and whose location was a mystery to them! Twenty national Bahá'í headquarters were to be established in the twenty capital cities of Latin America and two sites for future Bahá'í Temples were to be purchased. The two recently formed National Assemblies responsible for the work in these twenty countries must have asked themselves how such feats could ever be accomplished by the new Assemblies, the struggling groups, the scattered isolated believers under their jurisdiction. Other projects were added to these, either in the original Crusade Plan or at a later date. The worthiness of the new Latin American Community, which had now taken its rightful place in the Bahá'í world, was soon demonstrated. With the never-

failing help of its devoted and loving Mother Community in North America, it shouldered its sacred burdens, clung tenaciously to the precious work entrusted to it by its Guardian, and forged ahead from victory to victory. He had called upon it in 1947 to “rise to the heights of the glorious opportunity which destiny is unfolding before its members”. It arose, and so nobly did the Latin American Bahá’ís fulfil their trust that in 1955 the Guardian announced to the Bahá’í world that in 1957 he would increase the number of National Assemblies responsible for the work throughout that area to four, dividing Central and South America, respectively, into two Regions, thus facilitating the administration of the rapidly expanding work in each area. Fresh bounties and new evidences of the high regard in which the Guardian held these believers in the Latin countries of the New World were steadily forthcoming up until the very end of his life. He urged them, as supplementary goals, to secure a Bahá’í endowment in each Republic and a Bahá’í Temple site in the eighteen countries without one. He indicated that Jamaica would form a National Assembly of its own by including her in the roll call of delegates to one of the last Conventions held before his passing. In numerous Messages to the Bahá’í world, to Assemblies and individuals, he praised the devotion of the believers, extolled their services, listed their victories, and painted a glowing picture of their future.

In less than a quarter of a century the seeds so widely sown have yielded the harvest being reaped today in the name of Shoghi Effendi, according to the provisions of the Divine Plan of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and through the mighty spiritual impetus imparted by Bahá’u’lláh. The event the entire Bahá’í world, in this blessed Ridván period, is celebrating, is of a nature unequalled in the annals of our Faith. Twenty-one countries are at one and the same time reaching the last stage of their administrative evolution through the election of their independent National Assemblies. That vast area, “an area”, as Shoghi Effendi was wont to say, “extending from the southern confines of the Great Republic of the West to the extremity of Chile”, has now come of age in the conduct of its affairs. The pillars which must assist in bearing the weight of the Universal House of Justice so soon to be constituted, have been safely erected.

At this breath-taking moment of fulfilment, before plunging into the great work that lies ahead of them, it is essential that these Communities, and above all the members of their newly-elected National Assemblies, take stock of their present position and survey the tasks still to be accomplished, tasks clearly set forth by the Guardian himself. As these new national Bahá'í communities face the future they should, we feel, above all else, remember, cherish and foster the unity of purpose and spirit which has consistently characterized their growth and which was so carefully inculcated in them by Shoghi Effendi himself. We cannot urge upon the believers too strongly the necessity of maintaining this supranational quality of Bahá'í life regardless of the new-found independence of their national communities. The close and loving cooperation which has existed between different Latin American Communities in the field of teaching and publications should continue in order to consolidate the work already initiated and economize the very limited funds of the Faith available for Bahá'í literature, as well as to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and ensure a uniform and high standard in the matter of translations.

Our beloved Guardian, on various occasions, set many specific goals for Latin America, particularly in the subsidiary Six Year Plans given to the four Regional Assemblies formed in 1957. The believers and their newly elected national representatives must now keep these goals constantly before them, and exert the utmost effort to assure their accomplishment.

The Local Spiritual Assemblies, groups and isolated centres which have, at the cost of so much self-sacrifice and devotion on the part of both native and foreign pioneers, been raised to, and in some cases have even surpassed, the number specified by the beloved Guardian, must be safeguarded at any price during the coming years and, indeed, multiplied. The consolidation of the home fronts, and the preservation of the precious goals so laboriously won, must be regarded as a paramount duty at this critical period which inevitably follows the birth of any new national community. Each National Assembly must bear in mind that the foundation of Local Assemblies upon which it rests constitutes, however indirectly, the foundation of the Universal House of Justice itself, and that the pillars of this

mighty institution must under no circumstances be weakened at the very moment when the dome is about to be placed upon them.

The separate incorporation of each new National Assembly, as well as all firmly grounded Local Assemblies, is likewise an important phase of the work to be undertaken in each of the Republics, and in Jamaica, and constitutes one of the most fundamental ways of consolidating the tasks already carried forward during twenty-four years in such a remarkable manner. Likewise, every effort should be made to win recognition for the Bahá'í Holy Days on which work is suspended and to secure permission to perform Bahá'í marriages legally.

The beloved Guardian, in a momentous communication addressed jointly to the National Assemblies of Central and South America in 1951, listed "the consolidation of the recently inaugurated national and local Funds" as one of the foremost responsibilities of these newly-formed regional administrative bodies. During the remaining months of the World Crusade when the financial requirements for attaining total victory are so great, the friends must be made aware of the need for a steady and continuous flow of contributions to their National Funds, an outpouring which the beloved Guardian characterized as "the life-blood of those nascent institutions". The spiritual significance and blessing of voluntary giving in support of Bahá'í activities should be strongly emphasized by the new National Assemblies as they acquaint the members of their communities with the obligations which they must now discharge.

The emphasis placed by Shoghi Effendi on the importance of ensuring the wide dissemination of properly translated books on the Faith, as well as on the holding of an increasing number of regular summer schools and regional conferences, must never be forgotten and every effort should be made to implement his instructions given as long ago as 1947. "Other agencies," he wrote, "such as publicity and advertising in the press, the multiplication of accurate and improved radio scripts, the extension of teaching projects through regional teaching committees, visual education and the organization of public meetings, should be fully utilized to capture the attention, win the sympathy, and secure the active and unreserved support of a

steadily increasing proportion of the population of the various Latin American republics”.

Of the precious new territories given at the beginning of the Ten Year Plan to the two National Spiritual Assemblies of Central and South America, two of which were subdivided by the Guardian himself at a later date, those still assigned to the Latin American regional bodies, as well as the consolidation areas allotted to these same Assemblies, must continue to be the responsibility of the believers and their elected representatives, at least until the globe-encircling Crusade ends in 1963. After carefully considering the geographical relationship of these territories, now numbering twenty, as well as other factors, we have re-apportioned them among the new national bodies as follows:

To Chile, the three goals of Chiloé, Juan Fernandez, and Easter Islands; to Brazil, the six goals of British and French Guiana, Surinam, and the Islands of Trinidad, Barbados and Grenada; whilst Venezuela has been allocated the two goals of Curaçao and Margarita. Panama, Guatemala, Ecuador, Haiti and the Dominican Republic have each been apportioned one goal, respectively, as follows: Tuamotu Archipelago, British Honduras, Galapagos, Martinique, and the Virgin Islands. Jamaica, the only territory outside the twenty Latin American countries to achieve the status of an independent national community at this time, will be responsible for the four goals of the Bahamas, Bermuda, Antigua and St. Lucia.

Last but not least of the great responsibilities now laid squarely upon the shoulders of not only the elected representatives of these new national Bahá'í communities but upon the rank and file of the believers of all twenty-one countries, is the teaching work in that area, where as the Guardian wrote, “the first fruits of the Divine Plan . . . have already been garnered in such abundance”, and which he characterized as “the vital process of individual conversion”. Bahá'u'lláh has, in numerous Tablets, made teaching the paramount spiritual obligation of every single believer. The whole purpose of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan is to teach the Faith of His Father to all the peoples of the world. As long ago as the time when the first Seven Year Plan was given to the Bahá'ís of North America by the beloved Guardian, he pointed out to them that the purpose for which

they had so laboriously erected the administrative machinery of their Faith was to teach, and that now they must arise and use this instrument for this supreme purpose—the propagation of their Faith. On the occasion of the half-way point of the World Crusade, in the last Message the Bahá'í world was ever to receive from him, he associated the coming five years with mass conversion.

Now is the auspicious moment for the members of these new national communities “whose motherlands have been chosen”, as Shoghi Effendi wrote, “as the scene of the earliest victories won by the prosecutors of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan”—to arise and teach as never before. Let them recall the wonderful appeal the Guardian addressed to them: “Theirs is the opportunity, if they but seize it, to adorn the opening pages of the annals of the second Bahá'í century with a tale of deeds approaching in valour those with which their Persian brethren have illuminated the opening years of the first, and comparable with the exploits more recently achieved by their North American fellow-believers, and which have shed such lustre on the closing decade of that same century.” These communities have now entered the period of “strenuous and organized labours” the Guardian spoke of, “by which future generations of believers in the Latin countries must distinguish themselves” in that period when, as he said, “native Latin American travelling teachers” will arise “who, as the mighty task progresses, must increasingly bear the brunt of responsibility for the propagation of the Faith in their homelands.”

A bright picture stretches before the eyes of the believers in the New World and the harvest, in many places, stands ready for the garner’s hand. The greatest possibilities for mass conversion at the present time are undoubtedly amongst the Indian tribes. As long ago as 1947 the Guardian wrote that particular attention should be directed to the “various Indian tribes, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Latin republics, whom the Author of the Tablets of the Divine Plan has compared to the ‘ancient inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula’”. He then quoted the wonderful words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá regarding them: “Attach great importance to the indigenous population of America. For these souls may be likened unto the ancient inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, who, prior to the Mission of Muhammad, were like unto savages. When the light of Muhammad shone forth in their

midst, however, they became so radiant as to illumine the world. Likewise, these Indians, should they be educated and guided, there can be no doubt that they will become so illumined as to enlighten the whole world.”

How grateful all those believers must be who were in any way responsible for the beginning of this process of mass conversion among the Indians, which had already started during the lifetime of the beloved Guardian. What joy it brought him, with what enthusiasm he hailed the formation of the first all-Indian Local Assembly, how dear to his heart was the first Indian Institute at Chichicastenango, how frequently he spoke to pilgrims from East and West of the importance of this work and the progress it was making, and how carefully he noted in his records the names of the tribes enrolled in the Faith and the native languages into which Bahá’í literature had been translated. In his own words he clearly indicated for the believers of Latin America the manner in which he wished them to proceed in this all-important teaching field and clearly set forth the role he wished the new Indian Bahá’ís to play in both the administrative and teaching work of the Faith. “A special effort should be exerted to secure the unqualified adherence of members of some of these tribes to the Faith, their subsequent election to its councils, and their unreserved support of the organized attempts that will have to be made in the future by the projected National Assemblies for the large-scale conversion of Indian races to the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.”

The duties devolving upon the newly elected National Assemblies and the communities they represent are manifold and arduous. The possibilities which lie before them are infinitely promising. Within this area, which has now come of age in the administration of its own affairs, there are black republics and white republics. Within at least one of these the majority of the believers are descended from the original inhabitants of the Americas. What a glorious demonstration of the oneness of mankind! What an opportunity these favoured new national communities have of exemplifying the reality of that brotherhood of man Bahá’u’lláh has asserted as the cardinal principle of His Faith!

No words could breathe more hope and confidence into the hearts of the believers in that favoured portion of the globe than those addressed to them by the beloved Guardian himself during the last year of his life: "May these communities, now standing on the threshold of unprecedented achievements, which have already, through their collective endeavours, ennobled the record of Bahá'í accomplishments during the last twenty years of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation, who are so notably contributing, through their divers national characteristics, to the enrichment of the life of the International Bahá'í Community, be vouchsafed a still fuller measure of celestial strength, that will enable them to fulfil their high destiny in the years to come, and play their part in hastening the world-wide triumph of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and the firm establishment of its embryonic World Order."

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Form Letter to All National Spiritual Assemblies

[Various dates, following receipt of ballots, 1961]

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

This will inform you that the nine sealed ballots for the election of the International Bahá'í Council, forwarded to Haifa by the Secretary of your Assembly, have been received.

These ballots will be opened and tabulated on the first day of Ridván, and the result of the election announced to the Bahá'í world during the Ridván period.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 25, 1961

DEEPEST GRATITUDE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S UNFAILING
BLESSINGS ENABLING BAHÁ'I WORLD EIGHTH YEAR

CRUSADE ELECT INTERNATIONAL BAHA'I COUNCIL
SUCCEEDING FIRST HISTORIC BODY APPOINTED BY
GUARDIAN JOYFULLY ANNOUNCE MEMBERSHIP JESSIE
REVELL ALI NAKHJAVANI LOTFULLAH HAKIM ETHEL
REVELL CHARLES WOLCOTT SYLVIA IOAS MILDRED
MOTTAHEDEH IAN SEMPLE BORRAH KAVELIN STOP
INVITE BELIEVERS JOIN US ARDENT PRAYERS HISTORIC
STEP MAY RELEASE SPIRITUAL IMPETUS ASSIST
ATTAINMENT GOALS SACRED PLAN SO DEAR HEART
BELOVED GUARDIAN.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 26, 1961

SHARE MESSAGE COUNCIL ELECTION ALL HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

CONVENTION CARE BAHA'I WILMETTE

MAY 1, 1961

DEEPLY TOUCHED DETERMINATION AMERICAN BELIEVERS
LOYALLY PROSECUTE BELOVED GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE
ALL FIELDS UNTIL EVERY GOAL WON HIS NAME
SUPPLICATING HOLY SHRINES STILL GREATER VICTORIES
HOMEFRONT OVERSEAS MAY VINDICATE TRUST LOVE
HONOUR HE SHOWERED UPON MUCH LOVED
COMMUNITY.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . .

[Sent to newly elected National Spiritual Assemblies]

May 23, 1961

Dearly beloved Friends:

With the passing of the beloved Guardian and the assumption of the direction of the affairs of the Cause by the Hands as Chief Stewards of the Faith, the bonds of unity amongst the friends and particularly the institutions of the Faith were greatly strengthened by action taken by the National Assemblies throughout the world in accepting the action of the Chief Stewards, and particularly their appointment of the body of nine Hands in the Holy Land, known legally as the "Custodians" of the Faith.

Resolutions were passed by all National Spiritual Assemblies expressing their approval of this action, their recognition of the Custodians as the supreme body of the Bahá'í world, and pledging full support to the Custodians.

All National Assemblies formed since that time have passed similar resolutions, and sent us signed copies.

We attach herewith a copy of a Resolution made by one of the National Assemblies which is a good example. Will you kindly arrange for the passing of such a resolution by your body, sending us a copy for our records signed in a form that makes it legally valid in your own country.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Enclosure

Whereas this National Spiritual Assembly was duly elected and constituted as instructed by the Guardian of the Bahá'í World Faith, Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, and in accordance with the administrative principles thereof, on the () day of () of (), and

Whereas by these same principles this National Spiritual Assembly constitutes the supreme administrative body of the Bahá's of () and in consequence thereof is empowered to act for and on behalf of all of the Bahá'ís of (), and

Whereas all nine of the duly elected members of this National Spiritual Assembly have been consulted and their approval of that which is set forth hereinbelow obtained, therefore

BE IT KNOWN BY ALL MEN PRESENT

That the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of () does hereby approve and endorse the election by the Hands of the Cause of nine of their members to constitute the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith, and that

We recognize this body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith to be the supreme body in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, and that

We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.

BAHA'I WILMETTE

MAY 28, 1961

IMPELLED SHARE RECENT EVIDENCE VITALITY RAPID
EXPANSION CONSOLIDATION BELOVED FAITH STOP
TWENTY-ONE LATIN AMERICAN NATIONAL BODIES
SUCCESSFULLY FORMED RAISING TOTAL NUMBER FORTY-
EIGHT THROUGHOUT BAHA'I WORLD STOP FORMATION
ALL EUROPEAN GOAL ASSEMBLIES INCLUDING ONE
EXTRA HOLLAND DENMARK SPAIN EIGHT NEW
ASSEMBLIES CEYLON NOW CONSTITUTES FIRM
FOUNDATION ELECTION NEXT RIDVAN TWELVE
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL BODIES FUTURE PILLARS
UNIVERSAL HOUSE JUSTICE STOP MASS CONVERSION
STIPULATED LAST MESSAGE BELOVED GUARDIAN
ESSENTIAL FEATURE SECOND HALF CRUSADE STEADILY
GAINING MOMENTUM AFRICA INDIA SOUTH AMERICA
STOP CENTRAL EAST AFRICA MEMBERSHIP INCREASED

THREE THOUSAND SINCE MARCH STOP PAST FOUR
MONTHS SEVENTEEN HUNDRED NEW BELIEVERS
ENROLLED UJAIN DISTRICT INDIA STOP BOLIVIAN
COMMUNITY NOW BOASTS FIFTEEN HUNDRED INDIAN
BAHA'IS TWENTY-FIVE LOCAL ASSEMBLIES LARGELY
INDIAN MEMBERSHIP STOP CHAD RECENTLY OPENED
FAITH RAISING COUNTRIES ILLUMINED REVELATION
BAHA-'U'LLAH TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT STOP
CONSTANT EVIDENCES GRACE BLESSED PERFECTION
REALIZATION DIVINE PLAN CENTRE COVENANT
SUSTAINING INSPIRATION BELOVED GUARDIAN UPLIFT
ALL HEARTS INSPIRE EVERY BELIEVER RENEWED
EFFORT DETERMINATION WIN ALL GOALS STOP INVITE
FRIENDS JOIN PRAYERS THANKSGIVING SUPPLICATION
STILL GREATER VICTORIES STOP AIRMAIL COPY HANDS
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

To the Members of the International Bahá'í Council

June 25, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We extend to you a most loving welcome on the auspicious occasion of your entering upon your historic services to the Cause of God at the World Centre of the Faith. We hope it will be richly rewarding to you and a source of joy to our beloved Guardian.

The evolution of the appointed International Council into one elected by the members of the National Assemblies of the Bahá'í world marks yet another step in the efflorescence of the Council into the Universal House of Justice. That you have been chosen by the friends at large to shoulder this responsibility of great importance makes your task indeed a grave one. We will be happy to assist you in every way in our power in the prosecution of your arduous duties.

Preliminary plans for our joint gatherings, and the meetings of your body have been arranged, as outlined in the attached memorandum.

With deepest love,
In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

PROGRAM

THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

June 25 - 26, 1961

June 25th:

10:00 A.M.

Hands and Council Members will meet in the Home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Proceed to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh for prayers.

Joint meeting in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh.

Luncheon at Bahjí.

Continue meetings in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh.

June 26th:

9:00 A.M.

Meet in the Home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Proceed to the Shrine of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá for prayers.

The Council will convene in the sitting room placed at their disposal for this purpose at No. 10 Persian Street. (This room was the one in which the beloved Guardian had his meals with the pilgrims, and the members of the appointed International Bahá'í Council.)

Meetings of the International Council will be held in the sitting room of No. 10 Persian Street.

The office of the International Bahá'í Council adjoins this room.

Further joint meetings of the Hands and International Bahá'í Council can be arranged as desired.

ASSIGNMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

June 25, 1961

1. Forge link with authorities of newly emerged State.
2. Conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities.
3. Legal protection of the international endowments of the Faith at the World Centre and completion, circumstances permitting, of plans made by the beloved Guardian for their extension.
4. Supervision of income-producing properties at the World Centre.
5. Assist the Hands in preparing for the World Congress to be held in Baghdád in 1963.
6. Assist the Hands in arrangements for the election of the Universal House of Justice.
7. Issue News Letter from the World Centre of the Faith.
8. Financial responsibility for work at the World Centre exclusive of affairs of the Hands of the Faith.
9. Handle guiding at Shrines.

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JUNE 25, 1961

REJOICE ANNOUNCE FIRST MOMENTOUS MEETING
HANDS HOLY LAND ALL MEMBERS NEWLY ELECTED
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL HELD PRECINCTS HOLY SHRINE

BAHA'U'LLAH CONSULTED MEASURES NECESSARY
DISCHARGE HISTORIC DUTIES DESTINED FULFIL HIGH
HOPES BELOVED GUARDIAN PAVE WAY ELECTION
SUPREME HOUSE JUSTICE OCCASION MOST GREAT
JUBILEE STOP SHARE MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES OF FIRST FULL MEETING.

25th June - 5th July 1961

Present: Miss Jessie Revell, Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání, Dr. Lutfu'lláh Hakím, Miss Ethel Revell, Mr. Charles Wolcott, Mrs. Sylvia loas, Mrs. Mildred Mottahedeh, Mr. Ian Semple, Mr. Borrah Kavelin.

June 25th:

1. The Council assembled in the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at 10 a.m. and drove with the Hands of the Cause of God to Bahjí where a joint meeting was held following prayers in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. The Hands explained the functions to be assigned to the Council and expressed their wish for all members of the Council to reside in Haifa. The problems this raised for members of the Council were discussed at some length, and details of the Terms of Reference were discussed. After prayers in the Room of Bahá'u'lláh the entire company returned to Haifa at about 6 p.m.

3. In the evening the Council met in the room assigned to it on the lower floor of the Western Pilgrim House. Jessie Revell was asked to act as temporary chairman and Ethel Revell as temporary secretary. The personal situation of each of the members not at present resident in Haifa was discussed and the following points were decided:

a) Ian Semple can remain in Haifa without more ado.

- b) 'Alí Nakhjavání can come to reside in Haifa at a time subject to the solution of problems concerning the work of the African Hands and his own family.
- c) Charles Wolcott can come to reside in Haifa at a time dependent upon the handing over of the work of the United States National Spiritual Assembly secretariat, and the working out of his own removal.
- d) Mildred Mottahedeh can reside for alternating periods of two months in Haifa and two elsewhere.
- e) H. B. Kavelin cannot come to Haifa again during this Gregorian year but would come for 30 days early in 1962 and could then say what further time would be possible. He is eager to help with any work of the Council which can be assigned to him in the U.S.A.
- f) Charles Wolcott, 'Alí Nakhjavání and Ian Semple would all require financial support if resident in Haifa.
- g) Mr. Kavelin's offer to resign if this would help the work of the Council was not accepted, and it was resolved that no member of the Council should resign at this time.
- h) It was decided to convey the gist of the above points to the Hands of the Cause for their comment and decision.

June 26th:

- 4. The Council assembled at the Master's House at 9 a.m. and proceeded in company with the Hands to the Shrines of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá for prayers. A joint meeting was then held in the Master's House for the elucidation of a number of the points conveyed to the Hands from the previous night's meeting.
- 5. The Council then adjourned to its meeting room in the Western Pilgrim House and had a preliminary discussion of the Terms of Reference given to them by the Hands, which are as follows:
 - 1) Forge links with authorities of newly emerged State.
 - 2) Conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities.
 - 3) Legal protection of the international endowments of the Faith at the World Centre and completion, circumstances permitting, of plans made by the beloved Guardian for their extension.

- 4) Supervision of income-producing properties at the World Centre.
 - 5) Assist the Hands in preparing for the World Congress to be held in Baghdád in 1963.
 - 6) Assist the Hands in arrangements for the election of the Universal House of Justice.
 - 7) Issue News Letter from the World Centre of the Faith.
 - 8) Financial responsibility for work at the World Centre exclusive of affairs of the Hands of the Faith.
 - 9) Handle guiding at the Shrines.
6. The following daily timetable of meetings was accepted: 9 a.m. – 12 noon, 4 – 7 p.m., 8:30 – 10:30 p.m.
 7. Just before lunch the Council was called again to the Master's House to be informed by the Hands of their acceptance of the Council's recommendations on the service of their members in the Holy Land. The Hands further specified that the officers of the Council should be elected from among the members resident in the Holy Land, and that the Council was free to designate one of its members "Member at Large".
 9. Upon assembling for its afternoon session the Council elected its officers, who are:

President:	Mr. 'Alí Nakhjavání
Vice-President:	Mrs. Sylvia Ioas
Secretary-General:	Mr. Charles Wolcott
Treasurer:	Miss Jessie Revell
Assistant Secretary:	Mr. Ian Semple
 10. Mr. H. B. Kavelin was designated Member at Large.
 11. The Council then considered further the Terms of Reference and asked:
 - a) The Treasurer and Mr. Kavelin to prepare an estimated budget for the operating expenses of the Council.
 - b) The President, Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary to prepare an agenda on the basis of the Terms of Reference and the suggestions proposed during the preliminary consultations.
 12. In place of the evening session the Council dined in the Master's House in the company of the Hands and other friends at the invitation of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum.

June 27th:

13. The Council, with the exception of Dr. Lutfu'lláh Hakím, spent the morning viewing the income-producing properties.

15. The Secretariat was instructed to acknowledge the messages of greeting received by the Council.

16. The Council considered the steps to be taken to acquaint the Israeli Authorities and the world at large with the election and officers of the new Council, and the following steps were recommended:

a) That we send messages of greeting to the President and Prime Minister of Israel and the Minister of Religions; these messages to be drafted by the Secretary-General and Mr. Kavelin.

b) That we seek audience with the President and/or the Minister of Religions to present two of the above messages. We shall ask the Hands if all the members of the Council should go, or only representatives.

c) It was noted that the above messages must be delivered before any publicity is released.

d) We shall suggest to the Hands that they call a Press Conference during the current meeting of the Council to announce its election and its officers. We would prepare a press release to be handed out at this conference.

e) Mr. Kavelin was asked to convey these recommendations to the Hands.

17. The Council also decided to ask the Hands through Mr. Kavelin if they would request certain of their number to consult with us on matters affecting approaches to the Authorities, matters of personal status, protection of endowments and care of properties.

June 28th:

33. The Council considered the problems raised by the question of including the World Congress, the election of the Universal House of Justice and the election of National Spiritual Assemblies all within the twelve days of Ridván, 1963. It was decided to recommend to the Hands that, in accordance with the precedent set by the beloved Guardian in 1944, the elections of the National Spiritual Assemblies

in 1963 be held on 23rd May, or some suitable subsequent date, leaving to the decision of each National Spiritual Assembly whether this election should be by postal ballot or at a Convention.

34. For the World Congress itself the Council decided to make the following recommendations to the Hands:

a) In his cablegram of 24th December 1951 the beloved Guardian spoke of “summoning assemblage representative communities all sovereign states, chief dependencies, islands, entire planet.” In view of this the Council recommends that the attendance of at least one representative from each territory and ethnic group be ensured at the Congress, and that funds be made available to cover the expenses of any such representative who may be unable to afford to come.

b) The Council feels that about six days at the end of the Ridván period would be a suitable duration for the Congress.

c) It is felt that there should be an actual moment of thanksgiving for the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, and that this could appropriately fall on the ninth day of Ridván, which would come about half-way through the Congress. This could also be a suitable day for the election of the Universal House of Justice.

d) The Council considered the pro's and con's of holding a public meeting during or at the end of the Congress, and concluded that it would be valuable from a prestige and publicity point of view; it was therefore decided to recommend to the Hands that they consider the desirability of holding such a public meeting.

e) For the general publicity of the Congress it is recommended that the use of Bahá'í experts in this field be considered, both to prepare the way and to promote the publicity itself.

37. In preparation for the election of the Universal House of Justice the Council decided to recommend to the Hands that they send a letter to all the believers explaining and stressing the importance of these elections; also that they circulate to National

Spiritual Assembly members a compilation of quotations from the Scriptures and the writings of Shoghi Effendi on the functions of the Universal House of Justice.

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JUNE 29, 1961

HEARTS GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY ENTHUSIASM
ENERGY DETERMINATION ELECTED INTERNATIONAL
BAHA'I COUNCIL DISCHARGE VITAL EVER INCREASING
RESPONSIBILITIES STOP DELIGHTED SHARE NEWS
ELECTION FOLLOWING OFFICERS ALI NAKHJAVANI SYLVIA
IOAS CHARLES WOLCOTT IAN SEMPLE JESSIE REVELL
PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY GENERAL
ASSISTANT SECRETARY TREASURER RESPECTIVELY STOP
OTHER MEMBERS ETHEL REVELL LOTFULLAH HAKIM
MILDRED MOTTAHEDEH AND BORRAH KAVELIN MEMBER
AT LARGE STOP SHARE MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

To the 21 National Spiritual Assemblies in Latin America

July 7, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Over two months have passed since that historic day when 21 new pillars of the Universal House of Justice were brought into being in your important and productive part of the Bahá'í world. The time remaining before us until the completion of our beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan is vanishing with alarming rapidity. These precious days must be utilized to the fullest extent in assuring an overwhelming triumph in every land.

The vigour and enthusiasm with which each of your new National Assemblies has faced its work has pleased us very much, and together we may win many new victories in the year ahead.

One of the most important things for all of us to keep before us is the need for the most rigid economy in all that we do. With the astonishing and deeply rewarding progress of the Faith in all parts of the planet, with the formation of 21 new Assemblies this past year, and 12 more to be formed next Ridván, the limited resources of the Faith must be carefully husbanded and used in the manner that will assure winning the most important goals. Therefore, we urge your body to practice the most strict economy possible, and to encourage the dear friends to make every sacrifice both individually and collectively of their time and resources so that this fourth phase of the World Crusade truly may be characterized by the great increase in believers envisioned by our beloved Guardian for these days. Only the most vital purchases needed to carry on your day-to-day work should be made. The great bulk of your resources should go directly into the teaching work. The efforts of the entire country must be focused more and more on this all-important task. This cardinal responsibility of each National Assembly cannot be over-emphasized. Our beloved Guardian wrote less than three months before his passing: "The purpose of the new National Assemblies . . . and the purpose of any administrative body, is to carry the Message

to the people and enlist the sincere under the banner of this Faith. Your Assembly must never lose sight of this for a moment, and must go on courageously expanding the membership of the communities under your jurisdiction . . .”

In his last Message to the Bahá’í world, he urged us to realize that “The fourth phase (of the World Crusade) . . . must be immortalized . . . by an *unprecedented* increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá’í centres . . .” This is the very charter of our teaching work for this fourth and final phase of his glorious global Crusade. Its success depends upon each individual believer in the country arising to become a teacher, and under the loving, inspiring leadership of the National Assembly, to launch a concentrated teaching plan of such intensity and determination that it will, in the words of our beloved Guardian in his last loving Message to us all, cause “an upsurge of enthusiasm and consecration, before which every single as well as collective exploit, associated with any of the three previous phases, will pale.”

We are confident that this spirit of sacrifice and dedication, coupled with the energetic and courageous actions you have already taken, will bring about a year of just such “unprecedented victories” as would rejoice the heart of our beloved Guardian and bring great numbers under the shadow of the Blessed Beauty.

We shall pray at the holy Shrines that your every effort will be blessed and will bring productive fruit.

With warm Bahá’í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

July 8, 1961

Beloved Co-workers:

Now that the thrilling days of Ridván have passed, we would like to share with you the news of some of the victories won for our beloved Guardian, victories which the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh alone have made possible.

As you know, all 21 Latin American National Assemblies were successfully elected, including Ecuador and Cuba. Shortly before the Convention was held in Ecuador, we received very disturbing news indicating a number of the friends had been influenced by Mason Remey; immediate action was taken through the Western Hemisphere Hands, their Board members and the Regional Assembly for that area, and we were fortunate enough to avert the impending defection of these people. The National Assembly was elected, and we are watching the situation carefully to be sure the attitude of these believers is now sincere. In Cuba, in spite of the revolution there, the difficulty of travel and absence of communication, dear Enoch was able to attend the Convention and assist the friends to successfully elect their new National Spiritual Assembly.

All Local Assembly goals were won in Europe, assuring the foundation for the election next year of 11 independent pillars of the Universal House of Justice. To our surprise and joy, 8 new Assemblies were established in Ceylon, thus laying a firm foundation for the election next Ridván of the National Assembly.

The process of mass conversion—so longed for by our beloved Guardian—is moving forward at an ever-accelerated pace: Approximately 2,000 new believers in India during the last few months; the first steps of mass conversion have begun also in Ceylon; 3,000 new believers in Central and East Africa, which now has over 17,000 Bahá'ís, 1,140 centres and 470 Local Assemblies. Many of the new believers in this area came from the trouble and strife-torn Congo border. In Bolivia, they now have over 1,500 Indian Bahá'ís in over 153 centres with 25 Local Assemblies. For the first time in the history of North America, Indians in Canada are beginning to enter the Faith; 3 Spiritual Assemblies were formed on Indian reserves there, and the chairmen of two of these Assemblies attended the Canadian Convention and fired the friends with enthusiasm for bringing the Message to their people.

Liechtenstein and Loyalty Islands have been reopened. There are now 10 islands in the Gilbert and Ellice group having Bahá'ís, a new one recently having been added. A new Local Assembly has been created in American Samoa. Morocco had 3 new Assemblies this year, and the Yemen, one new one. In the heart of the Anglican stronghold in England, the Cathedral city of Canterbury, a Local Assembly has been established.

How many times our beloved Guardian assured us the Supreme Concourse was waiting to assist us. We see ever increasingly the fulfilment of this promise. The Hands must, we feel strongly, seize this great opportunity, when there is such an upsurge of enthusiasm on the part of the believers, and labour as never before, in close collaboration with their Board members, to promote the mass teaching work now opening up before us.

We know you are eager to have news of what is going on in the Holy Land, and what your co-workers are doing here and elsewhere: Rúhíyyih Khánum will be going to dedicate the Australian Temple in September, and hopes to be able to visit some of the Centres *en route*. Our dear Milly was obliged to return in May to the United States in order to take care of her health, which had been poor of late. She is doing everything in her power to return to her home here well before the beginning of the Conclave. Paul, after attending the Mexican and American Conventions and making an extended visit to different Centres in the United States, to encourage the friends, has returned with many valuable suggestions, which will help us to assist the American National Spiritual Assembly to win the goals on the home front. Furútan and Bill have recently arrived from Latin America, bringing us most encouraging reports of the spirit of the believers and the success of the Conventions they attended. Bill will now remain with us as one of the Hands in the Holy Land, sharing with us the experience he has gained in the Western Hemisphere. Leroy leaves in a few days for Europe, where he plans to attend a number of summer schools, visiting the friends in as many places as possible, including a month's stay in Great Britain. Jalál will be leaving in August for India, to visit the new areas of mass conversion there and discuss with the Indian National Assembly some of the

problems facing it in connection with this great work. He will also visit as many Indian Centres as possible.

Enoch has recently returned to Africa after a very successful tour in Central America and the Greater Antilles. Muhájir is on his way to the Philippines to assist them in intensive teaching work in those islands, following a period of great activity amongst the Indians in Bolivia and the Central American area. Collis, after attending two Latin American Conventions, has visited Hawaii and the South Sea Islands on his way home to Australia; Ugo has returned to Europe after rendering similar services in Haiti, Venezuela and Central America; 'Alá'í, after attending the Colombia and Jamaica Conventions, has been visiting France and other countries in Europe; Hasan made an extensive tour of Canada on his return from the two Latin American Conventions he attended. Hermann is still actively travelling throughout South America, visiting each country and new National Assembly and keeping a watchful eye upon possible activities of Remey's supporters. His knowledge of the language and the people is of inestimable help to the Faith in that part of the world. Dhikru'lláh is now back in the United States after attending the Latin American Conventions allotted to him, and we have recently heard he was able to visit the believers in Alaska and attend their summer school. Dear Agnes, Adelbert and Varqá have been continuing their services in their respective spheres, services which have been so vitally needed, while other Hands were away travelling for so many months in the Western Hemisphere. Banání and John (Robarts) have suffered setbacks in their health this year, but in spite of their difficulties, they have been carrying on with the work in Africa.

It will interest you to know that five of the supporters of Mason Remey in Pakistan have returned to the Faith. This of course does not mean that his efforts and those of his supporters have ceased to be active. We must all be very vigilant and encourage the friends as much as possible.

We spent ten wonderful days with the International Bahá'í Council. You have already received the news of the election of their officers, and we were delighted with the energetic enthusiasm and plans of this body.

It is evident to us, and perhaps even more so to you, what a great influence the Hands can exert in the teaching field. We know you will be happy to share with the friends the news of these victories. Surely this is the hour for all of them to arise as never before and lend a new momentum to the work during these precious remaining months of our beloved Guardian's Crusade. Total victory is now within our grasp. His words written toward the end of the first Seven Year Plan might well be our watchword now: "One final surge of that indomitable spirit", he told us, ". . . is all that is required . . . to release the flow of those blessings . . ."

With warmest Bahá'í love to you all,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

July 16, 1961

Beloved Friends:

As you know, the beloved Guardian for a number of years before his ascension permitted the various National Assemblies to apply the extreme punishment of deprivation of voting rights in cases where believers continued to disobey an important decision of a National Assembly, or in cases where the conduct of an individual continuously and flagrantly violated Bahá'í standards to a point where the good name of the Faith was placed in jeopardy.

At various times the beloved Guardian sent communications to National Assemblies instructing them and guiding them in the application of this authority, which he felt should be invoked only as a last resort, and after repeated warnings to the individual concerned.

