

“Their First Collective Enterprise” — The Six Year Plan 1944–1950

Shoghi Effendi

Original English



“Their First Collective Enterprise” — The Six Year Plan 1944–1950

Letter of 25 May 1944¹

Welcome spontaneous decision advise formation nineteen spiritual assemblies spread over England Wales Scotland Northern Ireland and Eire praying signal victory.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 26 May 1944

Overjoyed success celebrations. Praying ever increasing flow divine outpourings.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 8 July 1944

Prepare condensed report not exceeding thirty pages regarding activities achievements Bahá'í faith during past four years. Mail one copy America another Haifa prompt action necessary.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 11 August 1944

Appreciate greetings praying blessings summer school and teaching plan love.

¹. In response to cable from Convention announcing adoption of a six year plan and requesting the Guardian to set the goals.



ORIGINAL

Letter of 12 August 1944

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letters dated March 3rd and 25th, April 23rd, May 18th and July 6th together with their enclosures have all been received, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer them on his behalf.

He was most deeply gratified over the way the Centenary was conducted in London and feels that it has adequately demonstrated the vitality of the faith which animates the British Bahá'í community. They may well look upon this as their major achievement since the visits to their shores of the beloved Master. He was also very pleased to hear of the celebrations successfully held by the Manchester and Torquay Bahá'ís in their respective communities.

"The Centenary of a World Faith" he found most excellently gotten out and not only well written but calculated to arouse the interest of the reader and impress him with the true stature of our World Faith. He has distributed copies among the friends and placed some in the library of the Mansion, at Bahjí. He was also pleased with the programme of the London Meetings — so you can see that the patient efforts and sacrifices of the members of the N.S.A. and all those who contributed to the marked success of the Centenary celebrations in England, have met not only with his approval and admiration but brought happiness to his often heavily over-burdened heart!

Regarding your question concerning minute No. 1050; this is entirely a matter of conscience; if the individual feels for some reason justified in voting for himself, he is free to do so. Regarding your question of the proper time to celebrate or hold our meetings of commemoration, the time should be fixed by counting after sunset; the Master passed away one hour after midnight, which falls a certain number of hours after sunset; so His passing should be commemorated according to the sun and regardless of daylight saving time. The same applies to the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh who passed away about 8 hours after sunset.

The Guardian has already cabled you regarding your Six Year Teaching Plan, and he hopes that events in the future will be more favourable to carrying it out than they are at present. He often thinks of and prays for the English friends during these days of ordeal they are again passing through and he feels confident Bahá'u'lláh will strengthen their work and bless their efforts for this Holy Cause....

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The Six Year Plan which the national elected representatives of the English believers have spontaneously launched is a further evidence of their unquenchable faith and noble and unyielding determination to prosecute energetically the teaching work in the British Isles and to

exploit to the full the notable advantages derived from the successful celebrations of the Bahá'í Centenary in London. Attention should be focussed in the course of the opening year of the second Bahá'í Century on the needs and requirements of this Plan. The multiplication of Bahá'í centres and the dissemination of Bahá'í literature should be regarded as the chief objectives of the prosecutors of the Plan. Every sacrifice should be made, every effort should be exerted and every avenue should be explored to ensure the success of the Plan. The English believers stand identified with this Plan. The immediate destinies of the entire community depend upon it. I will pray for its success, will watch its progress and pledge every assistance within my power for its promotion. May the Beloved bless all those who have embarked upon it and crown their enterprise with brilliant and total victory.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 14 August 1944

Anxious safety London believers kindly cable.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 5 January 1945

Appreciate verbatim reports addresses delivered opening centenary exhibition and public meeting Denison house.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 27 January 1945

Kindly cable address Tudor-Pole mail three copies every photograph taken centenary.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 27 March 1945

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letters, written on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly, and dated Aug. 2nd, 21st and 31st (airgraph) and Oct. 9th, Nov. 16th (airgraph) and Nov. 23rd (duplicate copy also received), Dec. 19th (duplicate copy also received) all of 1944, and Jan. 25th 1945 (duplicate copy also

received) have arrived safely with any enclosures they contained, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer them.

He fully realises the many handicaps the English Bahá'ís are labouring under, and appreciates all the more deeply their perseverance and devotion shown in such activities as the National Centenary in London and local exhibitions and meetings held elsewhere, as well as the successful Summer School, the various printing undertakings and the renewed efforts to establish new centres and strengthen older ones. In this connection he would like you to please convey to Miss Young² and all other pioneers the expression of his loving appreciation of this historic service they have arisen to render the Faith in England.

The tasks facing the believers everywhere are great, for they see only too clearly that the only permanent remedy for the many afflictions the world is suffering from, is a change of heart and a new pattern of not only thought but personal conduct. The impetus that has been given by the Manifestation of God for this Age is the sole one that can regenerate humanity, and as we Bahá'ís are the only ones yet aware of this new force in the world, our obligation towards our fellow men is tremendous and inescapable! Therefore he hopes that many more of the friends there will arise to do pioneering work and help achieve the important goals set by the Six Year Plan. When once a few bold, self-sacrificing individuals have arisen to serve, their example will no doubt encourage other timid would-be pioneers to follow in their footsteps. The history of our Faith is full of records of the remarkable things achieved by really very simple, insignificant individuals, who became veritable beacons and towers of strength through having placed their trust in God, having arisen to proclaim His Message. The stamina and fortitude shown by the people at large during all these hard and bitter years of war should surely find a nobler example in the deeds of the Bahá'ís who are connected with the Divine Source! He urges your Assembly to do all in its power, through financial and moral assistance, to get more pioneers into the field.

Mr. Hofman has just written him about his meeting with the Paris believers, and he feels that as most of the friends there are elderly people and have suffered many privations, the British N.S.A. should keep in close touch with them and help and inspire them all it can....

Also concerning your question about the prayers and changing the pronouns: This cannot be done, even in the long Obligatory Prayer or the healing prayers. Either we must ignore this mere detail or say a prayer that applies to our sex or number....

You may be sure that you, and your fellow members of the N.S.A., are very often in his thoughts and prayers. He deeply appreciates your steadfast and persevering labours and hopes that the believers of England will arise to fulfil their high duties and discharge the debts they owe their countrymen through the privilege of being the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in these dark yet historic days....

P.S. The following is a copy of the cable the Guardian sent you in answer to your request for his advice as to the Six Year Plan the British believers resolved to undertake:

2. Miss Jessica Young were the first to arise to pioneer in the British Isles.

“Welcome spontaneous decision. Advise formation nineteen Bahá’í spiritual assemblies spread over England Wales Scotland Northern Ireland and Eire. Praying signal victory.”

He will, you may be sure, do everything in his power to assist the friends to achieve this objective.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The Six Year Plan which the English believers have conceived and are now energetically prosecuting constitutes a landmark in the history of the Faith in the British Isles. It is the first collective enterprise undertaken by them for the spread of the Faith and the consolidation of its divinely appointed institutions. The national elected representatives of the Bahá’í community in those islands must watch carefully every phase in its development, provide whatever is required for its systematic and steady extension, encourage the believers to disperse, to settle, to persevere, and to appeal more directly and effectively to the masses who are waiting for this Divine Message, and on whose ultimate response the triumph of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh must depend. Obstacles, however formidable, should be surmounted. Setbacks, however discouraging at first, must not, under any circumstances, cause them to deviate from the path they are so devotedly and determinedly pursuing. That glorious success may eventually crown their concerted and historic endeavours is my fervent and constant prayer at the Holy Shrines. May the Beloved aid them to achieve their noble end.

Shoghi

Letter of 11 April 1945

Bahá’í Persian National Assembly expelled ... family owing repudiation vital provisions master’s will and long-standing disobedience. Position any member this family in London should be immediately ascertained by your assembly. Cable results. Utmost firmness vigilance required otherwise contact breakers covenant will endanger Faith.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 25 April 1945

Appreciate cable received from.... Feel however owing defection his entire family necessity formal assurance before your assembly his determination cease communication with his family awaiting assembly’s reply.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 1 May 1945

Loving appreciation convention message. English believers lovingly remembered shrines fervently supplicating success six year plan urge redoubled efforts cabling five hundred pounds my contribution plan.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 3 May 1945

Assure ... appreciate response. Concerning medium do not advise acceptance membership.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 9 May 1945³

Followers Bahá'u'lláh throughout five continents unanimously rejoice partial emergence war torn humanity from titanic upheaval unerringly predicted seventy years ago by pen author their faith. Cessation hostilities European continent signalises closing yet another chapter tragic tale fiery trials providentially decreed by inscrutable wisdom designed ultimately weld mutually antagonistic elements human society into single organically united unshatterable world commonwealth. Gratefully acclaim signal evidence interposition divine providence which during such perilous years enabled world centre faith escape what posterity will recognise as one of gravest dangers ever confronted nerve centre its institutions. Profoundly aware bountiful grace vouchsafed by same providence ensuring unlike previous world conflict uninterrupted intercourse between spiritual centre and vast majority communities functioning within orbit far flung faith. Immeasurably thankful miraculous preservation Indian Persian Egyptian British Iráqí communities Long threatened dire perils owing proximity theatre military operations. Deeply conscious progress achieved despite six tempestuous years in both Eastern Western hemispheres through collective enterprises launched by these communities outshines sum total accomplishments since inception formative age faith. Seven year plan inaugurated by American Bahá'í community under lowering clouds approaching conflict victoriously completed exterior ornamentation mother temple west established structural basis faith every state province North American continent and hoisted its banner every Republic Latin America. Indian believers six year plan launched eve hostilities more than quadrupled centres functioning within pale administrative order. Edifices consecrated administrative affairs ever advancing cause involving expenditure over hundred thousand dollars erected purchased or completed capital cities India 'Iráq Egypt as well as Sydney Australia. Acquisition numerous properties Bahá'u'lláh's native land Mt. Carmel and Jordan valley as well as purchase several important historic sites associated lives both herald author faith swelled unprecedented degree Bahá'í endowments. Preliminary steps completion Báb's sepulchre and establishment world administrative centre

³. Printed also in "Messages to America (1932-1946)."

through removal remains brother mother 'Abdu'l-bahá undertaken. Termination first century Bahá'í Era synchronising climax raging storm publicly befittingly celebrated despite multiplication restrictions. Above all unity integrity incorruptible world community consistently safeguarded in face insidious opposition avowed enemies without and covenant breakers within. Such splendid victories over so vast field amidst such tribulations during so prolonged ordeal augur well colossal task destined be accomplished course peaceful years ahead by builders embryonic world order Bahá'u'lláh amidst wreckage distracted disrupted disillusioned society.

Shoghi

Letter of 10 May 1945

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

The beloved Guardian has instructed me to forward you the enclosed copy of his message⁴ to the Bahá'ís of East and West on the happy occasion of the termination of the European war.

He would appreciate your sharing it not only with all the British friends but with the Paris believers too.

Please inform him of the safe receipt of this message as soon as it reaches you.

We all send you our loving greetings and are greatly relieved to know your lives will now assume a more normal course after all these years of suffering...

Letter of 9 August 1945

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letters dated March 8th and 12th, April 17th, May 10th and 18th and July 8th and June 9th have been received, as well as the various enclosures you mention in them, and the photographs, sent under the separate cover. The beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer them on his behalf.

He was very pleased to hear you are now in touch with the French believers and able to help them morally, and also with some physical assistance too! It is only right that England, the first country whose Bahá'í community is in a position to reach out a helping hand to its sister communities in Europe, should do so, and should have this privilege and honour.

He realises the many difficulties that stand in the way of the British Bahá'ís in regard to fulfilling the important Six Year Teaching Plan they have undertaken. But he hopes that now the European war is over, and conditions are returning to a more normal way of life, that the friends, conscious of their very great spiritual responsibility, will arise and, in spite of everything,

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accomplish the work they have chosen for themselves and which is of such great spiritual importance to their countrymen.

The more we study the present condition of the world, the more deeply we become convinced that there just cannot be any way out of its problems except the way of God, as given by Him, through Bahá'u'lláh. The early Persian Bahá'ís gave their lives for the Cause; the Western believers have been spared this necessity, but their comfort, to some extent, they must sacrifice if they are going to discharge their moral obligation to tortured humanity, and bring to it the message of the Father. Once the friends start out to win the goals set in their Plan, they will find the Divine confirmation sustaining them and hastening its consummation. This is what happened in the American Seven Year Plan and the Indian Six Year Plan, and the same spiritual assistance will certainly be vouchsafed the English believers, once they arise with faith and confidence, to do their work.

In regard to the question you raise in your letter of June 9th about the "Paris Talks", the Guardian does not advise your putting the suggested footnote, as we cannot be absolutely sure, unless we see the Persian text, that what you propose is really what the Master means. The present translation cannot be considered accurate in all its details, obviously, and as at the moment the Persian text is not available, he suggests you either put no footnote at all, or one stating that the meaning is obscure and future re-translation will clear up such passages.

You may be sure that his ardent prayers will be offered on behalf of all the British Bahá'ís, that Bahá'u'lláh may aid them to fulfil His work and may open the doors of servitude and guide them on their way. He will also pray for you and your fellow N.S.A. members, for your strength, protection and guidance in fulfilling your many important tasks.

P.S. Regarding Mr. ... financial affairs; there is naturally no objection to his receiving his own money, but he should have no communication with his family, and should arrange for your N.S.A. to receive his money and deliver it to him. The Guardian is very pleased that he has taken the right, courageous, Bahá'í course of action in his life, and will certainly pray for his happiness and protection.

