

# BAHÁ'Í® NEWS

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## NSA of United States Reports Status of Goals in Atlantic and Caribbean Areas

Of the twenty seven new territories in the Americas to be opened to the Faith under the Nine Year Teaching Plan, nine have been assigned by the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of the United States; and of four areas to be resettled in the same continents, two are responsibilities of the United States. It is also responsible for the formation of one of four new National Spiritual Assemblies called for in the same area, namely, The National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, with its seat in Charlotte Amalie in the Virgin Islands.

The establishment and incorporation of this new pillar of the Universal House of Justice is dependent upon the prior achievement of the following goals:

### 1. The opening of these islands in the Caribbean Sea:

Barbuda  
Dominica  
Guadeloupe  
Saba  
St. Eustatius  
St. Kitts-Nevis  
St. Martin  
St. Vincent  
Turks and Caicos

### 2. The resettlement of Antigua and Martinique.

### 3. Increase in the number of localities where Bahá'ís reside in all the aforementioned islands to fifty.

### 4. The establishment of at least one local assembly in Barbados and St. Lucia, and two each in Grenada and the Virgin Islands, all of which had been opened during the Guardian's Ten Year Crusade.

In addition to the formation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, calling for the prior achievement of the above-mentioned goals, the Bahá'ís of the United States are responsible for the acquisition of a national Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Charlotte Amalie, acquisition of a Temple site in or near the same city, and the acquisition of a national endowment as well as obtaining from the civil authorities of the Virgin Islands recognition of the Bahá'í Holy Days and the Bahá'í marriage certificate.

### Present Status of Goals

Of the islands or island groups to be opened the following goals have been accomplished as of January 1, 1965:

*Barbados* — two settlers: Mr. D. R. Holder, Mrs. Etta Woodlen; two local members.

*Guadeloupe* — one family transferring from Haiti

*Martinique* — one family transferring from Haiti

*St. Lucia* — three settlers, Mrs. Esther Evans, Mr. and Mrs. Carrol Hoepner

*St. Vincent* — opened by Miss Annabel Jackson, Bahá'í youth from Grenada

*Grenada* — Two local Spiritual Assemblies formed at Riḍván 1964 in St. John's and St. George's, with one group of five adults in St. Andrew's and one of five youth in St. Mark's, thus accomplishing that particular goal.

*Antigua* — opened by Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie Edwards

The *Virgin Islands* have had for some time a well grounded local Spiritual Assembly in St. Thomas which is now working diligently with the Caribbean Goals Committee and the NSA to open other centers and especially to acquire the Temple site which is urgent in view of the rapidly increasing tourism and rising land values in and near Charlotte Amalie.

As of January first, five American settlers had already arrived in the islands to be included in the new National Assembly. They include Mr. Benjamin Schreibmann who pioneered in European goal countries during the Ten Year Crusade. Several others have already made preliminary visits to investigate business and employment possibilities and expect to be settled before Riḍván 1965.

The American pioneers settled in the Virgin Islands and Grenada (Leeward Islands) since last midsummer are:

Tom Millington, Victor Tom, Melvin Barber, and Miss Katherine Meyer, all in Charlotte Amalie; Mr. Benjamin Schreibman, Grenada.

### Pioneers at Other Island Posts

Pioneers from the United States already settled in other islands in the Atlantic Ocean area where two or more local spiritual assemblies are to be formed are:

Miss Loraine Cutler, San German, Puerto Rico  
 Miss Dorothy Behar, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico  
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ayoub and children, Freeport, Bahamas

### Traveling Teachers Assisting

Teaching trips have been planned by the Caribbean Goals Committee for Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas beginning in December and for Mrs. Marguerite Sears in January, not only to encourage the teaching efforts of the believers already resident in their goals but also to aid them in understanding their responsibilities under the Nine Year Plan as a whole. They will also bring back valuable suggestions and information for the considerable number of other pioneers who are making definite plans to settle in these areas within the next few months or the next year.

Besides constant attention to the islands which will comprise the National Spiritual Assembly of the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands, special assistance is also being sought for Bermuda, the Bahama Islands and Puerto Rico.

Bermuda and the Bahamas have one assembly each, but each must open four more centers.

Puerto Rico must have at least three local assemblies, one of them incorporated, by the close of the Nine Year Plan. San Juan, Puerto Rico has had an assembly for many years, but the community needs strengthening. As indicated in the list of pioneers, two new centers in Puerto Rico; namely, San German and Mayaguez have recently been opened.