In the belief that they will be helpful to all National Assemblies in carrying out the spirit as well as the letter of the beloved Guardian's instructions on this important subject, and because they contain such a clear exposition of the status of Bahá'ís deprived of their voting rights, we are sharing with you the following paragraphs from a communication sent by him to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States on May 18, 1948:

The Guardian considers there are three conditions, so to speak, in regard to Bahá'í status or lack of it: a member of the Bahá'í Faith, in good standing, possessed of all his administrative rights; a member of the Faith who is being severely punished—either because of flagrant disobedience of some very important injunction of the National Assembly, or because of conduct extremely detrimental to the good name of the Faith, which he has not rectified—through having his voting and administrative rights suspended; and a person who is excommunicated by the Guardian because of disloyalty and enmity to the Faith. “Deprivation of voting rights” and “deprivation of membership in the Bahá'í Community” are really the same thing.

No contribution should be accepted from a person deprived of his voting rights. He is not eligible for election to Bahá'í bodies, cannot attend the administrative gatherings such as elections or Nineteen Day Feasts. However he can attend Bahá'í meetings as he is not excommunicated.

In connection with the above two paragraphs the Guardian does not want them published in *Bahá'í News* or any statement whatsoever issued in connection with this matter. Your Assembly can take action as occasion demands. As he has already stated, he considers that National Assemblies must strongly guard against this marked tendency of laying down new rules and regulations all the time, which he considers unnecessary and injurious. In the end it will dampen the zeal and quench the spontaneity of the believers, and give the impression that the Bahá'í Faith is crystallizing into set forms. Principles there must be, but they must be applied with wisdom to each case that arises, not every case covered, before it arises, by a codified set of rules. This is the whole spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's system: rigid conformity to great essential laws, elasticity, and even a certain necessary element of diversity, in secondary matters.

The deprivation of a person's voting rights should only be resorted to when absolutely necessary, and a National Spiritual

Assembly should always feel reluctant to impose this very heavy sanction which is a severe punishment. Of course sometimes, to protect the Cause, it must be done, but he feels that if the believer so deprived makes an effort to mend his ways, rectifies his mistake, or sincerely seeks for-giveness, every effort should be made to help him and enable him to re-establish himself in the Community as a member in good standing.

Please note carefully the Guardian's words indicating that he did not wish to have this material published in *Bahá'í News*, and his further instruction that no statement whatsoever should be made by the National Assembly in connection with this question. In other words, his wish was that each case be considered individually in the light of the general principles which he gave to the National Assembly for its guidance.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

July 17, 1961

Beloved Co-workers:

In accordance with the responsibility placed upon the Hands in the Holy Land of calling and setting the dates for the annual Conclave, and pursuant to the suggestions made at our last meeting in Bahjí, we are scheduling this year's gathering for a nineteen-day period beginning Sunday, October 15, 1961.

A somewhat longer period than usual has been set aside for this forthcoming meeting in order to carry out the suggestion that the Conclave might wish to hold a recess once or twice during the period, and also in view of the fact that we have such a heavy agenda.

We have drawn up the attached tentative list of subjects, and are sending it to you for study and for your suggestions well in advance of the meeting. If you have any thoughts as to any other major items

which you think should be included in this outline, please let us have your suggestions as soon as possible.

With warmest and deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

AGENDA – 1961 CONCLAVE

SUBJECTS PRESENTED BY THE HANDS

COMPLETION OF THE WORLD CRUSADE

Mass Conversion

European Temple

National Assemblies to be Formed and

Status of Existing National Assemblies

Home Front Goals

Other Unfinished Tasks

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Election

Membership

Relationship of Hands

Convention

Funds for House of Justice

THE WORLD CONGRESS

Location

Representation and Financing

Program and Organization

ACTIVITIES OF HANDS

Hands in the Holy Land

Assignment of Hands
Travel of Hands
Attendance at Formation of National
Spiritual Assemblies in 1962
Attendance at World Congress and Convention for
Election of House of Justice
Auxiliary Boards

FINANCIAL SITUATION

World Centre Report
Crusade Requirements

INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

Commentary by Hands in the Holy Land

July 31, 1961

This is the first News Letter from the Holy Land issued by the recently elected International Bahá'í Council. The issuance of the News Letter from the World Centre is one of the functions assigned to the Council, which plans to send such a letter to the National Assemblies approximately every two months.

We are confident that this publication will be a source of inspiration to the friends, giving them news of the progress of the Faith, and bringing them close to the Holy Land, referred to by our beloved Guardian as "the heart and the nerve centre" of the Bahá'í World Community.

Please share this bulletin with the believers in your area through your own News Letter, or in any other way you deem advisable.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

[The News Letter is not included here.]

To All 21 Latin American National Spiritual Assemblies

August 3, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We have been delighted to hear the news of the increasing success of the work among the dear Indian believers in so many parts of Latin America, and in other areas where beginning efforts are being made toward mass conversion.

This fourth and final phase of our beloved Guardian's great global Crusade should indeed be "immortalized . . . by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres . . ." These are the words of our beloved Guardian in his last Message to the Bahá'í world. This final phase of the Crusade, he told us, must "witness . . . an upsurge of enthusiasm and consecration, before which every single as well as collective exploit, associated with any of the three previous phases, will pale."

This concentrated teaching effort should be the focus of every National Spiritual Assembly. However, with the election of the Universal House of Justice less than two years away, we feel confident that your National Assembly will recognize the vital and absolute need for maintaining the existing Local Spiritual Assemblies with a strong nucleus, and not jeopardize these prizes which have been won at such cost by removing the pioneers who were sent there to assure the winning of these goals, even to conquer the new Indian areas or other areas of mass conversion.

Expansion and consolidation go hand in hand, and the preservation of strong, vigorously functioning Local Assemblies is one of our most vital obligations at this time; for upon this solid foundation, firm national pillars must rest—those pillars which will support that Supreme Administrative Body of the Bahá'í world, the Universal House of Justice.

In a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa on August 8th, 1957, our beloved Guardian wrote: "The purpose of the new National Assemblies in Africa, and the purpose of any administrative body, is to carry the Message to the people and enlist the sincere under the banner of this Faith. Your Assembly must never lose sight of this for a moment, and must go on courageously expanding the membership of the communities under your jurisdiction, and gradually educating the friends in both the Teachings and the Administration. Nothing could be more tragic than if the establishment of these great administrative bodies should stifle or bog down the teaching work." The beloved Guardian, in that same letter in which he urged the dear friends on to greater effort in mass conversion, also wrote: "Nor must the pressing obligation to consolidate the firmly grounded local institutions of the Faith through their incorporation be, for a moment, neglected. The historic work, so laboriously initiated in the newly opened territories, and particularly in those where the Faith has not yet driven deep its roots, must, likewise, be rapidly and systematically reinforced."

Our beloved Guardian's Convention Message of that same year said: "The pre-eminent task of teaching the Faith to the multitudes who consciously or unconsciously thirst after the healing Word of God in this day . . . must, in the course of this year, be accorded priority over every other Bahá'í activity." In that same Message, our beloved Guardian also said: "Simultaneous with the acceleration in the process of individual conversion, the equally pressing need of safeguarding Local Spiritual Assemblies from dissolution and of increasing rapidly their number, must continually be borne in mind, as the most effectual means for the strengthening of the structural basis of the Administrative Order of the Faith."

Thus the twin processes of rapidly expanding and firmly consolidating go hand in hand. With this basic principle in mind, and with the spirit of enthusiasm and devotion which are reflected in your letters, we feel confident that you will maintain vital, strong Local Assemblies and still continue the wonderful work that has been launched, and will be launched, in the areas of mass conversion.

We shall pray at the holy Shrines for your success in the field of mass teaching, so highly prized by our beloved Guardian, a task

which he said challenged every single individual believer, a task which was “so dear to the heart of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá”, a task which was “so sacred, so fundamental, and so urgent”.

With warmest Bahá’í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

August 8, 1961

Dear Bahá’í Friends,

You have received a communication from the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia (dated May 19, 1961) announcing that the dedication of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in Sydney will take place during the period September 14–17, this year.

In view of the great spiritual significance of this event, constituting one of the most important victories of the beloved Guardian’s Ten Year Plan, we suggest that each National and Regional Assembly send an appropriate greeting to the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia on this historic occasion. These messages should be sent to the address of the National Secretariat, 2 Lang Road, Paddington, New South Wales, Australia, in time to reach the Secretary if possible not later than the tenth of next month.

With warm Bahá’í greetings and the assurance of our ardent prayers for the attainment of all your goals.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

August 12, 1961

Beloved Colleagues:

This is another letter to keep you abreast of events that are taking place as this year approaches the half-way mark. We have had the sad news of the illness of dear Mr. Samandarí who is in Teheran where he has been in the hospital. His reply to our cable indicates

that his health is now improving and we hope that we shall have the joy of seeing him here with us at the Annual Gathering. His services throughout the year have been a great example to us all, as he has travelled constantly, visiting the friends and encouraging them to greater efforts. The news of his improved health is a great blessing for which we are all deeply grateful.

Milly is still feeling far from well herself, but her work continues, and she has recently helped to make possible the purchase of a future Hazíratu'l-Quds in Jamaica and the launching of a greater teaching effort in South Africa.

Hasan has arrived from London to serve for a time as one of the Hands in the Holy Land. He is helping Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum with the work of the Archives, as are many of the other friends here. We have every hope that the new Archives building, with all of the precious relics and treasures, may be ready for the pilgrims who come to visit this coming year.

Soon additional members of the International Council will be coming to make their residence in the Holy Land. 'Alí Nakhjavání, the President of the Council, is expected in a few weeks, and the Secretary-General, Charles Wolcott, arrives on the 21st of September. In addition to the elected members who have resided here in the past, Ian Semple, the Assistant Secretary, has already transferred his residence to Haifa and has remained here since the first meeting.

Because of their activities which were undermining the Faith, the following have been declared Covenant-breakers: (1) Guillermo Soto-mayor of Quito, Ecuador, who visited Cuba and attacked the Institutions of the Faith; (2) Eduardo Gonzalez of Guayaquil, Ecuador, who has been in close touch with Mason Remey and supports his baseless claim; (3) Mr. and Mrs. Chester Davison of Monrovia, California, who have accepted Mason Remey; and (4) Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Davison of Monterrey, Mexico, who likewise have supported this false claim.

We have heard that Mason Remey is in Italy, but this has not as yet been verified.

However, the general news that reaches us from the various parts of the world is most encouraging. The letters of the new National

Spiritual Assemblies show their eagerness and determination to win unprecedented victories for our beloved Guardian.

One of the Peruvian friends plans to carry the Faith to the primitive people of Peru in the jungle area beyond the Andes.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Nicaragua has informed us of the acceptance of the Faith by three villages in the Indian area of that country. We are awaiting more details.

Bolivia reports 350 new believers since Ridván, bringing their total to 2,000.

India sends a further report of their growing teaching activities, saying that there are now 3,200 new believers in the primitive areas where they have been working so devotedly. Classes are being held to train teachers to carry the work forward on an even increased scale. The beginning stages of mass conversion (or mass teaching as they ask that we refer to it in all letters to India) are apparent in several areas, and we must do everything we can to hasten the process.

It is now only two months until we shall be meeting for the Annual Gathering, and once again we urge you all to take every step necessary to assure your being present at this all-important meeting. The problems that lie before us, and the golden opportunities that depend upon their resolution, require the presence of every single Hand of the Cause. If there are any obstacles in your way which we might help remove, please call upon us for any help you may need.

With warmest and deepest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies

August 30, 1961

Beloved Friends:

The enclosed message was sent to the Hands of the Cause and the Regional Spiritual Assemblies in Europe. We felt that it could be of use to you, and therefore we are sending you a copy.

With warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Enclosure

To the Hands of the Cause in Europe and the Regional National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and Switzerland, the Benelux Countries, Scandinavia and Finland.
August 22, 1961

Beloved Friends:

By the unfailing grace of Bahá'u'lláh, this year the necessary foundation was laid in the goal countries of Europe for the erection of independent National Assemblies, and the requisite number of Local Spiritual Assemblies were formed. A dedicated army of pioneers came forth to occupy their posts. The services of these valiant souls are truly unforgettable and historic. The debt that we owe them is great.

The beloved Guardian encouraged the pioneers whenever possible to throw down deep roots into the soil of the country of their adoption. He told them to learn the language of the people amongst whom they laboured to propagate the Cause of God. They were to stay at their posts, persevere at all costs, and not consider their work completed until there were a sufficient number of avowed supporters of the Faith drawn from the peoples of these countries themselves to take up the torch and carry on the task. He, the beloved Guardian, stressed the supreme importance of teaching in the goal countries, and underlined the fact that the end is not the maintenance of Assemblies chiefly composed of pioneers, but the emergence of Assemblies formed in the main or in totality by native believers.

We feel that it is essential that the pioneers who gave us such a resounding victory last Ridván should at this juncture be lovingly and kindly reminded of the standard set by our beloved Guardian. We ask you to bring these matters to their notice in the way you consider best, and impress upon them that unless there is a great influx of native believers before next Ridván, their task will not be completed

with the formation of independent National Assemblies, and that they should stay at their posts even beyond Ridván, 1963.

Assuring you of our ardent prayers on your behalf at the sacred Thresholds, and with warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

September 5, 1961

Beloved Co-workers:

In just a few weeks we shall be together for our Annual Gathering, and once again we shall share the news of the victories of our Faith in person. Therefore, this will be our last general letter until after this all-important event.

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum is now in Australia to attend the epoch-making dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes, having already visited the friends in Bangkok, Rangoon and Singapore. She will also visit many centres in Australia and New Zealand prior to her return.

Dear Milly has suffered from an accident in which she injured her arm, but is progressing well and hopes to be with us soon. Dear Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, although greatly improved, has not yet quite recovered from his recent illness. We know you will remember these wonderful servants of Bahá'u'lláh in your prayers.

Dear Agnes has just completed an exciting and fruitful teaching trip to Korea. There in Seoul, the capital-city, on July 9th, the Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Báb (according to the solar calendar), she addressed a meeting. Her translator was Mr. Oh San Sun, the same faithful soul who translated for her when she made her historic first pioneering visit to Korea's capital in 1921.

News of soul-stirring victories continues to pour in as the valiant army of Bahá'u'lláh forges ahead on all fronts, and assiduously builds upon the wide and the firm foundation which our beloved Guardian has laid down over the entire planet. One hundred Pygmies have entered the fellowship of our Faith in Bukavu in the

Congo region. The first native believers have been enrolled in the Mare Island of the Loyalty group, a husband and wife who accepted the Faith in Noumea, New Caledonia, but whose home is in Mare Island. South-East Asia continues to “vie” with Africa as urged by our beloved Guardian, and the Regional Spiritual Assembly reports that there are now 9,000 believers in Indonesia including Mentawai, and over 11,000 in the National Assembly region. Twenty souls from the Carib tribe have embraced the Faith in Honduras.

Ecuador has risen above the threat of the enemies of the Faith and presents a “new face” of victory. The National Assembly reports loving, dedicated meetings of their body directed to the primary task of the spiritual conquest of the country. In Carabuela we have four new Indian believers. This is the third Indian village with new believers, and the second village to be conquered for our Faith since the Convention. Already they have surpassed the total number who accepted the Faith in Ecuador during the whole of the past year.

Kenya increased its Local Assemblies by 23 this year, to 134, and now has approximately 4,000 believers. The Honolulu Community in the Pacific Ocean has doubled its numbers in a single year. Cuba not only held a triumphant National Convention and raised up a dedicated National Assembly, but has now organized its first historic summer school.

A notable event in Canada, in addition to the remarkable increase in the number of her believers, has been the acceptance of the Faith by a minister of the United Church, Mr. Ronald Parsons. This courageous soul has written an eloquent and moving testimony of his faith addressed to the church from the ministry of which he has resigned. In that letter he says: “To many of my brethren it may seem that I am turning away from Jesus by such an action, whereas for me it comes as the only way in which I can maintain my obedience to Him. Because I believe Bahá’u’lláh to be what He claims to be, the Return of Christ, the Promised Spirit of Truth, not to become His follower would be a betrayal of Jesus’s teaching and a denial of God’s Will in this Age”.

The Bahá’ís of the British Isles are celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the beloved Master’s momentous visit to their country, when He chose London as the scene of His first appearance before

a Western audience. Apart from special meetings held in all the centres on September 4th, the actual day of the Master's arrival at the shores of Britain, a large, well-advertised public meeting is arranged for September 8th in London. Leroy and Hasan are to be present at this meeting and speak from the platform. Lutfu'lláh Hakím has gone to London for a vacation, but primarily to fulfil his long-desired wish to visit the resting-place of our beloved Guardian. His journey to London happily coincides with the celebrations, and is particularly thrilling for the believers in Britain, because Lutfu'lláh was there when the Master arrived in London fifty years ago. He will be the only Bahá'í present at the celebrations who has witnessed that great day in the history of the West.

There is still more news to gladden every faithful heart. Mass conversion continues in India, goes steadily on in Africa, leaps forward in Bolivia, and each day brings fresh numbers of North and South American Indians into the advancing ranks of our blessed Faith.

It is the cherished hope of each one of us, we know, that in the wake of this vital Annual Gathering of ours which has far-reaching implications and consequences, there will come flooding into every corner of the planet, over continents and islands of the seas, a magnetic, all-sufficing power that shall bring into the realm of fulfilment the highest and brightest hopes of our most beloved Guardian for reaching in numbers ever-increasing the masses "who consciously or unconsciously thirst" for the healing water of our Faith.

We eagerly await your arrival. With warmest and deepest love to each one of you,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Germany, Italy and Switzerland
September 14, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, for the last two years the Faith has been under attack in Turkey, starting with the arrest of a number of believers in Ankara during Naw-Rúz of 1959, when the police imprisoned members of the Local Spiritual Assembly. This incident received wide publicity in the press. Subsequently the friends were released from prison, but a court case was brought against the Bahá'ís by the public prosecutor, who claimed that the Faith was a "Tarighat", one of those sects of Islám whose rituals, practices and forms of worship are forbidden by the law of the country.

Since then this matter has been the subject of lengthy litigation, with the Bahá'ís endeavouring to prove and establish the status of the Faith as an independent world religion, and the prosecuting authorities endeavouring to classify it as a forbidden sect of Islám.

The case is now to go to the high court on appeal, and the National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey has informed us that they believe that representations to the Turkish Ambassador in your respective countries^[16] would be helpful, as these diplomatic representatives will then inform their government of these visits and the proofs which representatives of your Assembly will present showing the completely independent character of the Faith, as well as its world-wide acceptance as a universal religion completely dissociated from Islám or any other revealed religion.

In order that you may thoroughly understand the background of this situation, we share with you the following summary of the development of the case against the Faith in Turkey.

Following the Turkish revolution in the 1920's, church and state were separated, but the major world religions, including the four recognized schools of thought of Sunni Islám—Maleki, Hanbali, Shafei and Hanafi—were left free to follow their beliefs and practices. However, according to Article 163 of the Turkish Criminal Code, the practice of every form of "Tarighat" was forbidden, and those who indulged in the forbidden rituals and practices of these Muslim sects were subject to severe punishment. Among these "Tarighat" are included the Naghshbandi, Molvai, Jalali and Refai sects. The Government of modern Turkey felt that the rituals and practices of these sects of Islám were out of place in modern life and harmful to the people; therefore they were forbidden.

It is clear that identification of the Faith with these forbidden sects would be a very bad blow for the Cause and conversely, if a high court of appeal in a Muslim country were to recognize the independent character of the Faith, it would be a very significant victory for the Cause, not only in Turkey, but throughout the East.

The original arrest of the members of the Local Spiritual Assembly in Ankara and the court case which followed resulted in wide publicity for the Cause, and most of the leading newspapers in the country opposed the action of the public prosecutor, and declared that the Faith was an independent religion. At that time many documents were sent to Turkey from the World Centre and from various National Assemblies to establish and prove the independent character of the Cause. The court requested three experts in comparative religion to study the matter and give their opinion. Two of the three experts appointed expressed the view that the Bahá'í Faith was an independent religion, and one claimed that it was a sect of Islám. After receiving this report, the court then appointed three outstanding religious scholars to review all aspects of the question and advise the court of their views. All three of these scholars agreed in a finding that the Faith was an independent religion, and sent a documented statement containing authenticated proofs to the court on January 17, 1961. In this historic document the panel of experts proved that the Cause has nothing to do with "Tarighat" or forbidden sects of Islám, and that it is an independent religion comparable to Islám and Christianity.

After this document was submitted to the court, everyone was certain that the Court would issue its decree in accordance with the findings of these experts. However, the judges chose to disregard these findings entirely, and suddenly on July 15, 1961, declared that the Bahá'í Faith was a "Tarighat". Following this unexpected decision, the Bahá'ís of Ankara were forgiven, on the grounds that their gathering constituted a criminal case and under the general amnesty provisions of the law they could be released, that is, the case against them dropped. The court did say, however, that its decision could be appealed.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Turkey has decided to make a strong appeal to the higher court, and as indicated previously, this

National Assembly believes that proper representations by your bodies to the Turkish Ambassadors in your respective countries will be helpful.

Therefore we request that you appoint without delay a well-qualified delegation composed of Western friends (the effect will be greater if the delegations do not include any of the Persian believers who may be residing in your respective countries) to call upon the Turkish Ambassador, explain your position as national representatives of the Bahá'í Community in your respective countries, indicate your great interest in a proper and just outcome of the pending case in Turkey, and give explanations and appropriate proofs of the independent character of the Faith and its world-wide scope as a separate revealed religion. In view of the highly nationalistic feelings of the Turkish people, particularly Turkish officials, we suggest that the representations to be made by your representatives do not in any way take the form of a protest. In other words, the approach should be a mild and friendly one, emphasizing the great interest which the Bahá'ís in your countries have in this matter.

We shall be very much interested in receiving in due course a report on the steps taken to carry out this request from the National Assembly of Turkey. We shall offer ardent prayers in the holy Shrines that all of these efforts will be divinely guided and assisted and that another great victory for the Faith may be won.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes

Sydney, Australia

September 15, 1961

To the Hands of the Cause, Members of the National Assemblies, Auxiliary Board Members, and believers attending the Teaching

Conference on the historic occasion of the Dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes.

Beloved Friends:

On this unique occasion in the life of the Antipodes, this joyous, soul-stirring occasion, the crowning glory of four decades of devoted labour in that great area of the globe, when the doors of the Mother Temple will open to pour in abundance the light of God's nascent Faith upon the expanse of the Pacific, our thoughts and our hearts turn to the architect of our world-redeeming victories. We turn to him, our most beloved Guardian, in humble gratitude, in wonderment, in eager anticipation of yet mightier things to come.

The harvest is mounting high. Goal after goal of the Beloved's Plan is reached all the world over. What faithful Bahá'í heart can fail to be thrilled and to rejoice at this latest evidence of Bahá'u'lláh's all-pervading power and sustaining grace. And the more will the faithful rejoice when the goal attained is the completion and the dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes. But even yet more shall the faithful heart rejoice when the import of the majestic utterance of Bahá'u'lláh is seen in its full glory. He, the Supreme Manifestation of God, wrote that should He be eclipsed on the land, His light would break upon the world from the midmost heart of the ocean.

Our edifice of light was denied to our brethren in the Cradle of our Faith. The beloved redressed the wrong and decreed the erection of the Mother Temples of Africa and the Antipodes. The voice of our Faith was muted in the land of its birth. Its silent teacher arose clad in splendour in the heart of Africa and in the midst of the Pacific Ocean.

From the World Centre of our Faith, we greet you one and all in utmost joy on this wonderful day. And our prayers offered at the sacred Thresholds are with you.

To each one of you comes also the deepest love of the Hands of the Faith who wish to express their profound and grateful thanks to every believer who has helped to win the victories which during the past years have fulfilled so many of the cherished hopes of our beloved Guardian.

The holding of the Teaching Conference in conjunction with the dedication of the Mashriq'l-Adhkár affords a timely opportunity for consultation between Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, representing the Hands at the World Centre, the Hand of the Cause in Australia, members of Auxiliary Boards and National Spiritual Assemblies, pioneers, teachers and believers in the Antipodes.

The words which we wish to share with you during this vital teaching session upon which such a bright future depends, are the words of our beloved Guardian. If his blessed instructions become our watchword, every obstacle will be overcome, and every goal will be accomplished.

This challenge of teaching, he told us, "so severe and insistent, and yet so glorious, faces . . . primarily the individual believer, on whom, in the last resort, depends the fate of the entire community. . . . Without his support, at once whole-hearted, continuous and generous, every measure adopted, and every plan formulated . . . is foredoomed to failure. . . . The unseen legions, standing rank upon rank, and eager to pour forth from the Kingdom on High the full measure of their celestial strength on the individual participants of this incomparably glorious Crusade, are powerless unless and until each potential crusader decides for himself . . . to rush into the arena of service ready to sacrifice his all for the Cause he is called upon to champion."

The beloved Guardian wrote in that same year, emphasizing the vital importance of the home fronts to the destiny of the entire Crusade. He said, "The Ten Year Plan, if the friends will study it, comprises not only glamorous goals far afield, but extremely important ones near at hand. If these (home-front goals) are not achieved, the Plan will have failed."

Upon the success of the home-front campaigns, he warned us, would depend the mildness or the fierceness of the "contest that must be waged, sooner or later, . . . between the rising institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic divinely appointed Order, and the exponents of obsolescent doctrines and the defenders, both secular and religious, of a corrupt and fast-declining society."

The words in his final, loving, fate-laden Message to America, are surely directed to each one of the vital home fronts: "Once again—

and this time more fervently than ever before—I direct my plea to every single member of this strenuously labouring, clear-visioned, stout-hearted, spiritually endowed community, every man and woman, on whose individual efforts, resolutions, self-sacrifice and perseverance the immediate destinies of the Faith of God . . . primarily depend, not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost. I would rather entreat each and every one of them to immortalize this approaching, fateful hour in the evolution of a World Spiritual Crusade, by a fresh consecration to their God-given mission, coupled with an instantaneous plan of action, at once so dynamic and decisive, as to wipe out . . . with one stroke, the deficiencies which have . . . bogged down the operations of the Crusade on the home front . . .” This, he assured them, was “the need of the present hour”.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Tablets of the Divine Plan appealed to us: “*Let your exertions henceforth increase a thousandfold.*” Then He promised us: “*The wider its range, the more striking will be the evidence of Divine assistance.*” “*Exert yourselves;*” He called to us, “*your mission is unspeakably glorious.*”

“No reader of these words, so vibrant with promises”, our beloved Guardian assured us, will be content to “rest upon” his “laurels”. It would, he said, “be tantamount to a betrayal of the trust placed” upon the followers of Bahá’u’lláh. “To cut short the chain of victories that must lead it on to that supreme triumph when ‘*the whole earth may be stirred and shaken*’ by the results of its achievements would shatter His (the Master’s) hopes.”

Therefore, beloved friends, we urge each one of you to follow our beloved Guardian’s counsel and “act, and act promptly and decisively”. From this very moment on, let each individual believer arise, and, with a measure of devotion and sacrifice never before attained, volunteer to pioneer to the goal cities established by your National Assembly. Those who are unable to go themselves, let them, as Bahá’u’lláh Himself suggested, deputize with their resources another to go in their place. Those who are unable to pioneer, let them arise and volunteer through the proper administrative body to become travelling teachers for a week-end, a

week, a month, six months or whatever time they have available from now until the end of the Crusade. Those who cannot travel and teach, let them open their homes so that every single believer in this richly blessed land may become a teacher. Let no Bahá'í month pass without the bare minimum of at least one fireside devoted to reaching the multitudes. This was our beloved Guardian's own instruction. Let every single believer, however humble his circumstances, pour out his resources on an unprecedented scale of sacrifice so that the means to properly sustain and courageously expand the work on the Australian home front may be provided for, and the efforts of the National Assembly vigorously increased. Let every isolated believer strive to become a group. Let every group concentrate on becoming an Assembly. Let every Assembly consolidate its strength and numbers so that it can become legally incorporated; then let all of the believers over the number of fifteen, in these strong communities, who can possibly do so, disperse and open new centres, thus setting in motion that process so highly prized by our beloved Guardian, by which every isolated believer becomes a group, every group an Assembly, every Assembly a thriving Community, which again in turn disperses until we have generated a momentum which will lead to that mass conversion everywhere, and the land is filled with movement like the tributaries of a mighty river carrying the water of life to every corner of Australia.

Such a plan of action is clearly envisioned by our beloved Guardian in his final Message to the Bahá'í world. The fourth phase of this glorious Crusade, he said, "must be immortalized . . . by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres . . ." This final phase of the Crusade, he told us, must "witness . . . an upsurge of enthusiasm and consecration, before which every single as well as collective exploit, associated with any of the three previous phases, will pale."

We have less than two years remaining of the beloved Guardian's Crusade. During every one of the hours remaining, let us keep

before us, as our guide, these words of the one who sacrificed his life that we might have such “golden” victories:

The opportunity that presents itself at this crucial hour is precious beyond expression. The blessings destined to flow from a victory so near at hand are rich beyond example. One final surge of that indomitable spirit . . . is all that is required . . . to release the flow of those blessings.

May Bahá'u'lláh watch over us, sustain us, guide us and make us worthy of so priceless and so great a privilege.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

SEPTEMBER 18, 1961

SHARE JOYOUS NEWS DEDICATION MOTHER TEMPLE
ANTIPODES PRESENCE AMATU'L-BAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM
REPRESENTATIVES TWENTY COUNTRIES BAHA'I WORLD
COMMUNITY STOP HISTORIC OCCASION MARKS
ATTAINMENT SECOND STAGE BELOVED GUARDIAN'S
THREEFOLD ENTERPRISE DESIGNED ESTABLISH FIRST
SACRED HOUSES WORSHIP AFRICAN CONTINENT
AUSTRALASIA EUROPE STOP CALL UPON FRIENDS
EVERYWHERE JOIN PRAYERS PRAISE THANKSGIVING
BAHA'U'LLAH HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT VICTORY STOP AIRMAIL
MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

November 5, 1961

Beloved Friends:

Enclosed is a copy of the Message to the Bahá'ís of East and West issued by the Hands of the Cause following their fifth Annual Gathering in the Holy Land.

We ask that you place this communication in the hands of the friends as quickly as possible, through your News Letter, or by some other means.

We send you loving best wishes and our ardent prayers for the success of your devoted efforts to carry forward the Holy Crusade of our beloved Guardian to complete and final victory in the coming eighteen months.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

CONCLAVE MESSAGE

1961

From the Hands of the Cause to the Bahá'ís of East and West

Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

Bahjí, 'Akká, Israel

November 5, 1961

Dearly beloved Friends:

The Community of the Most Great Name, East and West, North and South, can look back over the remarkable achievements of the past twelve months with profound thankfulness and from them draw fresh courage and determination to arise unitedly for one last supreme effort which will enable us to crown with victory the mighty Global Plan to be consummated in Ridván, 1963 by the celebration of the Most Great Jubilee of our Faith—the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh. The hearts and thoughts of all His followers now turn to the last eighteen months of our dearly beloved Guardian's World Crusade. What treasures will we proudly lay at his feet on that occasion. What rejoicing will be ours when we can say to him: See, we were faithful to our trust, as much as lay within our

power, this did we perform according to the sacred Plan you gave us!

After the passage of the most fruitful and stirring decade the Formative Age of our Faith has as yet witnessed, the International Bahá'í Council has passed into the final stage of its evolution and efflorescence into the Universal House of Justice through its election by all the members of the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world; the Council is now regularly meeting in the Holy Land and discharging those duties laid down for it by Shoghi Effendi himself. The vast process of mass conversion, specified by him as one of the major objectives of the second half of the World Crusade, is beginning to take place on a large scale in Asia, South America, and the Pacific area, and is rapidly increasing in momentum in Africa. Last Ridván, on the number of Local Assemblies specified by him as Crusade goals, no less than twenty-one independent National Spiritual Assemblies were successfully founded, an historic act which will be followed next Ridván by the establishment on an equally firm foundation of eleven European national bodies and the first National Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ceylon. The Mother Temples of both Africa and the Antipodes have been formally opened for public worship and are already redounding to the fame of the Cause of God throughout the entire world. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Europe is slowly rising in the heart of that continent so sorely in need of the regenerating grace of Bahá'u'lláh. The divine assistance, so repeatedly promised to us in the teachings, has been vouchsafed to us in a truly miraculous manner, plain for all to see, since the Bahá'í world was shaken by the loss of its beloved Guardian.

It is therefore with hopeful hearts that the Hands of the Cause can point out to their fellow-believers those remaining milestones we must race to pass ere our great and unique opportunity for service in the Guardian's own Crusade is lost to us forever. In the course of our lengthy consultations during this fifth gathering of the Hands of the Cause held in Bahjí, in the shadow of the Shrine of the Supreme Manifestation of God Himself, it has been abundantly clear what our major duties still are, where we must, one and all, concentrate our efforts and resources, which are the battle fronts we must deploy our

forces upon, if victory is to be won—that victory must and shall be ours no loyal Bahá'í heart can doubt for a single instant.

Though multifarious tasks still remain to be accomplished in various fields of Bahá'í activity, three supremely important duties face us during the last eighteen months of the World Crusade, duties which, should we fail in any one of them, may well have repercussions on the evolution of not only the present national Bahá'í communities, but indeed the spiritual and material welfare of mankind itself for generations to come.

The first of these is to bring the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to the waiting masses at this critical time, this unique juncture in human history, when the hearts of so many of the less privileged peoples of the world are ready to receive His Message, and to be enrolled under His banner “in troops” as foretold by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. The second is to win the remaining home-front goals in five of those original twelve stalwart, long-established, much-loved national communities which, at the inception of the Ten Year Plan, received the unique and priceless honour of having the spiritual conquest of no less than an entire planet entrusted to their care. Wherever the army of Bahá'u'lláh was free to march, in their totality, and with the greatest distinction, these global goals have been won. It is inconceivable that the home-front goals, given to them at the same time and forming an integral part of the World Crusade, should not also be triumphantly achieved. The third is undoubtedly the pivotal one at this point of the Crusade and comprises the heavy, pressing, inescapable duty of every single believer to assist in providing an uninterrupted and greatly amplified flow of that “life blood” of material resources without which construction of the Mother Temple of Europe and other vast undertakings now gaining momentum all over the world, in old and new Bahá'í communities alike, will either cease to go forward, come to a standstill or, in important areas of mass conversion, stand in danger of losing the precious ground won through so much heroic effort and sacrifice. There can be no doubt that the discharge of these three paramount duties at this time can alone provide a suitably strong and unshakeable foundation for the future activities of that glorious and august Institution, so soon to be elected, Bahá'u'lláh's long-anticipated Universal House of Justice.

Last year the Hands of the Faith called upon the believers to observe a year of austerity in order to concentrate the resources of the followers of this infant but infinitely strong and dynamic Faith upon attaining the remaining objectives of the Ten Year Plan. It has become apparent that a far greater effort must be made during the next eighteen months, and that the austerity and self-sacrifice we voluntarily imposed upon ourselves must continue and be intensified until every goal is won, every prize protected, every achievement maintained. In the words of the beloved Guardian, “a pouring out of substance, not only by those of limited means, but by the richest and wealthiest, in a degree involving the truest sacrifice,” is needed.

The financial requirements of the Cause at this critical hour call, not only for the offering of a greater proportion of the income of every loyal believer, but also for the sacrifice of capital in such a manner that no Bahá'í will have cause for regret that he or she failed to respond to the Guardian's plea “unhesitatingly, to place, each according to his circum-stances, his share on the altar of Bahá'í sacrifice, lest, on a sudden, unforeseen calamities rob them of a considerable portion of the earthly things they have amassed.”

The attention of the friends should be called at this time to the words of Shoghi Effendi concerning the purpose and significance of the Inter-national Fund, direct contributions to which he indicated were a spiritual obligation of every Local and National Assembly and every believer. Participation of individuals through “contributions directly transmitted to the Holy Land” was, he said, “imperative and beyond the scope of the jurisdiction of National and Local Assemblies.” Bearing in mind the increasing scale of the world-wide activities which must be sustained from the International Fund, we ask the friends to ponder these words and each, in his own way, respond to this plea. Undoubtedly one penny, freely and lovingly laid on the altar of sacrifice now, for the successful conclusion of this divinely-conceived Plan, will be equal to thousands in the future.

The paramount task of the present hour is to teach the Cause of God. *“In these days,”* wrote the incomparable Master in His Will and Testament, *“the most important of all things is the guidance of the nations and peoples of the world. Teaching the Cause is of utmost importance for it is the head corner-stone of the foundation itself.”*

“O, that I could travel,” He wrote, “even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of ‘Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá’ in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it.”

The wings of time are beating at our door as one of the most momentous epochs in the entire range of Bahá’í history swiftly moves to its close. The impelling call of our beloved Guardian, resounding in the very last message of his life, is but partially answered. “An unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society” is the goal inscribed by his unerring pen.

The effort now required of us is imperative and inescapable, and must indeed be prodigious. Nothing less than complete, total dedication will suffice. In this mighty, life-offering task every Bahá’í, no matter who he is or where he dwells, has a share and a worthy part to play. Now is the moment for all the administrative agencies of our Faith to order their work in such fashion as to put teaching at the forefront of all their activities, and to exclude any plan which is not relevant to the purposes of our Crusade.