There is no ambiguity about the Master's attitude towards psychic forces; He very strongly warned the believers against using them.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

I grieve to learn of the slow progress of the Six Year Plan which the English believers have so nobly conceived, and which, I pray and hope, will be triumphantly consummated. The Plan constitutes a direct and grave challenge to the English Bahá'í community in its entirety. It should be regarded as the greatest collective enterprise ever launched by the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles. It is thus far one of the most significant undertakings embarked upon by the members of Bahá'í National Assemblies during the opening years of the second Bahá'í century. To it, as already observed, the immediate destinies of the community of the English believers are linked, and on it must depend the future orientation and evolution of

the institutions which the members of that community are labouring to erect for the diffusion of the principles and the establishment of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in their country. It must not, it cannot, fail. The attention of the entire body of the believers must be continually focussed upon it. No sacrifice can be deemed too great for its successful prosecution. All must arise harmoniously, co-operate and lend their share of assistance. May the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh enable them to achieve signal success.

Shoghi

Letter of 18 December 1945

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

The beloved Guardian has instructed me to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters dated Aug. 11th and Nov. 9th and to answer them on his behalf. Their enclosures were also received....

He was very pleased to hear that you have had eight new Bahá'ís since Convention and hopes that this is only a foretaste of the conversion of souls in far greater numbers in the years lying ahead of us.

The Six Year Plan is of the utmost importance, and he urges your Assembly to continually keep reminding the friends of the necessity for sustaining their efforts through arising personally to serve and through giving generously that others may serve in their place.

In this connection he hopes you will use the services of Marion Holley, now Mrs. David Hofman,⁵ to the full. She is a gifted speaker and writer, and has had invaluable experience in America as a member of the National Teaching Committee, during the Seven Year Plan. Both she and Mr. Hofman are wholly dedicated to the service of the Cause, and eager to do all in their power to help accomplish the goals of your Six Year Plan.

He was happy to hear that the Summer School was held successfully. Now that the war is over, and conditions gradually returning to normal, he hopes that the British believers will exert their utmost in serving the Cause and spreading its message. Although from time to time they will receive the help of outside Bahá'ís, the major responsibility is theirs, and the lion's share of the work will naturally fall to them as both their privilege and their duty.

He assures you one and all that his ardent prayers sustain you in your labours for the Faith and he feels sure that with sufficient effort on the part of all, and the Power of God which inevitably sustains self-sacrificing service in His Path, the goals can be gloriously achieved....

5.

Mrs

Marion

Hofman

Came to Britain in 1945 to be married to David Hofman, after having served the Faith in America with great distinction as a teacher, writer and administrator. With her husband she pioneered during the Six Year Plan in Northampton, Birmingham and Oxford, and during the Ten Year Crusade in Cardiff and Watford. She served on the National Spiritual Assembly and National Teaching Committee and as an Auxiliary Board member. Since David's election to the Universal House of Justice, Marion was solely responsible for the family publishing business of George Ronald.

P.S. He was delighted to hear of the welfare of the German believers. Reports of a similar nature had already reached him, but no figures had been given.

[From the Guardian:]

Dearly beloved co-workers,

I am anxiously waiting for the news of the progress of the Six Year Plan, upon which the future orientation of the collective activities of the English believers depends, and with which the immediate destinies of their Faith are interwoven. No sacrifice is too great to ensure its success. The utmost effort, vigilance, perseverance and self-sacrifice are required to carry it to a successful conclusion. If the friends, individually and collectively, play their part and exert their utmost, the abundant blessings of Bahá'u'lláh will be fully vouchsafed, and the strength of the Plan will mark a glorious chapter in the history of the Faith. I appeal to the entire community to dedicate itself to this sacred and urgent task, the greatest collective enterprise ever undertaken by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 21 February 1946

Assembly should explain to ... owing his brother's secession faith adherence islám participation politics and association with his other brothers and mother who have flagrantly disobeyed master's will communication with him and them forbidden. Assembly should exercise utmost vigilance this vital matter otherwise as master repeatedly warned contaminating influence will spread and imperil structure faith. Cable his response show utmost firmness.

Shoghi

Letter of 5 March 1946

Overjoyed recent decisions teaching conference ardently praying speedy realisation cherished hopes urge supreme united continuous effort cabling one thousand pounds furtherance noble aims six year plan deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 12 March 1946

Inform ... appreciate his assurance praying steadfastness blessings.

Shoghi

Letter of 22 March 1946

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letters dated Sep. 6th and Nov. 6th 1945 and Jan. 2nd, Feb. 8th and 19th 1946, have been received together with their enclosures, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer them on his behalf.

He has been delighted to see, through your letter and reports sent by other Bahá'ís, that the Teaching Conference in Manchester was such a success, and he feels this marks a turning point in your Six Year Plan. Now that goal towns have been chosen, the friends must concentrate all their forces and resources on establishing Assemblies in them as soon as possible. He feels sure that once the signs of success become evident all the believers, tired and depressed after so many years of war and privation, will become vitalised with optimism and enthusiasm and drive forward unitedly towards the complete victory of their plans.

He was delighted to hear that Miss Townshend⁶ and Mr. Lee⁷ have arisen as pioneers, and he wishes you to please assure them of his special prayers for the success of their devoted labours.

He was also very happy to hear you have found a place to hold your Summer School; this is such an important Bahá'í activity that even if the expenses are such as to necessitate its being subsidised by the National Fund it does not matter.

He advises you to send half of the Russian books in your possession to the Bahá'í Bureau in Geneva. Mrs. Lynch can distribute them from there, as required, to other centres.

He feels it would be an excellent means of serving the Cause and enhancing the prestige of the British Bahá'ís if you can send a delegate to the Spiritual World Congress to be held in Brussels.

We are sending ... the Haifa News Letter direct from here; thank you for sending his address. The Guardian suggests if you have not already done so, that you send the address of the Dutch Bahá'í to Mrs. Lynch, so that travelling believers can be put in touch with him.

He is eagerly awaiting more good news of the progress of your Six Year Plan, and assures you all that he will ardently pray for its speedy and complete success in the Holy Shrines.

Your Assembly's labours are very deeply appreciated...

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

6. She pioneered to Malta and was the first Knight of Bahá'u'lláh in that island in October 1953.

7.

Joseph

Lee

Accepted the Faith in Manchester in 1932 and was active on committees and in the teaching work for over thirty years. He served on the National Spiritual Assembly from 1933 to 1940 and pioneered to Brighton, Torquay and Exeter, sacrificing material prosperity over many years in the interests of teaching and pioneering. He passed away in May 1966 at the age of 55 years.

The enterprise launched by the English Bahá'í community in the opening years of the second Bahá'í Century is of tremendous significance, and will, if successful, mark not only the inception of a glorious chapter in the history of the Faith in the British Isles, but will constitute a landmark in the spiritual awakening of its people. The forces which such a consummation will release none can estimate sufficiently at present. The task is colossal, but the reinforcing power of Bahá'u'lláh, who is watching over it and is ready to bless and sustain it if its prosecutors arise to play their part, is likewise immeasurable. The recent Teaching Conference is but the initial stage in this mighty, this collective, and indeed historic undertaking. The goal towns which have been selected should be regarded as the chief objectives requiring the immediate and concentrated attention of its zealous promoters. Every consideration should be subordinated to the paramount need of establishing at any cost and by every means possible, vigorously functioning assemblies at these centres. No effort should be wasted, all must arise to lend their assistance; no sacrifice is too great to ensure the completion of the first stage of this noble enterprise. Unity, perseverance, self-sacrifice, will guarantee its success. Obstacles may arise, set-backs will no doubt occur, but the unconquerable spirit animating the English believers must ultimately triumph.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 24 April 1946

Advise not purchase at present. Rent if possible befitting rooms central position.

Shoghi

Letter of 24 April 1946

Kindly airmail two photographs National Assembly for "Bahá'í World".

Shoghi

Letter of 26 April 1946

Urge focus attention six year plan subordinate every activity paramount issue teaching facing English believers.

Shoghi

Letter of 30 April 1946 (Convention)

Dearly beloved English believers remembered shrines praying ardently success deliberations convention supreme continuous effort required ensure success plan concentration attention

resources entire community promotion paramount aim indispensable greater sacrifices
demanded ensure ultimate victory eagerly awaiting News progress historic enterprise.

Shoghi

Letter of 8 May 1946

*Whatever not specified articles association left discretion National A__sembly.*⁸

Shoghi

Letter of 10 May 1946

Appreciate mail Haifa photograph all members last year's National Assembly for Bahá'í world.

Shoghi

Letter of 22 May 1946

Approve drop cardiff substitute any town deemed advisable praying speedy success urge
perseverance loving appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 May 1946

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters (and those previously written by Mrs. Ferraby⁹ as secretary) dated March 19th and 21st; April 12th and 23rd; and May 2nd and 11th, as well as their enclosures, have all been received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer them on his behalf.

Regarding the various points which have been raised in these letters.

As he already informed you by cable, he sees no objection to substituting some other town for Cardiff if that has proved too unpromising....

People who for years have ceased to either attend meetings or show the slightest interest in the Cause can be dropped from the voting list; but any who are unable to attend meetings, but still

⁸. In answer to cabled request for guidance about tied vote at Convention.

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consider themselves to be Bahá'ís and are desirous of keeping up their contact with the Faith, should naturally be kept on the voting list.

He feels at the present stage of the Cause's development in England it is perhaps wiser not to make any hard and fast rules about the boundaries of towns for assembly purposes. However, you should bear in mind that in the future some proper delineation will be necessary.

As to the question of the Publishing Trust about quoting excerpts from some of the Meditations; there is no objection to this at all.

He hopes you will be able to find some suitable quarters in London for your Bahá'í Centre; he considers that at the present time, with the heavy and essential teaching programme you have undertaken, it is out of the question to purchase headquarters.

The Guardian takes the keenest interest in your Six Year Plan, and he wishes me to point out to you certain things in this connection: if the important goals of new Assemblies are to be achieved, he feels you will have to organise the work on a new basis. England now stands, one might say, on the brink of a new phase of its Bahá'í life; the long years of war are over, the friends are not only awakened to a sense of their responsibilities, but have increased in numbers, in zeal, and in unity; there is a growing number of people who are anxious to do pioneer work. What is needed is a planned and consistent form of teaching and administrative support of the activities your Assembly is inaugurating.

He feels the time has come when the British Bahá'ís' resources are sufficient to enable them to embark on their teaching campaign in a manner similar to that already followed by the American and Indian Bahá'ís. In other words pioneers who volunteer for work, if they are not able to support themselves, should be supported by the National Fund until they either find work or their task is completed.

Likewise travelling teachers should be assisted financially to carry out the "projects" assigned to them. The friends should not for a moment confuse this type of support with the creation of a paid clergy. Any Bahá'í can, at the discretion of the N.S.A., receive this necessary assistance and it is clearly understood it is temporary and only to carry out a specific plan. Bahá'u'lláh Himself has not only enjoined on everyone the duty of teaching His Faith, but stated if you cannot go yourself, to send someone in your stead. The National Assembly, through and with its Teaching Committee, should take immediate steps to get pioneers out into the goal towns and teachers circulating about, to not only support and inaugurate the new work, but to stimulate the existing Assemblies and groups, and help them to expand.

He hopes that your Assembly, unitedly and with complete dedication to the great work that lies ahead of you, will concentrate all your forces on the teaching work. You may be sure he will pray for your success in the Holy Shrines, and that all the British Bahá'ís may realise to the full their historic responsibilities and arise to discharge them....

P.S. Your letter of May 29th has since been received and the extra photos of N.S.A. members will be forwarded to America.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The activities of the English Bahá'í community in pursuance of the Plan, which in its scope and potentialities is wholly unprecedented in the history of the Faith in the British Isles, are now approaching a critical stage, and will, if not relentlessly expanded and consolidated, fall far short of their ultimate objective. They have now entered the third year of their Plan, and the work that still remains unaccomplished is considerable, but not beyond what their united and sustained endeavours can accomplish. The utmost support, if the Plan is to yield its promise, should be continually and increasingly extended to every pioneer, both moral and financial, who will arise to contribute his or her share to its success. All the institutions of the Faith so laboriously erected since the inception of the Formative Age, most of the financial resources of the community that have been accumulated, the deliberations of the elected representatives of the entire body of the believers, both local and national, should henceforth be dedicated to the vital requirements and noble aims of an enterprise which, if successful, will pave the way, and provide the necessary agencies, for the proclamation of the Faith to the masses throughout the British Isles.

The Faith is too circumscribed at present, its resources too limited, its range too restricted, and the number of its active supporters too few, to allow a systematic and nation-wide campaign designed to awaken the masses, to be effectively inaugurated. The present Plan is but a stepping stone that must lead eventually the English believers to execute so tremendous and meritorious an undertaking. The duties and responsibilities now facing them must, however, be fully discharged. No time or effort should be wasted. All, young and old, must be aroused to a new consciousness of their collective responsibilities. A greater measure of self-sacrifice, a greater audacity, a greater reliance on the sustaining grace of Bahá'u'lláh, are required to lend the necessary impetus to the progressive unfoldment and ultimate fruition of this dynamic process which the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, labouring in the heart of a world encircling empire, have set in motion. May signal success crown their historic labours.