The foregoing report deals only with the goals of the United States near its own eastern shores. In addition to these and great responsibilities on the home front, the American believers have been asked to collaborate with other National Assemblies in achieving 26 of the total 219 inter-assembly goals, besides preserving a large number of goals hardly won under the Ten Year Crusade. In assigning these responsibilities to the American Bahá'í community, the Universal House of Justice in its Ridván 1964 call to action stated:

"The goals assigned to your community in the Nine Year Plan are indeed prodigious and your efforts must be prodigious to match them. Mobilization of all resources, both human and financial, is called for and a concentrating of all your powers on the objectives to be won. Setting aside all other considerations, may this community arise at once to grasp its share—the lion's share—of the new tasks, set its face toward leadership of the world community with all that leadership entails at home and sustaining less fortunate communities abroad, and as one soul move nearer, along its destined path, to that glorious day when, as declared by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, ' . . . all the peoples of the world witness that this community is spiritually illumined and divinely guided. Then will the whole earth resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness.' "

### Mother Temple of Europe Receives Gift as Requested by Amelia Collins

"Happy (to) inform you (we are) remitting forty thousand dollars (as) contribution (to the) Temple from funds bequeathed (for) special purposes by beloved Hand Cause Amelia Collins, outstanding benefactress (of the) Faith, thus fulfilling her wish (to) make further gift (to) sacred edifice reared (in the) heart (of the) European continent."

(Signed) HANDS OF THE CAUSE OF GOD  
 December 14, 1964

#### Commentary:

The cablegram quoted above, sent by the Hands of the Cause from the World Center to the National Spiritual Assembly of Germany, fulfills a wish expressed by beloved Hand of the Cause Amelia E. Collins in the last two weeks of her life which ended January 1, 1962. Mrs. Collins was closely identified with the Mother Temple of Europe from its beginning to the time of her death. It was she who laid the cornerstone for this edifice on November 20, 1960 as representative of the beloved Guardian. Here as always Mrs. Collins reflected her deep love for and devotion to Shoghi Effendi and her immediate support of every undertaking dear to his heart.