If the world situation has so far prevented us from planting the banner of Bahá’u’lláh in certain virgin territories, there can be no possible excuse for failure on such vital home fronts as those of the United States, Canada, Australia, Britain and Germany. These five tried and tested national communities, each to a greater or lesser degree, are still faced by the urgent necessity of increasing the number of their Assemblies to that total set for them by Shoghi Effendi himself. Let every single believer, in those countries where at present the status of these internal goals is a cause of grave concern to the entire Bahá’í world, recall the words of the Guardian in one of his last letters to the American Bahá’ís, dated September 21, 1957, words applicable not only to them but to all other Bahá’ís whose home fronts constitute a threat to the total success of the Crusade: “The fourth phase of the Ten Year Plan”, he wrote, “. . . must witness . . . on every home front, and particularly within the confines of the American homeland, this same spiritual re-invigoration,

administrative expansion, and material replenishment, constituting the triple facets of a task which can brook no further delay . . .” He urged the friends to rescue “while there is yet time, their home front from the precarious position in which it now finds itself . . . not to allow, through apathy, timidity or complacency, this one remaining opportunity to be irretrievably lost.” He said, “I would rather entreat each and every one of them” through fresh consecration and “dynamic and decisive” action “to wipe out, . . . with one stroke, the deficiencies which have, to no small extent, bogged down the operations of the Crusade on the home front . . .” In that same message he warned that the Plan was suffering from these vital deficiencies “which, if not speedily and fundamentally remedied, will not only mutilate the Plan itself, but jeopardize the prizes won so laboriously since its inauguration.”

There can be no doubt that if each individual believer in these national communities, where the goals are not yet won, will place his whole trust in God, if he will deeply search his heart and question whether he may not be the one privileged, indeed needed, to make the sacrifice of moving to one of those centres where a Local Assembly must be established, if he will call to mind the admonition of Bahá’u’lláh to deputize one in his stead if he is not himself able to go forth and teach, if he will rise to higher levels of sacrifice in this hour of great need on the home fronts, the victory will be assured.

Not alone in the arena of teaching, but also in the pioneering field, the opportunities and high rewards that now beckon every Bahá’í are indeed priceless. They who have gone forth in His Name to the goal towns on the home fronts, or to distant lands where the banner of Bahá’u’lláh had to be implanted or to be kept waving, have given such victories to the Cause of God which down the corridors of time will reverberate to His glory, and which succeeding generations shall remember with pride and gratitude. They are now painstakingly and diligently buttressing the pillars on which shall soon be laid the splendrous dome of God’s Universal House of Justice.

No consideration of needs in the teaching field at the present time can leave out that majestic theme of mass conversion which the Guardian introduced into his Global Crusade upon the eve of his departure from this world, and which he stated must immortalize the

second half of this Plan, which itself is but a stage in the unfoldment of that Divine Plan which he characterized as 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Mandate", His "world-encircling Plan", "the Master Plan of the appointed Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant."

The pre-eminent task of teaching the Faith to the multitudes is "a task", the Guardian wrote, "so dear to the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; at once so sacred, so fundamental, and so urgent; primarily involving and challenging every single individual"; it is, he said, "the bedrock on which the solidity and the stability of the multiplying institutions of a rising Order must rest."

In the last months of Shoghi Effendi's precious life he encouraged the National Assemblies, and all those engaged in the teaching work, to make a far greater effort to bring about this portentous process of converting the masses. He urged them to simplify their methods of teaching and enrolling new believers, to remove obstacles from the path of those hungering for the Word of God. He said the fundamental thing was to plant in the heart of the seeker the knowledge that the Promised One had come, that Bahá'u'lláh was God's Divine Messenger for this Day, and to encourage him to accept His station and embrace His Faith. "The essential thing", he wrote, "is that the candidate for enrolment should believe in his heart in the truth of Bahá'u'lláh. Whether he is literate or illiterate, informed of all the Teachings or not, is beside the point entirely. When the spark of faith exists the essential Message is there, and gradually everything else can be added unto it." He pointed out that "those responsible for accepting new enrolments must just be sure of one thing—that the heart of the applicant has been touched with the spirit of the Faith. Everything else can be built on this foundation gradually."

He promised us that once this spirit of mass conversion is released in the world, its momentum will increase mysteriously in every part of the planet. "As the Cause spreads all over the world", he assured us, "its rate of acceleration increases too, and new centres in Africa, in some mysterious way, have spiritual repercussions which aid in forming new centres every-where." May not Africa have ignited Indonesia which fired Bolivia which in turn set ablaze India? That the beloved Guardian's words have already found

fulfilment is evident in the astounding flood of teaching victories achieved this year, particularly in India, where more than eight thousand have entered the tabernacle of Bahá'u'lláh in the past eight months.

If every National Assembly, every Local Assembly and every individual believer will arise at this hour, and seize with both hands this God-given opportunity, we can hasten that joyous day foretold in the words of our beloved Guardian when he launched this glorious Global Crusade, a day when “the light of God’s triumphant Faith, shining in all its power and glory, will have suffused and enveloped the entire planet.”

“The purpose of the new National Assemblies in Africa, and the purpose of any administrative body,” he wrote to one of these African Assemblies on August 8, 1957, “is to carry the Message to the people and enlist the sincere under the banner of this Faith. Your Assembly must never lose sight of this for a moment, and must go on courageously expanding the membership of the communities under your jurisdiction, and gradually educating the friends in both the Teachings and the Administration. Nothing could be more tragic than if the establishment of these great administrative bodies should stifle or bog down the teaching work. The early believers in both the East and the West, we must always remember, knew practically nothing compared to what the average Bahá’í knows about his Faith nowadays, yet they were the ones who shed their blood, the ones who arose and said: ‘I believe’, requiring no proof, and often never having read a single word of the Teachings.”

Shoghi Effendi made it unmistakably clear that his words did not apply to Africa alone, for in another letter, written at his behest by an assistant secretary, we find it clearly stated that “What has been achieved in Africa sets an example to be followed by Bahá’ís everywhere. . . . The Guardian sees no reason why similar victories should not be achieved in all parts of the world.” As early as 1938, in a letter to the American National Assembly, in which he stressed the “high privilege of Local Assemblies” in facilitating the admission of new believers, he wrote: “To them I wish particularly to appeal . . . to desist from insisting too rigidly on the minor observances and beliefs, which might prove a stumbling-block in the way of any sincere

applicant, whose eager desire is to enlist under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh.” He was still making this same appeal towards the end of his life: “. . . the friends should be very careful not to place hindrances in the way of those who wish to accept the Faith. If we make the requirements too rigorous, we will cool off the initial enthusiasm, rebuff the hearts and cease to expand rapidly.”

Keenly aware of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s words that: *“The Hands of the Cause of God must spend all their time in teaching. Erelong will the assistance of the Heavenly Kingdom be manifest beyond all expectations and the words ‘you will see people enter the Religion of God troop upon troop’ be realized”*, we have decided that all the Hands, including those resident in the Holy Land, will devote as much of their time as possible to accelerating the process of mass conversion on the one hand, and on the other, in fulfilment of the Guardian’s instructions, to meeting frequently with various National Assemblies in order to deliberate with them on ways and means of winning the goals of the Crusade.

The tasks facing the institution of the Hands and the members of its Teaching and Protection Boards grow in weight as the Ten Year Plan advances. Once again we appeal to the members of these Boards to be more mindful of the duties given them by their beloved Guardian and to devote their hearts, their energies and their time to the work he outlined for them. To the degree to which each Hand and each Board member concentrates on his own specific task will the work of our glorious Faith speedily attain those victories which alone can bring the World Crusade to a triumphal end.

On the occasion of the election of the eleven new European National Spiritual Assemblies next Ridván six of the Hands of the Faith will be present as follows: Italy and Switzerland, Ugo Giachery; Belgium and Luxembourg, Dr. ‘Alí-Muhammad Varqá; Holland and Denmark, Hasan Balyuzi; Sweden and Finland, Adelbert Mühlischlegel; Spain and Portugal, Paul Haney; Norway, John Ferraby, who will also attend the British Bahá’í Convention. The election of the new National Spiritual Assembly of Ceylon will be attended by Shu’á’u’lláh ‘Alá’í.

In addition to these activities, and after careful consideration of the over-all needs of the teaching work at this time in various continents,

it has been decided that in view of the delicate state of health of Músá Banání which prevents him from moving about, John Robarts will remain a Hand of the Cause in Africa. William Sears will devote as much time as possible to the work in the Western Hemisphere, to which he will proceed in the near future. Rahmatu'lláh Muhájir, in view of the presence of both John Robarts and Enoch Olinga in Africa, will devote his time to the Asian and Pacific teaching fields, proceeding shortly on a lengthy tour which will take him as far as the islands of the South Pacific, later returning to the South East Asian field which is now being swept by a mighty wave of enthusiasm for the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and where the indigenous peoples are entering the Faith in great numbers.

Abu'l-Qásim Faizí will leave next spring to spend several months in the most promising mass conversion areas of Latin America, whilst Jalál Kházeh plans shortly a prolonged and extensive trip to the new centres in India where the people are truly entering the Faith in troops. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Leroy Ioas will both spend time assisting the European home fronts, the former in the near future, the latter during the summer months. All the Continental Hands have pledged themselves to travel as extensively as possible to promote the teaching and consolidation work in their areas.

With the erection in 1962 of twelve more future pillars of that supreme legislative Body of the Bahá'í world, a firm foundation will have been laid for the election of "that Universal House of Justice which," Shoghi Effendi stated, "as its title implies, is to be the exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone ensure the security of, and establish the reign of law and order in, a strangely disordered world."

We are now able to envisage the steps that must still be taken before that "Ark" referred to in Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Tablet of Carmel shall come into being, an ark whose dwellers, the Guardian told us, "are the men of the Supreme House of Justice, which, in conformity with the exact provisions of the Will and Testament of the Centre of the Mighty Covenant, is the Body which should legislate on laws not explicitly revealed in the Text. In this Dispensation, these laws are destined to flow from this Holy Mountain, even as in the Mosaic Dispensation the law of God was promulgated from Zion."

The Chief Stewards of the Faith are therefore calling a Convention in the Holy Land for the election of the Universal House of Justice on the first, second and third days of Ridván, 1963. The members of all National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies elected by the Bahá'ís in Ridván, 1962 will, in conformity with the teachings, constitute the electoral body empowered to vote for this crowning unit of the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, upon whose deliberations the unique bounty of receiving divine inspiration has been bestowed, and whose decisions are infallibly guided by both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

After long and conscientious consideration of the needs of the present hour and the writings of our dearly-loved Guardian, the following decision has been reached: All male voting members throughout the Bahá'í world are eligible for election to the Universal House of Justice. The Hands of the Cause do not limit the freedom of the electors. However, as they have been given the explicit duties of guarding over the security and ensuring the propagation of the Faith, they ask the electors to leave them free at this time to discharge their duties. When that supreme and infallible Body has been elected it will decide on all matters concerning its own membership.

At a later date, and in ample time for each qualified elector of the Universal House of Justice to cast his or her vote, a detailed election call, as well as ballots for those unable to attend the International Convention in the Holy Land will be issued from the World Centre.

Owing to conditions affecting the Cause which still prevail in the Middle East, it has become evident that it is not possible to hold the World Congress in Baghhdád in 1963, on the occasion of the world-wide celebrations of the "Most Great Jubilee", the Centenary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván. Prolonged investigations have shown us that to make plans at this time for it to take place there is out of the question. We have therefore decided that this first World Congress, the last of the great gatherings of the Bahá'ís to be summoned by Shoghi Effendi, which constitutes the joyous consummation of ten years of unprecedented work and achievement, shall be held in London, the city which enshrines his infinitely precious remains, on the 28th, 29th and 30th of April and

the 1st and 2nd of May, 1963, a period which includes the 9th and 12th days of Ridván. In taking this decision we have been comforted by the knowledge that he himself, in view of the situation in this part of the world, expressed towards the end of his life, serious doubts as to whether it would be possible to hold the Congress in Baghdád. It must be a consolation to every believer who plans to be present on this unique occasion to know that he will be able to visit the grave of Shoghi Effendi and offer his prayers there as the last, majestic, glorious, globe-conquering Plan of his Guardian draws to its close.

Because of the dates set for the election of the Universal House of Justice and the World Congress—both events of unique historic importance in this century, and which must perforce take place during the Ridván period—it has been decided to hold the elections of all National Spiritual Assemblies for the Bahá'í year 120 on the week-end beginning May 23rd, 1963. In making this decision we have been guided by the fact that the beloved Guardian himself permitted, in special rare circumstances, the Annual Conventions to be held outside the Ridván period.

The challenge confronting the standard-bearers of Bahá'u'lláh in every continent of the globe, in every field of Bahá'í activity, in these swiftly passing hours is unprecedented; the opportunities lying within their reach are of such magnitude that only future generations can comprehend their glory and their significance in the majestic unfoldment of Bahá'u'lláh's World-Redeeming Order.

Not many years have passed since the beloved Guardian addressed to the Bahá'í world the following pregnant words, full of hope, full of longing, full of love and full of warning. We do well to recall them now when we face our last possible chance to consummate his Plan and to consolidate the foundations of the Universal House of Justice: "I appeal, as I close this review of the superb feats already accomplished, in the course of so many campaigns, by the heroic band of the warriors of Bahá'u'lláh, battling in His Name and by His aid for the purification, the unification and the spiritualization of a morally and spiritually bankrupt society, now hovering on the brink of self-destruction, for a renewed dedication, at this critical hour in the fortunes of mankind, on the part of the entire company of my spiritual brethren in every continent of the globe, to

the high ideals of the Cause they have espoused, as well as to the immediate accomplishment of the goals of the Crusade on which they have embarked, be they in active service or not, of either sex, young as well as old, rich or poor, whether veteran or newly enrolled . . .”

He who was the Sign of God on earth has assured us that “The invisible hosts of the Abhá Kingdom are arrayed and ready to rush forth and ensure the triumph of every stout-hearted and persevering herald of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh”, and that “God’s Own Plan has been set in motion. It is gathering momentum with every passing day. The powers of heaven and earth mysteriously assist in its execution. Such an opportunity is irreplaceable. Let the doubter arise and himself verify the truth of such assertions. To try, to persevere, is to ensure ultimate and complete victory.”

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih
Amelia Collins
Tarázu’lláh Samandarí
Leroy Ioas
A. Q. Faizi
Hermann Grossmann
Agnes B. Alexander
Zikrullah Khadem
H. Collis Featherstone
Sh. Alai
A. Furutan
Enoch Olinga
Hasan M. Balyuzi
Paul E. Haney
Ugo Giachery
William Sears
Adelbert Mühlischlegel
John Robarts
Mohajer
John Ferraby
Jalal Khazeh

BAHA'I WILMETTE

NOVEMBER 6, 1961

MINDFUL BELOVED GUARDIAN'S EMPHASIS PREEMINENT
SACRED TASK TEACHING FAITH MULTITUDES AND
RECENT EVIDENCE MOUNTING WORLDWIDE FLOOD
ENROLMENTS URGE BELIEVERS OCCASION FORTIETH
ANNIVERSARY ASCENSION MASTER JOIN US ARDENT
PRAYERS ACCELERATION PROCESS MASS CONVERSION
RESOLVE DEDICATE INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS ASSURE
RESOUNDING VICTORIES REMAINING MONTHS HOLY
CRUSADE AIRMAIL MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.
[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies

December 10, 1961

Beloved Friends:

The season of pilgrimage to the holy Shrines at the World Centre is once again under way, and believers from many parts of the Bahá'í world are being welcomed for the usual nine days of pilgrimage.

We have noted that some of the friends were not aware of the policy of the beloved Guardian with respect to visits to other Holy Places and points of interest in Israel. Shoghi Effendi permitted such visits after completion of the nine-day pilgrimage to the holiest Shrines of our Faith. The friends can remain in the Holy Land for several days after their pilgrimage for this purpose.

Although no general announcement should be made, and no quotation from this letter should be published in your News Letters, we feel that each National and Regional Assembly should have this information in order to answer any inquiries which may be made by the friends who contemplate making the pilgrimage.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

December 10, 1961

Beloved Friends:

You have been informed, through the Message from the recent Annual Gathering of the Hands of the Cause, that the World Congress called by our beloved Guardian is to be held in the city of London, beginning April 28, 1963. We now wish to inform all the National and Regional Assemblies of the action which has been taken to coordinate the tremendous task of planning for this unique and historic event.

A Congress Arrangements Committee has been appointed to handle the detailed arrangements for the Congress. The members and officers are: Mildred Mottahedeh, Chairman; John Long, Vice-Chairman; Dorothy Ferraby, Secretary; John Wade, Assistant Secretary; David Hofman; Habib Nahai; and Edna True. This Committee will function from London. The work of this Committee will be under the general supervision of the Hands in the Holy Land, but the Committee will report directly to the International Bahá'í Council. Correspondence with National Assemblies concerning policy matters connected with the Congress will be carried on by the Council from the Holy Land, but correspondence about detailed arrangements will be with the Congress Arrangements Committee. The Council will shortly be in touch with the National and Regional Assemblies and will inform you of the procedures to be followed and the information needed.

In these fast-fleeting final months of the World Crusade every believer, and particularly the members of the National and Regional Assemblies who carry such heavy burdens of responsibility, surely will exert a supreme effort to ensure that the Most Great Jubilee can be befittingly celebrated by the attainment of all of the remaining goals of the beloved Guardian's Plan.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To National Spiritual Assemblies of Latin America

December 24, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The establishment of 21 National Assemblies in Latin America, the greater number having jurisdiction over people speaking Spanish, has raised problems regarding the publication of Bahá'í literature in that language. These problems provide the National Assemblies concerned with an opportunity to demonstrate that they are worthy of the status ordained for them in the Tablets of the Divine Plan by developing a system of inter-Assembly cooperation in publications in Spanish that will act as an example and an inspiration to National Assemblies faced with similar problems regarding publications in other languages.

The beloved Guardian has indicated the proper basis for such co-operation by calling for the formation in Buenos Aires of a Bahá'í Publishing Trust, which works under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Argentina. Although each National Assembly is free to publish minor literature (including vernacular literature) for its own use, the bulk of the publishing in Spanish, and particularly the publishing of important books, must be by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of Buenos Aires. The National Assemblies of Latin America using Spanish literature should regard it as part of their responsibility under the Divine Plan to ensure the successful development of this Publishing Trust by facilitating the concentration in it of the publishing of Bahá'í literature in Spanish.

Any cooperative publishing ventures undertaken by interested National Assemblies should be executed through this Publishing Trust. Since the Argentinian National Assembly and its Publishing Trust must act as the pivot for such cooperation, other National Assemblies should refrain for the present from circulating each other about matters relating to publishing in Spanish. The Argentinian National Assembly, on the other hand, should pay due regard itself,

and see that the Publishing Trust pays due regard, to the facilities available in other countries and do its utmost to ensure that publications fulfil the need of the other countries both in regard to content and production.

The adoption of the above scheme can be a milestone in the development of proper relations between National Assemblies in Latin America, and not only provide an instrument of great importance for the spread of the Faith in that area, but demonstrate to the whole world the force for unity that lies within the Bahá'í Administrative Order. We appeal to the National Assemblies concerned to exert every effort to make publishing of Bahá'í literature in Spanish a cooperative venture that will redound to the credit of the Cause.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

December 25, 1961

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We feel moved to bring to your attention something which is not of major importance but nevertheless should be mentioned.

In correspondence received here in the Holy Land, we notice that the Hands are being increasingly referred to as the "Revered" Hands. We know that it is the love of the Bahá'ís and their respect for the members of this august institution that leads the friends to so designate us. However, as our beloved Guardian in referring to the Hands never used the adjective "revered", we would like the friends to please not use it. Whatever he called us is more than sufficient honour and bounty. He only mentioned us as Hands of the Cause of God. We feel that it is highly inappropriate that any adjective should be used in the way that "revered" is now being commonly used in referring to the Hands, and ask you to please share this request with the believers.

With loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

December 27, 1961

Dearly-loved Co-workers:

Seven weeks have passed since the time we were all together at Bahjí. Here in this first general letter since our Annual Gathering we share with you recent news of the Faith. Dear Milly's health is still the cause of much concern. She is confined to her room in the Master's house, has day and night nurses, and has not been able to attend any of our meetings. That is why her signature does not appear on any letter. Tarázu'lláh Samandarí is in the Holy Land, engaged with the valuable work on original Tablets which he began two years ago. Bill left for the United States early in November, Khádem is back there after a short visit to Persia, and Hermann plans to leave for South America early in February. Jalál is now in India. Before proceeding there he travelled in the northern parts of Persia and met the believers in many centres. Muhájir, after a visit to Pakistan where he travelled in the interior of the country, is now also in India. He and Jalál will be present at the large teaching conference planned for the end of December in the mass conversion area. Collis visited many Assemblies and centres *en route* to Australia, was present at the inauguration of the Teaching Institute in Madhya Pradesh in India, and also at the re-institution of the Colombo Spiritual Assembly in Ceylon. Agnes visited Hong Kong and the Philippines where she reported a remarkable expansion in teaching activity and many declarations. It is obvious that this area is now at the portals of mass conversion. Furútan left for Italy at the beginning of December, visited Cyprus *en route*, and is now in Switzerland. Hasan has been in the Holy Land working with Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum on the Archives, but is leaving this week for London. He will be back here in the weeks immediately preceding Ridván. John Robarts has been visiting communities in North Africa, and is attending a conference in Nairobi toward the end of December. We have had our dear Músá

Banání much in mind, as the state of his health is still precluding him from actual participation in the affairs of the Cause. Both Ugo and Adelbert have suffered from ill health, but in spite of that they have been travelling in various parts of Europe.

The response to the financial appeal in our message has been very encouraging. Donations by individuals and Assemblies have increased, and the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States reports that substantial contributions intended for the International Fund have reached it. A Local Assembly in Panama (Canal Zone) has sent a contribution of five hundred dollars, which is remarkable in relation to the size and the circumstances of that community. However the need remains urgent to constantly encourage the believers to keep up a continuous and generous flow of funds, in the way envisaged by the beloved Guardian.

Recently in Panama City nine declarations were accepted at the same time, an event unprecedented there. The National Spiritual Assembly of Panama reports further exciting victories. It writes: "Due to the efforts of Alan and Ruth Pringle we now have eighty adult Bahá'ís on the Island of Ustupo. This does not even count the youth and children. The first Cuna has arisen to go to another island to give the Message. His name is Henrique Alfare. The Indian believers are now erecting a local Hazíratu'l-Quds on the land donated by one Bahá'í on Ustupo."

France has celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Master's visit, has held a very successful, well-attended Teaching Conference in Lyons at which Ugo was present, and reports good press and radio publicity, and general improvement in both teaching and consolidation. A Conference of the European Hands, Board members and National Spiritual Assemblies will be held in Paris in mid-January.

In the British Isles goal towns are being steadily filled, mostly by new declarations. A report by Marion Hofman reads as follows: "We have just returned from a week-end School in South Wales, fully arranged by the new Pontypridd Spiritual Assembly. Nearly fifty attended, and they were predominantly Welsh—real Welsh—both Bahá'ís and contacts. One couple who only heard of the Faith last March, and declared in time to make the Assembly, already have

one spiritual child, and the second should declare any moment. The Mayor of Pontypridd opened the School, wearing his official chain of office, read two Bahá'í prayers and stayed for two lectures and high tea. He had intended rushing off after fifteen minutes. Another councillor from Pontypridd and his wife attended the whole school."

Governors of four States of the United States issued proclamations to make Sunday, September 17th, 1961 "World Peace Day", because of the fact that Bahá'ís were observing the occasion.

Ecuador reports a very successful teaching conference with the participation of newly-declared Indian believers. Numbers have steadily increased there. In Canada the acceleration in teaching which began last year encouragingly continues. Centres and groups have been established on more Indian reservations. The National Spiritual Assembly of Canada writes that Bahá'í marriage is now recognized by the Province of Ontario. It further writes that, "Our new enrolments now number 192 on the home front and thirty-five in the Yukon. Many of these are Indians coming mainly from Alberta and Saskatchewan."

The Muslim Shari'ah Court in Kuwait has officially recognized and endorsed a Bahá'í marriage performed in Qatar by its Local Spiritual Assembly. This is indeed a remarkable triumph for the Faith.

The South-East Asian Regional Assembly reports that the military government in Indonesia has issued instructions to local authorities to ban all Bahá'í activity and confiscate all Bahá'í property. No developments are as yet reported.

Because of the increasing use on the part of the believers of the adjective "Revered" whilst referring to the Hands of the Cause, we have asked the National Assemblies to request the friends to refrain from its use.

The season of pilgrimage is with us now. This year not many of the Persian friends whose turn is reached can come due to travel restrictions enforced in Iran. The presence of Tarázu'lláh Samandarí here during the pilgrimage season is a great boon and tremendously appreciated. His experiences in the Faith which he shares with the pilgrims are truly inspiring.

We have appointed the following Committee to take over the arrangements in London for the World Congress: Mildred

Mottahedeh (Chairman), John Long (Vice-Chairman), Dorothy Ferraby (Secretary), John Wade (Assistant Secretary), David Hofman, Habib Nahai, Edna True. This Committee will explore possibilities for contracts with air lines, attend to hotel reservations, and carry out the policies decided here at the World Centre. The International Council is in correspondence with National Spiritual Assemblies to obtain all the information required.

With deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS**

1962

BAHA'I WILMETTE

JANUARY 1, 1962

WITH DEEPEST REGRET SHARE NEWS BAHAI WORLD
PASSING DEARLY LOVED HAND CAUSE OUTSTANDING
BENEFACTRESS FAITH AMELIA COLLINS STOP UNFAILING
SUPPORT LOVE DEVOTION BELOVED GUARDIAN DARKEST
PERIOD HIS LIFE BROUGHT HER UNIQUE BOUNTY HIS
DEEP AFFECTION ESTEEM CONFIDENCE AND HONOUR
DIRECT ASSOCIATION WORK WORLD CENTRE STOP
SIGNAL SERVICES EVERY FIELD BAHAI ACTIVITY
UNFORGETTABLE STOP PURCHASE SITE FUTURE
MASHRIQU'L-ADHKAR MOUNT CARMEL GENEROUS GIFTS
HASTENING CONSTRUCTION MOTHER TEMPLES FOUR
CONTINENTS ACQUISITION NATIONAL HAZIRATU'L-QUDS
ENDOWMENTS CONSTANT SUPPORT HOMEFRONTS
WORLDWIDE TEACHING ENTERPRISES AMONG HER
MUNIFICENT DONATIONS STOP URGE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES HOLD MEMORIAL GATHERINGS
PARTICULARLY TEMPLES COMMEMORATE HER SHINING
EXAMPLE CEASELESS SERVICES MAINTAINED UNTIL LAST
BREATH STOP AIRMAIL MESSAGE HANDS NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All Hands of the Cause and National Spiritual Assemblies

February 22, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We feel that the friends would like to know who is eligible to attend the International Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice to be held in Haifa on April 21-23, 1963. Only the Hands as Conveners of the Convention and the delegates, that is, the members of the National Assemblies, will be permitted to visit the Holy Land at this time. It should be particularly noted that members

of National Assemblies will not be entitled to bring their wives and families to the Convention.

Pilgrimages will be suspended from March 15, 1963 for the rest of the pilgrim season to enable those residing at the World Centre to make the necessary preparations for the World Congress and the International Convention. The list of pilgrims who can be accommodated before that date is almost complete; those applying for pilgrimage after completion of the list will be put on a waiting list and notified later when they may come.

We are confident that the friends everywhere will appreciate that the pressure of work upon those resident in the Holy Land makes these limitations necessary.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

February 22, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, each National and Regional Assembly is responsible for providing semi-annual reports to the World Centre on the progress of the Ten Year Plan in their respective territories. These reports must reach the Holy Land not later than March 15 and September 15. The facts you provide each year in the March 15 report are of vital importance in preparing our Annual Ridván Message.

In this crucial year preceding the great Jubilee, it is essential that the Bahá'ís of the world know exactly what remains to be accomplished to bring the World Crusade of our beloved Guardian to a triumphant conclusion in 1963. Our Message to the Annual Conventions this year will give the friends this information. We therefore urge you to mail your reports in time to reach Haifa not later than March 15.

As a general guide to assist you in preparing these reports, we attach an outline of the basic facts needed. If some of the details are not immediately available, please do not hold up the mailing of the

report. Any such additional statistical information can be sent later, perhaps by cable. We would appreciate it if you would also include in your report any particularly noteworthy or interesting achievements during the past year, even though they may not be related directly to specific Crusade objectives or the goals of supplementary Plans. This category would include, for example, a listing of the Teaching Conferences and Week-end Schools held throughout your area.

We send you our deepest love and the assurance of our ardent prayers for the success of your devoted labours.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

[The outline is not included here.]

**To the Representatives of the Sponsoring Regional Assemblies
at each Convention of the Goal Countries of Europe**

April 12, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Enclosed is the Ridván Message of the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land to the Annual Conventions of the Bahá'í world [see p. 340]. The special message to the Conventions of the European goal countries [see p. 352] has already been sent to you. Both of these messages should be presented by the Hand of the Cause attending each Convention, though not necessarily read by him because of the language problem.

We wish to inform the Conventions and the new National Assemblies that the Hands of the Cause are making a contribution of one thousand dollars to each of these eleven new Administrative Bodies, to inaugurate their National Funds. The announcement of this gift should be made by the Hand present at the Convention.

The late beloved Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins, before her death, arranged to make a separate contribution of one thousand dollars to each of the new National Funds, in loving appreciation of the great spiritual victory which has been won.

To facilitate transfer of these gifts, and in order to establish contact with the World Centre as quickly as possible, we request each new

National Assembly to forward to Haifa the name and postal address of its Secretary and Treasurer, as well as the cable address of its National Office.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**Election of the Independent National Spiritual Assembly of
Ceylon
Ridván 1962**

To the Representative of the National Spiritual Assembly of India at
the first Annual Convention of Ceylon

April 13, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friend:

Enclosed is the Ridván Message of the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land to the Annual Conventions of the Bahá'í world. The special message to your Convention is also enclosed. Both of these messages should be presented by the Hand of the Cause attending the Convention, though not necessarily read by him because of the language problem.

We wish to inform the Convention and the new National Assembly that the Hands of the Cause are making a contribution of one thousand dollars to inaugurate the National Fund. The announcement of this gift should be made by the Hand present at the Convention.

A gift of one thousand dollars is being made also, on behalf of the late beloved Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins, who had such keen interest in the development of the Faith in Ceylon.

To facilitate transfer of these gifts, and in order to establish contact with the World Centre as quickly as possible, we request your new National Assembly to forward to Haifa the name and postal address of its Secretary and Treasurer, as well as the cable address of its National Office as soon as possible.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

Enclosure

To the Hands of the Cause, Auxiliary Board Members, Representatives of National Assemblies, Delegates and Believers Gathered at the First Annual Convention of the Bahá'ís of Ceylon.

Beloved Friends:

With hearts filled with gratitude and joy the Bahá'ís of both East and West contemplate the great victories won by our glorious Faith in the island of Ceylon, and congratulate the Community of the followers of the Most Great Name on the occasion of the election of their first National Spiritual Assembly, an event which consummates the formation of no less than forty-four of these important administrative institutions in the nine years of the World Crusade which have passed since its inauguration by our beloved Guardian in 1953, and which raises the number of the sustaining pillars of the Universal House of Justice to fifty-six.

The immensely fruitful period of world-wide expansion which has taken place between the twin Centenaries of the Cause of God has witnessed not only the rise of its Administrative Order in Ceylon but the beginning of that rapid expansion in the field of teaching which our beloved Guardian so ardently hoped would characterize the latter half of his world-encircling Ten Year Plan. From the moment when travelling teachers and dedicated pioneers, in response to the appeal of Shoghi Effendi, travelled to that distant island in the Indian Ocean, the progress of the Faith in that country has been constant and assured. Gradually the hearts of the people were won over, the first Assembly established, what was to become the future National Hazíratu'l-Quds purchased, new groups and Local Assemblies formed and the roots of the community strengthened. That the Hand of the Almighty is overshadowing this promising community and blessing its endeavours is evident through the development, in recent months, of a powerful movement towards mass conversion, a movement which, in less than a year, has witnessed a fivefold

increase in the number of those enlisted in the ranks of the Faith. Such extraordinary progress in a field which we have every reason to believe is that in which our greatest victories must be won in the months and years that lie immediately ahead, cannot but uplift the hearts of the Ceylonese Bahá'ís, whether veterans or those recently enrolled, and fire them with determination to compete in this arena with their brethren on the Indian mainland, who, in the course of a single year, have welcomed into the world-wide community of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh no less than thirteen thousand new souls.

The responsibility of the new National Assembly, now taking its place as an independent national body beside such venerable Oriental Assemblies as those of Persia, 'Iráq and India, and joining the ranks of the thirty-one other great administrative institutions raised up throughout the Eastern Hemisphere of the globe, is very great. At this auspicious moment we do well to recall the words of our beloved Guardian, addressed to other administrative bodies on other occasions, but providing for all that illumination in the conduct of Bahá'í affairs so essential if success is to be achieved in all fields, and the rapid expansion of the Faith assured.

The election of a national body, he stated in one of his letters to a newly formed Assembly, constitutes a "memorable milestone in the evolution of the institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic Order." It is a "great turning-point in the rising fortunes of the institutions of this irresistibly advancing Order." It opens a "new phase in the unfoldment" of our beloved Faith. It must be "signalized by an upsurge of activity, a demonstration of Bahá'í solidarity, of devotion and of self-sacrifice unparalleled in the annals of the Faith in those regions." "The efforts, so nobly exerted in the past by the band of pioneers, resident believers and itinerant teachers . . . must, in consequence of the auspicious opening of a new phase in the establishment of this Divine Order, be multiplied a hundredfold, and the standard of consecration and of service to His Cause must be raised to still greater heights. No obstacle, however formidable, no test or trial, however severe, should deflect them for a moment from the task they have pledged themselves to fulfil." In weighty words he pointed out to us the great truth that "the administration of the Cause is to be conceived as an instrument and not a substitute for the Faith

of Bahá'u'lláh . . . it should guard against such rigidity as would clog and fetter the liberating forces released by His Revelation.”

The truly phenomenal victories being won in the area of Southern Asia at the present time must challenge the new National Assembly of Ceylon, and the body of the faithful whom it represents and serves, to arise and accomplish feats, during the remaining year of our beloved Guardian's Crusade, such as will astound the entire Bahá'í world. That long-awaited movement which has now commenced and which marks the entry of the people into the Cause of God by troops, must be accelerated and the great opportunities it offers be exploited to the full; the new national body must aid and assist the rapidly expanding Bahá'í community of Ceylon to consolidate the existing Local Assemblies, to transform existing groups into Assemblies in anticipation of next Ridván, and to increase the number of centres throughout the island; it must seek to obtain its own national incorporation, as well as that of all firmly grounded Local Assemblies, and endeavour to register the National Headquarters in the name of the new national body; it must encourage the holding of a summer school, teaching conferences, and deepening classes for the believers. Not a moment must be lost, during the twelve remaining precious months of our dearly-loved Guardian's Crusade, in furthering the advancement of the Cause of God in that country and in winning over, in the heart of this Buddhist stronghold, an ever-increasing number of its adherents to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

As the Ceylonese believers labour to fulfil the high hopes their Guardian cherished for them, to accomplish his wishes and shed lustre on his glorious World Crusade during its closing year, they cannot do better than hold before them the lofty truths embodied in these words of his: “Not by the force of numbers, not by the mere exposition of a set of new and noble principles, not by an organized campaign of teaching—no matter how world-wide and elaborate in its character—not even by the staunchness of our faith or the exaltation of our enthusiasm, can we ultimately hope to vindicate in the eyes of a critical and sceptical age the supreme claim of the Abhá Revelation. One thing and only one thing will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely,

the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendour of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

European Teaching Committee care Baha'i Wilmette

April 20, 1962

OCCASION WONDERFUL VICTORY EUROPE FULFILMENT
BELOVED GUARDIANS HOPES CONGRATULATE
COMMITTEE SIXTEEN YEAR LONG HISTORIC SERVICES
MEMORABLE CHAPTER ANNALS FAITH AMERICAN
BELIEVERS.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God

April 20, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

By the time this reaches you, you will have seen the Ridván Message with all the wonderful news it contains of the phenomenal progress our beloved Guardian's Plan has made during the past year. Truly stirring days are ahead, days of great challenge to every single one of us to further this wave of teaching which is now sweeping over so many countries, and which seems little short of a miraculous response to the wish expressed by Shoghi Effendi during the last months of his life.

You will note that we have informed the Bahá'í world that Local Assemblies can be constituted any time between this Ridván and next. We felt that this action was imperative in order to assist the home fronts, and we urge the Hands travelling everywhere to do all they can to encourage the believers to take advantage of this opportunity and redouble their efforts to increase the Assemblies, particularly of course on the home fronts, but everywhere else as well.

We have been very short-handed here in Haifa, many times having only a quorum, due to the trips being made by different Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land. At the present moment Paul and John are away attending the European Conventions; Furútan returned some time ago from his fruitful trip to various centres in Europe, and Jalál has just come back and brought us wonderful first-hand news of the extraordinary wave of mass conversion in India. Dear Samandarí has just left for Turkey to visit and encourage the friends. He has been working steadily on the Tablets ever since our meeting in Bahjí. . . .