Shoghi

Letter of 7 June 1946

National Youth Committee

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter dated May 16th and written on behalf of the National Youth Committee, was received, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He is very happy to see that the Bahá'í Youth of the British Isles are now organised and working with enthusiasm for the spread of the Faith there. He feels that they have a great and important rôle to play during the next few years in fulfilling the objectives of the Six Year Plan.

Young people, being, for the most part, freer than the older believers, are in a position to arise as pioneers and move to new towns as settlers. A great number of the pioneers in America, who left their native cities, and often their native land, in order to fulfil the Seven Year Plan, were

young people — some of them so young that the Spiritual Assemblies they helped to establish they were themselves not yet old enough to be elected to!

The Guardian has enjoyed very much meeting Capt. Philip Hainsworth,¹⁰ who had the unique privilege of being in Haifa for over a month, and he feels sure that upon his return to England he will lend great impetus to both the Youth and teaching work.

He heartily approves of your “Youth Bulletin” project and urges you to place special emphasis on articles that are of pertinent interest to young people, such as those dealing with the economic, social and moral aspects of society.

Assuring you, and all the members of your Committee, of his loving prayers for the success of your labours....

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless your meritorious endeavours, guide every step you take in the path of service, aid you to extend the range of your activities, and enable you to promote, by every means in your power, and in a most effective manner, the vital interests of a Plan with which the immediate destinies of the members of the English Bahá'í Community, both young and old, are so inextricably interwoven.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 18 June 1946

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

The beloved Guardian has instructed me to send you the following copy of a cable he sent the N.S.A. on the 7th of this month: “_Delighted latest report teaching activities. Present year crucial fortunes plan. Concentrate 5 most promising goal towns, also exert utmost re-establish torquay, bournemouth assemblies. Success immediate plan will necessitate increase convention delegates British Isles to twice_29. *Upon consummation entire plan further increase to three times 19 will become essential. Cabling five hundred pounds for travel settlement pioneers. Prospects bright, redoubled efforts absolutely essential, exertion youth vital. Forthcoming gathering summer school should devote special attention requirements plan. Ardently praying triumphant success first stage collective effort dearly beloved English believers*”.

¹⁰. He subsequently pioneered to Oxford and Blackburn. In June 1951 he was one of the party of five pioneers who first went to Dar-es-Salaam and then on to Kampala, Uganda, where he became Secretary of the first local Spiritual Assembly in 1952 and of the Regional National Assembly in Central and East Africa in 1956. He returned to pioneer in the Leeds area in 1966, was elected to the National Assembly in 1967 and is still (1979) a member.

In the first draft of this cable sent you a word was left out, namely "twice" before the "19" in reference to the first increase of the number of convention delegates. This was corrected the same day by cable.

The Guardian has so far received no acknowledgment of the receipt of this long cable and he is anxious to know if it reached you safely? Also the five hundred pounds which was forwarded by cable, through Barclays Bank, to your name?

Assuring you of his loving prayers on your behalf...

P.S. He was very happy to hear that the N.S.A. is now united, and that sources of misunderstanding and uneasiness have been entirely cleared up.

Letter of 6 July 1946

Delighted bright prospects achievement this year's goal will constitute turning point fortunes plan landmark British Bahá'í history sustained concentration essential convey pioneers travelling teachers assurance loving appreciation abiding gratitude Noble response urge exert simultaneously efforts establish this pivotal year nucleus future assembly both Scotland Ireland praying continually increasing evidences nation-wide expansion Progressive consolidation dearly beloved English Bahá'í community.

Shoghi

Letter of 2 August 1946 (Summer School)

Overjoyed praying ever increasing success deepest appreciation high endeavours.

Shoghi

Letter of 25 August 1946

Delighted urge utmost sacrifice provide requirements goal towns praying success.

Shoghi

Letter of 12 October 1946

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters dated June 1st and 26th and July 20th and 25th, together with their enclosures, have been received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

Regarding the various points you raised.

Unless the Russian "New Era" is hopelessly bad, the Guardian advises it nevertheless be made use of, as it will be some time before the funds of the Cause can be used for a new edition. If the mistakes are mostly in the nature of mistranslations of certain important terms it might be possible for you, in conjunction with Mrs. Lynch, to have printed or mimeographed a list of errata, and stick it in the book, in this way Russian-speaking people will not be denied some literature on the Faith, however inadequate.

The attitude of the friends towards orientals should be one of great caution, according to the Master's own often-repeated and explicit instructions and warnings. Any believer in good standing would not leave his home community without a letter of credential, and certainly no Persians, claiming to be Bahá'ís, but lacking credentials, should be accepted until the Persian N.S.A. has clarified their status. They can, naturally, attend public meetings, but should not be permitted to come to the 19-Day Feasts; the friends may associate with them, but should be very cautious, bearing in mind that many orientals, who scorned or were even actively against the Cause while living in the East, now find it convenient to pose as believers or friends of the Faith in a Western community where they are strangers.

As regards your question about Bahá'í procedure; the present statement can certainly be amplified to include the United Nations Organisation.

He feels that your Assembly should constantly, through its communications to the friends and its committees, and in every way possible, stir the British Bahá'í community to a sense of the great urgency of their pioneer activities; and the need for more pioneers. They now have a golden opportunity to arise and fulfil their own cherished plans before it is too late. In the future we may well look back upon these present days and see that in them lay our greatest chance to build for the future and to call people to the Faith while they were still deeply impressed with the tragedy and futility of war; and before they become too engulfed in post war problems, or too bitterly disillusioned by the trend of world affairs to even seek a solution. More believers must arise, and, putting their trust in Bahá'u'lláh, do their duty to the Faith they believe in and love so dearly. The youth in particular should be encouraged to enter this field of service, for the spread of the Cause is their only hope for a stable world in which to live and establish families of their own.

His loving prayers are with you all in your many services to the Cause of God, and he is greatly encouraged by the way the work is going forward in England....¹¹

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The evidences of intensified activity and of notable progress on the part of the English believers in recent months have rejoiced my heart and deepened my feelings of admiration and gratitude for the manner in which they are discharging, individually and collectively, their high responsibilities. I long to hear of the steady progress of their Plan, and will continue to pray for the removal of every obstacle in their path. However considerable their recent achievements,

¹¹.

1.

they are still in the initial stage of their great unfolding mission, and are not even capable as yet of visualising the possibilities or of estimating the consequences of their present-day labours. The consummation of their present task will mark the opening of a new era in the development of their community and will signalise the inauguration of a great epoch in the history of the Faith in their land — an epoch that must witness the universal recognition of their Cause and the proclamation of its truths, its claims and tenets, to the masses of their countrymen throughout the British Isles. The Plan they are now prosecuting will provide the machinery and establish the basic structure that will enable them to arouse the people, among all sections of the population, and aid them, systematically and gradually, to recognise Bahá'u'lláh, and support the nascent institutions of this World Order. Now it is their duty to lay an unassailable foundation for the great work that is to be undertaken in the future. There is no time to lose. Theirs is a priceless opportunity and a great privilege. They must neither vacillate nor falter. They must determinedly persevere until their immediate and distant goals have been attained.

Shoghi

Letter of 15 November 1946

Overjoyed marvel magnificent success urge after attainment this year's goal concentration Ireland Scotland Wales longing formation nuclei these virgin territories ardently praying loving admiration.

Shoghi

Letter of 21 November 1946¹²

Approve loving appreciation praying success.

Shoghi

Letter of 26 December 1946

National Youth Committee

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter of September 19th was received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf, and to congratulate you and the other members of your committee on the excellent first issue of your Bahá'í Youth Bulletin.

¹². Approving Teaching Conference to be dedicated to the 25th Anniversary of the Guardianship.

This is an important new undertaking, and must be established as a firm innovation on the part of the British Bahá'í community. He hopes it will gradually become the means of interesting and attracting many new souls to the Faith.

In fact the Youth work everywhere in the Bahá'í World is dear to his heart, and he attaches great importance to it. The young people, who will inevitably grow up to shoulder all the work of the Cause, are really its hope, and should be one of the most active factors in its propagation. Through their courageous adherence to the high moral and ethical standards set out by Bahá'u'lláh, and through gaining a mastery of His many, diversified, and profound teachings, they can shape, to a great extent, the development and aid in the rapid expansion of their beloved Faith in the various countries in which they labour. They should be made to realise their responsibility is heavy and their privilege very precious.

He wishes to assure you and all the other members of the National Youth Committee, of his most loving prayers for your progress, and for the success of the work you have so enthusiastically and devotedly undertaken....

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless abundantly the work which your Committee has so nobly initiated, remove all obstacles from your path, aid you to realise every hope you cherish, and carry out every plan you conceive, for the furtherance of the interests of our beloved Faith and of its God-given institutions.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 30 December 1946

Praying fervently removal all obstacles impeding progress plan and recovery. Supplicating richest blessings teaching conference deepest loving appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 1 January 1947¹³

Rejoice success praying richest blessings.

Shoghi

13. At news of move to new National Bahá'í Centre.

Letter of 12 January 1947 (To Teaching Conference)

Profoundly moved message. Greatly appreciate Noble sentiments praying depths grateful heart continued success magnificent collective efforts deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 20 January 1947

Consultation between delegates community advisable presentation community views to convention advisable manner consultation left discretion N.S.A. doubling number delegates conditioned achievement nine goal towns.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 January 1947

Assure Joan Giddings¹⁴ deepest loving appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 8 February 1947

Delighted progress Nottingham Birmingham response McKinleys¹⁵ urge supreme effort as crucial year draws close ensure attainment objective loving ardent prayers.

Shoghi

Letter of 26 February 1947

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your communications dated Sept. 12, Oct. 4th and 17th, Nov. 19th, 18th and 21st and Dec. 29th 1946 have all been received together with their enclosures and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf...

¹⁴. She pioneered first to Cardiff and later to York and Canterbury, and was active on Assemblies and on National Committees throughout her Bahá'í life. She passed away in Canterbury in 1978. (See also note about developments in Bradford under "Cyril and Margaret Jenkerson".)

¹⁵. Together they pioneered to Nicosia, Cyprus in 1953, moving to Famagusta in 1958. Violet passed away there in August 1959. In 1966 Hugh pioneered to Syros in the Cyclades Islands (Greece) and returned to the United Kingdom in October 1977. ("Bahá'í World", Vol. XVI, p. 512.)

He was very happy to see the marked success of your Summer School this past year and also to receive very encouraging reports of the Manchester Teaching Conference; a great change has come over the work in England during the past year and one which must certainly rejoice the hearts of the older Bahá'ís in particular as they compare the present state of the Cause with the decades that passed when it had two or three spiritual Assemblies and seemed to be practically standing still! It seems, indeed, as if an important corner had been turned and that the Faith in the British Isles is at last showing its true stature and casting a portentous shadow of future events before it!

He is particularly happy to see the way the Bahá'í young people are arising and serving in the pioneer field with such courage, determination and success.

Regarding the question you asked him about the sentence from the "Aqdas" for the marriage certificate: he feels that the following is a suitable translation of this passage: "Enter into wedlock, O people, that ye may bring forth one who will make mention of me."

The very good news of Nottingham and Birmingham achieving Assembly status was most welcome and he hopes the friends will redouble their efforts in connection with the remaining goal towns. Likewise the establishment of pioneers in both Eire and Scotland is of historic importance and they should receive every assistance from the National Teaching Committee and from your Assembly.

Now that the British believers see tangible results of their labours and perseverance taking shape, they should feel encouraged to make new sacrifices; a little effort on our part is so richly blessed by Bahá'u'lláh — we can only wonder what the rewards would be for a great, concerted, truly inspired effort by all members of the community.

He assures you all of his most loving prayers for your guidance and the success of your historic enterprises....

P.S. Shoghi Effendi would like your Assembly to make every effort to help Dr. Lotfullah Hakim¹⁶ to come to England from Persia; he wishes to continue his study of massage etc. and he could be of great help in the teaching work as he is a devoted and fine Bahá'í. Shoghi Effendi

¹⁶. His grandfather was the first Jew to embrace the Cause and Bahá'u'lláh revealed a Tablet in his honour. Lutfu'lláh came to study physiotherapy in England in 1910 and he was in constant attendance on the Master during His visit in 1911. He went to serve in the Holy Land and returned to England in 1920 when he accompanied Shoghi Effendi. He later served with distinction in Persia and returned, at the request of the Guardian, to Britain in October 1948, where he taught and travelled extensively until called to Haifa by the Guardian on 14 November 1950. He was appointed to the first International Bahá'í Council. He was elected to the first Universal House of Justice in 1963 but because of failing health and advanced age regretfully his resignation was accepted in October 1967 though he consented to serve until the 1968 election. He passed away in August 1968 and the House cabled the Bahá'í world: "*Grieve announce passing Lutfu'lláh Hakím dedicated servant cause God. Special missions entrusted him, full confidence reposed in him by master and guardian, his close association with early distinguished believers east west including his collaboration Esslemont, his services Persia British Isles holy land, his membership appointed and elected international Bahá'í council, his election Universal house justice will always be remembered immortal annals Faith B_ahá'u'lláh.*" ("Bahá'í World", Vol. XV, pp. 430–4.)

suggested he might investigate the possibility of carrying out his studies in Edinburgh or some other goal town and thus help with the Six Year Plan at the same time.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The present crucial year, now drawing to a close, may well be regarded as one of the most memorable in the annals of British Bahá'í history. The magnificent, spontaneous and collective response of almost the entire community of the English believers to the imperative call of teaching; the support lent by individuals, groups and Assemblies to the Plan set in motion by its national elected representatives; the success attending the Teaching Conference; the multiplication of Bahá'í centres in England; the initial steps taken to establish the structure of the Administrative Order of the Faith, in Ireland, Scotland and Wales — all these have combined to raise the stature of the community, and to prepare it for the still greater tasks that must be faced by its members after the successful prosecution of the present Plan.