—U.S. NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

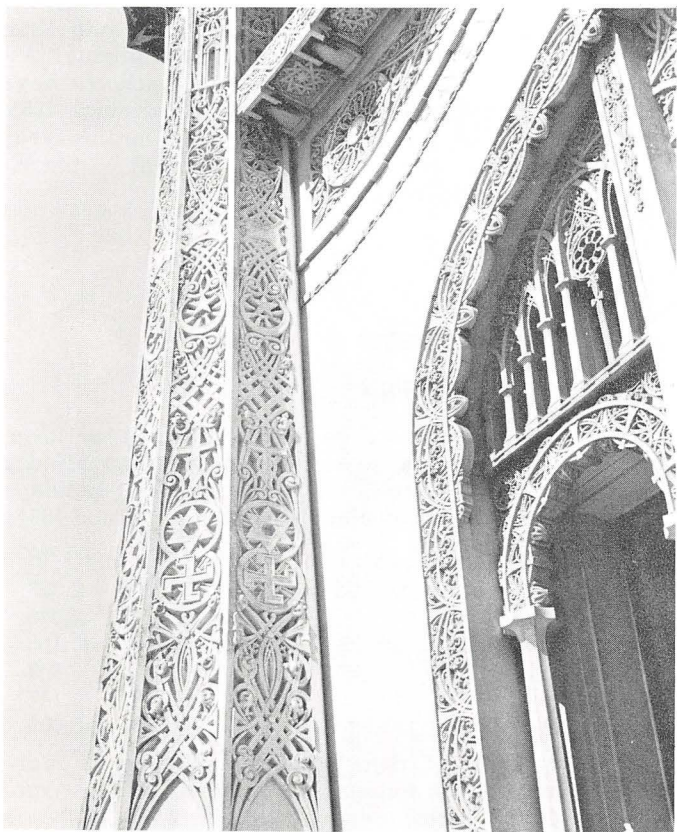
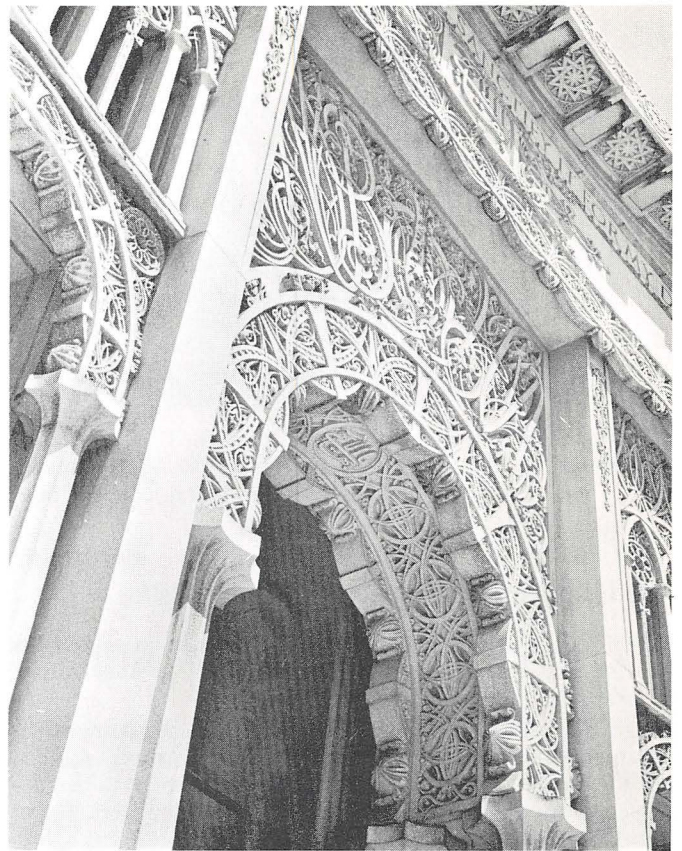
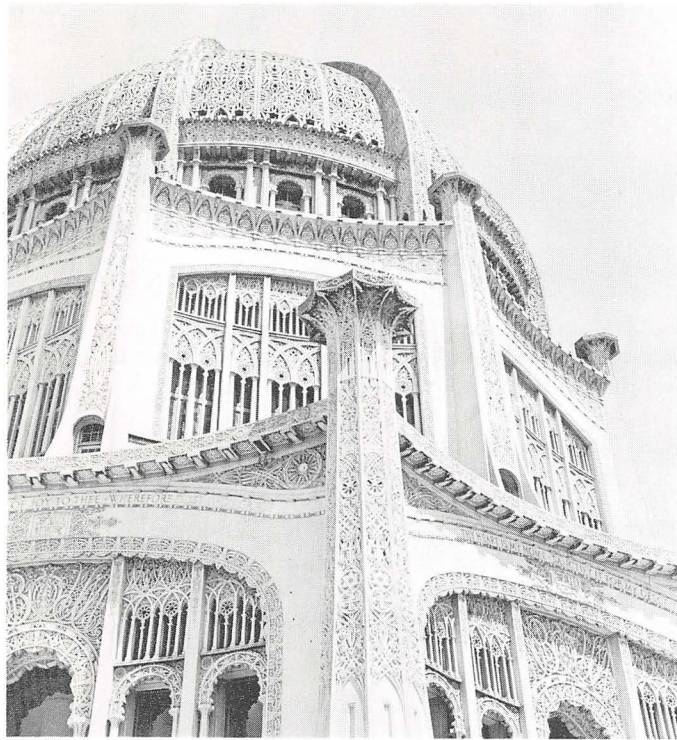
### American Pioneers Aiding in Consolidation of Foreign Goals

Bahá'ís from the United States who have moved to Africa since Ridván 1964 to aid in the teaching and consolidation tasks of other National Spiritual Assemblies are: Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Wilks of Issaquah, Washington, to South West Africa; Mr. and Mrs. Dempsey Morgan, transferred from Cambodia to Uganda; Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Hawthorne, returning to Uganda after several months in the United States for health reasons; Miss Louise Stewart of Decatur, Georgia, who has taken a teaching position in Libya.

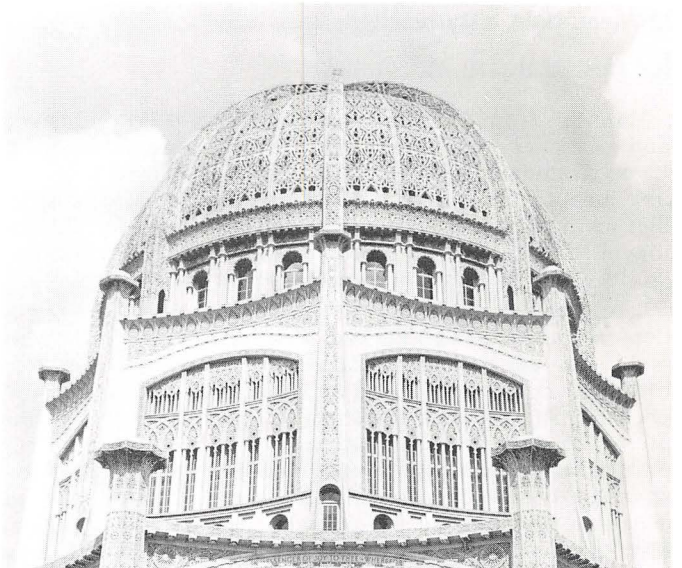
News has also been received that John T. Huston of Ann Arbor, Michigan, pioneering in Taiwan, has volunteered to open one of the new goal cities of that country which is to have its own National Assembly by Ridván 1973.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Mexico has reported that Mr. and Mrs. George Neuzil of Seattle, Washington, will arrive in Yucatan soon after January 1; that Mrs. Gladys Stewart of Preston, Idaho, had already arrived to assist with the ever-increasing work in the National Bahá'í Office, and that Mrs. Sadie Robertson of Billings, Montana is settled in Cozumel Island, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Mrs. Diana Carson of Grand Junction, Colorado, will assist with the teaching work in Curacao, Dutch West Indies, where her husband is stationed in a government post for three years.