Our thoughts are with you all at the time of this great Ridván Feast. We pray for you and ask you to pray for us who find ourselves with so much work at the World Centre, and less strength to carry it on than before.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

CONVENTION CARE BAHÁ'Í WILMETTE, ILLINOIS, U.S.A.
RIDVAN 1962

PRAYING SHRINES CONTINUOUS DIVINE OUTPOURINGS
MAY ENABLE MUCH LOVED AMERICAN COMMUNITY
VANGUARD HOST BAHÁ'U'LLÁHS EVER ADVANCING ARMY
LAST YEAR BELOVED GUARDIANS CRUSADE ADD NEW
VICTORIES BEFITTINGLY CROWN HISTORIC UNIQUE
LABOURS STOP APPEAL ALL FRIENDS ARISE ENSURE
PRECIOUS HARD WON GOALS HOMEFRONT ABROAD
MAINTAINED POUR FORTH SUBSTANCE ASSIST MASS
TEACHING ERECTION EUROPEAN TEMPLE FINAL YEAR
GLOBE ENCIRCLING CRUSADE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

RIDVÁN MESSAGE
1962

To Annual Bahá'í Conventions

Beloved Friends:

As we stand on the threshold of that year which must culminate in the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, the termination of the mightiest Spiritual Crusade in the history of mankind, the election of the Supreme Legislative Body of the Bahá'í Administrative Order, and the convocation of the first World Congress to be held by the followers of the Most Great Name, it behoves us, while there is yet time, to not only take stock of our precious and numerous victories but also to correctly assess the work still to be accomplished if we are to prove faithful to the priceless trust left in our hands by our beloved Guardian. The sands of time are swiftly running out; days and weeks will soon have slipped from our grasp forever; days in which we might have added one more victory to those already adorning the pages of the nine most momentous years in the Formative Age of our glorious Faith. Before the last lap of our race against time is run we may well pause for a moment of prayerful consideration, each one questioning himself as to where his duty lies, communing in his heart with the spirit of Shoghi Effendi, asking "Is there some special thing I can do?" before it is too late and the opportunity of a lifetime passes by forever.

The initial stage of that great victory, characterized by Shoghi Effendi as the "Spiritual Conquest of the Old World under a divinely conceived Plan", is taking place through the election this Ridván of national bodies in the ten original goal countries of the second Seven Year Plan, as well as in Finland, which was added to their number, at the opening of the World Crusade, by the Guardian himself. The little short of miraculous achievement last year, on the part of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout Latin America, which enabled them to erect no less than twenty-one independent pillars of the Universal House of Justice on the firm foundation of the number of Local Assemblies Shoghi Effendi specified as necessary prerequisites for the accomplishment of that historic act, has been duplicated one year later by their brethren in Europe, where the steadfast and unremitting labours of the European Bahá'ís, coupled

with the self-sacrificing and consecrated activity of a host of pioneers from both the Cradle of the Administrative Order and the land of Bahá'u'lláh's birth, have yielded an infinitely rich and promising harvest. The lamps of these great administrative institutions, which are destined in the course of time to become secondary Houses of Justices, are being lighted by the power released through the operation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, in land after land. In the Indian Ocean the latest of these mighty beacons is now being kindled through the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Ceylon, swelling the ranks of those regional and national bodies girdling the entire world to no less than fifty-six, twenty-four in the Western Hemisphere and thirty-two in the Eastern Hemisphere. When we remember that in Ridván, 1953 the tally of National Assemblies was twelve, and contemplate the fact that in exactly nine years forty-four of these autonomous institutions have been added, we are staggered by the magnitude of the task accomplished by the little band of Bahá'u'lláh's followers. How well we know who led us and who inspired us to such deeds! How well we know whose promises and whose praises rallied our often failing strength, kept our feet in the path of service, strengthened our hearts and fanned our faith until we lay in homage at his beloved feet such a victory as this!

Upon the foundations laid by Shoghi Effendi, the Sign of God on earth "that shadoweth all mankind", the divine Animus that poured its force into the embryonic institutions existing at the time of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—He Who was the architect of Bahá'u'lláh's world-encircling Order—have now been reared those initial pillars which must sustain the weight of an Institution which has been promised, for the first time in the history of this planet, unerring guidance in the discharge of its specially ordained tasks. From Chile to Alaska, from Britain to Japan, in the heart of the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, rising like a forest from the mainland of Asia, the Americas, Europe and Africa, the pillars of the Universal House of Justice now stand, waiting to receive, next Ridván, on the occasion of the first Jubilee Celebration of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic mission, their mighty Crown.

In view of the supreme importance of consolidating the foundations of the National and Regional Assemblies at so momentous a juncture in Bahá'í history, the Hands of the Faith have decided to permit the formation of Local Spiritual Assemblies any time between Ridván, 1962 and Ridván, 1963, following the example of the beloved Guardian who introduced this measure during the crucial year preceding the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the inception of the Bahá'í Cycle in 1944. We feel sure this will greatly assist and encourage those hard-pressed national communities which, in such countries as Germany, England, the United States, Canada and Australia, have not yet won the all-important home-front goal of forming the number of Local Assemblies he specified as an essential part of the tasks entrusted to their care under the provisions of his Crusade. It will also be eagerly seized upon by other communities throughout the world as an opportunity to add to the trophies they themselves have already piled so high in the course of this Crusade and to vie with each other in an effort to achieve added distinction when the roll call of local victories is held at that joyous time when the entire Bahá'í world celebrates the Jubilee Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.

Special consideration should be given at this time, by the believers everywhere, as well as their elected national representatives, to the World Bahá'í Congress, called by the beloved Guardian himself, which will be held in London, during the Ridván period of 1963, from April 28 to May 2, the first of its kind in the history of the Cause, and constituting one of the objectives of the Ten Year Plan at the World Centre of the Faith. It is hoped that on this unique occasion when, in every continent of the globe, in every hamlet and city where Bahá'ís reside, the friends will be celebrating the holiest festival of the Bahá'í calendar, commemorating the anniversary of the "formal assumption by Bahá'u'lláh of His Prophetic Office", which ushered in the "*king of days*", the "*Day of God Himself*", believers from all parts of the world will gather together and voice their thanksgiving and praise for the guidance given this age by the Supreme Manifestation of God, for the Divine Mandate the Centre of His Covenant devised for the spiritual conquest of this planet, for the Mighty Crusade fashioned by the

Guardian to implement the terms of that Mandate, and for the innumerable, glorious and immortal victories won during the last decade. On that momentous occasion, to which all are invited and which it is hoped as many as possible will attend, particularly representatives of the diversified ethnic groups now included in the pale of the Faith, the friends will have the solemn privilege of visiting the resting-place of their dearly-loved Guardian, there to place in the homage of their hearts the offering of ten years of unsurpassed service in the annals of religious history, there to rededicate themselves to the work that lies ahead as the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá enters a new phase in its unfoldment.

Already the extraordinary progress the Faith has made during the past twelve months in fulfilling the goals of the Plan conceived by Shoghi Effendi and entrusted to our care cannot but fill our hearts with astonishment at the magnitude of the victories won in so many fields in so short a time. These triumphs bear eloquent tribute to the spiritual power released by him who, speaking with the Voice of Divine Authority, conferred upon the faithful followers of Bahá'u'lláh a capacity for accomplishment far beyond the understanding of those unaware of the Almighty Power of the Manifestation which flowed through him, and which has safely brought us to this glorious hour.

The standard of Bahá'u'lláh has now been raised in no less than two hundred and fifty-seven countries, islands and dependencies, including all of the virgin territories specified by Shoghi Effendi at the beginning of the Crusade with the exception of the ten lying within the Soviet orbit which up to the present time have proven inaccessible.

On the eve of the inauguration of the final year of this Crusade, the number of localities throughout the world where Bahá'ís reside is well over seven thousand five hundred, an increase of five thousand centres since the inception of the Plan in 1953. More than one thousand of these have been added during the past year, bringing the total in Australasia to one hundred and sixty-two, in the British Isles to one hundred and sixty-three, in Germany and Austria to one hundred and seventy, in the Goal Countries of Europe to nearly one hundred and eighty, in the Dominion of Canada to one hundred and eighty-four, in Latin America to five hundred and thirty-nine, in the

Indian sub-continent to six hundred and seventy-one, in the entire Pacific area to nearly seven hundred, in Persia to more than one thousand one hundred, in the United States of America to nearly sixteen hundred, and in Africa to more than eighteen hundred and fifty. In the period since last Ridván, Africa has overtaken both the “Cradle of the Faith” and the “Cradle of the Administrative Order”, and now stands out as the area where “the warming and healing light of an all-conquering Revelation” radiates from more centres than any other continent of the globe.

The ninth year of the world-encircling Plan of the beloved Guardian has witnessed further striking progress in such widely dispersed regions as India, Latin America, the Pacific area, and Africa. The significant victories, achieved by the intrepid followers of Bahá'u'lláh in these lands, undoubtedly reflect the operation of those spiritual forces which both the Master and Shoghi Effendi promised would in the not distant future bring about a wave of new enrolments such as has not occurred since the early days of the Faith.

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. Since Ridván, 1961 well over thirteen thousand new believers have come into the Faith as a result of the mass teaching campaign carried out in the villages of India by the members of what was previously a relatively small national community.

In Latin America, the area where such an outstanding victory was achieved last year by the formation of no less than twenty-one new pillars of the Universal House of Justice, the work of the Faith is progressing in all fields, under the aegis of these new national bodies, and rapid progress is being made in consolidating the communities within its borders and in carrying the Faith to the Indians, “the original inhabitants of America” mentioned by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, who are entering the Cause in great numbers. No less than sixty-two different Indian tribes are now represented in the Bahá'í communities of North, Central and South

America, nearly four times the number mentioned by Shoghi Effendi five years ago in his Ridván Message of 1957.

The Bolivian community, which a year ago had already fired the imagination of the Bahá'í world by the extraordinary progress made in attracting new adherents from the ranks of the Indian population, now has nearly four thousand believers, a gain of more than twenty-five hundred since last Ridván. Latest reports indicate that as many as sixty Local Assemblies may be formed this year. Already these original inhabitants of Bolivia are arising to carry the flame of the Faith to neighbouring republics; recently, as a result of the devoted efforts of these pioneers, the rising tide of new enrolments amongst the descendants of an ancient American civilization has been extended to Peru and also to Chile where, during the last two months, nearly two hundred Indians have entered the Faith, representing the first conversions on such a scale in that country.

In Panama, where nearly three hundred Indian believers have been enrolled in recent months, the number of Assemblies will be doubled this year. In Mexico and Costa Rica, the past year has witnessed in the former a doubling of the number of believers comprising the national community, while the latter, as a result of a new wave of teaching activity on the part of its native believers, anticipates tripling this Ridván the number of Local Assemblies existing a year ago.

Throughout the Pacific region the Cause continues to gain adherents at an ever accelerating pace. In South East Asia the number of believers has more than doubled in the past two years and now stands at the impressive total of fifteen thousand five hundred, nearly seven thousand of whom have been enrolled during the last six months. In the entire Pacific area the diverse races and peoples comprising the Bahá'í communities in that part of the globe have established the Faith in over one hundred new localities during the past twelve months, including, for the first time, the northern island of the Mentawai group, one of the most important links in that chain of islands which was the first territory in the Pacific to witness a mass movement into the Faith, a development which brought such great joy to the beloved Guardian in the closing years of his life.

The steady consolidation and rapid expansion taking place in Africa has brought the number of followers of Bahá'u'lláh in that continent to nearly thirty thousand, a gain of almost ten thousand believers since Ridván a year ago. The most spectacular increases have occurred in the region of Central and East Africa, but substantial gains have also been recorded in the areas under the jurisdiction of the three other Regional National Assemblies; more than six hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies are now established throughout the length and breadth of that continent and its neighbouring islands, a total far exceeding that of any other major area in the Bahá'í world; three hundred and twenty-seven African tribes are now represented in the Bahá'í Community, more than forty having been added during the past year. Africa has indeed fulfilled the high hopes and confident expectations of the Guardian when, in his Message to the first Intercontinental Conference in Kampala, he alluded to the expansion even then beginning to take place there as "a multiplication designed ultimately to bring to a proper equipoise the divers ethnic elements comprised within the highly diversified world-embracing Bahá'í fellowship."

The steady gain which has taken place in recent years in the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies, comprising what Shoghi Effendi termed "the broad and indestructible foundation of a rising Order", has brought the total of these divinely-ordained institutions to well over two thousand, double the number which he so proudly announced in his last Message to the Bahá'í world. The total of incorporated Assemblies, both Local and National, now exceeds three hundred. Twenty-one of the fifty-six National and Regional Assemblies which will be established and functioning at the end of the Crusade have secured their incorporation; attainment of the remaining thirty-five registrations constitutes one of the major unfinished tasks of the Ten Year Plan, and must, during the final year of the Crusade engage the earnest efforts of those national bodies, both old and new, which have not yet achieved this important objective.

As the Cause steadily expands, recognition of its independent character by governmental authorities becomes increasingly important. This objective has been furthered during the past year by

official acceptance of the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate throughout the Commonwealth of New Zealand, in the Province of Ontario in the Dominion of Canada, and in the States of Colorado and South Carolina in the United States of America. Nearly fifty sovereign states and governmental subdivisions have accorded legal recognition to the Bahá'í marriage ceremony. Bahá'í Holy Days are now officially recognized by school authorities in one hundred and five different countries, states and cities, including in the United States, seventy-seven school districts in twenty-seven States, as well as the District of Columbia.

The literature of the Faith has now been translated into no less than two hundred and ninety-six different languages, over two hundred of which have been completed since the beginning of the Ten Year Plan. Virtually all of the ninety-one originally specified by Shoghi Effendi as Crusade goals, or those subsequently approved by him as substitutions, have been completed, with the exception of a few used in territories or countries within the Soviet orbit.

The completion and dedication of the Mother Temple of the Antipodes in Sydney, Australia, the second Mashriqu'l-Adhkár to be completed since the inception of the Crusade, constitutes still another milestone in the development of the institutions of the Faith during the past year. The nation-wide publicity attending this event, and the public interest which it aroused, foreshadow the fulfilment of the destiny of this sacred Structure as one of those great "Silent Teachers" of the Cause. In addition to the Temples already completed or under construction in four continents, sites for future Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs have been acquired in nearly forty-five other localities, many of these representing goals of supplementary plans given by the Guardian himself to National or Regional Assemblies established since the beginning of the Crusade. Recent acquisitions include such properties in Rangoon, Burma; Istanbul, Turkey; Montevideo, Uruguay; as well as the site for the Mother Temple of Venezuela, now in the final stages of legal transfer to Bahá'í ownership.

Uninterrupted construction of the third great House of Worship called for by Shoghi Effendi, the Mother Temple of Europe, now rising in the heart of that continent, will require a continuous and

sacrificial flow of funds, not only from the European believers, but from the friends in all parts of the globe who, mindful of the stirring promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, will wish to share in this noble undertaking and hasten the day when still another continent will receive the blessings which flow from an Edifice dedicated solely to the mention of God and His praise.

During the remaining months of the World Crusade, when the financial requirements for attaining total victory are so tremendous, the friends everywhere must become aware, as never before, of the paramount need for a steady and continuous flow of contributions in support of their National Funds, an outpouring which the beloved Guardian characterized as "the life-blood" of the National and Regional Assemblies now called upon to complete their allotted goals in the few remaining months of his Plan. The spiritual significance and blessing of voluntary giving should be emphasized anew by each National Assembly as it presents to the members of its community the obligations which must still be discharged. The friends must be assisted to grasp the significance of these words of the beloved Guardian, calling upon each and every believer to place his or her share on the altar of Bahá'í sacrifice: "The institution of the National Fund, so vital and essential for the uninterrupted progress of these activities must, in particular, be assured of the whole-hearted, the ever-increasing and universal support of the mass of believers . . . All, no matter how modest their resources, must participate. Upon the degree of self-sacrifice involved in these individual contributions will directly depend the efficacy and the spiritual influence which these nascent administrative institutions, called into being through the power of Bahá'u'lláh, and by virtue of the Design conceived by the Centre of His Covenant, will exert."

The body of the Bahá'ís throughout the world, the instruments through whom this latest phase in the Master Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá alone can be accomplished, have opportunities now, in the remaining months of the World Crusade, which can never be theirs again, which no group of people will ever have in future decades and centuries. That they will permit a single objective of the Plan to fail owing to lack of the necessary material means to ensure its accomplishment is inconceivable.

A special appeal must be made, at this crucial point in the spread of our Faith, to all pioneers to remain steadfastly at their posts. The prizes won at such a cost of sacrifice and devotion on the part of not only those souls who abandoned their own countries or their own homes in order to assist in establishing the Cause in other lands or other centres, but on the part of many dedicated souls who poured their substance into the Joint Deputization Fund and various national funds, must be safeguarded and strengthened at all costs.

In particular those pioneers and believers, struggling in less promising parts of the globe, and lavishing on seemingly barren soil their labour of love for Bahá'u'lláh, should not lose heart; far from feeling discouraged over the lack of results in their territory they should receive fresh stimulation from the remarkable evidences of the progress of the work in other regions. Let them remember that the harvest now beginning to be reaped in India took many years to yield its first fruits, that the present rapid advances being made in Latin America represent the effort of decades, that the victories won in both Africa and the Pacific area are, as our Guardian himself pointed out, due in no small measure to the remarkable spiritual receptivity of the people in those parts of the world. Let them recall the innumerable promises enshrined in our Teachings which assure us that all nations and peoples will be quickened by this Faith and enter beneath its shadow, and, deriving fresh courage from these prophetic words, have confidence in the ultimate triumph of their labours and persevere in their dedicated service to the Cause of God. The friends, whether in lands now witnessing the first waves of mass conversion or striving in more difficult territories, must determine to compensate through their steadfast and unflagging toil for the disabilities still being suffered by the long-oppressed and valiant body of the faithful in Bahá'u'lláh's native land, as well as by their brethren in other countries where the traditional enemies of the Faith are seeking to put out its light and subvert its standard.

Indeed, not only must the host of Bahá'u'lláh's army stay at its post and guard its conquests, redressing the balance a thousandfold for those believers who live in lands where the institutions of the Faith have been officially banned, its properties confiscated, its Assemblies dissolved and its members threatened, but it must, on

the eve of the last year of Shoghi Effendi's Crusade, recall his emphatic words that "the newly-opened territories of the globe must, under no circumstances, be allowed to relapse into the state of spiritual deprivation from which they have so recently and laboriously been rescued." While there is yet time it behoves those National Assemblies to which these precious virgin territories were originally entrusted, and some of which are at present without a single believer, to make one last supreme effort to heed the words of their Guardian and to comply with his explicit wish.

In reviewing the wonderful achievements of nine years' unremitting labour and the heavy responsibilities now resting upon the believers in every part of the world, the realization is forced upon every thinking Bahá'í that the Cause has entered an entirely new stage in its evolution. The response to the appeal of the Guardian in his last Message to the entire body of the faithful throughout the world for ". . . an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith, in all the continents of the globe, of every race, clime, creed and colour, and from every stratum of present-day society, coupled with a corresponding increase in the number of Bahá'í centres . . ." has been truly stupendous. Already his ardent wish has been partially fulfilled. Forces over which we have no control are now sweeping us into an era of expansion breath-taking in its possibilities. The sudden enlistment, in a single country, of over thirteen thousand new believers in one year, the news which is pouring in to the World Centre of the Faith of the opening up of new areas where the possibility of mass enrolment is equally great and may, at any time, take place on an equally large scale, is awe-inspiring, nay almost frightening in the vista it exposes to our dazzled eyes. The handful of teachers and administrators, labouring in Asia, Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Pacific suddenly find themselves called upon, for the first time in the history of this Cause, to receive and welcome not a few hundred souls eager to enlist in the Army of Bahá'u'lláh but many thousands, and perhaps, in the near future, many hundreds of thousands. Such a sudden turn in the fortunes of a Faith which the Bahá'ís, with considerable complacency, have conceived of as being still in the slowly-growing, gradually maturing, laboriously evolving stage of its development,

calls for a complete re-orientation of thought, a profound evaluation of motives, a careful study of those texts which can throw light on the needs of the present hour.

It was “troops” which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá so ardently desired should enter beneath the shadow of His Father’s Cause. Troops are now entering. The entire purpose of His glorious Tablets of the Divine Plan was to initiate teaching on a world scale. *“I fervently hope that in the near future”,* He wrote in those Tablets, *“the whole earth may be stirred and shaken by the results of your achievements.”*

Suddenly, like a thief in the night, we find that our sacrifices, our labours, great and small, during a period of one hundred and nineteen years, our pioneer efforts, especially those conducted during recent years, our laborious erection of various national and regional bodies in all parts of the globe, our silent prayers, our tears and patience and loyalty, have borne their miraculous fruit, and the first ripples of an awakening consciousness of the meaning and glory of Bahá’u’lláh’s Message are passing over the sleeping giant of humanity.

This is not a religion destined for any one race or any one people. It is the property of the entire human race. Bahá’u’lláh has come to that soul who believes in Him. What concern is it of ours if, at this particular moment in history, it is those people of the world as yet uncorrupted by a materialistic civilization who are ready to accept Him? Is not this perhaps their unique and golden opportunity to receive the education of His teachings ere it is too late and the corrosive aspects of that civilization have educated them in ways that lead away from God rather than towards Him? May not, in the mysterious workings of God’s Plan, so far above the capacity of our finite minds to grasp, this process of conversion on a large scale of the peoples of the Pacific Islands, the heart of India, the African continent and the descendants of the Aboriginal population of the Americas now taking place, release forces which will have wide repercussions in those venerable strongholds of both Eastern and Western culture whose people, overcome by spiritual lassitude, disillusioned and cynical, find themselves indifferent for the most part to the redemptive Message of Bahá’u’lláh?

Let us ponder these words of the Guardian and seek out, in the light of present events, their implication: "As the Plan bequeathed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá unfolds, through successive decades of the present century, its measureless potentialities, and gathers within the field of its operations nation after nation in successive continents of the globe, it will be increasingly recognized not only as the most potent agency for the development of the World Administrative System, but also as a primary factor in the birth and efflorescence of the World Order itself in both the East and the West."

Nation after nation has been swept into the orbit of the Faith since 1921. The believers, acting for thirty-six years under the direct guidance of the Interpreter of the Teachings of the Bahá'í Revelation, have been laying the foundation and erecting the framework of the administrative institutions of this Faith. How can we fail to perceive that the tabernacle having been raised, the people are now seeking its shelter?

Fifty-six great administrative institutions now exist in the Bahá'í world. Were such wonderful institutions as these fashioned to administer the affairs, for the most part, of a handful of believers? Or are they to be regarded as mighty doors flung wide to the world and designed to enable its spiritually hungry multitudes to enter into the stronghold of Almighty God? "The fundamental purpose of the Bahá'í Administration at the present time is to teach the Faith. Administering it is only to coordinate its activities and to safeguard it", wrote Shoghi Effendi, four months before he passed away, to one of the new European Regional Assemblies. He informed the Bahá'í world, that same year, that "the pre-eminent task of teaching the Faith to the multitudes" was "the bed-rock on which the solidity and the stability of the multiplying institutions of a rising Order must rest." In other words, these institutions, as they grow and consolidate, must be outgoing and not ingrowing in their action. "Nothing could be more tragic", he wrote, "than if the establishment of these great administrative bodies should stifle . . . the teaching work." "The purpose of the new National Assemblies . . . and the purpose of any administrative body, is to carry the Message to the people and enlist the sincere under the banner of the Faith." In a letter written as late as July, 1957, to one of the Regional Assemblies, he said: ". . . the

friends should be very careful not to place hindrances in the way of those who wish to accept the Faith. . . . The essential thing is that the candidate for enrolment should believe in his heart in the truth of Bahá'u'lláh. Whether he is literate or illiterate, informed of all the Teachings or not, is beside the point entirely. . . .” In another of his letters he said: “The early believers in both the East and the West, we must always remember, knew practically nothing compared to what the average Bahá'í knows about his Faith nowadays, yet they were the ones who shed their blood, the ones who arose and said: ‘I believe’, requiring no proof, and often never having read a single word of the Teachings. Therefore, those responsible for accepting new enrolments must just be sure of one thing—that the heart of the applicant has been touched with the spirit of the Faith. Everything else can be built on this foundation gradually.”

In the world today “a two-fold process”, the Guardian wrote, “. . . can be distinguished, each tending, in its own way and with an accelerated momentum, to bring to a climax the forces that are transforming the face of our planet. The first is essentially an integrating process, while the second is fundamentally disruptive. The former, as it steadily evolves, unfolds a System which may well serve as a pattern for that world polity towards which a strangely-disordered world is continually advancing; while the latter, as its disintegrating influence deepens, tends to tear down, with increasing violence, the antiquated barriers that seek to block humanity’s progress towards its destined goal. The constructive process stands associated with the nascent Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and is the harbinger of the New World Order that Faith must ere long establish. The destructive forces that characterize the other should be identified with a civilization that has refused to answer to the expectation of a new age, and is consequently falling into chaos and decline.”

Concomitant with the forces of integration working inside the Faith and those of disintegration working outside it is another process which he many times called to our attention: the chain reaction of victories and crises. Who can doubt for a moment that as the institutions of our Faith in land after land, gathering strength and being epitomized through the election of independent national bodies, responsible, in conjunction with the present Regional

Assemblies, for the election one year from now of the Supreme House of Justice, are raised, forces will be released of such spiritual power as to galvanize the body of the Faith throughout the world with a new life and enable the Cause to sweep forward on its course and enter a new era in the process of its propagation to the masses of East and West, as well as its recognition and official acceptance as an independent World Religion. Who also can doubt for a moment that this very process of consolidation taking place during this last year of the Crusade, when the goals of the beloved Guardian, susceptible of accomplishment within the present framework of world affairs, are for the most part either won or within our reach, must inevitably unleash fresh trials and tests, challenging the devotion and tenacity of the friends and driving the roots of both the new believers and the national communities deeper into the soil of faith, as well as sifting out the weak and raising up the strong in that constant purification of the ranks of the faithful which takes place in the course of the growth of this World Community.

Whatever the immediate future may hold in store, either for us or for our fellow-men, the path of action we must tread lies clearly before us. "Ours", Shoghi Effendi pointed out, "is the duty to fix our gaze with undeviating attention on the duties and responsibilities confronting us at this present hour, to concentrate our resources, both material and spiritual, on the tasks that lie immediately ahead, to ensure that no time is wasted, that no opportunity is missed, that no obligation is evaded, that no task is half-heartedly performed, that no decision is procrastinated."

"The Kingdom of God", the beloved Master assured us, "is possessed of limitless potency. Audacious must be the army of life if the confirming aid of that Kingdom is to be repeatedly vouchsafed unto it. . . . Now is the time to reveal the force of one's strength, the stoutness of one's heart and the might of one's soul."

On the occasion of another Centenary, over eighteen years ago, the Guardian, in never-to-be-forgotten words, called upon us to arise and fulfil the work entrusted to our keeping. These words are as applicable, as deeply moving and passionate in their appeal, as if he had meant them for this present fate-laden hour. Let us open our hearts to their message of love and of the longing they convey: ". . .

to all, without distinction of race, nation, class, colour, age or sex, I feel moved, as the fateful hour of a memorable centenary approaches, to address my plea, with all the fervour that my soul can command and all the love that my heart contains, to rededicate themselves, collectively and individually, to the task that lies ahead of them. . . . I direct my impassioned appeal to obey, as befits His warriors, the summons of the Lord of Hosts, and prepare for that Day of Days when His victorious battalions will, to the accompaniment of hosannas from the invisible angels in the Abhá Kingdom, celebrate the hour of final victory.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**Election of the 11 independent European
National Spiritual Assemblies
Ridván 1962**

To the Hands of the Cause, Auxiliary Board Members, Representatives of National Assemblies, Delegates and Believers Gathered during Ridván, 119, at the Historic Conventions for the Election of Independent National Spiritual Assemblies in the Following Countries:

Belgium
Denmark
Finland
Holland
Italy
Luxembourg
Norway
Portugal
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland

Beloved Friends:

On the occasion of the Ridván Festival of the one hundred and nineteenth year since the birth of this infinitely glorious Faith, the Bahá'ís the world over join with the Community of European believers in rejoicing over the great victories which have been won in the Name of Bahá'u'lláh, and which represent the consummation of the labour of sixteen years in the prosecution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan in the continent of Europe.

From the moment when, at the dawn of this mightiest of Dispensations, the Báb addressed the "*peoples of the West*" in His Qayyúmu'l-Asmá', calling upon them to "*issue forth from your cities*" and aid His Cause, the process of the spiritual conquest of the Western World was set in motion. Who can estimate the magnitude of the forces released when no less a Being than the Author of the Faith Himself set foot, as the Guardian wrote, "on the fringes of the continent of Europe" and revealed there not only some of His most significant words addressed to the rulers of the world, but also "the most momentous Tablet revealed by Bahá'u'lláh", His Súrih of Kings. The Supreme Manifestation of God, led by the mysterious dispensations of Providence, sojourned on the soil of that continent for a period of almost five years; the Centre of His Covenant blessed that continent with His presence in the course of two official and freely undertaken visits which carried him to no less than eight of its countries. The Guardian of the Faith himself, during his thirty-six-year ministry, visited practically every country in the western part of that same continent, and finally passed away in the capital city of a nation whose impact on the fortunes of mankind, in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, has been wider and more far-reaching than that of any other western power.

It was during the first year of peace, following upon the greatest war in the history of mankind, that Shoghi Effendi inaugurated the second stage in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan by calling upon the believers of North America to carry that Plan "a stage further across the ocean to the shores of the Old World, and to communicate, through the operation of its regenerative power, its healing influence to the peoples of the most afflicted, impoverished and agitated continent of the globe." With characteristic valour and determination they poured forth their resources and their pioneers in

a steady, redemptive flow, neither slackening their pace nor failing in their responsibility until such time as the work entrusted to their care should yield its promised fruit. The crown of the consecrated labours which have carried them through the second Seven Year Plan and the mighty World Crusade which succeeded it, is now being placed upon the edifice their hands have largely been instrumental in rearing, through the election, this Ridván, of no less than eleven independent National Spiritual Assemblies, in Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, raising thereby the number of pillars of the Universal House of Justice to fifteen in that continent which is the cradle of Western civilization.

That “host which”, Shoghi Effendi wrote as early as 1946, “must, in the years to come, spiritually raise up the sorely ravaged continent of Europe” went forth to conquer and conquered on all fronts, in all fields, to a most miraculous degree. Following in the footsteps of those early founders of the Faith who, at the turn of the century established the Cause of God in Paris and London, an ever-swelling number of believers, called by him “ambassadors of Bahá’u’lláh’s New World Order”, streamed forth from the New World to the Old. In more recent years these have been richly reinforced by a great flow of consecrated believers from the Cradle of the Faith. Unitedly these Bahá’ís from the West and the East have hastened to fill the goals and achieve the objectives set forth by their Guardian in the provisions of both his second Seven Year Plan and his Ten Year Crusade, until now, on the eve of the election of the Universal House of Justice, the eleven new national bodies, supplanting those he characterized as “interim regional institutions”, find themselves proudly and securely founded on the requisite number of Local Assemblies specified by him and are in a position to go forward with courage, confidence and optimism, into the new life awaiting them and the national communities they represent.

The words of Shoghi Effendi himself best describe such pioneers as Europe has received into her bosom: “Of such men and women it may be truly said that to them ‘every foreign land is a fatherland, and every fatherland a foreign land.’ For their citizenship, it must be remembered, is in the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh.” The full significance

of these pregnant words of the beloved Master is now being partially unveiled before our eyes: *“From the beginning of time until the present day the light of Divine Revelation hath arisen in the East and shed its radiance upon the West. The illumination thus shed hath, however, acquired in the West an extraordinary brilliancy.” “The day is approaching when ye shall witness how, through the splendour of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, the West will have replaced the East, radiating the light of Divine Guidance.”*

These new national communities, poised on the threshold of their independent existence, may well pause and count their blessings, and in counting them find strength for the work that lies ahead and discern the shape of those tasks they must now set themselves to achieve. Not only have the original ten goal countries been increased, through the addition of Finland, to eleven autonomous areas, but the chain of islands encircling the European continent in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic and the Baltic Seas, as well as the Atlantic Ocean, have been illumined with the light of the Faith, received their quota of dedicated pioneers and, in a number of instances, been able to establish flourishing groups and Assemblies. The difficult goal of Spitzbergen, an outpost of the North where the Guardian so longed to see the banner of the Faith upraised, has been conquered since his passing; National Hazíratu’l-Quds have been purchased in all eleven capital cities of the sovereign states which have now come of age in the world-encircling Administrative Order of Bahá’u’lláh; a number of national endowments have been acquired, as well as four of the five sites for future Bahá’í Temples which he specifically mentioned, the most sacred and important of these being that in the capital city of a land to which the beloved Guardian’s heart was deeply attached and which was his own personal gift to the Swiss believers; the first European Mashriqu’l-Adhkár, the Mother Temple of the entire continent, has at long last begun to raise its walls in preparation for that joyous day when the followers of the Most Great Name can meet beneath its dome and befittingly praise Him Who is the begetter of their spiritual life, the Law-Giver of the entire planet and the loadstone of the hearts of all His lovers.

On the occasion of the formation of the new national bodies it behoves their newly-elected members to orient themselves, from the outset of their activities, to the desires, hopes, and instructions of their departed Guardian whose loving guidance brought them into existence and obedience to whose slightest wish must be at once their greatest protection and the source of their strength and inspiration. The words which he addressed to the European Regional Assemblies in his first communications to them must now be passed on to their component parts which have attained, in pursuance of the provisions of his Crusade, their independent existence. In 1957 he wrote: "The efforts, so nobly exerted in the past by the band of pioneers, resident believers and itinerant teachers in each of these states, must, in consequence of the auspicious opening of a new phase in the establishment of this Divine Order, be multiplied a hundredfold, and the standard of consecration and of service to His Cause must be raised to still greater heights." "A concerted effort, systematic, strenuous and prolonged, must be exerted to increase, to an unprecedented extent, the number of the avowed supporters of the Faith in each of these countries. Simultaneously, a fresh impetus must be lent to the multiplication of isolated centres, groups and Local Assemblies, constituting the foundations of the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh in those regions."

"The primary duty laid upon all Bahá'ís by Bahá'u'lláh, Himself," he pointed out in those same letters, "is to teach the Cause of God. It is their greatest privilege and bounty." "The believers must be encouraged to teach individually in their own homes." "We have no priests, therefore the service once rendered by priests to their religions is the service every single Bahá'í is expected to render individually to his religion. He must be the one who enlightens new souls, confirms them, heals the wounded and the weary upon the road of life, and gives them to quaff from the chalice of everlasting life the knowledge of the Manifestation of God in His Day."

The emphasis which Shoghi Effendi placed on teaching, on the one hand, found its counterpart, on the other, in an equal stress placed upon the importance of not introducing rigidity and uniformity in secondary matters, into the administration of the affairs of the

communities. In those same historic letters to some of the European Regional Assemblies elected in 1957 he likewise stated:

“The fundamental purpose of the Bahá’í Administration at the present time is to teach the Faith. Administering it is only to coordinate its activities and to safeguard it. The friends must bear this clearly in mind; and he feels that he should point out to your Assembly, just embarking on its historic tasks, what he has many times pointed out to the old and tried national bodies, and that is that you should strenuously avoid introducing rules and regulations which will complicate the smooth working of the Faith in your region, handicap the Bahá’ís unnecessarily and confuse them.” “When problems arise, the National Assembly can deal with them one by one in a loving and understanding manner, applying the Bahá’í Teachings both in the spirit and in the letter to their solution . . .” “The fact that the affairs of the believers in these European communities are going to be administered on the spot, and for the most part by native Europeans, who understand both the problems and the psychology of the people, is a tremendous advantage . . .”

Every obstacle should be removed from the path of those seeking to embrace the Faith. We are not called upon to insist on a wide degree of knowledge of its teachings before enrolling new believers; our purpose must be to awaken in the hearts of those whom we seek to enlist in the ranks of Bahá’u’lláh’s followers the belief in Him as the Manifestation of God, the Báb as His Forerunner, the Master as the Centre of His Covenant, and win their acceptance of the Administrative Order. We may well ask ourselves if perhaps one of the fundamental reasons why the people are not entering in “troops” in the strongholds of western civilization is this very tendency to seek to educate the mind in the teachings of the Faith rather than to light in the heart the fire of the love of God and belief in His Chosen One for this Day.

Strongly as our beloved Guardian urged the Assemblies not to raise obstacles in the path of those seeking to enrol, he nevertheless laid great emphasis on the importance of educating the Bahá’ís themselves in the teachings. One of the objectives given by him to the new Regional Assemblies of Europe was to “extend the scope and increase the number of existing summer schools”. No doubt the

new national communities will now develop, as time goes by, separate institutions of this nature for the instruction of the believers and visitors in their area and as adjuncts and instruments of that important process of deepening the knowledge and understanding of those already enrolled.