The Bahá'ís of the British Isles are now, slowly, laboriously and in strict accordance with the principles of a steadily expanding, divinely appointed Administrative Order, building up the essential and primary institutions which are destined to act as the chief and most powerful instruments for the proclamation of the Faith to the masses of their countrymen, at a subsequent stage in the development of the Faith in their land. As these institutions expand and are consolidated, the community will find itself equipped, not only to carry the Message of the New Day to the multitudes throughout the length and breadth of its homeland, but prepared and fortified to initiate teaching campaigns beyond the shores of its native land, and in distant territories and various parts of the Empire of which that land is the heart and centre.

Theirs is the duty, during these coming years, to lay patiently, assiduously and unitedly the foundation on which the structure of their future international services to their beloved Faith can be firmly and unassailably established. Upon the success of the Plan they are now so diligently and devotedly prosecuting, must depend the scope and effectiveness of their two-fold task of proclaiming the verities of their Faith to their fellow countrymen at home, and of implanting its banner abroad amidst the peoples and races of a far-flung Empire.

That they may carry out, in a befitting manner and by the appointed time, the preliminary steps so essential for the fulfilment of their high destiny is my dearest wish and constant prayer.

Shoghi

Letter of 20 March 1947 (To First Regional Youth Conference)

Profoundly appreciate message conference urge concentrate needs plan praying great victories.

Shoghi

Letter of 21 March 1947

Overjoyed prospects praying ardently consummation cherished hopes appeal entire community exert supreme effort ensure total success mighty enterprise deepest loving appreciation abiding gratitude.

Shoghi

Letter of 28 March 1947

Advise apportion delegates coming convention in strict accordance number believers actually residing in four communities mentioned letter February 24th.

Shoghi

Letter of 7 April 1947

National Youth Committee

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letters dated August 10th (from the secretary) and December 19th and March 18th (from the Business Manager of the Editorial Committee) were received, and as our beloved Guardian is greatly overburdened by his steadily expanding correspondence, he has instructed me to answer these communications all in one.

He was very pleased to receive copies of "Youth Bulletin," which he thinks is starting out in the right direction; he would like to receive this publication regularly.

The work you are doing is very important, and the British Bahá'í Youth should feel very encouraged to see the way some of their members have arisen and gone forth to pioneer. He hopes others will follow this example in order to ensure the success of the Six Year Plan.

You may be sure his loving prayers are offered for you all in the Holy Shrines...

[From the Guardian:]

May the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh sustain, bless and guide you in your notable, meritorious, and deeply appreciated activities, aid you to extend the range of your services, and lend a great impetus to the progress of the Plan which the English believers are so devotedly and assiduously prosecuting.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 16 April 1947

Overjoyed historic success approved minute 590 praying still greater victories heartfelt
congratulations abiding gratitude.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 April 1947

Acclaim pride gratitude victory achieved revitalised triumphant dearly beloved British Bahá'í
community marvellous consummation arduous task crucial year historic plan unprecedented
annals fifty years British Bahá'í history sister communities East West North South hail significant
victory won notwithstanding prolonged strain formidable obstacles smallness numbers
diversity trials confident all members community young old teachers pioneers administrators
will resolutely safeguard prizes won forge ahead undiminished zeal attain goals within reach
cabling one thousand pounds promotion great tasks ahead token my abiding gratitude signal
service rendered followers faith Bahá'u'lláh British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 8 May 1947

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters dated Jan. 19th and 23rd; Feb. 16th, 27th and 28th; March 8th and 25th; and April 4th, 19th, 20th, 22nd and 23rd, 1947, have all been received, together with their enclosures and the material sent under separate cover, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

Regarding the various questions you have raised.

He has already informed the American N.S.A. that he feels Mr. Townshend's services to the Faith can best be rendered by his writing about it, as he obviously has an outstanding ability in this direction, combined with knowledge and zeal, and can render a very valuable service this way; he also feels that Mr. Townshend, now that his church association seems about to be broken, could be used as part of the pioneer force in Eire. It is his own land, he knows his own people, and the need for workers there is very particularly great this year....

If Mr. Townshend has not as yet been registered as a voting believer he certainly should be immediately. Everyone knows he has been a most devoted Bahá'í for many years and his contributions should certainly be considered those of a voting Bahá'í.

He would appreciate receiving, for the files here in Haifa, a copy of the revised Articles of Association.

Regarding the prayer translated by Dr. K̄hán and his daughter: although he has not taken time to compare it with the original, he assumes it is a faithful translation. Unfortunately it is not a style which in our language can convey the richness and power of the original, and he would not recommend that this version of it be printed. There is no objection, however, to its circulation among the friends if they want it.

As to certain of your voting members who have long been inactive, and whose conduct you disapprove of, he suggests you make an effort to find out if they still believe in the Faith, and if they do, and wish to be members of it, then they should be helped to mend their ways. If this patient and loving method does not prove successful and they refuse to identify themselves with the Faith, they should be removed from the voting list.

Miss ... should be advised, for the sake of better serving the Cause she loves so dearly, to take care of her health; also she should be made to realise that a pessimistic and critical approach (although perhaps fully justified by the situation) produces no results. We, having the power of the Faith to draw on, must always be constructive in our efforts, as this will produce results and attract Divine blessings upon them.

Concerning the membership of ... in the synagogue: as this concerns his non-Bahá'í Jewish wife and means a great deal to her — even involving the place of her burial — the Guardian does not feel it is right to request him to take a step which would deprive her of her own religious rights. On the other hand, he sees no reason why ... should not write a letter to the appropriate authority in this synagogue, explaining that he is a practising Bahá'í but is keeping his synagogue membership for the benefit of his wife and children. Some similar action should be taken by ..., or he should give up his synagogue membership.

He realises the difficult position of the London community, but the goals of the Plan, and its success, justify any temporary weakening of the work in the capital, which in the end will be greatly strengthened by the national spread of the Faith. He certainly will specially pray for this work in London.

The achievement of all goals during this crucial year has been very great, and brought him a conviction that the Cause in the British Isles is now operating on an entirely new footing, and that the community of believers there has thrown off once and for all time a certain lethargy which seemed to have retarded its progress in the past. Although so much still remains to be accomplished, the combination of the new zest for work and the determination of the friends to succeed, and the unfailing assistance of Bahá'u'lláh, promised to all who arise and put their faith in Him, will surely mow down all obstacles and carry the British believers through to victory.

He feels that the way your assembly is working, with its many and active committees, and the plans you have outlined in your report, are excellent. Any suggestions he has to make, as the work unfolds, he will communicate to you.

The Summer School, he feels, is of great importance, and he hopes gradually believers from the continent will visit it and be helped and inspired by their contact with the now active and flourishing British Bahá'í community!

You may be sure in the prayers he offers in the Holy Shrines you and your assembly's work are often remembered...

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The success that has crowned the strenuous efforts exerted by the entire British Bahá'í community in the course of this crucial year, has raised immensely its prestige in the estimation of its sister communities in East and West, and has demonstrated in a very striking manner, the vitality, resourcefulness and determination of its members, and merits the praise and blessings of the concourse on high, and particularly of our beloved Master, who in the course of two successive visits showered His loving kindness on the English believers, and chose the capital city of their country as the scene of His first public appearance before a western audience. This remarkable exploit, unparelled since the inception of the administrative order in that land, and unsurpassed by any achievement associated with the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles since the introduction of His Faith into their country, augurs well for the successful termination of the Initial Phase of the Plan, and fills me with hope that total victory will ultimately be achieved, at the appointed time, by the prosecutors of this bold, this historic and far-reaching enterprise.

The Plan itself when consummated will signalise the opening of a new epoch in British Bahá'í history, an epoch which must witness, simultaneously with the vigorous initiation of subsequent Plans designed to broaden the basis, and multiply the institutions, of a steadily evolving administrative order, the inauguration of systematic undertakings, jointly launched by the English, the Scottish, the Irish and Welsh believers, and aiming, on the one hand, at the proclamation of the Divine Message to the masses of their respective countrymen, and, on the other, at the establishment of the structural basis of a divinely appointed Administrative Order throughout the far-flung dependencies of the British Crown.

For the present, however, and as an essential preliminary to the vast and challenging tasks that await them beyond the shores of their homeland, the eyes of the prosecutors of the present Plan must be focused on the vital and urgent requirements in England, and particularly Scotland, Wales and Ireland, wherein the nuclei that have been recently formed, should, ere the expiry of the present year, be converted into full-fledged assemblies. The erection of the administrative institutions of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in these virgin territories will no doubt befittingly mark the termination of the initial phase of the Plan, and proclaim to the entire Bahá'í world the resolution, as well as the ability, of its valiant promoters to create the indispensable agencies required for an intensive propagation of the Faith at home, and the planting of its banner overseas.

Theirs is an unspeakably thrilling task, an awe-inspiring obligation, a priceless opportunity. Their recent victories inspire a confident hope that a no less outstanding success will mark their future endeavours.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 14 May 1947

Deeply appreciative pledge praying abundant blessings deliberations.

Shoghi

Letter of 24 May 1947

Townshend's resignation imperative. Allocation five hundred pounds from national fund excessive. Advise use part relief fund this purpose praying solution problem.

Shoghi

Letter of 18 June 1947

Overjoyed Townshend's memorable decision Noble example commendable determination settle Dublin ardently praying success protection removal difficulties delighted Stahler's¹⁷ George's¹⁸ pioneering supplicating abundant blessings cherish bright hopes fruition assembly's historic task deepest love appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 28 June 1947

National Youth committee

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter, with enclosures, to our Beloved Guardian, on behalf of the National Youth Committee, and dated February 26th, was received and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf. He did not reply sooner because he is so very busy and overworked, and feels sure you understand the reason for the delay.

¹⁷. He pioneered first to Cardiff, then to Bristol, moved for varying periods to seven other cities and finally settled in Derby in 1965.

¹⁸. She first pioneered from St. Lambert to Moncton and then from Canada to England with her young daughter in 1946 to settle in Blackburn, Lancs. From there to Norwich and Bournemouth in the Six Year Plan and then to Edinburgh and Portsmouth. In 1959 she pioneered to Luxembourg and then in the Nine Year Plan, to Guernsey, to Chelmsford, Essex and again overseas to the Canary Islands. In 1969 she returned to England to pioneer in Hereford and St. Austell and then back again to the Canaries where she was on the first Spiritual Assembly of Arucas. For over thirty years she served the Cause with utter consecration; carrying out at least sixteen pioneer projects in three continents. She passed away in Birmingham, England on 12 July 1974. ("Bahá'í World", Vol. XVI, p. 534.)

The services which the Bahá'í young people are rendering the Cause, not only in England but in Scotland and in Eire, please him greatly, as the Youth are the ones who perform, in the near future, will find themselves carrying on the administrative and teaching work of the Faith, and the sooner they prepare themselves for this heavy responsibility through actual experience in the pioneer field, the better.

He is delighted to see the steady progress of your activities and the way your Bulletin is progressing, and he assures you all of his loving prayers for the success of all your undertakings....

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless continually your meritorious efforts, guide and sustain you in your activities, and aid you to fulfil your heart's desire in the service of His glorious Faith.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 19 July 1947

Advise Townshend transfer residence outside Ireland if necessary approve provision coal American believers.

Shoghi

Letter of 20 August 1947

Overjoyed magnificent progress summer school assure attendants loving prayers grateful admiration congratulate entire British community astounding achievements Bahá'ís world proud unforgettable victories British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 12 September 1947

Delighted Townshend settlement magnificent success summer school beloved master Abhá Kingdom well pleased constructive historic manifold achievements virile British Bahá'í community praying increasing fervour divine guidance surmount obstacles resolve problems win still greater victories heartfelt gratitude abiding love.

Shoghi

Letter of 25 September 1947

The National Bahá'í Youth Committee of the British Isles

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated August 21st, as well as the note of your Secretary, Miss Howes, dated August 29th, have been received, together with the copy of your Youth Letter, and I have been instructed to answer you on his behalf.

He is very happy to hear of the formation of the new Youth Groups you mention, as this will not only greatly stimulate the Bahá'í Youth and enable them to attract new young people to the Faith, but will also do the general work of the Cause in these cities a great deal of good. He urges your Committee to make every effort to establish youth groups wherever there are Spiritual Assemblies, and circumstances permit. He would like to receive five copies of your Youth Letter if this is convenient.

Your services are very deeply valued, and he assures you all of his loving prayers for the success and expansion of your activities....

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The activities initiated and diligently pursued by the members of your committee deserve the highest praise. The devotion, the perseverance, the loyalty, the assiduous care with which you are striving to promote the interests of the Bahá'í Youth throughout the British Isles rejoice my heart, and will no doubt act as a magnet that will attract the blessings of the Almighty. Persevere in your historic labours, and rest assured that the Beloved is well pleased with your splendid accomplishments. I will continue to pray from the depths of my heart for the extension of your valued activities.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 9 October 1947

Assembly Development Committee Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letter to our beloved Guardian dated Aug. 4th, has been received and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He is very pleased to see the work your Committee is undertaking and feel that it is of the greatest importance. The unity, love, harmony and proper understanding of the administration of the Cause which exists in a community are the measure of its progress, and on them depend directly the expansion of the Faith.