*Some close views of the Mother Temple of the West, Wilmette, Illinois, showing details of the delicate patterns of the exterior molded in concrete and quartz.*





A portion of the audience attending the U.N. Day observance in Panama City, Republic of Panama, sponsored by the Bahá'ís. Dr. Donald P. Benjamin, U.N. Economic Advisor to the government of Panama, appears in photo at right with Alan Pringle, translator. Mrs. Raquel de Constante was the Bahá'í speaker.



## Bahá'ís Sponsor Panamanian UN Observance

A large crowd of Bahá'ís and friends attended the United Nations Day program sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Panama City, Republic of Panama.

Dr. Donald P. Benjamin, economic advisor to the government of Panama, delivered the featured address on the three D's of the United Nations' undertakings — Disarmament, Decolonization, and Development — outlining the ever-changing problems. He paid high tribute to the National Spiritual Assembly for the interest in promoting a United Nations Day celebration, and stated that after comparing the Bahá'í principles with those of the United Nations, he is more than ever convinced that the United Nations is heading in the right direction.

Mrs. Raquel de Constante, the Bahá'í speaker, mentioned the non-political activities of the United Nations that are supported by the Bahá'ís, particularly in the field of human rights which promote the unity of the human race.

## In Memoriam Service Held for Mrs. Margery McCormick

Bahá'ís from several states joined with relatives and personal friends on Saturday evening, December 12, in Foundation Hall of the Bahá'í House of Worship in a beautiful service in memory of Mrs. Margery D. McCormick, member of the Auxiliary Board for Teaching in the United States who passed away in Wilmette on July 14, 1964 at the age of seventy-nine.

The program consisted of prayers and other selections from the Bahá'í sacred scriptures by Bahá'ís who had been very close to Mrs. McCormick during her lifetime. Dr. Daniel Jordan spoke beautifully of the personal life of Mrs. McCormick, paying special tribute to her complete dedication to the Faith, mentioning particularly her instant obedience to the instructions she had received from the beloved Guardian on the occasion of her two pilgrimages. Hand of the Cause, Mr. Zikru'lláh Khádem recounted her widespread serv-

ices in the teaching field as member of the Auxiliary Board for Teaching. Dr. David S. Ruhe, secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, acted as chairman.

At the close of the program all the friends were invited to visit with Mrs. McCormick's two sons, Alan and James, and their wives at the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds.

## Key West Schools Recognize Bahá'í Holy Days

Key West, Florida, which has been a goal of both the Ten Year Crusade and the Nine Year Teaching Plan for the establishment of a strong local Spiritual Assembly has reported that the Key West schools have given recognition to the Bahá'í Holy Days since 1955. The formation of the Assembly at Ridván this year now seems quite certain. The next step will be the incorporation of the Assembly.

## Large Increase in Number of Visitors to Bahá'í Temple

The following comparative figures indicate the large increase in the number of visitors to the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, on national holidays as well as for the entire calendar years of 1963 and 1964:

	1963	1964
Memorial Day Week End	1,236	2,323
July 4th Week End	2,112	2,946
Labor Day Week End	2,203	3,168
Thanksgiving Day	610	609
Christmas Day	298	1,147
Calendar Year	104,645	116,006

An early issue of BAHÁ'Í NEWS will carry a more detailed story of the number and kinds of groups comprising special tours.

## Human Rights Observances

Bahá'í communities and groups are showing resourcefulness in bringing the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights to the attention of the general public. From the reports received to the time of this writing one learns that believers throughout the United States are becoming ever more successful in proclaiming the principles of human justice for which the Bahá'í Faith stands.