Every effort should likewise be made to incorporate as soon as possible the new national bodies, as well as all Local Assemblies existing on a firm foundation; to which should be added the further duty, alike specified by the Guardian himself, of seeking to have Bahá'í Holy Days and the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate recognized by the civil authorities.

Although extraordinary progress has been made in the course of more than a decade, in the vital task of translating and printing Bahá'í literature, it must continue to receive special attention, and the instructions of Shoghi Effendi to those European nations using French as either their national tongue or one of their official languages, to cooperate and consult with each other and "avoid all duplication of effort, which is a waste of time and money" must be conscientiously borne in mind.

The importance of enrolling in the Cause representatives of various European racial minorities must not be forgotten for a moment, and the duty placed upon the Scandinavian and Finnish communities of introducing the Faith into the three Baltic States must be seriously considered by the new independent National Assemblies of that region and sedulously pursued.

At this crucial moment in Bahá'í history when that Supreme Administrative Body, the Universal House of Justice, which Shoghi Effendi likened to the dome which must rest upon the pillars of the national bodies and the foundation of the local bodies, is about to be elected one short year from now, the security of the foundations of these new National Assemblies is of paramount importance. It behoves them to recall the words of their Guardian, written at an earlier turning-point in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan, but equally applicable to the days we are about to pass through: "The spirit that has inflamed the pioneers who have set the seal of triumph . . . must . . . be constantly watched, kept alive and nourished." To no small degree the Assemblies of Europe owe their present existence to

pioneers, largely drawn from the ranks of the American and Persian believers; their devotion, their self-sacrifice, the deep love for the Guardian of their Faith which led them to leave their own countries and rush to the assistance of young communities struggling to fulfil the present objectives of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan, must be acknowledged and receive the homage it deserves. Although problems may arise through the difference in background, language and customs, to meet these and overcome them, with deep Bahá'í love and the firm determination to understand and cooperate, is the obligation not only of every pioneer, but also those native Europeans who are called upon to accept their help and work with them in creating those purely indigenous communities which the Guardian repeatedly pointed out are the only safe foundation for the national and local institutions of the Cause to rest upon.

The responsibility for various territories which the Guardian himself allotted to some of the European Regional Assemblies as their special province, will, until the termination of the Crusade, be allocated as follows: the Balearic Islands to the National Spiritual Assembly of Spain; Sardinia, Sicily, Rhodes, San Marino and Monaco to the National Spiritual Assembly of Italy; Corsica and Liechtenstein to the National Spiritual Assembly of Switzerland.

A special appeal should be made to all the friends, whether residents of these European goal countries or pioneers, to adequately support their National Fund. However humble the offering, the friends must come to realize that contributing to this National Fund on a systematic basis, will enable the National Assembly to carry forward the glorious work of which its members are at once the servants and spiritual trustees. The privilege of supporting the institutions of our Faith cannot be overestimated. Largely due to the sacrifice and generosity of believers in other countries the Regional Assemblies have been able to carry on their work. Had it been possible for them to receive more they would have accomplished more. Now the time has come when the hitherto nascent communities have emerged into adult existence. They must learn to stand on their own feet, receiving the strength and blessings from on High which such an act brings.

The demands of the European Temple upon the limited resources of the Bahá'ís of that continent are not only extremely heavy during this last year of the Crusade, in order to complete the superstructure in time for the Centenary celebration of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Prophetic Mission, but must inevitably continue to be so during the years immediately following this world-wide Jubilee. The bounties which will flow from this Mother Temple are, we know, incalculable; as it rises, its shadow will cast far and wide the fame of the Cause of God; it will be another of the great "Silent Teachers" shedding a lustre on the Faith which the accomplishment of no other single enterprise ever can. We therefore appeal to the new National Assemblies and the communities they represent to inaugurate, at the time their National Funds are established, a special European Temple Fund, to which all may contribute, in great or small measure, mindful that the act of everyone giving has a spiritual significance far surpassing the size of the gift and releases beneficent forces which react on the life of both the individual and the community in a mysterious and highly potent manner.

What cause for rejoicing the European believers have as they stand on the threshold of a new epoch in the history of the Faith in their continent! North, South and West the long tally of victories nears completion as the last year of the Crusade opens. Before them lies Eastern Europe, where many of their brethren still hold aloft the torch of Bahá'u'lláh under conditions requiring the greatest fortitude and persistence, waiting for the day when the remaining goals of our beloved Guardian's Crusade can be fulfilled. This arm of Bahá'u'lláh's followers, outstretched over Western Europe and pointing and stretching its fingers towards the East, is already ornamented by more than one priceless jewel, for in Bulgaria are laid to rest George Adam Benke, whom the Guardian called the first European martyr, as well as that "immortal heroine", Marion Jack, she whom he eulogized as the "shining example to pioneers of present and future generations of East and West". Dotted over many other countries are precious graves where other teachers and pioneers and "first to believe" of their countrymen lie buried, blessing the soil in which they rest, whilst in the azure waters of the

Mediterranean lie the remains of Dorothy Baker, Hand of the Cause, and distinguished servant of the Faith.

No words can better convey the vastness of the opportunities that lie ahead, the sacredness of the responsibilities being presently assumed by so many new national communities, the glorious challenge facing each individual Bahá'í at this time, than those the beloved Guardian himself addressed to the first European Intercontinental Teaching Conference on the occasion of the inauguration of the European Campaign of his global Crusade. In never-to-be-forgotten words he painted the picture of the greatness of Europe's past, recounted the blessings she had received throughout her distinguished history, and expressed his hope that the believers toiling upon her soil, in the Name of Bahá'u'lláh, would outshine in deeds the acts of the disciples of Jesus Christ:

“A continent, occupying such a central and strategic position on the entire planet; so rich and eventful in its history, so diversified in its culture; from whose soil sprang both the Hellenic and Roman civilizations; the mainspring of a civilization to some of whose features Bahá'u'lláh Himself paid tribute; on whose southern shores Christendom first established its home; along whose eastern marches the mighty forces of the Cross and the Crescent so frequently clashed; on whose southwestern extremity a fast evolving Islamic culture yielded its fairest fruit; in whose heart the light of the Reformation shone so brightly, shedding its rays as far as the outlying regions of the globe; the well-spring of American culture; whose northern and western fringes were first warmed and illuminated, less than a century ago, by the dawning light of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh; in whose heart a community, so rich in promise, was subsequently established; whose soil was later sanctified by the twice-repeated visit of the appointed Centre of His Covenant; . . . such a continent has at last at this critical hour—this great turning-point in its fortunes—entered upon what may well be regarded as the opening phase of a great spiritual revival that bids fair to eclipse any period in its spiritual history.

“May the elected representatives of the national Bahá'í communities . . . aided by the Hands of the Cause and their Auxiliary Board, reinforced by the local communities, the groups and isolated

believers . . . be graciously assisted by the Lord of Hosts . . . and lend a tremendous impetus to the conversion, the reconciliation and the ultimate unification of the diverse and conflicting peoples, races and classes dwelling” within that continent.

“May all the privileged participators, enlisting under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh for the promotion of so pre-eminent and meritorious a Cause, be they from the Eastern or Western Hemisphere, of either sex, white or coloured, young or old, neophyte or veteran, whether serving in their capacity as expounders of the teachings, or administrators, of His Faith, as settlers or itinerant teachers, distinguish themselves by such deeds of heroism as will rival, nay outshine, the feats accomplished nineteen hundred years ago, by that little band of God-intoxicated disciples who, fear- lessly preaching the Gospel of a newly arisen Messiah, contributed so decisively to the illumination, the regeneration and the advancement of the entire European continent.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 28, 1962

REJOICE LONG ANTICIPATED VICTORY HOMEFRONT
FULFILLING BELOVED GUARDIANS PLAN VINDICATING HIS
HOPE JUSTIFYING HIS CONFIDENCE REAFFIRMING
SPIRITUAL VITALITY STRENGTH CHAMPION BUILDERS
BAHA'U'LLAHS WORLD ORDER STOP HISTORIC
ACHIEVEMENTS EUROPEAN LATIN AMERICAN FIELDS
ESTABLISHMENT AEGIS AMERICAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
SUCCESSIVE RIDVAN 118 AND 119 THIRTYTWO
INDEPENDENT NATIONAL BODIES REPRESENTING
HARVEST THREE SUCCESSIVE STAGES UNFOLDMENT
ABDU'L-BAHAS DIVINE PLAN UNFORGETTABLE STOP
CONFIDENT LAST YEAR CRUSADE WILL WITNESS PART
THIS GREATLY BLESSED DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY
MIGHTY WAVE ACTIVITY ENSURE PRESERVATION

PRECIOUS GOALS ADD FURTHER DISTINCTION UNIQUE SERVICES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

MAY 11, 1962

JOYFULLY SHARE NEWS RECEIVED RIDVAN PERIOD
OUTSTANDING ADDITIONAL VICTORIES WON
THROUGHOUT BAHA'I WORLD EVIDENCE DEVOTION
CONSECRATION DETERMINATION BELIEVERS EAST WEST
CROWN BELOVED GUARDIANS CRUSADE UNFADING
GLORY STOP VITAL HOMEFRONT GOALS UNITED STATES
CANADA BRITISH ISLES ATTAINED OR EXCEEDED
THROUGH FORMATION MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED
LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES AMERICAN BAHA'I
COMMUNITY SIXTYONE DOMINION OF CANADA AND
FORTYEIGHT BRITISH ISLES STOP SINGLE ADDITIONAL
ASSEMBLY NEEDED FULFIL GOAL HOMEFRONT GERMANY
STOP ASSEMBLIES NOW ESTABLISHED CAPITAL CITIES
ALL AUSTRALIAN STATES STOP RAPIDLY SPREADING
CONFLAGRATION MASS CONVERSION REFLECTED
FORMATION ONE HUNDRED TEN NEW LOCAL
ASSEMBLIES INDIA TOTAL NOW FIVE TIMES NUMBER
REQUIRED MEET CRUSADE GOAL STOP UNPRECEDENTED
INCREASES REPORTED SOUTHEAST ASIA AFRICA LATIN
AMERICA STOP TWENTYFOUR NEW ASSEMBLIES
PHILIPPINES WHERE TOTAL BELIEVERS NOW EXCEED
ONE THOUSAND STOP SIXTEEN NEW ASSEMBLIES
FORMED VIETNAM BRINGING TOTAL FORTY STOP
CENTRAL EAST AFRICA REPORTS SIX HUNDRED SIXTY
LOCAL ASSEMBLIES TWENTYSIX THOUSAND BAHA'IS
INCLUDING OVER SIX THOUSAND CONGO WHICH SENT
TWELVE DELEGATES CONVENTION INCLUDING FIRST
PYGMY DELEGATE BAHA'I HISTORY STOP SIXTYTWO
LOCAL ASSEMBLIES FORMED BOLIVIA FOCAL POINT MASS

CONVERSION LATIN AMERICA STOP TWO HUNDRED NEW
INDIAN BELIEVERS RECENTLY ENROLLED CHILE STOP
NICARAGUA PANAMA RESPECTIVELY REPORT TRIPLING
QUADRUPLING BELIEVERS LAST YEAR WITH INDIAN
ENROLMENTS NUMBERING SEVERAL HUNDRED STOP
URGE ALL NATIONAL BODIES SEIZE OPPORTUNITY FORM
ADDITIONAL LOCAL ASSEMBLIES ANY TIME PRESENT
YEAR ENSURE STILL GREATER INCREASE AVOWED
SUPPORTERS GROUPS ASSEMBLIES ERE TERMINATION
SACRED GLOBAL PLAN ENTRUSTED BELOVED GUARDIAN
COMMUNITY MOST GREAT NAME STOP AIRMAIL MESSAGE
HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God

July 13, 1962

Dear Fellow-Hands:

It is now six months since the passing of dear Milly Collins, and it has become evident that a ninth Custodian must be appointed for legal purposes, since we are liable to be asked in legal matters to give the names of the nine Custodians.

In accordance with the authority given the Hands in the Holy Land at the first Conclave, we have therefore appointed Hasan Balyuzi to act as Custodian temporarily until the Hands meet. Hasan has for some time not been well, but we have urged him to come to Haifa as soon as his health permits.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

FAIZI CARE KHAMSI, CASILLA 1613, LA PAZ (BOLIVIA)

JULY 24, 1962

BASIS RECOMMENDATION OVERWHELMING MAJORITY
HANDS CONCLAVE POST-PONED APRIL LOVE.
[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Goal Countries of Europe

July 27, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan called for quadrupling the number of Local Spiritual Assemblies and tripling the number of localities which existed in each of the Goal Countries of Europe at the beginning of the Crusade. The first of these objectives was attained during the Ridván period last year, a victory which gave inspiration and encouragement to the entire Bahá'í world.

In these closing months of the Crusade we request each National Assembly to compare the total number of localities where Bahá'ís reside within their respective countries with the number existing at the beginning of the Crusade, in order to ensure that this particular objective has been attained in every case. Naturally the maintenance of all existing Assemblies must not be jeopardized in any way in an effort to triple the total number of localities where Bahá'ís reside. We are confident that this is a Crusade objective which can and will be achieved in all the Goal Countries, if it has not already been attained.

The other remaining unfinished tasks of the beloved Guardian's Plan in the Goal Countries are the securing of the incorporation of National Assemblies and the incorporation of Local Assemblies in leading cities of these countries. These are objectives which should be pursued vigorously by each National Assembly to ensure their accomplishment before next Ridván. In countries where it may not be possible to secure the incorporation of the National Assembly as a religious body at this time, it may be possible to incorporate as a non-profit company of some nature, and this alternative should be carefully investigated if incorporation as a religious body appears doubtful.

Although some of the Goal Countries have succeeded in incorporating the Local Spiritual Assemblies in the capital city of those countries, others have no incorporated Local Assemblies, and the National Assemblies of these countries should urgently pursue this objective along with that of having the national body itself incorporated in some manner. Also additional local incorporations may be possible in those countries which have succeeded in registering the Local Assembly in the capital city.

We are confident that the National Assemblies of the European Goal Countries, an area where such victories have been won, will leave no stone unturned in their efforts to ensure that every objective of the beloved Guardian's Plan will, without exception, be accomplished by Ridván, 1963.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

July 27, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Ten Year Crusade is drawing to a close and the signs of its glorious fulfilment are everywhere apparent. In many ways the successes achieved have more than fulfilled the beloved Guardian's fondest hopes when he initiated it.

The greatest care must be taken, however, that the triumphal conclusion of the various national Plans in April, 1963 is not succeeded by an anticlimax in which pioneers leave their posts, Assemblies are lost and the work and sacrifices of the last ten years are marred by setbacks to the progress of the Cause.

Pioneers who have performed such noble services by leaving their homes to open territories, establish Assemblies, or consolidate what has been achieved at home and abroad should make every effort to remain at their posts after Ridván, 1963 until their services can be dispensed with, remembering the appeal of the Guardian in one of his last messages that they should "remain at their posts", and

bearing in mind that at the glorious yet critical juncture of the formation of the International House of Justice, any weakening of the administrative structure and depletion of the ranks of the vanguard of the faithful holding distant and difficult outposts of the Faith, would place in jeopardy the fruits of the World Crusade we have achieved so gloriously and in no small measure through the labours of the host of valiant pioneers.

The work of consolidation is scarcely less important than that of establishing and maintaining Assemblies, and sacrifices will be needed for these purposes after the completion of the Crusade as they have been needed during the ten years of its achievement.

We ask you to circulate this letter widely, in your newsletter or otherwise, so that all may see clearly where their duty to Bahá'u'lláh lies and may lay a firm foundation upon which the Cause can march from strength to strength in the years succeeding the Most Great Jubilee of 1963.

With Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

July 27, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

You have received our cable of July 19 requesting all of you to send us your recommendation on the holding of the next Conclave.

We have now received replies from nearly all of the Hands, and the vote of the overwhelming majority is to hold the Conclave next April, beginning on the date mentioned in our cable, April 9, 1963. This vitally important gathering can be extended beyond the suggested nine-day period if it appears necessary or desirable to do so.

It has been suggested that all of the Hands, in making their arrangements for attending the Conclave, the Convention for the election of the House of Justice, and the World Congress, should plan on leaving open at least a week or two following the Congress

for whatever initial consultations the members of the House of Justice may wish to hold with the Hands of the Cause.

We have just completed a detailed review of the few remaining unfinished goals of the beloved Guardian's Crusade, and have written the National Assemblies concerned, urging them to exert every effort to complete these vital tasks. Aside from those which our Beloved himself felt were doubtful of accomplishment, such as establishment of the Bahá'í courts in Islamic countries, the chief ones still to be won are the Australian home front and the incorporation of those National Assemblies which have not yet secured their registrations.

Recently we have approved a plan for carrying forward the work on the European Temple which will, unless unexpected delays occur, permit services of commemoration to be held in this sacred Edifice during Ridván, 1963.

With warmest greetings and deepest love to you all,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í World

August 16, 1962

Beloved Friends:

This letter is to inform you that the Annual Gathering of the Hands of the Cause will be held beginning April 9, 1963, preceding the election of the Universal House of Justice.

The wonderful and thrilling victories throughout the Bahá'í world during the past year have made it possible for the Hands of the Faith to postpone their Annual Meeting and to concentrate their efforts on the all-important teaching work so that the "vast increase" of new believers envisioned by the beloved Guardian for this fourth and final phase of the Crusade may become a reality.

Holding the Annual Gathering in April will not only free the Hands of the Faith for this essential task, but will also help conserve the precious Funds of the Faith by eliminating the necessity of the Hands' assembling twice in the Holy Land this present Bahá'í year.

The news from around the world brings frequent and thrilling accounts of fresh triumphs for our blessed Cause as it moves from victory to victory.

We urge each National Spiritual Assembly, as well as every individual Bahá'í, to join the Hands of the Cause in every continent in taking advantage of this rising tide, so that every single believer may make a supreme and unprecedented effort to assure that "vast increase" in new believers envisioned by our beloved Guardian for this fourth phase of his glorious global Crusade.

Upon our success in discharging this responsibility together as "one soul in many bodies" will depend, in a large measure, the joy and happiness we will all share upon the occasion of the great Jubilee celebration of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh to His Throne of Glory.

We shall pray earnestly at the sacred Threshold of the Blessed Beauty that each individual believer, each Local Assembly, and each National Assembly will arise during these closing hours of a Crusade, the equal of which mortal eyes will never see again, and enrich their record of services with a sacrifice, selflessness, and dedication unmatched by anything they have done in the past, individually or collectively.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God throughout the World

August 22, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

Reports of new teaching victories continue to reach the Holy Land from all parts of the world. Since Ridván, mass conversion has begun in Brunei, and during the past two months alone the number of believers in Brunei has increased from 2,300 to 3,500. In Central and East Africa, nine African village Local Assemblies in Uganda have been legally incorporated, marking an historic step toward assuring the future progress and consolidation of these village

communities. The number of believers now reported in the Indian sub-continent is well over 26,000. Mass conversion is still taking place in the Congo, in Panama, in Mexico and in the Philippine Islands. There are signs in many other areas of that “rapid increase” in new believers envisioned by our beloved Guardian.

Work is progressing satisfactorily on the European Temple in accordance with contracts which have been approved calling for the expenditure of approximately \$120,000, and which will complete the exterior finish and, it is hoped, enough of the interior, including painting and plastering, to permit the holding of gatherings in the House of Worship on the occasion of the Most Great Jubilee.

Sir Barnet Janner, a Member of the British Parliament and Chairman of the Jewish Board of Guardians in Britain, visited the Shrine by invitation yesterday and met the Hands and the International Council. He is very friendly to the Faith and expressed his wish for further contact with the Bahá'ís in Britain.

Mingled with the news of these joyous victories comes the sad note of the passing of that faithful caretaker of the Mansion of Mazra'ih, 'Abdu'l-Rahmán Jarráh. He passed away suddenly in Athens, Greece, while on holiday. His devoted services to the Faith have now been specially blessed by his being the first Bahá'í to be buried in the country of Greece.

Steps are being taken through the diplomatic missions to the United Nations to assist persecuted Berber believers who have been imprisoned in Morocco.

Plans for the World Convention for the election of the Universal House of Justice, and for the Most Great Jubilee, are receiving increasing attention as the historic hour for these two unprecedented events approaches.

With less than eight months remaining in which to fulfil every cherished aim of our beloved Guardian for his great global Crusade, we may well remind ourselves of our united conviction expressed at our last Annual Gathering. We all saw the urgency for the Hands in every continental area to work even more closely and energetically with the various National Assemblies through personal consultation when possible, or through frequent correspondence when not, so that the wonderful promises given by our beloved Guardian in his

Message to the Hands and National Assemblies on June 4, 1957, may be fully realized, and that together we may “carry out unflinchingly” what our beloved Guardian has called our “sacred, inescapable duties”.

“Upon the befitting discharge of the weighty responsibilities now resting upon the members of these two institutions”, he tells us, will depend “the security of our precious Faith, the preservation of the spiritual health of the Bahá’í communities, the vitality of the faith of its individual members”, as well as “the proper functioning of its laboriously erected institutions, the fruition of its world-wide enterprises” and “the fulfilment of its ultimate destiny”.

The following is for your information only. Mr. Jean Donat, a believer from Réunion Island strongly suspected of contact with the Covenant-breakers, has recently been in England speaking against the institutions of the Faith. His case is now being investigated. A Covenant-breaker from Pakistan was recently in Britain and France. Tony Fillon, Covenant-breaker from South America, is reported to have gone to France from Ecuador. This may have no particular significance, but knowing France to be such a strong centre of sedition, it should put us on our guard.

Now, as never before, during the remaining eight months of our Chief-Stewardship, at a time when our enemies, both from within and without the Faith, may well make a supreme effort to hinder in every way they can, the successful culmination of our beloved Guardian’s glorious Crusade, and the election of the Universal House of Justice, the Institution of the Hands of the Cause working, as directed by Shoghi Effendi himself, closely and constantly with the National Spiritual Assemblies, should be more vigilant than ever against what the beloved Guardian described as “evidences of increasing hostility without” and “persistent machinations within” the Cause. In this way, we can best protect the Faith against any attacks, but above all at this time, we can prevent anything from dampening the zeal and ardour of these National Spiritual Assemblies which must give such inspiring leadership to their communities during these final months of the Crusade when the great emphasis is upon reaching the masses in unprecedented numbers.

You are always in our thoughts and prayers when we visit the sacred Shrines. We know that during these fast-fleeting crucial days of this unparalleled Crusade, our hearts are united even more closely than ever, and that each one of us is determined to sacrifice his time, his energy, his very life so that we may offer the full measure of our devotion in serving our beloved Guardian and the Cause for which he sacrificed his precious life.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America

August 22, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

You have no doubt by this time heard of the imprisonment of fourteen of the Bahá'ís in Morocco and the strong steps taken against the Faith by the authorities in that country. . . .

In view of the fanatical and prejudiced religious and political environment, great wisdom and caution must be exercised to avoid still greater and more intensified persecutions. We do not feel that it is wise to mobilize our forces for publicity and for action through the United Nations as was done in 1955 in the case of the Persian persecutions.

It has, however, been suggested that representations made to the diplomatic missions of Morocco in Washington and at the United Nations might be helpful from the standpoint of indicating that the world-wide Bahá'í community is aware of and is surprised and gravely concerned about the imprisonment of innocent Bahá'ís in Morocco, a country which has recently joined the family of independent nations.

We request that your Assembly make such a contact or contacts in the same way as was done a few months ago in the case of the Turkish diplomatic representatives in connection with the court case in that country. The non-political character of the Faith should of

course be stressed, as well as its establishment in nearly 260 countries, islands and dependencies of the world.

We hope that a contact of this kind can be made in the very near future, so that it will effectively reinforce the steps already taken in Morocco itself to alleviate the situation. In the interviews with the Moroccan representatives, the proper framework of approach would be to imply that undoubtedly the measures against the Bahá'ís were taken as a result of a misunderstanding based on incorrect information given the government regarding the Faith.

We shall be most interested in receiving a report on the results of your efforts to assist the dear friends in Morocco, who have shown great courage, wisdom and above all steadfastness in the face of these grievous difficulties.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE
AUGUST 26, 1962

IF CONTACTED BY PRESS REGARDING STORY
IMPRISONMENT FRIENDS MOROCCO ANY STATEMENT
SHOULD EMPHASIZE ONLY PRINCIPLES OBEDIENCE
GOVERNMENTS UNITY RELIGIONS STOP ESSENTIAL AVOID
CONTROVERSY OR IMPLIED CRITICISM ACTION
MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

On August 28th this same message was cabled to the National
Spiritual Assembly of France.

AUSTRALIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY CARE NATBAHA'Í
SYDNEY
SEPTEMBER 3, 1962

WITH LESS THAN EIGHT MONTHS REMAINING BELOVED
GUARDIANS GLORIOUS CRUSADE APPEAL EACH EVERY
BELIEVER DEVOTED AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY ARISE
NEW HEIGHT DEDICATION SACRIFICE CONQUER
SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE VIRTUALLY LAST REMAINING
UNFULFILLED HOMEFRONT GOAL TEN YEAR PLAN
ENTREAT EACH INDIVIDUAL BAHÁ'Í PRAYERFULLY RE-
EXAMINE LIVES LIGHT THIS CRITICAL HOUR AUSTRALIAS
SPIRITUAL DESTINY MAKE HEROIC EFFORTS PIONEER
GOAL CITIES HOMEFRONT WITHOUT DELAY URGE EVERY
BAHÁ'Í TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE THIS SACRED PRECIOUS
LAST OPPORTUNITY CONSECRATE TIME ENERGIES
RESOURCES ON UNPARALLELED TEACHING EFFORT STOP
PRAYING HOLY SHRINES ENTIRE COMMUNITY AUSTRALIA
WILL ARISE ONE SOUL MANY BODIES MEET THIS
GLORIOUS CHALLENGE FULFIL FONDEST HOPES
BELOVED GUARDIAN.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

September 5, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

You have by this time received our communication of August 16 informing you that the Annual Gathering of the Hands of the Cause will be held next April, rather than in October or November as heretofore.

As you know, we have always requested each National Assembly to transmit its semi-annual reports on the progress of the Ten Year Plan in time to reach the Holy Land not later than March 15 and September 15. The facts provided in the March reports are shared with the Bahá'í world in our Annual Ridván Message, and those in the September reports have been considered by the Hands in their Annual Meeting and used in preparing the message to the friends from that gathering.

Although the Annual Meeting will not take place at the usual time this year, the Hands will send a general message to the believers throughout the world, and it is essential that we have the information provided in the September semi-annual reports for inclusion in this message. We therefore request that you mail your reports in time to reach Haifa *not later than September 30*.

For the guidance of all National and Regional Assemblies we attach an outline of the basic statistical and other information needed. (Some of these headings, such as translations, may not apply in the case of all National Assemblies.)

Since Local Assemblies can be formed at any time during this final year of the World Crusade, we request that any Local Spiritual Assemblies formed since Ridván be listed separately, in addition to including them in the total. We also ask that in the remaining months of the Ten Year Plan you inform the World Centre whenever additional new Assemblies are established or former ones restored.

In addition to the specific information called for, we would appreciate your including in your semi-annual report any other interesting or striking developments in your area which represent victories for the Faith. These should also be reported from time to time as they occur throughout the year.

We are confident that the rising tide of victories under the beloved Guardian's Plan, already evident in so many countries, will spread throughout the Bahá'í world in these glorious months preceding the Most Great Jubilee.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

[The enclosure is not included here.]

To the Hands of the Cause of God

September 7, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

Since our last letter to you, news has reached us of the activities of the supporters of Mason Remey in Latin America. A cablegram

was received from the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile informing us that Fabienne Guillon, long-time member of the Chilean and Regional Assembly, and the other members of the Local Assembly of Loncoche, Chile, had accepted the claims of Remey.

Mas'úd Khamsí, Auxiliary Board member for Protection and a former member of the Regional Assembly which included Chile, was sent immediately to the spot by the Hands in the Western Hemisphere, following an exchange of cables with the World Centre. The National Assembly of Chile was cabled to have all the friends refrain from association with Guillon and other affected persons until a full investigation can be made. We are following the agreed steps of meeting and trying to save these people before expelling them from the Faith, in case all, or some, of them because of their inexperience, lack of sufficient knowledge of Covenant-breaking or Covenant-breakers, may have been unduly influenced and will renounce such baseless claims once the situation is clear to them.

This new flare-up has come apparently as a result of Bernardo Fillon returning to South America from France. The National Spiritual Assembly of Chile wrote us a letter which arrived after their cable about Loncoche telling us that Fillon was there trying to influence the friends. It now seems fairly apparent that following a meeting in France, some of the key-conspirators of Mason Remey have gone out to renew their efforts to damage the Cause and undermine the faith of the friends.

Therefore, the things we shared with you in our recent letter concerning the application of the beloved Guardian's cable of June 4, 1957 to all the Continental Hands and National Spiritual Assemblies becomes even more urgent and vital. We must all redouble our vigilance and intensify our efforts to combat the spread of their evil influence wherever we find it.

We are preparing a letter to all National Spiritual Assemblies on this subject, and the significance of that June 4, 1957 cable of Shoghi Effendi. We are sending a special letter to Latin America including the above, but also giving them some background to share with the friends on the significance of Covenant-breaking so they will be better able to resist their insidious efforts.

We have asked dear Varqá to go to France to help strengthen that Community and to consult with the National Spiritual Assembly. He is there now and will remain for fifteen days. Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum arrives in the World Centre Sunday from Europe. Faizí reports thrilling victories and wonderful news of his visit to Bolivia, and also comments strongly on the grave general weakness of many Latin American areas. Leroy goes to America on personal business, after his trip to Europe where he has visited the summer schools and made valuable visits to National Spiritual Assemblies of the Scandinavian countries and Germany. Muhájir is here at present, and is lending his valuable help to our consultations.

There has also been a wonderful flow of good news from the Bahá'í world. The Prime Minister of Uganda and his Personal Secretary, accompanied by the Director of Public Relations from the Israel Foreign Office with the possible future Israeli Ambassador to Uganda visited the Shrine of the Báb. The Prime Minister, Apollo Milton Obote was our guest of honour at a luncheon in the House of the Master. This is for your information as it will appear later in the News Letter from the International Council.

News of additional victories in the Philippines has reached us. They have increased their number to 2,000 believers. Since Ridván they have doubled their centres to nearly 200. Among the new believers are members from four different tribes.

The teaching victories continue also in the Indian sub-continent, Africa and Bolivia. Dear Enoch, accompanied by Auxiliary Board member Max Kenyerezi, has arrived this week in the Congo and we are confident that ever-greater victories will be forthcoming from that fruitful area, following the success of his trips to Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.

We would be grateful for any news that you may have which might indicate increased activities by the enemies in your area, so that we may anticipate and minimize them.

We are all visiting the Shrine of the Blessed Beauty this afternoon, and will remember you in our prayers, and shall supplicate at that sacred Threshold that even greater victories may flood the earth during these precious, rapidly passing hours of our beloved Guardian's glorious Crusade.

With warmest Bahá'í love,
In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God
September 13, 1962

Dear Fellow-Hands,

We have noticed in the minutes of several National Assemblies that they are urging the members of their community to use the Long Obligatory Prayer. We consider this is neither part of the function of a National Assembly nor in accordance with the spirit of the teachings of the Faith, for the reasons given in the following letter sent to the New Zealand National Assembly:

We have noticed in your minutes of 26-27 May that you decided to encourage the friends to use the Long Obligatory Prayer.

In taking this action, we feel that your National Assembly has exceeded the powers given to it in the Administrative Order, insofar as Bahá'u'lláh left the believers entirely free to choose between the three obligatory prayers. Further He said: *"To chant but one verse with joy and gladness is better for you than reading all the Revelations of the Omnipotent God with carelessness."*

No pressure should be put upon the believers to say one of the three prayers rather than another. If a believer feels inclined to say the long prayer he should say it, and if for some reason he prefers one of the others he is quite free to say this instead.

We feel the Hands should use their influence to prevent such pressures, that are not in accordance with the law of Bahá'u'lláh, being put upon the believers.

With Bahá'í love,
In the service of the beloved Guardian,
HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

September 23, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As you know, fifteen of the believers are imprisoned in Morocco. We now have two lawyers working on their case, but nothing anyone has been able to do so far has permitted them to have a speedy hearing or be let out on bail or be released. Needless to say, it is a very delicate problem because of the intense Muslim fanaticism which has led to their imprisonment. . . .

We have been informed that the personal representative of the King of Morocco . . . is now heading that country's delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

We would like your National Assembly to consider seeking an interview with him, at which Bahá'í representatives would call to his attention the entirely non-political character of the Faith, our obedience to our governments, and that our beliefs are not in any way subversive towards any religion or any country. It might be possible also to enter a plea that this man would intervene with his King, the real power in the country, on behalf of these innocent Bahá'ís who are simple and relatively insignificant people, whose only sin seems to be their religious belief. . . .

With warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All Hands of the Cause of God

September 26, 1962

Dear Co-workers:

As our beloved Guardian's Plan speeds to an end, news of additional victories continues to brighten the closing months.

Plans for the World Convention and World Congress are progressing at an increased pace. The Hands of the Faith and the members of the International Bahá'í Council are working more closely than ever during these golden days still remaining of our beloved Guardian's World-Conquering Crusade.

India reports 34,000 believers, over 20,000 since Ridván; Central and East Africa over 42,000. Borneo Island now has over 6,000 new believers since Ridván, 3,000 in the past two months. There were 115 new believers among the San Blas Indians in Panama during the past month. One entire island of the San Blas group, named Islapino, has been conquered for the Faith, and four new Indian areas have been opened up there. The first Indian community in Argentina has been enrolled in the Faith across the border from Bolivia. The first all-Indian Local Assembly of Brazil was established in Logoa Grande. In England they have enrolled over 120 new believers since June, nearly as many as during the entire last year, which was a record year. This greatly increased effort is supported by no less than 100 fireside meetings each week.

Such victories have brought in their wake, as expected, increased attacks and opposition from the enemies. Two members of the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile, residing in Loncoche, Fabienne Guillon and Sr. Pallés,^[17] have become Covenant-breakers, supporting the false claims of Mason Remey. Both have been expelled. Mr. and Mrs. James Barrett of Panama, daughter and son-in-law of Fabienne Guillon, have also been expelled from the Faith for similar reasons. It has been reported that the Local Spiritual Assembly of Loncoche is following Guillon and Pallés. Faizí and Board member Mas'úd Khamsí are in Loncoche, Chile now to make an investigation. We are awaiting their report, and shall keep you informed.

The Remey supporters are sending out a flood of correspondence, re-peating the same things over and over; this material includes a printed 52-page booklet by Remey which is a duplicate of all the things he said in 1960 and has been parroting since.

This brings you up to date on the activities of these Covenant-breakers. If you have any additional items to report, or have

evidence of any increased activity, or the presence or movement of any of these enemies, we would appreciate immediate and regular reports.

Both the National Spiritual Assembly of Colombia and of Belgium have received official status from their respective governments during the past months.

The reports from the summer schools around the world all speak of the new spirit of enthusiasm and dedication, and many speak of the astonishing number of enrolments which took place during the sessions.

We shall remember you in our prayers at the sacred Shrines.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All Hands of the Cause of God

October 10, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

This letter is to share with you the very encouraging news that as many as 300 of the National Spiritual Assembly members may be attending in person the World Convention in the Holy Land. With reports from 37 National Assemblies, 253 have already stated definitely that they plan to attend. There are 19 National Assemblies still to send their final figures.

Because of his continued efforts to support the views of Mason Remey, both verbally and in writing, we have been obliged to expel Jean Donat of Réunion Island (in the South West African U.S.A. Region) from the Faith.

We have received the satisfying news that while Fabienne Guillon, National Spiritual Assembly member of Chile, has not renounced Remey, seven members of the Loncoche Community who wrote a letter to the Chilean National Spiritual Assembly supporting Mason, have now renounced him. This seven includes the other National Spiritual Assembly member, Jorgé Pallés. After meeting with Faizí, National Spiritual Assembly Secretary Alexander Reid and Board

members Mas'úd Khámsi and Seymour Malkin, they have declared their complete loyalty to the Faith. Faizí has rendered a wonderful service to the Cause through his patience, love and wisdom, and has been most capably assisted by the National Spiritual Assembly of Chile and the above-mentioned Board members. It is indeed a great victory for the Cause and a blow to the enemies. It demonstrates again that the friends are misled by misinformation and deception, but when logical explanations based on the Teachings are offered to them, if they are sincere, they respond.