He wishes you every success, and assures you of his prayers in support of your labours....

P.S. He has received your bi-monthly news letter and thinks it is very well written and excellent in every way.

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless continually your valued activities, aid you to overcome all obstacles in your path, promote effectively the vital interests of our beloved Faith, and contribute, in a notable manner, to the multiplication of its nascent institutions.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 9 October 1947

Child Education Committee

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated Sept. 1st, has been received by him, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He was very pleased to see the enthusiasm and devotion with which you have entered into this important branch of Bahá'í activity, and he hopes your labours will be richly rewarded with success.

He would suggest that wherever classes for Bahá'í children are held, liberal minded parents be invited to send their children too, so that their minds may receive the broad, basic and tolerant doctrines of our glorious Faith.

He assures you of his loving prayers for the success of your activities.

With warmest greetings,

[From the Guardian:]

May the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh guide and sustain you in your highly important and vital undertaking, enable you to extend continually the range of your meritorious activities, and lend a great impetus to the consolidation of the institutions of our glorious Faith.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 10 October 1947

Highly approve arrange Marion Hofman resume secretaryship teaching committee urge entire community persevere united strenuous efforts ensure triumphant termination present phase plan status newly formed assemblies must be maintained at all costs attention should moreover be focused establishment firm foundation historic assemblies Scotland Wales Eire ere termination current year cabling five hundred pounds assist assembly vigorous prosecution mighty enterprises conferring imperishable lustre divinely sustained victoriously advancing

dearly beloved British Bahá'í community.

Shoghi

Letter of 16 October 1947

Delighted evidences progress Edinburgh Dublin Blackpool heartfelt abiding appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 24 October 1947

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters to our beloved Guardian, dated May 18th and 27th; June 4th, 9th and 16th; July 5th, 8th (two of this date), 12th and 14th; August 9th and September 15th, 20th and 29th; and October 6th and 13th, have all been received, as well as their enclosures, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf....

He received a letter direct from the World Congress of Faiths, and wrote them offering full Bahá'í co-operation, and informing them he was ready to appoint a Bahá'í representative to attend any conference they may hold.

The discovery of the Master's letter to Andrew Carnegie is very interesting, in spite of the very poor translation of this Tablet, and he will be very pleased to receive a photostat of the original, or at least a faithful copy of the text in Persian.

He would be pleased to continue receiving the reports of the Assembly Development Committee.

Regarding the question you asked him: he feels that in the case of a believer who will be 21 years old on April 22nd, there is no objection, at this time, when the work of the Cause is so urgent and the workers so few, in permitting him to vote on April 21st.

The conduct of ... is an excellent example of why he, (and 'Abdu'l-Bahá before him), feels it so necessary to be very strict about the admission of Orientals into the communities of the Western world. The British people, being shrewd by nature and having had considerable experience with Orientals and peoples of all races, are far less vulnerable to the insidious influence of the insincere than are the more naive and less experienced Americans. People such as this young man, Bahá'í in name whenever it suits their convenience to be so, caring really nothing about the Faith at heart, and ready to abandon it at a moment's notice if the pleasures to be gained outweigh the humiliation of ostracism, are a real menace to the Cause, especially to the faith of young and untried believers. It is to protect the Cause against such individuals that the Guardian is at present so strict about not permitting Persians to visit America at this time.

In regard to your question about qualifications of delegates and assembly members: the qualifications which he outlined are really applicable to anyone we elect to a Bahá'í office, whatever its nature. But those are only an indication, they do not mean people who don't fulfil them cannot be elected to office. We must aim as high as we can. He does not feel the friends should attach so much importance to limitations — such as people perhaps not being able to attend assembly or convention meetings, because if they do, then the fundamental concept of everyone being willing to do Bahá'í service on administrative bodies will be weakened, and the friends may be tempted to vote for those who, because of independent means or circumstances in their lives, are freer to come and go but less qualified to serve.

Regarding “Abdu'l-Bahá in London”. Nothing can be considered scripture for which we do not have an original text. A verbatim record in Persian of His talks would of course be more reliable than one in English because He was not always accurately interpreted. However such a book is of value, and certainly has its place in our literature.

He assures you all of the deep appreciation of your valiant labours and his loving prayers on your behalf...

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The gigantic task, now being so energetically and successfully carried out by the consecrated and firmly knit British Bahá'í community, constitutes a glorious landmark in recent Bahá'í history, and will, when viewed in proper perspective, deserve to be regarded as one of the most outstanding enterprises launched by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the opening years of the second Bahá'í century. Alike in its magnitude and significance, this momentous undertaking is unprecedented in the annals of the Faith in the British Isles, and deserves to rank as one of the most compelling evidences of the creative power of its Author, marking the rise and establishment of His institutions on the European continent. It is yet too early to assess the potentialities of this present Plan and those destined to follow it, or estimate their future benefits. The blessings they will confer, as the forces latent within them are progressively revealed, on the people dwelling within those Islands, and subsequently, as their sphere is enlarged and their implications are fully disclosed, on the diversified peoples and races inhabiting the widely scattered dependencies of a far-flung empire, in both the East and the West, are unimaginably glorious.

A staggering responsibility rests on the shoulders of those who have been called upon to assist in the operation of the initial stages of this heroic colossal enterprise, and to participate in the privilege of directing its course, and nursing its infant strength. Setbacks and reverses are inevitable as this mighty Plan progresses and expands. Critical stages in its unfoldment must be encountered with unswerving resolution and confident hope. Whatever hardships and sacrifices its future prosecution may involve must be borne with courage, pride and thankfulness. To insure its speedy advancement every issue must be subordinated to its vital requirements, and every individual effort co-ordinated with the agencies designed for its execution.

Its present and pressing needs in the virgin territories of Eire, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland must be met with concentrated attention, continuous, systematic effort and the utmost self-sacrifice. The goals to be achieved in the capitals and chief cities of these newly opened territories must be relentlessly pursued, no matter how hard and stony the path that must be trodden. The prizes already won in other towns in those islands must at all costs be preserved and subsequently further enriched by fresh spiritual conquests in neighbouring counties and farther afield. Indeed the steps preliminary to the formation of a Bahá'í administrative centre in every county throughout the British Isles, must sooner or later be taken, as an essential prelude to the effective proclamation of the Faith to the masses. That the English Bahá'ís, aided and reinforced gradually by fresh recruits from among their Irish, Welsh and Scottish countrymen, may hasten the advent of such a glorious day in British Bahá'í history is the dearest wish of my heart and the object of my constant supplication at the Threshold of Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi

Letter of 10 December 1947

Deeply touched assembly's solicitude all safe heartfelt appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 7 January 1948

Fervently praying signal success teaching conference urge concentrated unrelaxing effort ensure glorious termination initial phase historic plan delighted settlement cardiff deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 20 January 1948

Cheered heartened magnificent success teaching conference. Greatly welcome valuable assistance extended distinguished teacher Dorothy Baker. Initial phase plan drawing triumphant close. Signal services rendered sound blessed firmly knit wide awake British Bahá'í community evoking admiration sister communities East West setting stirring example rising generation conferring inestimable blessings posterity meriting applause concourse on high augmenting my debt gratitude. Praying ardently success newly launched co-ordinated teaching plan supplicating richest blessings newly arisen pioneers deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 6 February 1948

Deplore loss valiant soul John Marshall praying for him. Praying continually ever increasing success greatly admired deeply loved high spirited British Bahá'í community.

Shoghi

Letter of 25 February 1948

Increasingly admire deeply thankful progress historic achievements blessed community delighted response Edinburgh assure Olga Mills best wishes loving appreciation praying removal difficulties.

Shoghi

Letter of 3 March 1948

Assure you prayers summer school deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 4 April 1948

Kindly air mail after April elections separate up to date alphabetical lists assemblies groups isolated believers British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 4 April 1948¹⁹

Assure dearly loved Alfred Sugar fervent prayers recovery heartily welcome new believers Edinburgh Dublin greatly appreciate support new pioneers address last minute appeal valiant British Bahá'í community intensify effort fill remaining gaps ensure total victory initial phase momentous plan ardently praying fulfilment dearest hopes.

Shoghi

¹⁹. Pioneers referred to were Charles Dunning (see block b.42) who had arrived in Belfast, and Evelyn Baxter, Ata'o'lláh Khochbine, Claire Gung (see block b.43), Lizzie Hainsworth (see block b.44), and Margaret Sullivan (see block b.45), for whom projects were completed.

Letter of 25 April 1948

Acclaim triumphant conclusion initial stage epoch making plan initiated Bahá'í community British Isles opening year second Bahá'í century sustained prodigious effort culminating laying structural basis rising administrative order leading cities eire Scotland Wales unprecedented British Bahá'í history constitutes landmark annals world Bahá'í community signalises commencement significant phase spiritual history Irish Scottish Welsh peoples potent seeds sown 'Abdu'l-bahá's twice repeated visits United Kingdom long last germinating concourse on high applauds brilliant feat unitedly achieved British followers faith Bahá'u'lláh sister communities East West marvel victory won such magnitude so short period by community so sorely afflicted so small numerically so circumscribed in resources yet so alive so sound so resolute plead urge valiant promoters so momentous plan guard against dissipation resources relaxation effort distraction attention forfeiture hardwon prizes appeal further sacrifices nobler dedication greater intensification labours until last act final phase divinely sustained plan gloriously consummated.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 April 1948

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters to our beloved Guardian, written on behalf of the British N.S.A., and dated as follows: Oct 20th, 22nd, 24th and 29th, Nov. 10th and 17th, Dec. 1st and 15th of 1947, and Jan. 13th, Feb. 8th, 9th, 13th, and 27th, and March 1st and 4th of 1948 and April 5th, 1948, together with various enclosures, have been received, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

A number of matters referred to in them have been answered by cable, so I will not go into them again.

He was specially pleased to receive the copies of the Tablet of the Master to Andrew Carnegie, as this is yet another authentic and interesting Bahá'í document.

He was, likewise, very pleased to receive the statement of Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar testifying to his appreciation of the Faith, and he will use it in the appropriate section of "Bahá'í World" in the forthcoming edition.

The instruction he gave to the effect that committees should elect their own officers, he feels, is universal in scope and should, therefore, apply to Great Britain as well....

Regarding the matter of the budget of the N.S.A. he feels that both wisdom and courage is required in this matter. You should not fix a budget which is too heavy for the community to meet, even with sacrifice. Both the pressing needs of the Cause and your Plan, as well as the foreseeable possibilities of your income should guide you.

He has no objection to extracts from his letters to ... being published. He feels that in the future it is not necessary to ask his permission to publish such extracts. As long as the person who has received a letter, such as he would wish to share with others, from the Guardian, has no objection to its publication, he has no objection either. Anything confidential he always specifies as being such.

He feels that the question of Mrs. Hofman giving up the secretaryship of the National Teaching Committee, and who is to be chairman of it, etc. is something to be decided there by those responsible for the work.

In one of your letters you mentioned some ... who have visited the London Centre and their attitude: great patience must be used in dealing with the child-like members of some of these primitive races. They are innocent in heart and have certainly had a very bad example, in many Christians, of a purely mercenary approach to religion, but if their hearts and minds once become illumined with the Faith they could make very fine believers.

Regarding the matter of believers who have been deprived of their voting rights: just as no one should ever be deprived of his voting right lightly, it should likewise be realised that to be deprived of it is a grave matter, and involves heavy penalties spiritually. People who have been so deprived should not be permitted to attend any meetings involving the administration of the Cause, such as an election or a 19 Day Feast. They can attend the 9 Holy Days, however; they should not be married by Bahá'í law, no money should be accepted from them, they should not be given credentials (which imply a member of the community in good standing) nor should they be used officially as teachers or speakers.

He has no objection to your getting out a book on Bahá'í Procedure similar to the synopsis you enclosed for his information. He wishes you, however, to stick to essentials and, as far as possible, avoid — not only in the book but in your Assembly's decisions — binding the friends by a lot of procedure on minor matters which he always urges should be, as much as possible, dealt with according to each case that comes up. He wishes to keep the administration of the Cause as flexible as possible and not impede the work by a codified set of rules.

As to the attitude of the Bahá'ís in the British Isles towards the World Government Movement: he thinks that as this Movement, so far, seems to be working for what we believe in, and not for anything we do not subscribe to, the Bahá'ís should by all means support it, vote for the representatives to be sent to its constituent Assembly in 1950, and stand for election if they wish to. However, he feels your Assembly should keep a careful watch on this Movement, and if it becomes in any way imperialistic, anti-Russian, or in any other field starts sponsoring attitudes partizan or political in nature, the believers should be advised to withdraw their support and help. He does not think your Assembly should take any initiative in this Movement outside of its jurisdiction, such as in the Middle East, through asking the friends to send in non-Bahá'í names, etc.

He does not advise you to try and create more than one Assembly, i.e. the present one, in the London area.

The work being accomplished in the British Isles is not only a source of pride to him, but is increasingly being recognised and admired by the Bahá'í communities throughout the World, and is greatly encouraging them in their own struggles. For people are prone to thinking that the American Bahá'ís accomplish so much solely because of the great advantages they enjoy in their very fortunate country, whereas now the friends, knowing full well how much England suffered during the war, and is still suffering, are forced to acknowledge that it is spirit, determination, faith and devotion which bring victories into being, one after another, in Britain, and not luxury and leisure. Your achievements are heartening the friends in many places where their numbers are few, and the obstacles to be overcome great! In fact the American Bahá'ís who have visited England feel there is much to be copied at home in your spirit and methods.

He, therefore, urges you all to persevere courageously, knowing what you are accomplishing is infinitely precious and great. You are witnessing with your own eyes the fruition of your plans, the nearing of the moment when your hopes will be fully realised.

He assures you all of his very loving prayers on your behalf, and for the speedy progress of your work.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

The successful conclusion of the Initial Phase of the first collective enterprise launched by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles during the first year of the second Bahá'í century constitutes a milestone of the utmost significance on the road leading the British Bahá'í community to the glorious destiny ordained for them by Divine Providence. The efforts exerted, the magnitude of the success which has been achieved, the spirit of consecration that has been demonstrated, the solidarity, determination and perseverance evinced by individuals, groups and assemblies during the opening years of this century are indeed unprecedented in British Bahá'í history, and may be regarded next to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's twice repeated visit to the British Isles, as the most potent period in the annals of the British Bahá'í community.

The establishment of the structural basis of the Administrative Order of the Faith in Scotland, Wales and Eire — an accomplishment of tremendous spiritual significance in itself — has greatly enhanced the momentous character of this period, and will lend a mighty impetus to the evolution of the Faith in the days to come.

The Final Phase of the Plan must now be carried forward with still greater energy, with still nobler self-sacrifice, with a clearer vision of the historic import of the work which is to be accomplished, with a mightier determination to bring it to a successful conclusion. The resources at the disposal of the community must, as a result of its expansion, be continually augmented and carefully extended. The prizes so painstakingly won must, at all costs, be safeguarded and consolidated. The newly enrolled believers must be constantly encouraged to assume an increasing share of the responsibilities and of the administrative functions devolving upon the members of the community. The pioneer activities undertaken by its members must, however great the sacrifices involved, be increasingly developed, systematised and accelerated. The needs of the Faith in the newly opened territories in the west, in the north, and in the south,

must, while the specific goals of the Plan are being pursued, be given special attention, in order to enrich the life of the entire community, to increase the diversity of its constituent elements, to demonstrate the welding and assimilative power of the Faith, and to stimulate the processes now set in motion for the spiritual regeneration of all the ethnic elements within the British Isles.

In token of my gratitude for the work already accomplished, as a recognition of the status achieved by the British Bahá'í community in the Western Hemisphere, in anticipation of the tasks that still remain to be undertaken, I feel moved to initiate, as soon as the situation here permits, measures that will enable me, through the institution of a Palestine Branch of the British Bahá'í National Assembly, to register in the name of the body of the elected representatives of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the British Isles, a portion of Bahá'í international endowments dedicated to the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel. May this step, associating it with its sister national assemblies in the United States and India in the possession of so sacred a trust, lend its share to the consolidation and distinction of the central institution of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 2 May 1948

Happily transmit rejoicing news beloved guardian's safety Haifa.

Bahabureau

Letter of 5 May 1948

Greatly welcome deeply appreciate convention's response successful conclusion initial phase plan encourages me initiate as soon as circumstances permit measures establish holy land Palestine branch British national assembly enable it legally own portion Bahá'í international endowments MT. Carmel token my abiding gratitude shining achievements.

Shoghi

Letter of 9 May 1948

Kindly cable number assemblies groups isolated believers British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 13 May 1948

Loulie Mathews proceeding South Africa this summer advise send her care Horace Holley addresses contacts Africa also introduction from Barbe Baker praying ardently success newly

elected national assembly teaching committee.

Shoghi

Letter of 10 June 1948

Assure Grace Challis ardent prayers deepest loving appreciation services also praying ... success Hofman's visit deepest love.

Shoghi

Letter of 7 July 1948

Praying removal difficulties urge steadfastness increasing self-sacrifice also wisdom expenditure prizes painstakingly won must at all costs be safeguarded work initiated goal towns energetically pursued deepest love appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 7 September 1948 (Summer School)

Assure attendants summer school loving fervent prayers success sessions deeper understanding distinguishing features faith closer association members victoriously advancing steadily consolidating community.

Shoghi

Letter of 2 October 1948²⁰

Assure three new settlers fervent prayers deepest loving appreciation delighted Welsh publication eagerly awaiting copies supplicating almighty's blessing forthcoming regional meetings. Cable whether five hundred pounds arrange be sent you from Tīhrán reached you.

Shoghi

Rabbání

²⁰. Walter Wilkins, Cyril Jenkerson (see block b.46), and Zara Warman had settled in Norwich, Blackpool, and Brighton, respectively.

Letter of 27 October 1948

Dr. Yúnis Afrúkhteh staunch distinguished servant faith proceeding England medical treatment
extend assistance advised him help teaching work Britain.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 29 October 1948

Assure Mills Backwell loving appreciation grieve passing challis praying progress soul services
Faith gratefully remembered.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 5 November 1948

Approve Townshend's admirable statement convey congratulations praying signal success
approve appeal funds overseas.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 5 November 1948

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters to our beloved Guardian, dated July 14th and of July 20th, August 6th and 30th and
September 11th and October 8th, have been received, as well as various enclosures forwarded,
and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

...There are always bound to be some human complications cropping up in the work, but with
love and patience these can usually be smoothed out, and he feels your assembly invariably
shows these qualities in helping the friends to overcome their problems.

He believes that people such as ... have no real idea of what the New History Society stands for,
and can therefore be taught the Faith, and converted to it, by the right handling. All the friends
must do in such cases is to make quite sure that the person in question is sincere and grasps the
Will and Testament. There are, of course, some individuals in whom the subversive spirit of
Sohrab has taken root, and these should be carefully guarded against, but they are more the
exception than the rule.

He feels that the local Assemblies should be encouraged to realise that the National Committees are constituted to serve their needs, not to dictate arbitrarily to them, and to unify the work of the Cause which is now spreading so rapidly in the British Isles. The committees in question should be very tactful in dealing with a young assembly which is beginning to “feel its oats”, as this spirit of independence, if properly handled, can lead it to be strong and independent rather than weak and always relying on other bodies to carry it forward. Assemblies, however, should certainly co-operate with National Committees and not refuse their assistance.

Dr. Yúnís Kẖán Afrúkhteh is planning to go to England for medical treatment, and the Guardian would appreciate your Assembly’s giving him every assistance possible. He has been ill for some time, and Shoghi Effendi hopes he will recover his health, as he is a wonderful believer, full of wisdom and devotion, and his services are much needed in the Cause. He has advised him to assist you in your teaching work as soon as his health permits this exertion.

He also hopes dear Dr. Lotfulláh Hakím will be of valuable assistance in your teaching work.

He has recently asked Mr. Varqá, his representative, to transfer to your Assembly five hundred pounds to assist you in your manifold activities connected with your Six Year Plan. Unfortunately it is not possible to send any money out of Palestine at present, even from Persia it is difficult to transfer funds, but he trusts this sum will be of assistance to you.

The Guardian feels that the assemblies of Cardiff, Dublin and Edinburgh must receive sustained support, as they are the three most important assemblies formed under the Plan, and must be built into strong and flourishing communities, free from any danger of relapse.

He is very happy about the general progress of the work in the British Isles, and the remarkable, sustained, and self-sacrificing work the believers are doing, guided and assisted by the devoted efforts of your Assembly.

You may be sure you are all remembered in his prayers in the Holy Shrines, and he eagerly awaits news of fresh victories in the teaching field.

[From the Guardian:]

Dearly-beloved friends and co-workers,

The opening of the Final Phase of the First Collective Enterprise undertaken in the history of the British Bahá’í community marks the closing of a stage of tremendous historic significance in the evolution of that community and, indeed, in the spiritual history of the British Isles. Well nigh fifty years after the inception of that community, almost a quarter of a century after the birth of the Administrative Order, and on the morrow of the world-wide celebrations of the centenary of the Faith, a Plan, ambitious in its scope and endowed with vast potentialities, was nobly and spontaneously conceived by the small band of its devoted adherents in those islands. An effort, extending over a period of no less than four years, nation-wide in its range, sustained, systematic, prodigious has been exerted. A victory unparalleled in British Bahá’í annals has been achieved. Towards its consummation newly won recruits to the ranks of this growing community, representative of the English, the Scottish, the Irish and Welsh races have notably

contributed. The seeds sown, with such lavish hands by the Founder of that community in the course of two successive visits to the United Kingdom, have at last germinated. The machinery of the Administrative Order, slowly and laboriously taking shape, on the morrow of His ascension, has, as destined by Him who delineated its features in His Will and Testament, been put to the service of this newly conceived Plan, and is now yielding its first fruits. Born at the turn of the last century, its nucleus formed in the heart and nerve centre of a far-flung Empire, gestating for over a decade whilst confined to the narrow limits of the English territory whence it first sprang, energised, after having lain dormant for no less than ten years, through the twice repeated journeys of the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant to both the English and Scottish capitals, shaped and trained through the processes of a divinely conceived, slowly evolving Administrative Order, propelled along the broad highroad of its destiny in direct consequence of the initial operation of the First Plan set in operation for its further unfoldment, emerging as a truly representative and firmly-knit community, at the conclusion of the Initial Phase of that Plan through the spread of its ramifications among the peoples of Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the organised band of the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the British Isles, within sight of the conclusion of the Final Phase of the Six Year Plan, stands on the threshold of a door which when opened will disclose to the eyes of its members a vista of vast dimensions, of majestic beauty, of infinite promise.

Theirs is the unrivalled opportunity, should they bestir themselves, to carry forward to a triumphant conclusion this first corporate effort to which they have consecrated themselves and their nascent institutions, to embark, in the course of subsequent Plans, on enterprises destined to safeguard and consolidate, in all parts of the motherland, the achievements so hardly won, to proclaim, unequivocally, systematically and effectively, to the masses throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles the verities enshrined in their Faith, to initiate the establishment of a befitting National Hazíratu'l-Quds in either the capital of the United Kingdom or further north in the very heart of the British Isles, to inaugurate national and local endowments, to incorporate the newly constituted assemblies, to undertake the preliminary measures for the erection of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the British Empire, and to launch crusades designed to implant the banner of the Faith and lay the structural basis of its Administrative Order throughout the diversified, the numerous and widely scattered colonies of the British Crown.

Not theirs, however, while the present tasks remain as yet unaccomplished, to dwell upon, or even visualise, however dimly, the course which the progress of their subsequent labours must assume in a world whose stability is so lamentably shaken, and whose immediate future is so dark. Theirs is the duty to derive from this fleeting glimpse of the glories which their future destiny holds in store for them fresh inspiration and added stimulus for a befitting performance of the work that lies immediately ahead.

Two brief years separate them from the hour destined to witness the total triumph of their first organised, nation-wide collective enterprise. Every minute of this interval is infinitely precious. The gloom overhanging the entire planet is deepening ominously every day. The American followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, through the ever-swelling army of their pioneers and settlers, on the northern, the western and southern fringes of the European Continent, as well as the newly resuscitated German and Austrian Bahá'í communities labouring in its very heart,

have nobly arisen, and are doing their part in paving the way for the spiritual awakening and the ultimate redemption of the teeming millions of its war-torn, discordant, fear-stricken and spiritually famished inhabitants.

They who man the North-Western outpost of the Faith in Europe must, whilst pursuing their chartered course, play a distinctive part in this threefold crusade launched, almost simultaneously, from three directions, in conformity with specifically laid out plans, at so critical an hour, in so vast a field, amidst such diversified and conflicting races and nations of what may well be regarded as the cradle of a civilisation, and the mother of a Faith, whose fate now hangs so perilously in the balance.

That the valiant community of the British followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh may assume an ever-increasing share in this gloriously unfolding, this herculean, this Divinely propelled enterprise is the dearest wish of my heart and the object of my constant prayers.

Shoghi

Letter of 25 November 1948

Assure Ada Williams ... deepest loving appreciation delighted enrolment new believers praying
removal difficulties nottingham deepest love.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 22 December 1948

Assure Hofmans Bob cheek loving ardent prayers success meritorious efforts supplicating
satisfactory solution secretariat problem deepest loving appreciation assembly's Noble
exertions.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 2 January 1949

Appeal British Bahá'í community focus attention critical stage pioneer activity so essential
steady unfoldment plan attainment goals. Plead particularly numerically larger communities
arise play decisive rôle vital urgent task substantial increase number active pioneers dedicated
meritorious labour aimed safeguarding multiplication prizes won so laboriously over so short
period despite formidable obstacles by members so valiant resolute high spirited community
urge approaching conference deliberate vital issue rouse pioneer spirit indispensable success
plan invoking almighty's blessings anxiously awaiting befitting response.