Our dear fellow-Hands have, of course, all been busy serving the Faith in different parts of the world; some of them have not been well. Hasan had an operation on his shoulder (nothing dangerous we understand) but he has not yet been able to come to Haifa as planned; we hope for his early arrival. Ugo has just completed an exhausting supervision, in the heat of the Rome summer, of the publication of our beloved Guardian's Mid-Way Point of the Crusade map. It is very beautiful, and will be a joy to the believers everywhere when it is placed on sale next Ridván. Ugo is very run down and has left for some weeks' rest. Adelbert has visited every European Summer School except one; he also is in frail health. We hope when you pray for all of us you will particularly say healing prayers for these three Hands. Hermann, after his arduous tour of Latin America, has returned to Germany for a much-needed rest; Collis is embarking on a comprehensive tour of some of the Pacific Islands as well as centres in Australia and New Zealand. Enoch is now engaged in a tour of the Bahá'í Centres in the Congo; we have not yet received a report from him but are sure his visit will produce resounding victories in this fertile field. Samandarí, whose perseverance is a shining example to us all, is after several months in Turkey, visiting a series of Bahá'í communities throughout the Indian sub-continent and neighbourhood; his presence will no doubt greatly encourage new and old believers alike in serving the Faith. 'Alá'í, Varqá, Agnes, Khádem and John [Robarts] are all at their posts and carrying on their devoted services.

The Hands in the Holy Land aided by Muhájir, who is remaining here for some time after practically two years of uninterrupted travel, are as well as can be expected, and very busy.

Reports of the astonishing progress of our blessed Cause continue to reach the World Centre almost daily. In the last five months, 6,000 have accepted the Faith in Borneo. These victories are among the people of the Dayak tribe. Nearly 60 Local Assemblies have been established. There are 56 villages where the inhabitants are all Bahá'ís.

In the Philippines there are now 2,000 believers, 24 Local Spiritual Assemblies and 200 localities. Members from four different tribes have embraced the Faith.

In Vietnam 275 new believers have been enrolled, and 5 new Local Assemblies formed.

There is also wonderful news of great teaching and administrative strides in Costa Rica. They have progressed from 3 Local Spiritual Assemblies at the start of the Crusade to 8 in 1961, and in the past year they tripled this number to 24 Local Spiritual Assemblies, 8 of which Local Assemblies are in the fertile Indian regions.

Equally as thrilling, in view of the long years during which this project was unsuccessful in taking hold, is the news from the United States that there are now 66 Navajo Indians in one area who have accepted the Faith; 51 of them have enrolled during the past three months.

We shall continue to keep you closely informed of all events as they happen, and as we approach the glorious consummation of our beloved Guardian's World Crusade.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

October 11, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

We are planning to issue, in time for sale at the World Congress to be held in London, a pamphlet similar to the one our beloved Guardian published in 1952 at the beginning of the World Crusade,

bringing as far as possible the statistics and comparative information up to date.

We therefore request your Assembly to please not duplicate this effort; there are so many demands made upon National Funds at this time in order to win their goals, maintain those already won, keep pioneers in the field, publicize the Faith etc. that we feel the resources of the Faith must be carefully harboured for the most important tasks.

In the near future we shall be sending you suggestions regarding the national celebrations of the Most Great Jubilee, publicity in connection with it, etc.

Assuring you of our prayers for the success of your work when we visit the holy Shrines, and with warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

OCTOBER 12, 1962

WITH THANKFUL HEARTS UNFAILING PROTECTION
BELOVED GUARDIANS OWN HISTORY MAKING CRUSADE
SHARE GLAD TIDINGS JUST RECEIVED CENTRAL EAST
AFRICAN ASSEMBLY STOP OVER FIFTYONE THOUSAND
BELIEVERS THIS AREA 763 ASSEMBLIES 665 GROUPS 587
CENTRES TOTALLING OVER 2,000 LOCALITIES STOP
CONGO NOW LEADS AFRICAN CONTINENT WITH OVER
THIRTY THOUSAND BAHA'IS STOP GREAT VICTORIES
CHALLENGE BODY FAITHFUL EAST WEST ARISE CROWN
OWN ENDEAVOURS MANNER BEFITTING CONSUMMATION
CRUSADE CELEBRATION MOST GREAT JUBILEE NEXT
RIDVAN STOP SHARE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies

November 4, 1962

Beloved Friends:

The enclosed Message should reach all the believers at the earliest possible date; wherever translation is necessary will you kindly see this is done at once and that it is circulated amongst the community immediately, thus enabling each and every Bahá'í to search his heart and ask himself what service he can personally render before these challenging last days of the beloved Guardian's glorious Crusade pass us by forever.

With warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

MESSAGE TO THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF EAST AND WEST

OCTOBER 31, 1962

Dearly beloved Friends:

Upon the horizon of the Bahá'í world the splendorous light of the Most Great Jubilee is daily brightening. Six months stand between us and that occasion our beloved Guardian informed us would witness "the world-wide celebrations of the *'Most Great Festival'*, the *'King of Festivals'*, the *'Festival of God'* Himself—the Festival associated with the accession of Him Who is the Lord of the Kingdom to the throne of everlasting glory, and with the formal assumption by Him of His Prophetic Office . . . that greatest of all Jubilees, related to the year 1335, mentioned by Daniel in the last Chapter of His Book, and associated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá with the world triumph of His Father's Faith." That time at which, the Master assured us "*a century will have elapsed from the dawn of the Sun of Truth, then will the teachings of God be firmly established upon the earth, and the Divine Light shall flood the world from the East even unto the West. Then, on this day, will the faithful rejoice!*"

It behoves us, standing on the threshold of so mighty an event, to pause and contemplate its magnitude and to renew in our hearts the

image of that *“adorable and ever-blessed Beauty”*, the Supreme Manifestation of God. His Own words, alone, can adequately reveal the glory of His Station and the significance of this Day:

“The Pen of Holiness . . . hath writ upon My snow-white brow and in characters of effulgent glory these glowing, these musk-scented and holy words: ‘Behold ye that dwell on earth, and ye denizens of heaven, bear witness, He in truth is your Well-Beloved. He it is Whose like the world of creation hath not seen, He Whose ravishing beauty hath delighted the eye of God, the Ordainer, the All-Powerful, the Incomparable!’” “. . . the Tongue of Grandeur is now proclaiming: *‘Lo, the sacred Pledge hath been fulfilled, for He, the Promised One, is come!’”* *“The Eternal Truth is now come. He hath lifted up the ensign of power, and is now shedding upon the world the unclouded splendour of His Revelation.”* *“Tell the priest to ring the bells no longer. By God, the True One! The Most Mighty Bell hath appeared in the form of Him Who is the Most Great Name, and the fingers of the will of Thy Lord, the Most Exalted, the Most High, toll it out in the heaven of Immortality, in His Name, the All-Glorious.”* *“Naught is seen in My temple but the Temple of God, and in My beauty but His Beauty, and in My being but His Being, and in My self but His Self, and in My movement but His Movement, and in My acquiescence but His Acquiescence, and in My pen but His Pen, the Mighty, the All-Praised. There hath not been in My soul but the Truth, and in Myself naught could be seen but God.”*

“This is the King of Days, the Day that hath seen the coming of the Best-Beloved, Him Who through all eternity hath been acclaimed the Desire of the world.” *“This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of Thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. . . . This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: ‘Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the foot-stool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne.’”* *“The Scriptures of past Dispensations celebrate the great Jubilee that must needs greet this most great Day of God. Well is it with him that hath lived to see this Day and hath recognized its station.”* *“In this most mighty Revelation all the Dispensations of the past have attained their highest, their final consummation.”* *“That which hath been made manifest in this pre-*

eminent, this most exalted Revelation, stands unparalleled in the annals of the past, nor will future ages witness its like."

Let us fix our gaze in adoration upon that figure, so inimitably delineated by the Guardian: "the incomparable figure of Bahá'u'lláh, transcendent in His majesty, serene, awe-inspiring, unapproachably glorious." He Whom, He Himself testifies, the Prophets and Messengers addressed, on the eve of His Declaration, as "O Most Great Mystery, O Tabernacle of Immortality!" He, but for Whom, in His Own words, "no Divine Messenger would have been invested with the Robe of Prophethood, nor would any of the sacred Scriptures have been revealed." Let us call to mind, in His Own words, the period of His declaration in Baghdád, the Centenary of which is so close upon us: "Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Ridván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the Garden of Delight which God hath made the Throne of His Paradise . . ." "Rejoice, with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá! as ye call to remembrance the Day of supreme felicity, the Day whereon the Tongue of the Ancient of Days hath spoken, as He departed from His House proceeding to the Spot from which He shed upon the whole of creation the splendours of His Name, the All-Merciful."

"The mere contemplation", 'Abdu'l-Bahá testified, "of the Dispensation inaugurated by the Blessed Beauty would have sufficed to overwhelm the saints of bygone ages—saints who longed to partake for one moment of its great glory." "How thankful must we be for having been made in this Day the recipients of so overwhelming a favour! 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!" "The holy ones of past ages and centuries have, each and all, yearned with tearful eyes to live, though for one moment, in the Day of God. Their longings unsatisfied, they repaired to the Great Beyond. How great, therefore, is the bounty of the Abhá Beauty Who, notwithstanding our utter unworthiness, hath through His grace and mercy breathed into us in this divinely-illuminated century the spirit of life, hath gathered us beneath the standard of

the Beloved of the world, and chosen to confer upon us a bounty for which the mighty ones of bygone ages had craved in vain.”

It was in November, 1951, that the beloved Guardian disclosed to our eyes the significance of the event we shall so shortly be celebrating throughout the Bahá'í world when he cabled that the first four Intercontinental Conferences scheduled to be held during the Holy Year were a “prelude to Most Great Jubilee which will alike commemorate Centenary formal assumption by Author of Bahá'í Revelation of His Prophetic Office and mark God willing world-wide establishment Faith forecast by Centre of Covenant in His Tablets and prophesied by Daniel in His Book thus paving way for advent of Golden Age destined witness world recognition universal proclamation ultimate triumph of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.” He said those Conferences marked the “inauguration beyond limits of World Centre of the Faith of intercontinental stage of Bahá'í activity . . .”, and pointed out to us in glowing words that the “earthly symbols of Bahá'u'lláh's unearthly Sovereignty must needs, ere the decade separating the two memorable Jubilees draws to a close, be raised as far north as Franklin beyond the Arctic Circle and as far south as the Falkland Islands, marking the southern extremity of the Western Hemisphere, amidst the remote, lonely, inhospitable islands and archipelagos of the South Pacific, the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, the mountain fastnesses of Tibet, the jungles of Africa, the deserts of Arabia, the steppes of Russia, the Indian Reservations of North America, the wastelands of Siberia and Mongolia, amongst the Eskimos of Greenland and Alaska, the Negroes of Africa, the Buddhist strongholds in the heart of Asia, amongst Lapps of Finland, the Polynesians of the South Sea Islands, Negritos of the archipelagos of the South Pacific Ocean.”

The celebration of the Most Great Jubilee marks the end of a century—the greatest century this planet has ever seen, or will see, for a period of five hundred thousand years; a century in which the Promised One of all ages ascended the throne of Prophethood and shed the light of His Revelation from the Day of His Declaration upon mankind for twenty-nine years; a century which witnessed the ministry of that unique Being, the Centre of the Covenant, the Mystery of God, the perfect Man, Who served the Cause of His

glorious Father for no less than twenty-nine years; a century during which His beloved eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Faith, laboured to establish that Cause over the face of the entire planet during the thirty-six years of his office; a century that encompassed fifty-eight years of the Heroic Age of the Faith; that was laved in its opening years by the precious blood of countless martyrs; that gave birth to the Formative Age of the Cause of God; that beheld the hoisting of the banner of Bahá'u'lláh in over two hundred and fifty states, dependencies, chief islands and territories of the globe; a century whose inauguration—ushered in by the Declarations of the Twin Manifestations of God—was so significant that it marked the end of a six-thousand-year-old religious cycle.

The mysterious workings of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, presided over by His divinely inspired Guardian, have enabled the followers of the Most Great Name to approach the coming Jubilee laden with the spoils of untold victories. Already in 1957, when almost half of the Ten Year Plan had run its course, he himself testified to the extraordinary character of those victories: “The phenomenal advances made since the inception of this globe-girdling Crusade, in the brief space of less than five years, eclipses—if we pause to ponder the scope and significance of recent developments—in both the number and quality of the feats achieved by its prosecutors, any previous collective enterprise undertaken by the followers of the Faith, at any time and in any part of the world, since the close of the initial and most turbulent epoch of the Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation.”

Who can doubt for a moment that the hopes he expressed at that time have been abundantly fulfilled? “May this Crusade,” he wrote, “on which the privileged heirs and present successors of the heroes of the Primitive Age of our Faith have so auspiciously embarked, yield . . . such a harvest as will amaze its prosecutors, astonish the world at large, and draw forth from the Source on High a measure of celestial strength adequate to ensure its triumphant consummation.”

Every single territory of the globe named by him as a goal to be opened to the Faith, and apportioned amongst the original twelve national and regional bodies to whom the Plan was given, has been made the recipient of the light of Bahá'u'lláh, with the single

exception of ten within the Soviet orbit, comprising a part of that group which at the inception of the Crusade Shoghi Effendi himself indicated might prove inaccessible. In addition, those numerous supplementary goals, added by him at a later date, have, with one or two exceptions, likewise been opened to the Faith. The phase of the Crusade, which he told us at that time was about to open, has witnessed the fulfilment of his express desire and been truly “immortalized . . . by an unprecedented increase in the number of avowed supporters of the Faith”. By thousands and tens of thousands they have trooped into the Cause of God; behind them already can be seen the shadowy outlines of the hundreds of thousands and millions who are approaching it, tramping nearer day by day. When we remember that the appeal of the Guardian to teach the masses was practically the last words we received from him before his passing, and see that every week brings in a new record of enrolments in Africa, the sub-continent of India, the Pacific area and Latin America, our hearts are uplifted and comforted. We do not come empty-handed to our Most Great Jubilee. We have, by the grace of Bahá'u'lláh, witnessed the realization of those pregnant words of Shoghi Effendi, when he wrote at the inception of the Crusade, that it was “destined . . . to diffuse the radiance of His Faith over the face of the entire planet.”

The second aspect of the phase of the Ten Year Plan which, our beloved Guardian said, would open with the midway-point of the Crusade, has likewise been fulfilled. The three great Temples he called upon the Bahá'ís of the world to rear during this period, now stand, in all their distinction and sanctity, in the heart of Africa, Australasia, and Europe, vibrating forth their spiritual power, joining as great “Silent Teachers”, the beloved first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár raised in the heart of Asia and the Mother Temple of the West, built in the midmost heart of America. The roll call of languages in which our literature has been printed, the tribal and ethnic groups enlisted in the ranks of Bahá'u'lláh's followers, the Assemblies, groups and isolated centres throughout the world where Bahá'ís are labouring to establish the Kingdom of God upon earth, far surpasses the number originally given by Shoghi Effendi in his majestic outline of the tasks to be accomplished during the unique decade separating the two

great Jubilees—the celebration of the Centenary of the Year Nine, and the celebration of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh's station in the plenitude of its splendour in Baghdád, which took place one hundred years ago.

So great an occasion calls for celebrations not only on an international scale, through the holding of the World Congress to take place in London during the Ridván period, but nationally and locally, in every city, hamlet and village where Bahá'ís are to be found throughout the entire world. The fifty-six National and Regional Assemblies should immediately set plans in motion to befittingly commemorate this inestimably glorious event, to celebrate the praises of Bahá'u'lláh, to review the victories won during the Ten Year Crusade, to entertain friends and truth-seekers on special occasions, that they too may partake of our joy and receive that hospitality at our hands which is so highly prized in our teachings.

Mindful of their Guardian's instruction that the "avowed, the primary aim of this Spiritual Crusade is none other than the conquest of the citadels of men's hearts", they must seize this unique opportunity and "befittingly consummate" this great Centenary celebration. We are fortunate in having his own explicit instructions as to the manner in which the believers should celebrate an historic occasion of this nature: "An unprecedented, a carefully conceived, efficiently coordinated, nation-wide campaign, aiming at the proclamation of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, through speeches, articles in the press, and radio broadcasts, should be promptly initiated and vigorously prosecuted. The universality of the Faith, its aims and purposes, episodes in its dramatic history, testimonials to its transforming power, and the character and distinguishing features of its World Order should be emphasized and explained to the general public, and particularly to eminent friends and leaders sympathetic to its cause, who should be approached and invited to participate in the celebrations. Lectures, conferences, banquets, special publications should, to whatever extent is practicable and according to the resources at the disposal of the believers, proclaim the character of this joyous Festival."

This infinitely precious Faith has, through the mercy of Bahá'u'lláh, now enveloped, as the Guardian hoped it would do, "the whole

planet with the radiance of its splendour.” We stand at the crossways; the unfoldment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Divine Plan, under the aegis of His divinely appointed successor, has passed through successive stages in its evolution and reached the point of victory to which the minor plans concerned with its prosecution, and devised and impelled forward by the tremendous drive and vision of Shoghi Effendi himself, have brought it. Many plans, as he himself forecast, will be needed to carry forward the world-redeeming Message of the Supreme Manifestation of God until such time as His Spirit covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, but none of them will be from our beloved Guardian’s own pen. This is our last chance to pay him the tribute of our love, to lay before his memory, at the end of his Crusade, tenderly, sorrowfully, proudly, victory upon victory. We have seen, in the most miraculous manner, these past five years the repeated evidences of God’s sustaining grace poured out upon us. Which one of us can doubt that it lies within our power to rise to still greater heights, to surge forward, in every part of the globe, and seize, in the last moments of our Guardian’s Plan, still further glowing prizes to be heaped at his feet, in his name, as a token of his sacrifice for the glory of Bahá’u’lláh, at that moment when the world over we render Him thanks for His Revelation and pour out paeans of praise to His celestial Might and Beauty?

This is alike a time for great rejoicing and a time for deep soul-searching. Every believer has some particular service he or she can render in these last days of the Crusade; whether it be that long-delayed moment he arises and goes forth to strengthen one of the distant territories where pioneers are still urgently needed, including resettlement of one of the very few which, though previously opened, is at present lacking a resident pioneer, or to fill a home-front need, or to enter into some field of active teaching work, or to aid individually in the rapidly growing enlistment of the masses in the ranks of the Faith, or to give of his substance in supporting its meagre and overburdened Funds, or to attract new souls through opening his home, however humble, to the people of his town or village and inviting them to receive the loving gift of Bahá’í hospitality. No one need be deprived of the bounty of a last worthy service in the closing months of the Guardian’s Crusade.

Who can doubt that the essence of true religion is love; the love of the Creator for His creature, the love of that shadowy creature for his Eternal Beloved, the love of men for all mankind? What greater moment during our lives will ever come than this moment to shower the love Bahá'u'lláh has brought to this world on each other and on our fellow-men, bewildered, fearful, misled, ignorant, cold in a world of hatred, tension, misunderstanding, prejudice and bigotry? He Himself testified that *“a spark of the fire of Thy love is enough to set ablaze a whole world.”* Let us pour out from our hearts, now overflowing in gratitude to Him and thanksgiving for His appearance in our midst, a measure of love upon our fellow-men which will quicken their souls and draw them to the shores of this Most Great Ocean to drink their fill and quench the fire of their separation and longing. Each one of us can do this, this lies within the power of each of us.

Now irrevocably associated with the termination of our beloved Guardian's Crusade comes another event of singular historic importance—the election of the Universal House of Justice. On the first day of the “greatest Bahá'í Festival”, in the shadow of the Shrine of the Báb, the election will take place of that august Body Shoghi Effendi said would be regarded by posterity as “the last refuge of a tottering civilization”. The profound significance of this event, the sacred character of the setting in which it will take place, the nature of this unique Administrative Body, cannot be overestimated: “In a land”, Shoghi Effendi wrote, “already revered and held sacred alike by the adherents of three of the world's outstanding religious systems”, a land which “geographically, spiritually and administratively constitutes”, he stated, “the heart of the entire planet”, and is likewise “the heart and nerve-centre” of Bahá'u'lláh's “world-encompassing” Administrative Order and the “world seat” of that system—in such a land the delegates for the election of the Universal House of Justice have been invited to foregather. In a spot overshadowed by Mt. Carmel, *“the Hill of God and His Vineyard”*, the *“Mountain of the Lord”*, to which *“all nations shall flow”*; faced by the plain of 'Akká, which Muhammad called the *“Banquet-Hall of God”* and that city *“whose whiteness”*, He said, *“is pleasing unto God”*, that city of which Bahá'u'lláh wrote: *“Upon Our arrival We were*

welcomed with banners of light, whereupon the Voice of the Spirit cried out saying: ‘Soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under these banners’”; in the neighbourhood of not only the Shrine of the Báb, which Shoghi Effendi associated with the words of Bahá’u’lláh in the Tablet of Carmel when He described *“the celestial Kaaba round which have circled in adoration the favoured of God, the pure in heart, and the company of the most exalted angels”*, but of those three sanctified resting-places which our Guardian informed us were the “spot designed constitute focal centre Bahá’í Administrative Institutions at Faith’s World Centre”—in such a peerless setting as this will the first International Bahá’í Convention be convened.

That House which Shoghi Effendi called “the Supreme Legislative Body of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh”; which he identified with those majestic words of the Manifestation of God Himself in His Tablet of Carmel: *“Erelong will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names”*; which derives its being from no less a source than the Aqdas itself, designated by Shoghi Effendi “the Mother Book” of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation and the “Repository of His Laws”; which Bahá’u’lláh called the *“Book of God”* and is, He asserted, *“My weightiest testimony unto all people”*; and of which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament states: *“Unto the Most Holy Book every one must turn and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this Body, whether unanimously or by a majority doth carry, that is verily the Truth and the Purpose of God Himself. Whoso doth deviate therefrom is verily of them that love discord, hath shown forth malice and turned away from the Lord of the Covenant”*—such a House as this, constituting, Shoghi Effendi tells us, “the last unit crowning the structure of the embryonic World Order of Bahá’u’lláh”, will be elected next Ridván.

At such a turning-point in the history of our Faith we are indeed blessed through having received, from both the Centre of the Covenant and His appointed Guardian, many indications as to both the function and method of election of this glorious Institution. “To the trustees of the House of Justice”, Shoghi Effendi wrote, “He (Bahá’u’lláh) assigns the duty of legislating on matters not expressly

provided in His Writings, and promises that God will *'inspire them with whatsoever He willeth'*." In His Will and Testament 'Abdu'l-Bahá states: *"And now, concerning the House of Justice which God hath ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error, it must be elected by universal suffrage, that is, by the believers. Its members must be manifestations of the fear of God and daysprings of knowledge and understanding, must be steadfast in God's faith and the well-wishers of all mankind. By this House is meant the Universal House of Justice, that is, in all countries a secondary House of Justice must be instituted, and these secondary Houses of Justice must elect the members of the Universal one. Unto this body all things must be referred. It enacteth all ordinances and regulations that are not to be found in the explicit Holy Text."* *"It is incumbent upon these members (of the Universal House of Justice)"*, 'Abdu'l-Bahá writes, *"to gather in a certain place and deliberate upon all problems which have caused difference, questions that are obscure and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book. Whatsoever they decide has the same effect as the Text itself."*

The independence of this Supreme Body from its electorate is clearly set forth by the Guardian himself in his analysis of the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament: "The powers and prerogatives of the Universal House of Justice, possessing the exclusive right to legislate on matters not explicitly revealed in the Most Holy Book; the ordinance exempting its members from any responsibility to those whom they represent, and from the obligation to conform to their views, convictions or sentiments; the specific provisions requiring the free and democratic election by the mass of the faithful of the Body that constitutes the sole legislative organ in the world-wide Bahá'í community—these are among the features which combine to set apart the Order identified with the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh from any of the existing systems of human government." The members of that Body "are to follow," Shoghi Effendi says, "in a prayerful attitude, the dictates and promptings of their conscience. They may, indeed they must, acquaint themselves with the conditions prevailing among the community, must weigh dispassionately in their minds the merits of any case presented for their consideration, but must reserve for themselves the right of an

unfettered decision. *'God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth'*, is Bahá'u'lláh's incontrovertible assurance. They, and not the body of those who either directly or indirectly elect them, have thus been made the recipients of the divine guidance which is at once the life-blood and ultimate safeguard of this Revelation." The Guardian has made abundantly clear that the enactments of the Universal House of Justice are "authoritative and binding" and that its "exclusive right and prerogative is to pronounce upon and deliver the final judgement on such laws and ordinances as Bahá'u'lláh has not expressly revealed"; and that it is "the body designed to supplement and apply His (Bahá'u'lláh's) legislative ordinances".

Laboriously, painstakingly, over a period of thirty-six years, the Guardian implemented the instructions revealed in the Holy Text of Bahá'u'lláh's Writings and elaborated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Over the face of the globe he ensured that those Local Spiritual Assemblies, which he characterized as "the chief sinews of Bahá'í society, as well as the ultimate foundation of its administrative structure", should be elected on a firm foundation; he said they were presently "designated as 'Spiritual Assemblies'—an appellation that must in the course of time be replaced by their permanent and more descriptive title of 'Houses of Justice' . . ."; he informed us the National Assemblies, which the Master Himself had designated as "*secondary Houses of Justice*", would constitute "the electoral bodies in the formation of the International House of Justice"; he assured us that 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself had "established beyond any doubt the identity of the present Bahá'í Spiritual Assemblies with the Houses of Justice referred to by Bahá'u'lláh", and explained that "it has been found advisable to bestow upon the elected representatives of Bahá'í communities throughout the world the temporary appellation of Spiritual Assemblies, a term which, as the position and aims of the Bahá'í Faith are better understood and more fully recognized, will gradually be superseded by the permanent and more appropriate designation of House of Justice"; he stated that: "Upon the National Houses of Justice of the East and the West devolves the task, in conformity with the explicit provisions of the Will (of 'Abdu'l-Bahá), of electing directly the members of the International House of Justice."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, in one of His Tablets, expounding upon the words of Bahá'u'lláh Himself, has made it clear that only men are eligible for election to the Universal House of Justice: *"The House of Justice, however, according to the positive commandments of the Doctrine of God, has been specialized to the men, for a (specific) reason or exercise of wisdom on the part of God, and this reason will presently appear, even as the sun at midday."* When specifically asked why women were not to be elected to this Supreme Body, Shoghi Effendi, through his secretary, gave the following explanation: "Regarding your question, the Master said the wisdom of having no women on the International House of Justice would become manifest in the future. We have no other indication than this. . . . when the International House of Justice is elected, there will only be men on it, as this is the law of the *Aqdas*."

With the closing of the first epoch in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan we are now entering a new phase in the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Who can doubt that with the election of this Supreme Legislative Body tremendous forces will be released? Already, as early as 1951, Shoghi Effendi told us the 1953 celebrations would signalize the "inauguration long-anticipated intercontinental stage in administrative evolution of Faith." He pointed out to us that the Crusade and its unfoldment would be "acclaimed by posterity as counterpart to consolidation Faith at its World Centre through recent formation International Bahá'í Council in Holy Land". We now stand on the threshold of what, no devout Bahá'í can question, is an event of incalculable spiritual significance. We are entering what Shoghi Effendi termed the "tenth part" of that majestic process which was "set in motion at the dawn of the Adamic cycle", the part which must witness: "the penetration of that light, in the course of numerous crusades and of successive epochs of both the Formative and Golden Ages of the Faith, into all the remaining territories of the globe through the erection of the entire machinery of Bahá'u'lláh's Administrative Order in all territories, both East and West, the stage at which the light of God's triumphant Faith shining in all its power and glory will have suffused and enveloped the entire planet."

We have been assured by our Guardian that the history of this Faith “if read aright, may be said to resolve itself into a series of pulsations, of alternating crises and triumphs, leading it ever nearer to its divinely appointed destiny.” The victorious termination of his Crusade, followed immediately by the erection of that Institution which he informs us is “the exponent and guardian of that Divine Justice which can alone ensure the security of, and establish the reign of law and order in, a strangely disordered world . . .” cannot but set in motion, once again, this process of crisis and triumph. With awe, with joy, with courage, with renewed dedication, we are ready to take the next step, comforted and encouraged by his assurance that in spite of the fact that “the tribulations attending the progressive unfoldment of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh have indeed been such as to exceed in gravity those from which the religions of the past have suffered . . . these tribulations have failed utterly to impair its unity, or to create, even temporarily, a breach in the ranks of its adherents. It has not only survived these ordeals, but has emerged, purified and inviolate, endowed with greater capacity to face and surmount any crisis which its resistless march may engender in the future.”

“As the administrative processes expand,” he explained, “as their operation steadily improves, as their necessity is more fully and strikingly demonstrated, and their beneficent influence correspondingly grows more apparent and evident, so will the blessings, the strength and guidance bestowed by Him Who animates and directs these processes be more abundantly vouchsafed to those who have been called upon to utilize them, in this age, for the execution of God’s Purpose and for the ultimate redemption of a sore-stricken travailing humanity. Many will be the setbacks, the shocks and the disturbances, which the commotions of a convulsive age must produce; yet no force, however violent and world-wide in its range and catastrophic in its immediate consequences, can either halt these processes or deflect their appointed course. How great, then, the privilege, and how staggering the responsibility, of those who are destined to guard over them and to bring them eventually to full fruition. Nothing short of utter, of continuous consecration to His Will and Purpose can enable them to fulfil their high destiny.”

Our invincible Faith “has gone”, he wrote, “from strength to strength, has preserved its unity and integrity, has diffused its light over five continents, reared the institutions of its Administrative Order and spread its ramifications to the four corners of the earth, and launched its systematic campaigns in both the Western and Eastern Hemispheres. For such benefits, for such an arresting and majestic vindication of the undefeatable powers inherent in our precious Faith, we can but bow our heads in humility, awe and thanksgiving, renew our pledge of fealty to it, and, each covenanting in his own heart, resolve to prove faithful to that pledge, and persevere to the very end, until our earthly share of servitude to so transcendent and priceless a Cause has been totally and completely fulfilled.”

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í World

November 4, 1962

Beloved Co-workers:

In accordance with the decision of the body of the Hands of the Cause of God regarding the election of the Universal House of Justice, we are enclosing nine ballot-papers and nine envelopes to contain these ballots, and nine copies of this covering letter, one for each member of your Assembly. These ballot-papers carry all the necessary instructions for voting.

The following information should be carefully read, and if there is anything which is not entirely clear, your questions should be sent immediately to the World Centre for clarification.

1. It is the members individually, and not the body of the National Assembly collectively, which makes up the electorate of the Universal House of Justice.

2. Because of the sacred nature of this historic occasion, and in order that those voting by mail may also partake of the spiritual atmosphere which surrounds this unique and unprecedented election, we urge each National and Regional Spiritual Assembly to make every effort to meet together in a body on this occasion; not as

a part of a National Assembly session, but as a separate and distinct electoral session for the purpose of casting their ballots for the Universal House of Justice. If this proves unfeasible, the delegates may vote alone, and send their ballots to their National Secretary.

3. This covering letter of instructions should be read at that time. The attached selections concerning the nature of Bahá'í elections should also be shared with the delegates, and this should be followed by a period of prayer. Then, in that spiritual atmosphere, only those who are not able to attend the World Convention in person, should cast their ballots for the election of the Universal House of Justice.

4. Each ballot-paper should be placed in the ballot-envelope and sealed, and neither ballot-paper nor envelope should be signed. This envelope containing the ballot-paper should be placed inside a second envelope and sealed, and the name and address of the delegate written plainly upon it for identification purposes.

5. These envelopes should be given to the Secretary of the National Assembly, who will immediately send them by Registered Air Mail Post to the Hands of the Faith in the World Centre.

6. If any delegate has any doubt about his ability to be present at the World Convention in the Holy Land, he or she should vote by mail at this time. Then, if it is possible to attend in person, the ballot can be returned to the delegate after arrival in the Holy Land, so that the delegate may vote during the Convention itself.

7. Those who are planning to attend the World Convention should not vote at this time, but should bring their ballot-paper and envelope with them.

8. If, at the last minute, a delegate is unable to attend in person as planned, he should himself follow the steps outlined in this letter and send his properly enclosed ballot-paper by Registered Air Mail Post to the World Centre.

9. It is left to the judgement of each National and Regional Spiritual Assembly to set the date for such a meeting as mentioned above in Point No. 2. The important thing to remember, is to make certain that sufficient time is allowed so that these ballots will be received at the World Centre not later than April 10, 1963.

10. This letter and the enclosed ballot forms should be sent by the Secretary to each individual member of the National or Regional Assembly without delay. If translations are necessary, these can be sent later to the member needing them. However, only the original printed ballot will be valid for the election.

We are confident that each single delegate is keenly aware of the grave responsibility and blessed, sacred privilege which he or she has been given in participating in this unequalled event which will cast its holy and protective shadow down through the ages.

We shall pray ardently at the sacred Shrines that each one of you will be sustained, inspired, and guided by the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, in bringing into reality this august and glorious Institution which His Infallible Pen created, which the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, defined and exalted, and the foundations of which our beloved Guardian laboriously laid during thirty-six years of unremitting toil in perfecting the administrative institutions of the Faith and calling into being those National Assemblies which are the sustaining pillars of this Supreme Administrative Body whose members you are now called upon to elect.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

THE NATURE OF BAHÁ'Í ELECTIONS

The electors “must approach their task with absolute detachment” and with “that purity of spirit that can alone obtain our Beloved’s most cherished desire.”

Shoghi Effendi

The elector “is called upon to vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold.”

Shoghi Effendi

The elector has a “God-given right . . . to vote only in favour of those who he is conscientiously convinced are the most worthy

candidates.”

Shoghi Effendi

“Hence it is incumbent upon the chosen delegates to consider without the least trace of passion and prejudice, and irrespective of any material consideration, the names of only those who can best combine the necessary qualities of unquestioned loyalty, of selfless devotion, of a well-trained mind, of recognized ability and mature experience.”

Shoghi Effendi

**BALLOT FOR THE ELECTION OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF
JUSTICE
RIDVÁN, 1963**

1. Our beloved Guardian has said that electors in a Bahá'í election should “consider without the least trace of passion and prejudice, and irrespective of any material consideration, the names of only those who can best combine the necessary qualities of unquestioned loyalty, of selfless devotion, of a well-trained mind, of recognized ability and mature experience.”
2. He has also stated that “when the International House of Justice is elected, there will only be men on it, as this is the Law of the *Aqdas*.”
3. The Hands of the Cause in their message of November 4, 1961, referred to the election of the Universal House of Justice in these terms: “That all male voting members throughout the Bahá'í world are eligible for election to the Universal House of Justice. The Hands do not limit the freedom of the electors. However, as they have been given the explicit duties of guarding over the security and ensuring the propagation of the Faith, they ask the electors of the House of Justice to leave them free at this time to discharge their duties. When that Supreme and Infallible Body has been elected, it will decide on all matters concerning its own membership.”

NOTES:

The following instructions are for those who will be voting by mail:

(1) This ballot when completed should be given to the Secretary of your Assembly in the envelope provided with it, and the envelope should be sealed.

(2) All ballots should be mailed by the Secretaries of National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies to reach the World Centre before Ridván, 1963.

(3) Neither ballot paper nor envelope should be signed.

(4) Each of the nine names on the ballot should be written in block capital letters and not written in long-hand.

(5) After each name, the name of the country should be written in block capital letters, so that it is absolutely clear for whom the vote is cast, in case of identical names in various parts of the world.

(6) Great care should be taken not to repeat any name.

(7) Votes must be cast for nine people. To vote for more than nine or less than nine will invalidate the ballot.

.....

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....
- 6.....
- 7.....
- 8.....
- 9.....

BAHA'I WILMETTE
 NOVEMBER 7, 1962

OVERJOYED SHARE BELIEVERS NOW RACING LAST LAP
 BELOVED GUARDIAN'S HISTORY MAKING CRUSADE
 THRILLING NEWS LATEST ACHIEVEMENTS MASS
 CONVERSION INDIAN SUBCONTINENT WHERE ALMOST
 THIRTY THOUSAND HAVE ENTERED FOLD FAITH SINCE

RIDVAN RAISING TOTAL ABOVE FORTYTWO THOUSAND
STOP 528 LOCAL ASSEMBLIES NOW ESTABLISHED 705
GROUPS 294 CENTRES TOTALLING 1527 LOCALITIES
THROUGHOUT COUNTRY STOP GLORIOUS VICTORIES
RECENTLY WON COMMUNITIES MOST GREAT NAME INDIA
AFRICA CHALLENGE ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD ONE LAST
MIGHTY EFFORT ACHIEVE DISTINCTION ALL IMPORTANT
TEACHING FIELD ERE PRECIOUS UNIQUE GLOBE
GIRDLING PLAN DRAWS CLOSE STOP AIRMAIL MESSAGE
HANDS NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

November 8, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Among the many glorious victories being won during these closing months of the beloved Guardian's World Crusade is the establishment of a very large number of new Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, in accordance with the action of the Hands of the Faith permitting Local Spiritual Assemblies to be formed at any time during the year preceding the great Jubilee in Ridván, 1963.

The establishment of so many new Local Assemblies raises certain practical questions in connection with the assignment of delegates for the National Conventions which are to be held after the World Congress next year. In many cases it will be necessary to raise the number of delegates comprising the National Conventions in order to include newly-formed Assemblies in the apportionment of delegates. However, it is also necessary to establish a cut-off date so that each National Assembly will have ample time to make the apportionment of delegates and to carry out the other necessary steps in arranging for election of the delegates.

In order that the necessary actions may be taken by the World Centre and by the various Regional and National Assemblies, we are designating January 1, 1963 as the deadline for the establishment of

Local Assemblies which are to be represented by delegates at the various National Conventions. In other words, only those Local Assemblies formed before January 1 of next year will be included in the apportionment of delegates for the National Conventions. We wish to emphasize that in accordance with the announcement made in our last Ridván Message, Local Assemblies can continue to be formed up to April 21, 1963, but only those formed prior to January 1 can be represented by delegates at the National Conventions to be held in May, 1963.

In order that any necessary changes in the number of delegates due to an increase in number of Local Assemblies may be made, we request all National and Regional Assemblies to inform the Hands in the Holy Land immediately after January 1, 1963 the number of Local Assemblies existing in their areas at that time; also, if any National Assemblies have not already done so, they should inform us as to the number of delegates comprising the last Annual Convention, held during the Ridván period of 1962. This information should reach us in Haifa not later than January 15, 1963. As soon as possible thereafter, we shall inform each National Assembly the number of delegates approved for its National Convention.

As we approach the end of the World Crusade and the historic time of the Most Great Jubilee, it becomes increasingly evident that an ever greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit is taking place, assisting the devoted believers everywhere in their efforts to crown the beloved Guardian's Plan with unprecedented victories in its final months.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To All National Spiritual Assemblies

November 25, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

As we draw closer to the historic festivities and activities which will take place next Ridván, it becomes imperative for the National

Assemblies to have a uniform policy in handling such important matters as publicity given to the election of the Universal House of Justice in the Holy Land next April. This would include both publicity at the time of the event, as well as from now on. We have devoted considerable thought to this matter, and in view of the policies of our beloved Guardian and his repeated emphasis on the importance of protecting the World Centre, the heart and nerve centre of the Faith, we wish to share with you our views and instructions in this matter.

As you are well aware, opposition to the Faith in Islamic countries is acute; there is a strong resentment against the Bahá'ís, not only on religious grounds, but also at the present time because our World Centre is situated in the State of Israel. This position, which has been brought about through the political situation in the world, only adds to our responsibility and the necessity for us to be wise and cautious in order to protect both the World Centre and our brethren who are living—in large numbers—in Muslim countries.

We feel that the great emphasis in publicity connected with the Jubilee next Ridván should be on the Jubilee itself; in other words that the Bahá'ís are celebrating the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh. The aims and purposes of the Faith can be stressed, its remarkable spread during the last ten years, and emphasis placed on the World Congress to be held in London, at which time representatives from all over the Bahá'í world will give thanks for the progress made, on the occasion of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh.

In focusing the attention of the press on the above lines of publicity, we will be able to reach many people with the name "Bahá'í", and acquaint them with the purposes and aims of our Faith.

Any reference to the holding of an international election in the Holy Land should cover the following points: That the various national Bahá'í communities are voting for the election of the Supreme Administrative Body of the Bahá'í Faith; that the World Centre of the Bahá'ís is situated in Israel because in 1868 the Founder of the Faith, Bahá'u'lláh, at that time a prisoner of the Turks, was exiled to 'Akká and passed away in that country; that as His tomb and that of His Forerunner, the Báb, are places of visitation for the Bahá'ís throughout the world, the World Centre was located in

the vicinity of their resting-places; that it is the Spiritual and Administrative Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, and that its world-wide affairs are administered from this Centre.

We would like to call your attention to the fact that the beloved Guardian himself used more than one term in referring to the Universal House of Justice, especially the phrase "International House of Justice". In view of this we feel that, as in the eyes of the general public the term "Universal House of Justice" could be easily misconstrued, it would be better to use this other term, or to use it in conjunction with "Universal House of Justice". The use of the word "Infallible" in the press would also be in this category, since although it is clear to the Bahá'ís, it may be misunderstood and misrepresented by the public. We must always remember that when we publicize the Faith, our aim is not to make it seem something strange to the public, but rather to express its purposes and functions in ways that are easily understood and will not create prejudice or opposition.

We feel very strongly that at a time when tensions between the Arab States and other Muslim countries and Israel are acute, we must be exceedingly wise and not focus too much attention on the Convention to be held here. The greatness of this occasion in the eyes of the Bahá'ís could never be properly assessed; but there is no reason why we should tell the whole world this in the press if it is going to have the exact opposite effect and create more complications with which the Universal House of Justice will have to deal when it assumes its supremely important functions.

We ask that you do not circulate this letter in any way, but that where appropriate you summarize its contents in a confidential letter to the Local Assemblies throughout your area and any national committees which may be involved, emphasizing the importance of these instructions and the necessity for wise handling of what undoubtedly will prove to be an unprecedented opportunity for publicizing the Faith in the proper way.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

BAHA'I WILMETTE

DECEMBER 17, 1962

FROM MOROCCO NAVIDI INFORMS PRISONERS
CONDEMNED RELIGIOUS GROUNDS RADIO HERE AND
REUTERS NEWS DISPATCH STATES THREE CONDEMNED
DEATH OTHERS LONG IMPRISONMENT HARD LABOUR
STOP BAHA'I INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD
IMMEDIATELY RELEASE OFFICIAL BAHA'I STATEMENT
PRESS DEPLORING MOROCCAN RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION
INJUSTICE FLOUTING ADHERENCE UN CHARTER ALSO
RESOLUTION CONDEMNING RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE
JUST ADOPTED UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY STOP STRESS
USUAL POINTS BAHA'I POSITION OBEDIENCE
GOVERNMENT STOP . . . KEEP US INFORMED
DEVELOPMENTS PRAYING SUCCESS.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I LONDON

DECEMBER 23, 1962

RELAY BY CABLE AT OUR EXPENSE FOLLOWING ALL
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES EUROPE ALSO
NORTHWEST AFRICA QUOTE YOUR ASSEMBLY
REQUESTED IMMEDIATELY CABLE U THANT SECRETARY
GENERAL UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK REQUESTING HIS
INTERVENTION BEHALF MOROCCAN BAHA'IS UNJUSTLY
SENTENCED DEATH AND LIFE IMPRISONMENT RELIGIOUS
GROUNDS IN DEFIANCE UN CHARTER STOP USE OWN
WORDING STOP ALSO CONTACT UNITED NATIONS
ASSOCIATION YOUR COUNTRY URGING SIMILAR APPEAL U
THANT UNQUOTE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I WILMETTE

DECEMBER 23, 1962

RELAY BY CABLE AT OUR EXPENSE FOLLOWING ALL NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WESTERN HEMISPHERE QUOTE YOUR ASSEMBLY REQUESTED IMMEDIATELY CABLE U THANT SECRETARY GENERAL UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK REQUESTING HIS INTERVENTION BEHALF MOROCCAN BAHA'IS UNJUSTLY SENTENCED DEATH AND LIFE IMPRISONMENT RELIGIOUS GROUNDS IN DEFIANCE UN CHARTER STOP USE OWN WORDING STOP ALSO CONTACT UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION YOUR COUNTRY URGING SIMILAR APPEAL U THANT UNQUOTE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

On December 26th this same message was cabled to the National Spiritual Assemblies of:

Australia
Burma
Ethiopia
Fiji
India
Írán
Japan
New Zealand
Southern Rhodesia
Turkey
Uganda
Vietnam

BAHA'I WILMETTE

DECEMBER 25, 1962

RELIABLE SOURCES ASSURE APPEAL FILED TRIAL
SCHEDULED END JANUARY.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH.

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . .

December 27, 1962

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Further consideration of the way our support of the Moroccan Bahá'í prisoners is shaping up has led us to the conclusion that it is advisable for your National Assembly and all Local Assemblies to write letters direct to the Moroccan Ambassador in your country.

Obviously it should not be a form letter, but the points to be embodied should be the same as those we asked you to use in our recent letter regarding obtaining publicity. Stress should be laid on the fact that obedience to government is a fundamental part of the Bahá'í teachings and that far from discrediting Islám, all Bahá'ís, no matter what background they come from, believe Muhammad was the Prophet of God, the Qur'án a Holy Book, and love and respect Him and His teachings. No attack should be made either on the Moroccan government or the Moroccan court. The plea should be for justice and religious freedom.

We feel that following the wave of international publicity the case has received, and the actions being taken through the United Nations and other non-Bahá'í societies, this wave of letters reaching the Moroccan representative in different countries will keep the matter before that government and add pressure at the right time.

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**THE MINISTRY OF THE
CUSTODIANS**

1963

To the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of . . .

January 27, 1963

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land have surveyed the number of delegates allocated to the various national communities for their National Convention, and have increased the number of delegates allocated to some of the communities.

The number of delegates allocated to your community for this year's National Convention is . . .

With warm Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

National Spiritual Assembly

Alaska	19
Argentina	9
Australia	38
Austria	9
Belgium	9
British Isles	76
Burma	19
Canada	38
Ceylon	38
Chile	19
Colombia	19
Costa Rica	38
Cuba	9
Denmark	9
Dominican Republic	9
Finland	9
Haiti	19
Holland	19
Iran	95
Italy	19
Jamaica	9

Luxembourg	9
Mexico	19
New Zealand	9
Nicaragua	19
North East Asia	38
Paraguay	9
Peru	19
Portugal	19
South East Asia	95
South Pacific Is.	38
Spain	19
Sweden	9
Switzerland	19
Turkey	19
Uruguay	9
USA	171

To All Hands of the Cause of God

February 18, 1963

Beloved Co-workers:

We are sending you the attached suggested Agenda for the Annual Gathering beginning April 9th in the Holy Land. You will see that we have provided for any additional suggestions from the Hands of the Cause under the first item on the proposed Agenda: "Subjects Presented by the Hands". Any suggestions you may wish to add to the Agenda can be presented at this time at the outset of the Annual Gathering. If there are any other thoughts you may wish to express, please send them on to us after you have received and studied the attached suggested Agenda.

The news of additional teaching victories is received almost daily from various parts of the world, assuring a glorious conclusion to our beloved Guardian's Holy Crusade.

We are eagerly looking forward to your arrival in the Holy Land, the prelude to this unique and historic Ridván Festival.

With warmest and deepest Bahá'í love,
In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

PROPOSED AGENDA - 1963 CONCLAVE

1. SUBJECTS PRESENTED BY THE HANDS
2. COMPLETION OF THE WORLD CRUSADE
 - Other Unfinished Tasks
 - European Temple
3. MASS CONVERSION AND CONSOLIDATION
4. FINANCIAL SITUATION
 - World Centre Report
 - Sources of Funds
5. ACTIVITIES OF THE HANDS
 - Future Functions
 - Hands in the Holy Land
 - Assignment of Hands
 - Auxiliary Boards
 - Travel of the Hands
6. THE WORLD CONGRESS
7. RELATIONSHIP OF THE HANDS AND THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE
8. THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
 - Convention
 - Announcement
 - Finances

To the International Bahá'í Council

March 8, 1963

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Would you kindly convey to the Congress Arrangements Committee in London the following information:

Realizing that there may be problems which arise unexpectedly at the Congress, and are of a nature which the Congress Arrangements Committee may feel are not within its province, we have appointed three of the Hands residing in the Holy Land to be responsible for consulting with the Congress Arrangements Committee in case this should become necessary. They are: Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and Mr. Leroy Ioas.

With loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Hands of the Cause of God

March 11, 1963

Beloved Co-workers:

Enclosed is a preliminary draft of the program of the World Congress with names of speakers and chairmen of different sessions, but without the quotations which will appear on the printed program. Since some changes may still be necessary, we ask that you keep the contents confidential.

It has been exceedingly difficult to formulate this program, as you can well imagine. It has been our hope and aim throughout to produce a program which would be in keeping with the greatness of the occasion, and to have it as representative as possible, including the wonderful richness of races and ethnic groups now in the Faith. We also felt that the Hands, the conveners of the Congress, should not unduly monopolize the program. Our great difficulty has been in finding Bahá'ís, known to us, who will be present at the Congress, and who can address in English, an audience of over six thousand people.

We have a problem which we want to share with you before you come here for our Annual Gathering, as by then it may be too late to

take action. We have decided that it would be both unwise and unbefitting the sacredness of the World Centre to have it seriously understaffed during the Congress. Two Hands, we feel, must be present here all the time. In order not to deprive anyone of the privilege of attending at least part of the beloved Guardian's Congress, we are arranging for four Hands residing in the Holy Land (who have volunteered to be here) to alternate during the first and second halves of the Congress. However, we find this will not cover all of the days some of them must be in London because of the plane schedules.

We would like to know if any of the other Hands would volunteer to make this sacrifice to ensure the protection of the World Centre; one who would be willing to stay the first part (up until Tuesday, April 30) and then go to the Congress, and one who would be willing to leave London on Tuesday, April 30, and come to Haifa. We can then adjust our program and the movements of the Hands here in a satisfactory manner, and at the same time never leave the World Centre unprotected.

Please let us know if any of you find this possible, so that we can make plans.

Needless to say, as the time draws nigh for so many wonderful events to take place, the work at the World Centre becomes increasingly heavy. It is a comfort to know that we will so soon be with you all again and able to consult together in our Conclave.

With our warmest and deepest love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS RIDVÁN 1963

(The members of National Spiritual Assemblies constitute the Electoral College of the Universal House of Justice)

Note: The letter "c" indicates that the member attended the International Convention in the Holy Land.

ALASKA

c Mrs. Kathryn Volz Alio
c Mr. Donald A. Anderson
c Mr. Howard J. Brown
c Mr. Robin C. Fowler
c Mrs. Evelyn G. Huffman
c Mrs. Lois Katherine Lee
c Mr. Robert E. Moul
c Mrs. Janet Smith
c Mr. Verne Larue Stout

ARABIA

Mr. Zia'u'llah Adlparvar
Dr. Nosrat'u'llah Afnan
Mr. Zabih'u'llah Golmohamadi
Mr. Khosroo Khosravi
Mr. Ahmad Mohseni
Mr. Masih'u'llah Rouhani
Dr. Manouchehr Salmanpour
Dr. Aziz'u'llah Tahzib
Mr. Shahab Zahra'i

ARGENTINA

Miss Mary Binda
c Mr. Manuel Caballero
c Mr. Cayetano Liardo
c Mr. Cinar Torres López
c Dr. José Mielnik
c Mr. Badiollah Nosratpour
Mr. Shapour Saeed
Mr. Valiullah Samadani
Mr. Ricardo Schwartzman

AUSTRALIA

c Mr. Noel Bluett

Mr. James Heggie
c Mr. Goro Jorgic
c Mr. Peter J. Khan
c Mrs. Greta Lake
c Miss Thelma Isobel Perks
c Mr. David Podger
c Miss Pamela Ringwood
Mr. Jeffrey W. Rodwell

AUSTRIA

c Dr. Aminollah Ahmedzade
Mr. Günther Haug
c Miss Ursula Kohler
c Mr. Darius Ma'ani
Miss Bertha Matthiesen
c Mr. Franz Pöllinger
c Mr. Manutschehr Samyi
c Dr. Mehdi Vargha
c Mrs. Johanna von Werthern

BELGIUM

Mr. Adolphe Decouvreur
c Mrs. Elsa de Koninck
c Mr. Shoghi Ghadimi
c Mr. Fernand Gillain
c Mr. Louis Hénuzet
c Mr. Robert Hubar
c Mr. Hassan-Ali Kamran
Mr. Benjamin Levy
c Mrs. Lea Nys

BOLIVIA

Mr. Estanislao Alvarez
c Mr. Athos Costas
Mrs. Angélica Costas
c Mr. Massoud Khamsi
Mrs. Yolanda Claros de López

Mr. Sabino Ortega
c Mr. Alberto Saldias Reyes
Mr. Alberto Rocabado
Mr. Andrés Jachakollo Ticona

BRAZIL

Dr. Mario de Vasconcellos Dantas C.
Miss Dinah de Almeida C. Franca
Mr. Ernani Mentz
c Mr. Edmund John Miessler
c Mrs. Muriel Auble Miessler
Mr. Vivaldo Ramos
Mrs. Margot Worley
c Mrs. Nylza Taetz
c Mr. Rangvald Taetz

BRITISH ISLES

c Mr. Owen Battrick
c Mr. Ernest Gregory
c Mr. David Hofman
c Mrs. Marion Hofman
c Mr. John Long
c Mr. Charles Macdonald
c Mrs. Betty Reed
c Mr. Adib Taherzadeh-Malmiri
c Mr. John Wade

BURMA

U Ba Sein
Daw Hla Hla
Mr. Shah Alam Chowdhuri
Daw Thoung Khin
U Myit
Mr. A.K. Ko Gyi
U Doolman
U Soe Tin
Mr. Syed Murtaza Ali

CANADA

- c Mr. A. H. Banani
- c Mr. Angus Cowan
- c Mr. Rowland Estall
- Mr. Glen Eyford
- c Mr. Lloyd G. Gardner
- c Mr. Frederick Graham
- c Mr. J. Douglas Martin
- c Mrs. Peggy Ross
- c Mrs. Audrey Westheuser

CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICA

- c Mr. Edmund John Cardell
- c Mr. Charles Nalika Chelodi
- c Mr. Oloro Kareu Sepiria Epyeru
- c Mr. Philip Hainsworth
- c Mr. Sosipateri Malinga Isimai
- c Mr. Israel Kanyerezi-Mukasa
- c Mr. Kolonario Oule Omoyen
- c Mr. Hassan Abdel Fattah Sabri
- c Mrs. Isobel Alice Locke Sabri

CEYLON

- Mr. V. Chitravelu
- Mr. A. M. Eshraghian
- Mrs. Heshmat Eshraghian
- Mr. A.C.M. Fassy
- Mr. B. Kesawadatte
- Mr. L.U.C. Kuruppu
- Mr. S. Nahvi
- Mr. A.B.D. de Silva
- Mr. K. Sivappirakasam

CHILE

- Mr. Ricardo Bañados

Mr. Sergio Guillermo Aparicio
Miss Ema Luisa Cabezas
c Dr. Alexander Reid
Mr. Edmundo Fuchslocher
Mr. Jorgé Pallés
Miss Sylvia Leticia Franchino
Mrs. Lina Gianotti F. de Smithson
Mr. Carlos Calixto Martínez

COLOMBIA

c Mrs. Gloria de Fritzsche
c Mr. Charles Hornby
c Mr. Luís Montenegro
c Miss Leonor Porras
c Mr. Habib Rezvani
c Mrs. Ellen Sims
c Mr. Ervin Thomas
c Mrs. Wilma Thomas
c Mr. Stewart M. Waddell

COSTA RICA

Mr. José Baltodano
Mr. Aaron J. Barnes
c Mr. Esteban Canales
c Mr. Theodore Cortazzi
Mrs. Jean Dobbs
Mr. Richard Mirkovich
c Mr. John Rutan
c Mr. Antonio Soto
Mr. Fernando Soto

CUBA

Miss Josefina Camacho
Mr. Antonio Cubero
Miss Migdalia Diez
Miss Gloria Ortega
Miss Juana Ortuña

Mr. Carmelo Pérez
Miss Celestina Pérez
Mrs. Marta Pimentel
Mr. Rafael Pimentel

DENMARK

- c Mr. Palle Bischoff
- c Mr. Johan Fobian
- c Mr. Baher Forghani
Mr. Egon Kamming
Mrs. Honor Kamming
- c Mr. Kaj Mulvad
Mr. Verner Nielsen
- c Mrs. Lisbeth Andersen Nygård
- c Mr. Fereydoon Vahman

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

- c Mr. Rafael Benzán
Mr. Manuel García
- c Mr. Celestino Gómez
- c Mrs. Frieda van Houten de Gómez
Mr. Felix Ramón Gómez
Mr. Rafael Felipe Peña
Mr. Benito Alejandro Pérez
- c Mrs. Sheila Rice-Wray
Mr. Wilfred Rowland

ECUADOR

- Mr. Juan Luís Aguirre
- c Mr. Khalilu'llah Behjati
- c Mrs. Dorothy Campbell
- c Mrs. Patricia Conger
Mr. Alberto Carbo
Mr. Fereydoun Monadjem
Mr. Bolívar Plaza Newell
- c Mr. Raúl Pavón
- c Mrs. Gayle Woolson

EL SALVADOR

- c Mr. Quentin Hamilton Farrand
- Mrs. Jeanne Welsh Farrand
- Mr. Rafael García
- Mrs. Elsa Maria Cubilla de García
- Mr. Marco Antonio Martínez
- Mrs. Marcia Isabel Matamoros
- Mr. Mauricio Hernandez Muñoz
- c Mr. José María Padilla
- Mr. Gabriel Torres

FINLAND

- c Mr. Godratollah Bidardel
- c Mrs. Greta Sofia Jankko-Badeau
- c Miss Aminda Josephine Kruka
- c Mr. Mozaffar Namdar
- c Miss Gudrun Øfstegaard
- c Miss Maija-Liisa Ravola
- c Miss Sirkka Inkeri Salmi
- c Mrs. Mailis Kaarino Talvenheimo
- c Mr. Habibu'llah Zabihian

FRANCE

- c Mr. Chahab Alai
- c Mrs. Florence Bagley
- c Dr. A.M. Barafroukhteh
- c Mrs. Sara Kenny
- c Mr. Lucien McComb
- c Miss Lucienne Migette
- c Mr. Yadullah Rafaat
- c Mrs. Henriette Samimy
- c Mr. Omer Charles Tamenne

GERMANY

- c Mr. Erik Blumenthal
- c Miss Anneliese Bopp

- c Mrs. Margot Dornbrack
- c Mr. Otto Häfner
- c Dr. Abouzarjomehr(Bozorg) Hemmati
Mr. Ruprecht G. Krüger
- c Mr. Hans Randel
- c Mr. Eugen Schmidt
- c Mr. René Steiner

GUATEMALA

- c Mr. Manuel Agueda
- c Mrs. Louise Caswell
Mr. José Trinidad Gramajo
Mr. Artemus D. Lamb
- c Mr. Alberto Landau
- c Mr. Harold Neff
- c Mrs. Elmerene Neff
Mr. Dale Sinclair
Mrs. Alice Sinclair

HAITI

- Mr. Eustace Bailey
- Miss Odette Benjamin
- Mr. Ellsworth Blackwell
- Mrs. Ruth Blackwell
- Mrs. Circe Brantome
- Mr. Jean Desert
- Alcide Narcisse
- Speline Posy
- Mr. André St. Louis

HONDURAS

- Mrs. Olinda Sierra Andrade
- Mr. Luís A. Bouche
- Mrs. Ruby de Costa
- Mr. George Haley
- Mrs. Vivian Haley
- Mrs. Mazie Haylock

Mr. José López
Mr. David E. Mathisen
c Miss Shirley Ross

INDIA

Mr. G. A. Amreliwala
Mr. P.C. Auplish
c Dr. K.K. Bhargava
c Mrs. Shirin Bowman
c Mr. H. Fatheazam
c Dr. H.M. Munje
c Mr. K.H. Vajdi
c Mr. R.N. Shah
Mr. R. R. Williams

ÍRÁN

c Mr. Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í
c Mrs. Bahiyyih Nadiri
c Mr. Salim Noonoo
c Mr. Habíbu'lláh Sabit
c Mr. Abbas Quli Shahqoli
c Miss Adelaide Sharp
c Mr. Hádí Rahmání Shírází
c Mr. Hedayatu'llah Sohrab
c Dr. 'Alí Muhammad Varqá

'IRÁQ

Mr. K. Abbas
Mr. S. Abdu'l-Majid
Mr. A. Arif
Dr. J. I. Baghdadi
Mr. S. Dloomi
Mr. Kh. Halloubin
Mr. A. Hamdi
Mr. A. Sabour
Mr. D. Toeg

ITALY

- c Professor Hossein Avaregan
Professor Alessandro Bausani
- c Mr. David Ned Blackmer
Professor Mario Fiorentini
- c Mr. Manoutchehr Madjzoub
- c Mr. Hossein Mahboubi
Mr. Mario Piarulli
- c Mr. Augusto Robiati
- c Miss Teresa Taffa

JAMAICA

- c Dr. Doris Maud Buchanan
Mr. Randolph Fitz-Henley
Miss Alice Maude Gallier
Mr. William Arthur Wellesley Mitchell
Mr. Alfred Senior
Miss Emily Taylor
Miss Ruby Taylor
- c Mr. Clarence Ullrich
- c Mrs. Margarite Ullrich

LUXEMBOURG

- Mr. Ronald Bates
Mr. Pierre Bram
- c Miss Hélène Suzanne Hipp
- c Miss Honor Kempton
Mr. Ernest (Claude) Lévy
- c Mr. Leslie Marcus
Mr. Feizollah Namdar
- c Miss Virginia Orbison
- c Mrs. Betty Broome Thompson

MEXICO

- c Mr. Samuel Burafato
- c Mrs. Carmen Burafato
- c Mr. Romeo Guerra

- c Mrs. Anna W. Howard
- c Mrs. Florence Mayberry
Mr. Earl James Morris
- c Mr. Harold Baldwin Murray
- c Mrs. Valeria Lamb Nichols
- c Dr. Edris Rice-Wray

NETHERLANDS

- c Mr. Mas'úd Mazgání
- c Mrs. Gieny Sijssling
- c Mrs. Elizabeth Charlotte Tobias
- c Mrs. Gerrit van der Garde
- c Mr. Jacobus Eduard (Bob) van Lith
- c Mr. Arnold van Ogtrop
- c Mr. Günther Emil Karl Vieten
- c Mrs. Hally Watrin
- c Mr. Christiaan C. Westenbroek

NEW ZEALAND

- c Mr. Hugh Blundell
Mr. John Carr
Mrs. Margaret Harnish
- c Miss Linda Hight
Mr. Percy Leadley
Mrs. Phyllis Milne
Mrs. Jean Simmons
Mr. Douglas Weeks
Mr. Terry Stirling

NICARAGUA

- Mr. Francisco J. Aráuz
- Mr. José Barahona
- c Mr. Hooper C. Dunbar
Mrs. Leticia de Escalante
Mr. Salomon Escalante
Mr. Armando Fonseca
Miss Creadell Haley

Mr. Jorge V. Harper
Mrs. Blanca Lydia Sequeira

NORTH EAST AFRICA

- c Dr. Hushang Ahdieh
- c Mr. Foad Ashraf
Mr. Gila Michael Bahta
- c Dr. Heshmat Farhoumand
- c Dr. Leo Niederreiter
Mr. Ali Hussein Ruhi
- c Mr. Gamal Rushdy
- c Mrs. Ursula Samandari
- c Mr. Jamchid Monajjim Tehrani

NORTH EAST ASIA

- c Miss Agnes B. Alexander
- c Dr. David M. Earl
- c Dr. Ikuo Mizuno
- c Mr. Ataullah Moghbel
- c Mr. Rouhollah Momtazi
- c Mr. Masazo Odani
- c Mrs. Barbara R. Sims
Mr. Hiroyasu Takano
- c Mr. Michitoshi Zenimoto

NORTH WEST AFRICA

- c Mr. Koddabakch Attar
- c Miss Elsie Austin
- c Mr. Mustapha Bouchoucha
Mr. William Foster
Mr. Abdullah Mesbah
- c Mr. Rowshan Mustapha
- c Mr. Enoch Olinga
- c Mr. Emad Saberan
- c Miss Valerie Wilson

NORWAY

- c Mrs. Amelia Bowman
- c Mr. Ernst Holm
- Mrs. Aud Jervell Pettersen
- Mr. Bruce Johnson
- c Mr. Mahmood Madjzooob
- c Mr. Trygve Nielsen
- c Miss Bodil Skodstrup
- c Mrs. Gerd Strand
- c Miss Lecile Webster

PAKISTAN

- c Mr. Esfandiar Bakhtiari
- c Mr. Jean Pierre Louis Deleuran
- c Mrs. Tove Lillian Alice Deleuran
- Mr. Siyyid Mehfooz-ul-Haq Ilmi
- c Mr. Mehraban Jamshedi
- Mr. Asanand Chagla Joshi
- Dr. M. A. Latif
- Dr. Mehboob Illahi Qureshi
- c Mr. Feridoon U. Jamshed Yazamaidi

PANAMA

- Mr. Harry Haye Anderson
- c Mrs. Rachelle Jean F. de Constante
- c Mr. James Vassal Facey
- c Mr. Kenneth Frederics
- c Mrs. Leota E. M. Lockman
- c Mr. Alfred E. A. Osborne
- c Mr. William Alan H. Pringle
- c Mrs. Ruth E. Yancey Pringle
- c Mr. Donald Ross Witzel

PARAGUAY

- Mr. Amir Aazampanah
- Mrs. Kayhanoush Aazampanah
- c Mr. David P. Baral
- Mrs. Ana de Álvarez

Mrs. Victoria de Frey
c Miss Margaret Mills
Mrs. Angélica Doldán
c Mr. Gilbert Grasselly
Mrs. Rosa de Laterza

PERU

Mr. Guillermo Aguilar
Mr. Fidel Flores
Mr. Cesar Loayza
c Mr. Lester W. Long
Mr. Demetrio Molero
Mrs. Jesús Rivera
Mrs. Josefina Rosas
c Miss Mercedes Sánchez
c Dr. Enrique Sánchez

PORTUGAL

Mr. Angelo da Silva Carneiro
c Mr. Mansour Masrour
Miss Sara Tiffon Ramonet
Mrs. Hilda Xavier Rodrigues
Mr. Carlos Salomão
Mr. Carl Scherer
Mr. Julião Serrano
c Mr. Celestino M. Silva
Mr. Richard Walters

SOUTH EAST ASIA

c Mr. Jamshed Fozdar
c Dr. John Fozdar
c Mrs. Shirin Fozdar
Mr. Le Loc
c Mr. Leong Tat Chee
c Mr. Jamshid Ma'ani
c Mr. Dempsey W. Morgan
Mr. Khodarahm H. Payman

c Mr. Kamran A. Samimi

SOUTH AND WEST AFRICA

c Mr. John Allen
c Mrs. Valera Allen
c Mr. Rudolfo Duna
c Mr. Shidan Fathe-Aazam
c Mrs. Bahiyyih Ford
c Mr. Lowell Johnson
c Mr. William Masehla
c Mr. Andrew Mofokeng
c Mr. Max Seepe

SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS

c Mr. Suhayl Ala'i
Mrs. Elsa Blakely
c Mr. Alvin Blum
c Miss Irene Jackson
c Mr. Lisiate Maka
c Mr. Stephen Percival
Miss Margaret Rowling
c Miss Mabel Sneider
c Mr. Niualeava Tuataga

SPAIN

Mr. Ramón Escartín Alamanac
Mr. Isidro Torrella Arnau
Mr. Carlos Chías Grau
c Mr. Antonio Jiménez Gutiérrez
Mr. Francisco Salas Heras
c Mr. Charles Monroe loas
Mr. Ruhollah Mehrabkhani
Mr. José López Monge
Mr. Luís Ortuño Puche

SWEDEN

c Mr. Hadi Afsahi

- c Miss Elizabeth Bevan
Mrs. Jean Bonn
- c Mr. Rouhollah Golmohammadi
- c Mr. Sven Mårds
- c Mr. John Nielsen
Mrs. Lotus Grace Nielsen
Mr. Hans Odemyr
- c Mrs. Marianne Pickens

SWITZERLAND

- c Mrs. Mona Haenni de Bons
- c Mr. William Hatcher
- c Mrs. Anna Kunz
- c Mrs. Martha Müller
- c Dr. Heinrich Walter Ott
- c Mr. Friedrich Schär
- c Mr. Daniel-Robert Schaubacher
- c Mr. Fritz Semle
- c Miss Elsa Steinmetz

TURKEY

- c Mr. Mahmud Afnan
- c Dr. Inayetullah Burhani
Mr. Haydar Diriuз
- c Mr. Djavad-Ghuchani
- c Mr. Sami
Mr. Mejdettin Inan
- c Mr. Habib Manevi
- c Mr. Neyyir Özsuja
- c Dr. Muzaffer Tanrikut

UNITED STATES

- c Mr. Hugh E. Chance
Mr. Arthur Dahl
- c Mr. Amoz E. Gibson
- c Mr. H. B. Kavelin
- c Miss Charlotte M. Linfoot

- c Dr. Sarah M. Pereira
- c Dr. David S. Ruhe
- c Mrs. Velma L. Sherrill
- c Miss Edna M. True

URUGUAY

- Mr. Edward Brownley Belcher
- Mrs. Elena Ade Caraballo
- Miss Eloisa Mary Dutra
- c Mr. Ronald Lee Hauck
- c Mrs. Helen Hathorn Hauck
- Mr. Aminullah Mandegari
- Mr. Marius Regina Marios
- c Mr. Leo Perrin Powell
- c Mrs. Daisy Lapsley Powell

VENEZUELA

- Mrs. María Ines de Caro
- Mrs. María de Dutto
- Mr. Edwardo Maa Gamarra
- Mr. Camilo Grandi
- Mr. Anselmo Torres Morales
- Miss Mireya Muñoz
- Mr. Luís E. Narvaez
- Mr. Hans Voss
- Mrs. Chana Mejía de Voss

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 1, 1963

DEEPLY APPRECIATE LOVING MESSAGE STOP EVE MOST
 GREAT JUBILEE WISH EXPRESS PROFOUND ADMIRATION
 GRATITUDE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION CHIEF
 EXECUTORS DIVINE PLAN ACHIEVEMENT GOALS
 BELOVED GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE EVERY CONTINENT

GLOBE FULFILLING HIGH DESTINY FORETOLD ABDU'L-BAHA.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To National Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Europe

April 4, 1963

Beloved Friends:

We are sending you the attached statement of information and quotations concerning the television interview of King Hassan and the Moroccan case in general. You are free to use it, if you choose. We are hopeful that it may be of value for Local Assemblies and groups in counteracting the unfavourable publicity caused by King Hassan's television interview and subsequent newspaper publicity. It can be used locally and nationally as your Assembly sees fit, in order to secure as widespread publicity as possible.

We feel strongly that King Hassan should not be allowed to make such damaging remarks, and then think that by saying he will grant a royal pardon, that it will remove the damage. As you know, from the beginning of the Morocco case, we have agreed that clemency or even a pardon is not enough. The prisoners must be entirely exonerated. They cannot be pardoned for a crime they did not commit, and we must keep this truth before the eyes of the public.

With the appeal coming up soon, we must do everything in our power to secure a favourable decision from the Supreme Court. If they uphold the condemnation, it is a defeat for the Cause whether the King pardons the prisoners or not. We are all anxious, of course, to keep the story of this injustice alive and before the court of world opinion, just as all of you are exerting every effort to do.

We are confident that this recent outburst of King Hassan will prove providential, and afford the opportunity for a fresh wave of counteracting publicity which will attract even more attention, and proclaim our beloved Faith on an even wider scale.

With warm Bahá'í greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

“Condemned to Death for Their Religion!” THE YEAR: 1963

WORLD SHOCKED

The *London Times*, January 9, 1963 --- “The recent death sentence on three Bahá’ís by a provincial court shocked Moroccan as well as foreign opinion.”

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR RIGHTS OF MAN PROTESTS

United Nations, N.Y., January 31, 1963 --- “During the trial which began last December 10, the only evidence was that they practised their Faith.”

IRONIC TWIST

New York Herald Tribune News Service, United Nations, January 31, 1963 --- “Ironically, the trial began last December 10, which is the U.N. Human Rights Day, and was finished December 14, the day when a new Moroccan constitution was promulgated guaranteeing to all free practice of their Faith.”

A NEW DEVELOPMENT

March 31, 1963: King Hassan II of Morocco, in a television interview before a nation-wide audience in the United States, declared that the Bahá’í Faith was not a religion. It was, he said, “against good order and also morals.”

FALSE INFORMATION BROADCAST TO MILLIONS

This interview, carried to an audience of millions, was subsequently reported in the world press. Members of the Bahá’í Community in over 250 countries, as well as their sympathizers throughout the world, were stunned and shocked to hear such words

spoken by the head of a sovereign state. That he should be so misinformed as to make such a statement in a country where Bahá'ís reside in over 1700 cities, where their National Assembly is a legally incorporated body, where they have the right to perform marriages and other privileges, and where the International Bahá'í Community is accredited to the United Nations as one of the Non-Governmental Organizations, seems incredible.

SAME FALSE CHARGES LED TO SENTENCE OF DEATH IN MOROCCO

The misinformation given during this interview, was the same as that which led to the arrest, conviction and sentence of death being pronounced against the Bahá'ís in Morocco. Three were sentenced to death, five to life imprisonment, one to ten years' imprisonment. They were accused of rebellion, disorder and other crimes against the state, but the simple truth was: They were Bahá'ís.

UNITED NATIONS APPEAL LABELS CHARGES FALSE

United Nations, N.Y., January 31, 1963 --- Roger Baldwin, Chairman of the International League for the Rights of Man, appearing before the U.N. sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities declared: "One charge . . . the one from which the others stemmed . . . was of injuring the Islamic faith."

"During the trial, which began last December 10, the only evidence was that they practised their faith and ignored the faith of Islám."