Letter of 12 January 1949

Delighted immediate action initial response pioneers ardently praying teaching conference May lend powerful decisive impetus paramount vital urgent pioneer undertaking constituting supreme challenge confronting steadily consolidating irresistibly advancing British Bahá'í community.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 19 January 1949

Appeal all members community resolutely arise attain greater heights heroism through demonstration further measure self-sacrifice in support pioneer fund urge newly enrolled believers particularly as sign gratitude inestimable benefits newly conferred Bahá'í membership and evidence solidarity rapidly expanding community extend financial assistance fullest measure possible pioneer activities on which hinge fortunes plan supplicating divine outpourings much needed meritorious endeavours.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 20 February 1949²¹

Approve drastic measures praying ardently success.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 1 April 1949²²

Assure newly declared believers welcome prayers. Convey new pioneers deepest loving admiration praying richest blessings assembly's strenuous endeavours. Appeal further sacrifice

²¹. This was in reply to a cable from the N.S.A. which ended "Assembly ready continue plan intensive teaching other communities designed release known willing pioneers. Involves drastic reduction administrative work free capable teachers. Suspend until convention A.D.C., youth, Publishing Trust, reduce summer school, Townshend committees, delay numerical increase virgin territories new assemblies. Ready operate desperate measures immediately receipt your approval. Begs prayers guidance."

²². Louise Charlot, Constance Langdon-Davies (see block b.49), and Cyril Jenkerson were pioneering to Oxford.

continued response call pioneers... deepest love.

Shoghi

Rabbání

Letter of 9 April 1949

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters to our beloved Guardian, with their various enclosures, and dated October 4, 20; November 2, 7, 17, 18, 27; December 19, 22, 25, 28; of 1948, and January 4, 19; February 3, 17; and March 1, 1949, have been received, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf...

Please assure Mr. Walter Wilkins that the Guardian was aware of his pioneer labours through various reports forwarded to him, and that he deeply appreciates them and is praying for his success.

He considers that Final Phase day must be April 21st, and not in July.

He feels that, although precedence must be given to the new goal assemblies, this does not mean the older assemblies like Bournemouth can afford to be neglected. They must be maintained, but the first call on pioneers must be from the critical goal assemblies who — at least theoretically — need help more urgently! He has just cabled you about this.

He sees no objection to your printing excerpts from his "Dispensation" and "God Passes By" in your compilation on the Covenant. Although he strongly feels that the Master's writings, the revealed Word of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, and his own writings should, out of respect for the difference in their relative stations, be published whenever possible in separate volumes, this must not be fanatically adhered to where an educative compilation on a certain subject is conceived.

A vacancy can be recognised, under the circumstances you outlined in your letter of December 22, 1948, and a new assembly member be elected. But of course this in no way implies the retiring member of the Assembly is not a full voting believer, and a member of the community in good standing.

He deeply sympathises with the struggles of the British Bahá'ís at present to perform their task, now reaching the crucial stage, in spite of financial difficulties and shortage of pioneers. It would seem as if all our tasks, all over the world, including here at the World Centre, are becoming increasingly more of a challenge to us. As the time approaches for the ending of the various Plans, Six Year ones, Seven Year, Five Year, etc., the obstacles seem to become greater, and the friends are made to realise that very real, hard, often back-breaking effort and sacrifice is involved! The The American Bahá'ís here-to-fore so relatively easily victorious(!), are now feeling a very real squeeze on their resources and determination. The same is true of India, Persia, and the other countries with goals to accomplish within a fixed and rapidly diminishing period! He himself, having undertaken at such a disturbed time to raise at least the first story or arcade of

the new part of the Báb's Shrine, finds himself beset with worries, problems and complications which have not only doubled his work, but exhaust and harass him all the time. So at least, let the British friends know that when they struggle and feel hard beset, they are not struggling and worrying alone! Far from it!!

We must expect these things: It is becoming evident that the world is not yet through with its labour, the New Age not yet fully born, real Peace not yet right around the corner. We must have no illusions about how much depends on us and our success or failure. All humanity is disturbed and suffering and confused; we cannot expect to not be disturbed and not to suffer — but we don't have to be confused. On the contrary, confidence and assurance, hope and optimism are our prerogative. The successful carrying out of our various Plans is the greatest sign we can give of our faith and inner assurance, and the best way we can help our fellow-men out of their confusion and difficulties.

He assures you he feels that the British Bahá'ís have got what it takes (to be a trifle slangy) to be successful and accomplish their goals. Let them therefore demonstrate it to the rest of the Bahá'í World....

P.S. — Your letter of April 4th has just been received. The Guardian is too busy to undertake at present the revision of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to the Christians, but he has no objection to a committee doing it.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers:

The British Bahá'í community, now embarked on the final phase of the first historic collective enterprise undertaken in British Bahá'í history, stands at the parting of the ways. Only a brief interval separates it from the fateful date when its first experiment in a collective nation-wide effort to achieve a definite goal in the path of service to its beloved Faith will have ended. Five years of stupendous effort, of magnificent self-sacrifice, of marvellous dedication and of splendid cooperation have marked the progressive evolution of the Plan to its present stage. What has been achieved during this short span of years, despite the smallness of numbers, the paucity of resources and the exhaustion resulting from a prolonged and severely devastating conflict, has, beyond the shadow of a doubt, eclipsed the brightest achievements recorded in the course of more than half a century in the annals of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in that country.

The Bahá'í world, in its entirety, is struck with amazement at the quality of the work performed, at the extent and number of the victories achieved by this community. Its sister-community in the great Republic of the West, already laden with many and splendid trophies gathered in distant fields and over a long period of time cannot regard this resurgence of the Bahá'í spirit, this manifestation of Bahá'í solidarity, these ennobling evidences of Bahá'í achievement, amidst so conservative a people, within so short a time, under such trying circumstances, and by so small a band of workers, except with feelings compounded of envy, of admiration and respect. Its sister-communities throughout the East, venerable by reason of their age, and the sacrifices they have made, and fully aware of the long period of incubation this community has undergone, recall, with feelings of delight, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's prediction, forecasting the

germination, at their appointed time, of the potent seeds His loving hands have sown in the course of His twice-repeated visit to that Island, and marvel at the rapidity with which its soil is now manifesting the potentialities with which it has been endowed. He Who blessed it with His footsteps, Who called into being, and fostered the growth of, the community labouring in that Island, hails, from His station on high, the exploits which immortalise the small band of His present-day consecrated and resolute followers, who are carrying on the torch which He Himself had entrusted to their immediate predecessors. Bahá'u'lláh Himself lauds the conspicuous victories being won in His Name, in the dawning years of the Second Bahá'í Century, at the very heart and centre of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen, whose Sovereign Monarch He Himself had addressed and whose deeds He, with His Own pen, had commended.

The one remaining year, ere the present Plan of this blessed, this radiant and spiritually potent community, is scheduled to draw to a close, cannot, must not, be allowed to jeopardise the prizes so painstakingly won during five memorable years of British Bahá'í history. The newly-enrolled believers, on whom the mantle of the first generation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's British disciples has now fallen, and are now summoned to participate in a Plan, whose scope and potency their predecessors could have never visualised and whose initial success must thrill and rejoice their souls in the Abhá Kingdom, have a distinct, a sacred, a peculiar and urgent responsibility to discharge in ensuring the consummation of this mighty enterprise. Through active and constant participation with their veteran co-workers, in filling swiftly the still remaining gaps in the pattern of the Plan, now in its concluding stage; in displaying systematic and sustained activity in the pioneer field now stretching before them; in sacrificing, in as great a measure as possible, their resources, to facilitate the attainment of all its goals, they can best discharge their immense debt of gratitude to the Cause of the Most Great Name, Who has singled them out, at so critical an hour, and from among such a vast multitude of their slumbering countrymen, to serve and glorify His Faith.

I entreat them, and plead as well with their older brethren who have set so momentous a Plan in motion, to arise as one soul, to exert one more superhuman effort, to fix steadily their gaze on the pinnacle they are visibly approaching and to disencumber themselves of any burden impeding their arduous climb, in a last and determined attempt to scale and conquer the summit, from which alone they can catch a glimpse of the future glory of their destiny.

Shoghi

Letter of 15 April 1949

Bahá'í Public Relations, Mr. Richard Backwell, sec.

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Our Guardian thanks you very kindly for the excellent piece of publicity you forwarded to him with your letter of March 22. It should bring the Cause to the attention of many, and is sober, and very encouraging, in tone.

He hopes your committee will have many more triumphs along this line!...

P.S. Please convey to Mr. George Marshall²³ a cordial welcome into the service of our beloved Faith from our Guardian.

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving prayers for the success of your constant and meritorious efforts in the service of our beloved Faith, and for the realisation of your heart's desire in its service,

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 18 April 1949

Approve election local assemblies before April.

Shoghi

Letter of 19 April 1949

Be not distressed redouble exertions perseverance will enable prosecutors plan attain goal arranging contribution termination plan April assemblies may be formed during year ardently praying realisation dearest hopes.

Shoghi

Letter of 27 April 1949

Acclaim historic occasion participation double number delegates British Bahá'í convention testifying rapid unprecedented highly promising expansion dearly beloved community followers faith Bahá'u'lláh British Isles though immediate goals unattained amount work achieved standard effort exerted range task performed quality spirit demonstrated since inception plan have contributed raising stature entire community enhancing its prestige proclaiming its fame demonstrating its virility establishing beyond shadow doubt its right occupy front rank onward marching army Faith bahá'u'lláh appeal assembled delegates arouse entire community exert remaining twelve months effort surpassing noblest endeavours as yet made service plan victory within sight intervening period rapidly shrinking responsibility every single member community growing graver hourly my prayers longing total success likewise increasing intensity Bahá'u'lláh's sustaining unfailing grace more efficacious readier bless last attempts made save fortunes plan so inextricably interwoven destiny British Bahá'í community.

23.

Shoghi

Letter of 8 July 1949

Highly approve assembly's programme action delighted energetic hopeful measures as concluding year final phase six year plan rapidly ebbs away attention all members British Bahá'í community already fully aroused action highly conscious glorious opportunity unflinchingly determined attain goal should be unwaveringly focussed energies mustered all available resources mobilised one last forward charge enabling them ere final hour strikes seize laurels victory hanging within their reach concerted effort sustained consecrated nation wide scope transcending intensity mighty efforts already exerted past five years by community will unfailingly ensure worthy consummation initial memorable stage first historic crusade launched by Bahá'u'lláh's spiritual battalions length breadth British Isles plead afresh directing particular appeal few remaining inactive participants who through inexperience timidity or overburdening circumstances still hesitate fling themselves arena wherein struggling community being called upon this fateful hour display before eyes Bahá'í world its prowess demonstrate the intrinsic worth its stewardship faith Bahá'u'lláh impelled in recognition brilliant record past services and token confidence inspired latest exploits field service pledge thousand pounds furtherance sacred task now most acute phase steadily approaching culmination intense prayers ascending from longing heart throne lord hosts supplicating victory which Will befittingly crown strenuous exertions wholly unparalleled annals faith Bahá'u'lláh British Isles.

Shoghi

Letter of 9 July 1949

Centenary martyrdom should have no public commemoration non-Bahá'ís may participate publicity _____ press _____ permissible.

Shoghi

Letter of 19 July 1949

Advise show utmost consideration Tudor-Pole invite him summer school participation other activities.

Shoghi

Letter of 24 July 1949

Delighted news Oxford assure Jenkerson family loving prayers.

Shoghi

Letter of 6 September 1949

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Your letters dated April 8, 22, 27; May 13, 17, 24; June 7, 10, 23 (two of this date), 25, 28; July 19, 22, and 30; and August 10th, together with various enclosures, have been received by our beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer them on his behalf.

He has already informed you by cable of his views regarding.... He realises that, of course, it is very difficult for him to renounce his plan of educating his son ... in England, and the Guardian hopes that the boy can find a way, either through doing agricultural work or gaining a scholarship, or through the help his father might himself obtain from Persia for him, to go on with his studies. But it is obviously out of the question for your Assembly to shoulder this financial burden.

He already cabled you about the appropriate manner for commemorating the Centenary of the Báb's martyrdom, so I will not go into the subject again here.

The fine spirit of co-operation shown by ... pleased him immensely. He has since received from her a letter full of joy and devotion to the Cause, which pleased him greatly....

Now that the Cause is spreading so rapidly throughout the world, the National Assemblies must be vigilant, and do all they can to protect and assert its independent status, and to give assistance to isolated or repressed Assemblies, when they are turned to for help or advice.

He has recently received enthusiastic letters from Mrs. Preston²⁴ in Kenya and informed her that when she needs advice or assistance she should turn to your Assembly, while, of course, keeping in close contact with him as well.

He realises that your Assembly, and all the British Bahá'ís, are facing the most difficult and critical months of your Plan. The friends must be made to realise that the urgency of the task during these few months which lie ahead, is not only acute but temporary. Once they make this final effort, and clamber to the top of their goal, they can rest. The opportunity for achievement is absolutely unique, for this is their first Plan, and consequently the most historic one of the many they will, no doubt, carry out in future decades. To fail, so near to victory, would indeed be sad, and he cannot but suppose, would be a severe blow to that stubborn British pride which is so famous for its tenacity of purpose! However he himself is not thinking in terms of their failure, but rather believes they can, by one last determined drive, be successful, even if they feel some exhaustion at the end of their race against time. They must, likewise, at this crucial hour, remember that failure or success are never confined to the immediate community concerned, but have wide repercussions. Their success will not only greatly enhance their prestige in the

²⁴. She married Terence Preston, a Kenya tea grower, in August 1945 and settled in Kenya where she was the only Bahá'í until the pioneers began to settle under the Two Year Plan. Her husband died unexpectedly in July 1951 leaving her with three young children and she and her eldest child were killed in an aeroplane crash when she was returning to Kenya after a short holiday in England, in February 1952.