"So far as we know, this is the only case in recent history in any country where members of a religion have been condemned to death solely for holding and expressing religious views regarded as heretical."

BAHÁ'ÍS CONFIDENT KING WOULD WISH WRONG CORRECTED

Since millions of people either heard or read the statement of King Hassan, it is only proper that the true facts of the case be placed before the public, in the interests of justice, and to protect the good name of the Bahá'í Faith, which is widely respected throughout the

world. The Bahá'ís assume that His Majesty, King Hassan made his erroneous statement because of misinformation supplied to him about the Bahá'í Faith. It is this error alone they wish to correct.

KING TELLS PRESS HE DISAGREES WITH JUDGEMENT, WILL GRANT PARDON

The good-will of His Majesty has already been demonstrated by his statement in a *Reuters* dispatch dated April 2, New York, in which he promised a royal pardon for those condemned to death if the Supreme Court upholds the decision. *Le Monde*, April 3, 1963 quotes the King: "I am not personally in agreement with the condemnation to death of the Bahá'ís in Morocco." "If there is an appeal," he is quoted as saying, "if I am asked to pardon them, I shall do so."

Public opinion demands that since the men were arrested without due cause, imprisoned several months without trial, and condemned solely because of their religion, it is not in the interests of justice that they be given clemency or even a royal pardon. Men cannot be pardoned for a crime they did not commit. They should be completely exonerated. Furthermore, pardon for the prisoners cannot remove the damaging effect caused by the widespread misinformation made during the King's ill-advised television interview. It is for this reason that we are issuing this statement.

WORLD PRESS COMMENTS ON IMPRISONMENT AND DEATH SENTENCES FOR RELIGIOUS BELIEF

ONE DAY'S IMPRISONMENT TOO MUCH SAYS U. N. APPEAL

United Nations, Geneva: J. Duncan Wood, writing on behalf of The Friends World Committee for Consultation, submitted a statement to the Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva, stating: "In our view a sentence of even one day's imprisonment for religious belief is a clear form of religious discrimination." Wood also called attention to another astonishing breach of the human rights of the Bahá'ís in Morocco, a fact which had not been covered in earlier press releases. "Two Bahá'ís", he said, "have been detained in prison in

that state for almost a year without ever having been brought to trial. Such an act of arbitrary arrest constitutes a further breach of human rights to which we call your attention. Because of the pressure of world opinion they have recently been interrogated *in camera* and, instead of being liberated, have been returned to prison.”

FAMOUS FRENCH NEWSPAPER QUOTES EDITORIAL FROM LEADING MOROCCAN PAPER

Le Monde, December 26, 1962 (Rabat) --- “Apparently, it would seem that the defendants might have been sentenced, and to what punishment . . . without the ‘cases and forms’ having been expressly mentioned by law. For what written law, in Morocco, mentions attacks on religious faith and punishes such by a death sentence?” (From: *Les Phares*)

MOROCCAN PAPER APPEALS TO CONSCIENCE OF ALL MOROCCAN CITIZENS

Les Phares, Rabat, Morocco, December 29, 1962 --- “Yes, we wrote that the sentence of Nador seems to us redoubtable and stems from a severity which is outdated in this period of change. We wrote it and we repeat it and we once again appeal, because the judgement has not yet been made effective, to the conscience of all citizens.”

MOROCCAN PRESS HIGHLIGHTS FREEDOMS GUARANTEED IN NEW CONSTITUTION

“ARTICLE 6: Islám shall be the official religion while the State shall guarantee the freedom of worship for all.”

“ARTICLE 9: The Constitution shall guarantee to all citizens: the freedom of movement through, and of settlement in, all parts of the kingdom, the freedom of speech in all its forms.”

LEADING BRITISH JOURNAL SAYS: INCONCEIVABLE SENTENCES WILL BE CARRIED OUT

The Guardian, Manchester, Friday, December 21, 1962 --- “Now three men who profess Bahá’í have been condemned to death by a regional court at Nador, in Morocco, and five others sentenced to life imprisonment . . . simply, so far as one can see, because of their

religion. It is astonishing enough that the Courts should still be condemning men to death for their religion anywhere in the world; that this happens in Morocco is, as *Le Monde* put it, a matter for stupefaction. The people of that country just voted themselves a bright new constitution which 'guarantees freedom of worship to all.' The condemned men are appealing, and it seems inconceivable that the sentence will be carried out in a country of Morocco's standing."

MOROCCAN PAPER LABELS VERDICT MEDIEVAL BARBARITY

The Economist, January 5, 1963 (Quotes leading Moroccan Journal) --- "Significantly, the newspaper attacked the verdict as a medieval barbarity, unworthy of modern Morocco. And many educated Moroccans have been shocked by what seems a reflection of their good name for religious tolerance . . . a tolerance enshrined in their new constitution."

WHY DID THE LOWER COURT CONDEMN THE PRISONERS OF NADOR?

THE CHARGES:

1. The Bahá'í Faith incites rebellion. (*False*)
2. The Bahá'í Faith attacks public security. (*False*)
3. The Bahá'í Faith is an association of criminals. (*False*)
4. The Bahá'í Faith advocates the overthrow of all governments. (*False*)
5. The Bahá'í Faith attacks other religions. (*False*)
6. The prisoners studied Bahá'í books and were members of the Bahá'í Religion. (*True*)

We recommend to His Majesty, King Hassan II, and to the Supreme Court of Appeals, to weigh another type of testimony regarding the Bahá'í Faith, the Bahá'ís, and what they stand for.

IMPRESSIVE TRIBUTES TO THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH
FROM WORLD LEADERS WHICH DEMONSTRATES
THE FALSE NATURE OF THE ACCUSATIONS

Historian Arnold Toynbee: Baha'ism is undoubtedly a religion. Baha'ism is an independent religion, on a par with Islám, Christianity, and other recognized world religions. Baha'ism is not a sect of some other religion; it is a separate religion, and it has the same status as other recognized religions.

Viscount Herbert Samuel, G.C.B., stated in August, 1959, that he had found the members of the Bahá'í Faith under his jurisdiction as a High Commissioner, to be "a valuable element in the population, intelligent, orderly, well-educated, and above all trustworthy. In government service and in commercial employment they were much esteemed as being free from corruptibility." The Bahá'í Faith, Samuel added, "commands the respect and goodwill of its neighbours."

Professor Benjamin Jowett, Oxford University, Master of Balliol described the Bahá'í Faith as "the greatest light that has come into the world since the time of Jesus Christ."

Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, K.C.S.I., President, Economic and Social Council of United Nations: "The Bahá'í Faith gives us the great and precious message of unity in religion. How much the world needs such a spirit today."

Leo Tolstoy: "Bahá'u'lláh's teachings . . . now present us with the highest and purest form of religious teaching."

U. S. Supreme Court Justice, William O. Douglas: "They (the Bahá'ís) enjoy a fine reputation as merchants. The reason is that they maintain high ethical standards in all their dealings . . . and as a result, they gain in prestige."

Eduard Benes, former President of Czechoslovakia: "The Bahá'í Faith is one of the great moral and social forces in all the world today."

Senator Kenneth B. Keating, N.Y. (in U. S. Senate, February 18, 1963): "Proclaiming the oneness of all the great world religions, the Bahá'í Faith accepts all their major prophets as equally inspired. It believes in the unity of all mankind . . . How far religious freedom

under the Moroccan Constitution really applies, will be revealed in the coming weeks when the appeal before the Supreme Court (of Morocco) is heard.”

It is the hope of men of goodwill everywhere that the Moroccan Supreme Court of Appeal will correct the grave injustice inflicted by its Lower Court, and completely exonerate all the Bahá'í prisoners who have suffered for more than a year a flagrant violation of religious freedom and human rights.

“We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations . . . These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family.”

Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith

Conclave Message 1963

BAHA'I WILMETTE
APRIL 9, 1963

KINDLY CABLE FOLLOWING ALL NSAS EXCEPT PERSIA
IRAQ ARABIA EUROPE QUOTE HANDS CAUSE GATHERED
PRECINCTS MOST HOLY SHRINE URGE ALL BELIEVERS
WORLD BAHAI COMMUNITY EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR IN
GROUPS UNITE HEARTS ARDENT PRAYERS BEGINNING
SUNDOWN APRIL TWENTIETH FIRST DAY RIDVAN
BESEECH BLESSED BEAUTY INSPIRE GUIDE DELEGATES
RAISE UP LONG AWAITED AUGUST INSTITUTION
FULFILLING GLORIOUS PROMISES SACRED WRITINGS
STOP REQUEST ALL NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES INFORM

FRIENDS HANDSFAITH UNQUOTE CHARGE COST VARGHA
FUND.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

ROWHANI CARE NAWNAHALAN TEHERAN (IRAN)

APRIL 9, 1963

HANDS CAUSE GATHERED PRECINCTS MOST HOLY
SHRINE URGE ALL BELIEVERS WORLD BAHA'I
COMMUNITY EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR IN GROUPS UNITE
HEARTS ARDENT PRAYERS BEGINNING SUNDOWN APRIL
TWENTIETH FIRST DAY RIDVAN BESEECH BLESSED
BEAUTY INSPIRE GUIDE DELEGATES RAISE UP LONG
AWAITED AUGUST INSTITUTION FULFILLING GLORIOUS
PROMISES SACRED WRITINGS STOP REQUEST INFORM
FRIENDS.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

BAHA'I LONDON

APRIL 9, 1963

KINDLY CABLE FOLLOWING ALL NSAS EUROPE QUOTE
HANDS CAUSE GATHERED PRECINCTS MOST HOLY
SHRINE URGE ALL BELIEVERS WORLD BAHA'I
COMMUNITY EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR IN GROUPS UNITE
HEARTS ARDENT PRAYERS BEGINNING SUNDOWN APRIL
TWENTIETH FIRST DAY RIDVAN BESEECH BLESSED
BEAUTY INSPIRE GUIDE DELEGATES RAISE UP LONG
AWAITED AUGUST INSTITUTION FULFILLING GLORIOUS
PROMISES SACRED WRITINGS STOP REQUEST ALL
NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES INFORM FRIENDS HANDSFAITH
UNQUOTE CHARGE COST OUR ACCOUNT.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the International Bahá'í Council, Haifa

April 12, 1963

Beloved Friends:

All the Hands present at our meeting in Bahjí wish to express to the members of the International Bahá'í Council their deep appreciation of the services they have rendered the Cause of God since they assumed their duties after their election in 1961. Collectively and severally they have greatly contributed to strengthening the World Centre of the Faith and to carrying out those duties specified for that body by our dearly-beloved Guardian.

The Hands in the Holy Land wish, on their own behalf, to assure the Council members of their appreciation of the valuable assistance they have given them locally in so many ways, and to assure them our association has been not only a fruitful and pleasant one, but a source of comfort and strength to us.

There are two matters in connection with the Congress which we would like you to immediately convey to the Congress Arrangements Committee:

During the first session, all Hands of the Cause and the members of the Universal House of Justice will sit on the platform. During the remaining sessions the Hands, their wives and the companion of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, will occupy front row centre seats facing the platform; if space in the centre is insufficient, then two or more rows can be reserved for their use. Although we neither know if all the members of the Universal House of Justice will be present or where they would wish to be seated, we feel extra seats should be included in this block for them and for their wives, in case they desire to use them.

The Hands will arrange the devotional readings and readers for the opening session of the Congress on Sunday afternoon, the entire program of the Feast of Ridván, and the readings at the closing devotional session on May 2nd in the afternoon. However, the prayers for all other sessions, and those who are selected to read them, are left to the discretion of either your Committee or a sub-committee which you may wish to appoint.

We have laid down our policy for these prayers which we request be strictly adhered to: Prayers will be read at the opening and closing of every session. No prayers will be read at the time of the fifteen minute interval. The total time allotted for these readings is fifteen to twenty minutes. All sessions are carefully arranged as regards time allowed, chairman and speakers. It is therefore very important that the readers' prayers are approved beforehand by the Committee in order to be sure each person will read only a short prayer. If it is left to the individual's judgement, some very long prayer in a foreign language may be read and spoil the presentation of the different subjects the speakers have been asked to address the Congress on. There can be as many as three readers if so desired in each session.

It is our desire to have as many of the different ethnic groups present at the Congress read these prayers as possible. No Persian or Arabic prayers or readers should be arranged for these sessions, as they have already been amply provided for in the other sessions of the program. The major emphasis in choosing readers should be among those who belong to the tribes and races enrolled during the World Crusade rather than those ethnic groups of Europe. We give you below a sample program just by way of information. We leave the last choice of readers and languages and order on the program to you.

Monday Morning

Opening

Prayer in Tongan

Prayer in Gujrati, or Hindi, etc.

Closing

Prayer in Finnish

Monday Afternoon

Opening

Prayer in Quechua

Closing

Prayer in Samoan
Prayer in English read by an African

Tuesday Morning

Opening

Prayer in African language read by an African
Prayer in Finnish

Closing

Prayer in Chinese

Tuesday Afternoon

Opening

Prayer in Korean (Bill Smits' wife is Korean)
Prayer in English read by some other race

Closing

Prayer in Canadian Indian language

Wednesday Morning

Opening

Prayer in Indonesian
Prayer in African language by African

Closing

Prayer in Japanese by Japanese

Wednesday Afternoon

Opening

Prayer in Vietnamese by native
Prayer in English read by another race

Closing

Prayer in Malayan, or some other South East Asian language

Thursday Morning

Opening

Prayer in Lapp or Gypsy if possible

Prayer in English by another race

Closing

Prayer in Navajo or other Indian language

In our letter to you of October 8, 1962, we conveyed to you our decision that the Hands of the Faith would not put themselves forward in any way at the time before the election of the House of Justice. The Hands of the Faith support this decision. They will, in any case, be in session up until the end of Ridván. We feel, however, that the ladies who are doing the guiding and receiving of the delegates must be extremely discreet in their remarks, and under no circumstances say the Hands are keeping out of sight on purpose. If anyone asks where the Hands—all or one—are, the answer should be: In session. They have no time at the moment for anything else but their own work, and hope after the first of Ridván to have time to enjoy meeting with their friends and all the delegates. They should, under no circumstances, become involved in discussions with the delegates, should they be asked by them on the subject of whether the Hands should or should not be on the Universal House of Justice.

With warmest Bahá'í love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

NAVIDI, BOITE POSTALE 114, MONTE CARLO (MONACO)

APRIL 15, 1963

KINDLY CONVEY IN PROPER MANNER FOLLOWING
MESSAGE PRISONERS MOROCCO QUOTE ENTIRE BODY
HANDS CAUSE MEETING PRECINCTS MOST HOLY SHRINE
GREET YOU ONE AND ALL WITH DEEPEST LOVE
AFFECTION STOP HAIL WITH PRIDE GRATITUDE YOUR
HEROISM EXEMPLARY STEADFASTNESS RECALLING
IMMORTAL FEATS SPIRITUAL FORBEARS SHEDDING
EVERLASTING LUSTRE ANNALS CLOSING MONTHS

BELOVED GUARDIAN'S MIGHTY CRUSADE BRINGING ABOUT UNPRECEDENTED SPREAD KNOWLEDGE FAITH ENHANCING ITS PRESTIGE DISTINCTION THROUGHOUT WORLD STOP PRAYING FERVENTLY SACRED THRESHOLD DIVINE PROTECTION VINDICATION.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

ROWHANI CARE NAWNAHALAN, TEHERAN (IRAN)

APRIL 15, 1963

DEEPLY APPRECIATE RIDVAN MESSAGE JOIN YOU ARDENT PRAYERS DIVINE INSPIRATION GUIDANCE STOP EVE MOST GREAT JUBILEE WISH EXPRESS PROFOUND ADMIRATION GRATITUDE CONSECRATED HISTORIC SERVICES FRIENDS CRADLE FAITH STOP THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT MATERIAL RESOURCES PIONEERING SERVICES EVERY CONTINENT CONTRIBUTING SUCH LARGE MEASURE ATTAINMENT VICTORY BELOVED GUARDIAN'S HOLY CRUSADE ADDS YET ANOTHER BRILLIANT CHAPTER IMPERISHABLE RECORD SERVICES SACRED THRESHOLD.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

ROWHANI CARE NAWNAHALAN, TEHERAN (IRAN)

APRIL 19, 1963

HANDS GATHERED HOLY LAND REQUEST YOU APPOINT SUITABLE PERSON DELIVER FOLLOWING MESSAGE KAMIL ABBAS IN PERSON IMMEDIATELY QUOTE OCCASION MEMORABLE RIDVAN TERMINATION BELOVED'S PLAN COINCIDING MOST GREAT JUBILEE ALL FRIENDS IRAQ LOVINGLY REMEMBERED HOLY SHRINES STOP URGE JOIN US THANKSGIVING ASTOUNDING VICTORIES WON STOP YOUR ARDENT PRAYERS VISIT GREAT HOUSE GARDEN RIDVAN WILL CONNECT MADINATU'LLAH WITH

WORLD CONGRESS CONVENED ACCORDANCE DIVINELY
GUIDED PLAN FORMULATED BELOVED GUARDIAN STOP
URGE FRIENDS SEND MESSAGE GREETING REACH
WORLD CONGRESS OBSERVANCE NINTH RIDVAN
DEEPEST LOVE.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

Election of the Universal House of Justice

PROGRAM

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

APRIL 21-23, 1963

'AKKÁ – HAIFA

WORLD CENTRE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

April 21

9:30 a.m.

Election of the Universal House of Justice

4:00 p.m.

Ridván Feast Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the
Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh

April 22

10:00 a.m.

The Victories of the World Crusade

3:00 p.m.

Teaching the Faith

Mass Conversion

Home Front Teaching

Liberalization of Enrolment of New Believers

8:30 p.m.

Status of Other Crusade Goals (including the Mother Temple of Europe)

April 23

10:00 a.m.

Consolidation of the Faith

Preservation of Local Assemblies -The Spiritual Prizes

Importance of Pioneers Remaining at their Posts

Establishment of Administration and its Proper Use

The Nineteen Day Feast

3:00 p.m.

Consolidation of the Faith (continued)

Protection of the Faith

Importance of Firmness in the Covenant

Public Relations of the Faith

Meeting Attacks

Making Friends for the Faith

Need for Caution in Critical Areas

8:30 p.m.

Intensification of the Spirit of Teaching throughout the World

Closing of the Convention

Note: The election of the Universal House of Justice on Sunday morning, April 21, will be held at the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 7 Haparsim Street, Haifa. The Ridván Feast on Sunday afternoon will be held at Bahjí, in the garden surrounding the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. The Convention sessions on Monday and Tuesday, April 22 and April 23, will be held at Beth Harofe Auditorium, 2 Wingate Avenue, Haifa.

BAHA'I WILMETTE

APRIL 21, 1963

OCCASION WORLDWIDE CELEBRATIONS MOST GREAT
JUBILEE COMMEMORATING CENTENARY ASCENSION
BAHA'U'LLAH THRONE HIS SOVEREIGNTY WITH HEARTS
OVERFLOWING GRATITUDE HIS UNFAILING PROTECTION
OVERFLOWING BOUNTIES JOYOUSLY ANNOUNCE FRIENDS
EAST WEST ELECTION SUPREME LEGISLATIVE BODY
ORDAINED BY HIM IN HIS MOST HOLY BOOK PROMISED
BY HIM RECEIVE HIS INFALLIBLE GUIDANCE STOP
MEMBERS FIRST HISTORIC HOUSE JUSTICE DULY
ELECTED BY DELEGATES COMPRISING MEMBERS
FIFTYSIX NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES ARE CHARLES WOLCOTT
ALI NAKHJAVANI BORRAH KAVELIN IAN SEMPLE
LOTFULLAH HAKIM DAVID HOFMAN HUGH CHANCE AMOZ
GIBSON HUSHMAND FATHEAZAM STOP TO JUBILATION
ENTIRE BAHAI WORLD VICTORIOUS COMPLETION
BELOVED GUARDIAN'S UNIQUE CRUSADE NOW ADDED
HUMBLE GRATITUDE PROFOUND THANKSGIVING
FOLLOWERS BAHAU'LLAH FOR ERECTION UNIVERSAL
HOUSE JUSTICE AUGUST BODY TO WHOM ALL
BELIEVERS MUST TURN WHOSE DESTINY IS TO GUIDE
UNFOLDMENT HIS EMBRYONIC WORLD ORDER THROUGH
ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONS PRESCRIBED BY
BAHA'U'LLAH ELABORATED BY ABDU'L-BAHA LABORIOUSLY
ERECTED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI AND ENSURE EARLY
DAWN GOLDEN AGE FAITH WHEN THE WORD OF THE
LORD WILL COVER THE EARTH AS THE WATERS COVER
THE SEA STOP CABLE ABOVE MESSAGE ALL NATIONAL
ASSEMBLIES EXCEPT IRAQ ARGENTINA AIRMAIL LATTER
STOP SEND CANADA'S CARE HARPER PETTYPIECE STOP
CHARGE COST VARGHA FUND.

[CABLE]

HANDSFAITH

RESOLUTION OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD

Passed at their meeting in London on May 9, 1963

The following principles shall apply to the relations between the body of the Hands and the Hands Residing in the Holy Land and to the activities of the Hands in the Holy Land:

1. Five of the Hands of the Cause are assigned to the Holy Land. They will be responsible for coordinating the international work of the institution of the Hands, in relation to the Continental Hands and to the Universal House of Justice.
2. The quorum of the Hands in the Holy Land will be three, two of which must be from the original five elected to serve in the Holy Land. If necessary in order to maintain a quorum, the Hands in the Holy Land are authorized, after consultation with the Continental Hands, to request one of these Hands to serve temporarily in the Holy Land.
3. In the event of any vacancy occurring in the composition of the Hands in the Holy Land, the body of the Hands will fill such vacancy by election.
4. Meetings of the body of the Hands are to be called by the Hands in the Holy Land, after consultation with the body of the Hands.
5. The Hands in the Holy Land, acting on behalf of the body of the Hands, will allocate whatever international funds are available for the work of the Hands, in accordance with the general instructions of the body of the Hands.

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih

Ugo Giachery

John Ferraby

Hermann Grossmann

Agnes B. Alexander

Paul Haney

William Sears

A. Furutan

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí

A. Q. Faizi

Collis Featherstone

Adelbert Mühlischlegel

Enoch Olinga

Zikrullah Khadem

A. Vargha
Sh. Alai
John Robarts
Jalal Khazeh
Hasan M. Balyuzi
R. Mohajer

RIDVÁN MESSAGE
1963

TO ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTIONS

BAHA'Í WILMETTE
MAY 19, 1963

HANDS CAUSE WISH EXPRESS LOVING APPRECIATION
HEROIC DEDICATED EFFORTS FRIENDS EVERYWHERE
ASSURING TRIUMPHANT CONCLUSION BELOVED
GUARDIAN'S MIGHTY CRUSADE STOP ENTIRE BODY
HANDS DESIROUS DEVOTE ALL THEIR EFFORTS
PROTECTION PROPAGATION FAITH ACCORDING
FUNCTIONS LAID DOWN HOLY TEXTS AND SUSTAINED
UPLIFTED ESTABLISHMENT SUPREME EDIFICE UNIVERSAL
HOUSE JUSTICE INTEND CONCENTRATE ACTIVITIES ALL
IMPORTANT TEACHING WORK THIS GLORIOUS PERIOD
EXPANSION FAITH STOP OUR BELOVED GUARDIAN
ASSOCIATED FIVE HANDS WITH WORK HOLY LAND HIS
LIFETIME STOP FOLLOWING THIS PATTERN FIVE HANDS
NOW ASSIGNED HOLY LAND THUS ENSURING AT ALL
TIMES PRESENCE HANDS WORLD CENTRE FACILITATE
INTERNATIONAL WORK INSTITUTION HANDS ASSIST
HOUSE JUSTICE ANY WAY DEEMED ADVISABLE THAT
EXALTED BODY STOP FIVE CHOSEN SERVE HOLY LAND
ARE AMATU'L-BAHA RUHIYYIH KHANUM LEROY IOAS ALI
AKBAR FURUTAN PAUL HANEY ABU'L QASIM FAIZI STOP
CHANGES ASSIGNMENT HANDS CONTINENTS WILL BE

ANNOUNCED SHORTLY STOP CONFIDENT SPIRIT
RELEASED MOST GREAT JUBILEE WILL INSPIRE FRIENDS
ARISE ENSURE CONTINUATION UNPRECEDENTED TIDE
VICTORIES TEACHING FIELD.

[CABLE] HANDSFAITH

To the Hands of the Cause of God Residing in the Holy Land

May 26, 1963

Beloved Friends,

We have been most grateful for the consultations we were able to have with you over the past two days, and look forward to others in the coming weeks as the process of our taking over the administrative work of the Cause progresses.

As we explained on Friday, there is one decision made by the House of Justice in London which we feel we should communicate to you without delay: our decision to adopt 10 Haparsim Street as the offices of the Universal House of Justice and to terminate the other uses of the building. . . .

Our members will be arriving in the Holy Land during the course of the next few weeks and by 1st September eight of the members will be here. As it will take a little time to prepare the premises for use as offices we would therefore be grateful if we could have them as soon as possible.

The alternative accommodation for the western pilgrims has not yet been finally decided, but we are investigating the possibility of housing them in the Eastern Pilgrim House and the two houses adjoining. . . .

With loving greetings,

Yours in His service,

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

To the Hands of the Cause of God

May 27, 1963

Beloved Co-workers:

We hasten to send you the enclosed copy of our message to the Annual Conventions. You will note that it incorporates the points approved at our meeting in London.

Very heartwarming acknowledgements have been received by cable from a large number of the National Assemblies and Conventions, containing expressions of appreciation of the services of the Hands in bringing the beloved Guardian's Crusade to a successful conclusion. When the file is complete, we plan to share these messages with you.

We shall be writing you again shortly in connection with various actions approved at our recent meeting.

With warmest loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

To the Universal House of Justice

June 7, 1963

Dearly Beloved Friends:

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION 1963

For the records of your august Body, we wish to provide you with the following statement concerning the First International Bahá'í Convention held in Haifa, Israel, on April 21-22-23, 1963.

This Convention was called by the Hands of the Cause residing in the Holy Land, acting on behalf of the entire body of the Hands of the Cause, the Chief Stewards of the Faith.

The delegates to this Convention were the members of the fifty-six existing National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'í world. In accordance with the Bahá'í Sacred Writings these delegates or electors cast their ballots for the election of the first Universal House of Justice. All fifty-six National Assemblies participated in the election, either through having their members present in person at the Convention in Haifa, where they cast their ballots individually, or

through the casting of absentee ballots sent by mail by those members of the various National Assemblies unable to be present in person in Haifa at the Convention.

The Convention itself was under the supervision of the Hands of the Cause, who appointed the eighteen tellers responsible for tabulating the ballots and announcing the result of the election of the Universal House of Justice. These tellers were in all cases themselves members of National Spiritual Assemblies, and therefore delegates to the Convention. A list of the names of the eighteen tellers is attached.

The casting of ballots for the members of the Universal House of Justice took place on the morning of April 21, 1963 at the Home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Number 7 Persian Street, Haifa. The results of the election were announced by the tellers at the Convention session held on Tuesday morning, April 22, 1963 at Beth Harofe Auditorium, Number 2 Wingate Avenue, Haifa. The tellers' report indicated that the following nine Bahá'ís received the highest number of votes, and comprise the membership of the Universal House of Justice:

Charles Wolcott
'Alí Y. Nakhjavání
H. Borrah Kavelin
Ian C. Semple
Lutfu'lláh Hakím
David Hofman
Hugh E. Chance
Amoz E. Gibson
Hushmand Fatheazam

On motion made and duly seconded the Convention approved and adopted the report of the tellers.

After the presentation and approval by the Convention of the tellers' report, the nine members of the first Universal House of Justice were presented as a group and individually to the Convention.

With loving greetings,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

TELLERS

SUPERVISORY BOARD OF THREE
(TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN CHAIRMAN TO MAKE REPORT TO
THE CONVENTION)

Ernest Gregory Husayn Mahboubi James Facey

FIVE TEAMS OF THREE TO COUNT THE BALLOTS

First Team

Jamshid Monajjem
Lloyd Gardner
Leong Tat Che

Second Team

Michitoshi Zenimoto
Max Seepe
Alejandro Reid

Third Team

Salim Nounou
Lisiate Maka
Eugen Schmidt

Fourth Team

Hassan Sabri
Noel Bluett
Athos Costas

Fifth Team

Soheil Ala'i
Dempsey Morgan
Charlotte Linfoot

To the Hands of the Cause of God Residing in the Holy Land

June 7, 1963

Beloved Friends,

Pursuant to the several discussions which we have had with you relevant to the transfer of the “functions, rights and powers” vested in the Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith by virtue of the Declaration of the Hands of the Cause of God made at Bahjí on November 25th, 1957, please be advised that the Universal House of Justice has decided that the office of Custodians of the Bahá’í World Faith ceases to exist upon your receipt of this communication.

With loving greetings,

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

To the Hands of the Cause of God

June 14, 1963

Beloved Co-workers:

The attached copy of a legal document which we have executed on your behalf under the general authority approved at our recent meeting in London, is self-explanatory. It was worked out in consultation with the Universal House of Justice and with Dr. Weinshall, our attorney in Haifa.

Thus action has been taken to terminate the legal entity of the Custodians, in accordance with the language of the original document executed by the Hands of the Cause on November 25, 1957, which provided that the body of the Custodians would continue to exercise their functions, subject to such directions and decisions as might be given by the entire body of the Hands, “until such time as the Universal House of Justice, upon being duly established and elected in conformity with the Sacred Writings and the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá may otherwise determine.” The actual date of termination of the Custodianship was June 7, 1963. From that date the Hands in the Holy Land will function under the terms of the document approved in London.

In the course of other meetings and conferences during the last three weeks documents have been executed designating the members of the Universal House of Justice as the members and managers of the eleven Israel or Palestine branches of the various National Spiritual Assemblies, in successorship to the Hands in the Holy Land.

We shall be writing you again shortly concerning other matters growing out of our recent meetings, but we feel we should share with you immediately certain facts which have just come to our attention. The National Assembly of the United States has sent us clippings from newspapers published in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and in Florida, in the United States, describing the recent annual convention of the "Bahá'ís of the United States Under the Guardianship", which was held in Santa Fe. At this convention, "a National Assembly of the United States" was established, and one of the newspaper articles stated that in addition to the "National Assembly" of the United States, two other national assemblies under the guardianship were elected this year, one in Pakistan and one in India. The news item published in Santa Fe stated that eventually the Universal House of Justice would be elected by these national assemblies under the hereditary guardianship, with the guardian as its head, in accordance with the Bahá'í sacred writings.

Appropriate steps are of course being taken to alert the National Assemblies of India and Pakistan, and we shall report to you any further significant developments which may occur.

We would also like to inform you that representatives of the Universal House of Justice and of the Hands in the Holy Land met with the head of the Bahá'í Department of the Ministry of Religions in Jerusalem on May 30th. At that meeting they were shown the originals of a number of communications sent in April and May of this year by Mason Remey to various officials of the Government of Israel, including the President. In these communications Remey reiterated his claims, and in the one to the Ministry of Religions, asked them to advise him as to how he could gain recognition by the Government of Israel as the second Guardian of the Faith in successorship to Shoghi Effendi.

The above developments emphasize the need for exercise of the utmost vigilance here at the World Centre in connection with any possible further moves by Remey or his supporters. Steps have been taken to formally notify the proper officials of the Government of Israel, including the Prime Minister, of the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, and that Body is taking steps to strengthen its position with the Government.

Our beloved fellow-Hand Enoch Olinga has reported that a former believer in the Cameroons, Mr. Joseph Pamo, has joined the Remey group, and is attempting to undermine the House of Justice and the Institution of the Hands. He has been sending communications to the Local Assemblies, groups and isolated believers in the Cameroons, urging them to get in touch with Mason's group in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and to accept Mason Remey as the second Guardian and the proper head of the Universal House of Justice.

On the basis of this information furnished by Enoch we have expelled this individual, and have taken steps to warn the believers in the Cameroons that all association with him is forbidden. Needless to say, we immediately met with the Universal House of Justice and informed them of these developments.

As you know, our dear fellow-Hand Collis Featherstone planned his return journey to Australia in such a way as to visit a number of centres in Africa. He has cabled us from Mauritius that there is an individual there, a Mr. Seechurn, who does not accept the Universal House of Justice and questions the integrity of the Hands. He states that he is openly attempting to cause division amongst several communities in Mauritius. Collis met with the believers in these communities to combat his poisonous attacks, and we are awaiting further information before taking final action.

It is of course essential that we prevent the spread of the poison of Covenant-breaking in the African continent and surrounding islands which, with the exception of Réunion, have so far been relatively free from this disease.

Our thoughts are with you all, and our prayers, and we ask you to pray for us constantly and to keep in close touch with us, so that we will be informed of the progress of the work in all continents, and of

your own activities, and thus be in a position to pass on this news to all the Hands.

With warmest and deepest love to you all,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND

**DECLARATION
BY THE CUSTODIANS**

RELEASING ALL THEIR FUNCTIONS, RIGHTS AND POWERS
CONFERRED UPON THEM BY THE DECLARATION OF THE
HANDS, NOVEMBER 25, 1957, TO THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE
OF JUSTICE

Haifa, Israel

June 7, 1963

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, DULY NOMINATED AND APPOINTED AS CUSTODIANS OF THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD FAITH BY THE DECLARATION OF THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD MADE AT BAHJÍ ON NOVEMBER 25TH, 1957 "to exercise—subject to such directions and decisions as may be given from time to time by us as the Chief Stewards of the Bahá'í World Faith—all such functions, rights and powers in succession to the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, His Eminence the late Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, as are necessary to serve the interests of the Bahá'í World Faith, and this until such time as the Universal House of Justice, upon being duly established and elected in conformity with the Sacred Writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, may otherwise determine", do now declare that the Universal House of Justice was so established and elected by action of the International Bahá'í Convention held at Haifa on April 21st, 22nd and 23rd, 1963 and we hereby release all the said functions, rights and powers which were conferred upon us under the said Declaration of November 25th, 1957 as determined by the Universal House of Justice in its communication of June 7th, 1963, and we

declare that all the said functions, rights and powers now devolve rightfully and in full accordance with the Sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Faith upon the Universal House of Justice. We make this statement for the full body of the Hands of the Cause of God in accordance with the powers conferred upon us by the Declaration of November 25th, 1957, and the office of Custodians of the Bahá'í World Faith has thus ceased to exist.

HANDS OF THE CAUSE RESIDING IN THE HOLY LAND

[Signed as follows]

Rúhíyyih Rabbani

Paul E. Haney

A. Furutan

Djalal Khazeh

William Sears

This book opened with the tribute to the Hands of the Cause of God from the Universal House of Justice. Let it close with a tribute to them from the National Spiritual Assembly of a small community:

Your dedication, love and example to the Bahá'í world from the time of the passing of our beloved Guardian until the culmination of his Ten Year Crusade with the establishment of the Universal House of Justice will forever be in our memory and hearts.

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A few of the quotations in the messages of the Hands of the Cause are from unpublished letters of the Guardian to individual National Spiritual Assemblies.

^[1] A Newsletter has been issued from the World Centre, at different periods and under different headings, for well over 50 years.

^[2] See *The Bahá'í World*, Vol. XIV, 1963 - 1968, pp. 445-446.

^[3] See *The Bahá'í World*, Vol. XIV, 1963 - 1968, pp. 445-446.

^[4] Cables of appointment were sent the previous day.

^[5] Cables of appointment were sent the previous day.

^[6] Cables of appointment were sent on 2 October 1957.

^[7] Relative of the Báb.

^[8] The Universal House of Justice.

^[9] The 1992 number of National Spiritual Assemblies is 165.

^[10] See "The Bahá'í Faith 1844-1952 Information Statistical & Comparative".

^[11] It seems unbelievable that as recently as March 18, 1992, yet another Iranian follower of Bahá'u'lláh, of an old and distinguished Bahá'í family, has been executed.

^[12] This was a wholly unfounded and unsupportable standard accusation brought against the Bahá'ís particularly in view of the fact that western Bahá'ís of Christian background in the Western Hemisphere and Europe acknowledge the spiritual station of Muhammad, the founder of Islam, as a Divinely inspired Prophet of God.

^[13] As it proved inexpedient for Dr. Adelbert Mühlischlegel to serve as a Hand of the Cause in Israel, Abu'l-Qásim Faizí was chosen in his place.

^[14] "BAHA'I WILMETTE" was the cable address for the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, which was the distribution point for world-wide dissemination of communications from the World Centre.

^[15] This postscript also written to Mrs. Collins, Mr. Faizí and Mr. Ioas.

^[16] It is specifically requested that in the case of the Italo-Swiss National Assembly, that contact be made with the Turkish Ambassador in Switzerland. We do not believe that a visit to the Ambassador in Italy would be advisable at this time.

^[17] The expulsion of Sr. Jorgé Pallés was based on information at hand. It was later clarified that he had not accepted Mason Remey and was therefore re-instated (see p. 376). That a letter had been written by seven members of the Loncoche community in support of Remey was proved to be incorrect.

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