Bahá'í World, but will inspire the often flagging efforts of the believers in the East, who have so many obstacles to overcome, and are by nature and experience more prone to become disheartened in the execution of fixed tasks.

It was the success of America's first Seven Year Plan which so stimulated the British community that it, in its turn, was determined to have a Plan and a victory of its own. Now it really cannot lose; it has gone too far, laboured too brilliantly, shown too much courage and high sacrifice, to let, at the last minute, the prize fall from its grasp!

His prayers and thoughts are with you all, constantly, and with all the believers, toiling so devotedly all over the British Isles...

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers,

As the Plan, to which the entire British community has pledged its support, approaches its end, my heart turns with increasing longing and expectation, towards those who so spontaneously initiated it, so enthusiastically set it in motion, so valiantly overthrew the barriers that confronted them in the initial stage of its unfoldment, who so unitedly consecrated their efforts to its subsequent development, and who are now within sight of its final consummation. I cannot believe that a community which, motivated by so noble an impulse, capable of such prodigious efforts, dedicated so whole-heartedly to so gigantic a task, blessed by so many evidences of Divine assistance and guidance, enriched by the first fruits garnered in the course of the execution of a splendidly conceived enterprise, will allow, at the very moment when final victory is, at long last, within sight, through a momentary relaxation of effort, the magnificent prize of total success, to slip from its grasp, and the fortunes of such a potentially powerful undertaking to be marred by any feelings of impotence or exhaustion which might well, at the eleventh hour, assail those who have for so long and in such a great measure, expended their energies for the prosecution of so weighty and far-reaching a Plan.

The required number of pioneers who must arise, while there is yet time, and stop the dangerous breaches which a fate-laden Plan, now in the last stages of its development, reveals to the eyes of its prosecutors must, however costly the sacrifice, be instantly found, and rushed without delay to the scene of action. The funds, which must enable these last minute pioneers to adjust their affairs and settle down wherever most needed, must, under no circumstances, and particularly on the part of the well-to-do, be withheld, as the present critical situation moves towards its climax.

Great and overpowering as these sacrifices may now appear, they will, when viewed in their proper perspective, be adjudged as inconsiderable, and pale into insignificance when balanced against the inestimable advantages which must accrue to a community that has achieved total and complete victory for a Plan so epoch-making in character, and so charged with undreamt of potentialities. The sacrifices which this fateful hour calls for, are by their very nature, individual; the loss or inconvenience they entail are at most transitory in their effect, and might well be fully compensated for in the days ahead, whereas the blessings that must irresistibly flow out, as the result of the integral success of a nation-wide, historically unprecedented Plan, will enrich and

ennoble the life of an entire community, exert an abiding influence on its fortunes, and empower it to launch still mightier crusades in the course of subsequent stages in its organic spiritual development. How bountiful, moreover, will be the rewards which He who watches from on high the varying fortunes of the Plan and presides over its destinies, must either in this world or in the next — and it may well be in both — choose to confer upon those, who, at the hour of the Plan's greatest need, will fly to its succour, exhibit the rarest evidences of courage and heroism, and choose to subordinate their personal interests to the immediate needs and future glory of the community to which they belong.

The interval during which a decision so momentous, so rich in promise, must be taken is steadily and inexorably shrinking. The golden opportunity which such a decision offers will never again recur. The issues hinging on such a decision can neither be over-estimated nor visualised while the fate of the First Plan embarked upon by the British Bahá'í community still hangs in the balance. The invisible hosts of the Kingdom are ready and eager to rush forth to the assistance of such as will have the courage to weigh the issues involved and to take the decision commensurate with these issues. To such as take it, while there is yet time, the present generation as well as those who will succeed it will be eternally grateful, for theirs will have been the privilege of sealing on the one hand, the fate of the First Historic Plan in British Bahá'í annals, and on the other of paving the way for the initiation of the successive enterprises that must follow in its wake.

To reach such a decision, to face willingly and cheerfully its consequences, will, above all, earn the good-pleasure and commendation of the One Who, well nigh a hundred years ago, so gloriously made the supreme sacrifice of laying down His life that the Cause for which the present prosecutors of the Plan have so wholly dedicated themselves might live, prosper and bear, in the fullness of time, its fairest fruit in both the East and the West.

Dear friends! As the tale of the woes and trials He endured is called to mind, during the months preceding the centenary of His martyrdom, and destined to witness the conclusion of the Six Year Plan sponsored by the British Bahá'í community, a resolution, born of the love and admiration which the memory of His heroic life and tragic death must evoke in every Bahá'í heart, should seize, and galvanise into action, the little band of His lovers and followers, who, of their own accord, and at the dawn of the second Bahá'í century, have risen to launch the first collective enterprise in British Bahá'í history, and chosen to associate its consummation with the centenary of the death of the martyr Prophet and co-founder of their Faith. The centenary of the inception of His Mission has witnessed the initiation of so praiseworthy, so vast and potent an enterprise, extending its ramifications over the entire territory of the British Isles. The observances, commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the last act of His life, must, as pledged by its initiators, synchronise with the successful termination and glorious triumph of that same enterprise throughout the length and breadth of that same territory.

Your
Shoghi

true

brother,

Letter of 29 September 1949

Dearly beloved distinguished co-worker Amelia Collins arriving London en route Poland show great consideration praying utmost benefit visit.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 September 1949

Overjoyed success summer school assure newly enrolled Newcastle Liverpool loving welcome prayers surrounding entire community acceleration momentum carrying it attainment goals appointed time.

Shoghi

Letter of 5 November 1949

Summer School Committee

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of October 9 was received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He was very glad to hear the School was such a success this year, and that — a very important factor — it placed no extra burden on the National Fund at this critical juncture.

Next year your School will be held after the end of your Plan, he hopes the victorious end! It would be suitable to hold some kind of review of how the goals were won and to remember the many sacrifices that have been made, for they have been very real and taxed to the uttermost the strength of the servants of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles.

Also he feels it would be good to have some course on the Covenant, the force that binds and strengthens the Bahá'í community and holds it together, when so many man-made institutions are disintegrating and going on the rocks of discord and lack of faith.

Likewise, discussion of the future needs of the community should be held. By next Summer you will know better what these are, and can formulate your points to be taken up and considered.

He will pray that a suitable place may be found for the friends to gather.

Every year your school is more representative and successful than the year before, and he feels sure this will continue to be so until that happy day comes when Summer School develops at last into a seat of Bahá'í learning....

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless your meritorious efforts, guide and sustain you in your activities, enable you to extend continually their range, and contribute to the consolidation of the newly-born institutions of the Faith.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 25 November 1949

Delighted victory Oxford assure pioneers deepest appreciation meritorious action.

Shoghi

Letter of 4 December 1949

National Youth Committee of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Guardian approves of the policy your committee is pursuing, as outlined in your letter to him of October 27th, of devoting all the energies of the British Youth, active in the Cause, to assisting in the achievement of the goals of the Plan.

He was very happy to hear your part of the programme at Summer School was more successful than ever before, and that the Bulletin is being maintained and at the same time costing less.

Your determination, and the work you are doing, are admirable, and he is very pleased with you all...

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless continually your high endeavours, aid you to extend the range of your meritorious labours, and win great and memorable victories in this vital sphere of Bahá'í activity in that promising country.

Your true brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 12 December 1949

Advise hold 1950 convention during Riḍván period.

Shoghi Rabbání

Letter of 21 December 1949

Kindly mail fifty copies "Glad Tidings Bahá'u'lláh" wisdom East series. Praying fervently success
forthcoming conference.

Shoghi

Letter of 23 December 1949

Approve substitution.²⁵

Shoghi

Letter of 27 December 1949

Deliver sixty pounds Hainsworth from national fund for publication Swahili Chinyanza
languages.

Shoghi

Letter of 29 December 1949 (Teaching Conference)

Feel moved address this eleventh hour my last fervent appeal assembled representatives British
community seize opportunity teaching conference arouse entire body followers faith Bahá'u'lláh
British Isles save fortunes plan now hanging balance entreat once again all believers England
Wales Scotland Ireland whether young old men women native-born visitors overseas newly-
enrolled veterans brace themselves as hour centenary Báb's noblest act sacrifice approaches
one last supreme sacrificial sustained effort designed ensure total victory now within reach
constituting befitting culmination final phase six years heroic endeavour and worthy tribute
collectively paid by British upholders cause Bahá'u'lláh immortal memory dearly beloved martyr
prophet their Faith arranging transmission £500 further contribution consummation enterprise
unprecedented in scope spiritual potentialities half century British Bahá'í history.

Shoghi

Letter of 4 January 1950

Greatly heartened news conference prayers continually ascending throne Bahá'u'lláh total
success plan.

Shoghi

²⁵. Substitution of Stockport for St. Ives as goal of Plan.

Letter of 19 January 1950

Greatly heartened assure pioneers fervent loving prayers accompanying them. Parvine heartfelt sympathy loving prayers continually offered her behalf.

Shoghi

Letter of 31 January 1950²⁶

Advise disregard procedure suggested letter January twentieth...

Shoghi

Letter of 25 February 1950

Assure pioneers heartfelt appreciation convey congratulations Stockport Newcastle praying solution difficulties centre London entreat entire community seize firmly prize fingertips crown everlasting glory mightiest task undertaken British followers Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi

Letter of 20 March 1950 — National Teaching Committee

Praying fervently success forthcoming weekend school. Deeply appreciate unceasing efforts. Renew through you impassioned plea entire community exert fleeting fateful days ahead concerted strenuous unrelaxing efforts ensure needed number pioneers fill remaining gaps in nobly conceived laboriously prosecuted historically unique spiritually momentous plan.

Shoghi

Letter of 28 March 1950

National Bahá'í Teaching Committee, England

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letter of January 12th, written by Mr. Hainsworth, was received, as well as the material enclosed, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

²⁶. Refers to a suggested new procedure for the recognition of Local Assemblies.

He was glad to learn the Manchester Conference was such a success, and appreciated the very generous offer of Mr. Leach.²⁷ If the believers all over the world were animated by such a spirit, there would scarcely be any necessity for "Plans".

These days, as Ridván approaches, his anxious thoughts are with not only the British community, but other Bahá'í communities in different parts of the world. He longs to see them fully achieve their goals; for to do something for God 100 per cent has an attractive power, and brings future Divine confirmations.

His ardent prayers are with you all, you may be sure....

[From the Guardian:]

May the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh sustain and guide you in your historic labours, aid you to extend the range of your splendid achievements, consolidate the victories you have won, and lend a still greater impetus to the progress and expansion of your unforgettable accomplishments.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi

Letter of 30 March 1950

Deeply appreciate participation John Robarts splendid action Scott and other pioneers appeal further sacrifice greater heroism firmer resolve nobler consecration ensure total success plan now hanging balance for my Part utmost can do is stretch period plan to July ninth date commemoration martyrdom last remaining chance offered hardly pressed yet gloriously striving community should be instantly seized ere it is irretrievably lost.

Shoghi

^{27.} Bernard Leach, C.H., C.B.E.

It was through Mark Tobey that world famous potter and author Bernard Leach became a Bahá'í in the early 1930's. He has through his works, his books, his press, radio and television interviews introduced the Faith with love, dedication and dignity to people in many spheres of society in Britain, Japan and America. He was honoured by Her Majesty the Queen and made a Companion of Honour. Even at ninety years of age, though blind, he was serving the Cause with distinction through his writings and interviews. In March 1977, he opened, with much favourable publicity, an exhibition of his works at the Victoria and Albert Museum London. In 1919, when Bernard was about to leave Japan, the late Soetsu Yangi, the well-known Japanese art critic and philosopher and Bernard's friend for over fifty years, paid tribute: "When he leaves us we shall have lost the one man who knows Japan on its spiritual side... I consider his position in Japan, and also his mission in his own country to be pregnant with the deepest meaning. He is trying to knit the East and West together by art, and it seems likely that he will be remembered as the first to accomplish as an artist, what for so long mankind has been dreaming of bringing about...." He passed away in May 1979 and to the National Assembly the Universal House of Justice cabled: "*Kindly extend loving sympathy relatives friends passing distinguished veteran upholder faith Bahá'u'lláh Bernard Leach. Honours conferred upon him recognition his world-wide fame craftsman potter promoter concord East and West add lustre annals British Bahá'í history and his eager willingness use his renown for service faith earn eternal gratitude fellow believers. Assure ardent prayers progress his soul.*"

Letter of 4 April 1950

Delighted news praying added fervour total success deepest loving appreciation.

Shoghi

Letter of 11 April 1950²⁸

Rejoice evidences approaching victory praying increasing fervour.

Shoghi

Letter of 19 April 1950

Overjoyed deeply grateful immensely proud signal victory achieved Bahá'í community British Isles shedding lustre opening years second Bahá'í century airmail list assemblies groups isolated believers also map British Isles showing same.

Shoghi

Letter of 21 April 1950²⁹

Share Joy reciprocate Noble sentiments heartily congratulate national elected representatives triumphant community indefatigable national teaching committee all subsidiary agencies particularly self-sacrificing pioneers who so outstandingly contributed signal victory reverberating Bahá'í world.

Shoghi



²⁸. In answer to cable of 10 April from N.S.A. "joyfully transmit teaching committee report arrangements made complete plan by Riḍván earnestly entreat prayers Bahá'u'lláh seal victory.

²⁹. In answer to cable of 19 April from National Assembly. "*Joyous Riḍván greetings beloved guardian from National Assembly and twenty-four local assemblies British Isles.*