An essay contest on the subject of "Unity of Humanity" open to youth of McKinley County, New Mexico was announced widely by the local Assembly of Gallup, New Mexico. The prizes, small cash awards, plus a trip to Santa Fe were awarded at a public meeting on Human Rights Day. The meeting was well attended by visitors and the two winners read their essays. The program also included music provided by groups of various backgrounds: Spanish, Negro, Croatian, Yugoslavian and Indian. Refreshments added to the happy party-like atmosphere of the occasion and one of the radio stations conducted an on-the-spot interview with the two prize winners.

The trip to Santa Fe at which the prize winners were greeted and congratulated by Governor Jack M. Campbell served as a fitting climax for these girls. Excellent publicity, including pictures was obtained in the local papers and the Bahá'í community has thus contributed effectively to the feeling of good will in that locality. Another noteworthy detail of this project was the panel of judges, selected from five different ethnic groups of Gallup.

Urbana, Illinois concentrated on using the talents of young people in its program. Children of the Bahá'í classes sang and gave readings from prayers and scriptures of the religions of the world about peace. A movie about the United Nations was shown and a brief Bahá'í talk given.

Refreshments and table decorations were planned with the children in mind and included Chinese fortune cookies and dolls from around the globe.

Music and a dramatic reading, together with a brief introductory talk marked the Human Rights Day celebration in Great Falls, Montana. Sixty people, mostly

visitors attended and enjoyed the very moving musical program as well as the friendly social hour which followed.

In Greenville, South Carolina the program was outstanding in that the Bahá'ís were the only group to hold a U.N. Day or Human Rights Day observance in the entire city. Also the interracial fellowship for which the Bahá'ís are well known furnished an additional means of displaying the Bahá'í Faith in action in one well publicized afternoon. The meeting, held in the civic room of a bank, attracted 20 visitors who joined twelve Bahá'ís in a congenial program. The speakers included Richard Benson, Bahá'í; Robert Anderson, one of the first Negroes to attend the University of South Carolina, and other non-Bahá'ís who contributed to the program by singing or giving readings on human rights and obligations. The period of fellowship and refreshments which followed was especially fruitful since so many were attending a Bahá'í meeting for the first time.

A public meeting in Temple City, California at which three Bahá'ís participated was one of the most successful such gatherings held there by the Bahá'ís in recent years. This meeting was planned with the cooperation of three nearby communities and the speakers were: Mr. James F. Nelson, chairman, Mr. David Lepard, and Mrs. Manila Lee. The subjects covered were the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights and the Bahá'í view of human rights.

Public meetings marked the day also in Quincy, Illinois where Mrs. Lois Goebel spoke on "Human Rights Justice for All" and in Waterloo, Iowa. In the latter city Mr. James Jackson, newly elected Negro member of the State Legislature spoke on "Justice for All" and Mrs. Virginia Finch, Bahá'í of Cedar Falls, gave a very fine talk on the Bahá'í views on human rights.

The Bahá'ís of Niagara Falls, New York observed the day by presenting a short talk and color slide tape on "United Nations — Capital of Our World" at the local Kiwanis Club meeting. And in Danville, Illinois the day was marked by a Bahá'í advertisement in the local newspaper as well as a 15-minute panel discussion on the radio on "Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

*Governor Jack M. Campbell, of New Mexico, congratulates Ella May King and Alice Mitchell, winners of the Human Rights essay contest sponsored by the Bahá'ís of Gallup, New Mexico. This picture appeared in the local newspaper of Gallup.*

*The Bahá'ís of Pueblo, Colorado presented a United Nations flag to Colorado State College. The presentation and other UN Day events of the Pueblo Bahá'ís received widespread publicity.*





Local Spiritual Assembly of the Gulf Islands, B.C., Canada. Left to right, back row: Mrs. Edna Moan, Fletcher Gennett, Mrs. Bernice Crooks, Mrs. Katherine Saunders, Capt. Walter Luth and (insert) Mrs. Lisa Luth. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Elinor Bennett, Mrs. Catherine Huxtable, Clifford Huxtable. The Gulf Islands was a Ten Year Crusade goal, designated by Shoghi Effendi as an alternate new territory to Anticosti Island. Forming a Spiritual Assembly in the Gulf Islands was the first Nine Year Plan goal to be filled in Canada.

## Las Vegas Bahá'í Youth Hold Well Attended Roundup

Over 160 Bahá'í youth and their friends gathered in Goodsprings, Nevada over the weekend of November 27-29 for a conference which included: planning and organizing for future youth activities, studying the Bahá'í writings on world unity, and learning at first hand of the needs as well as opportunities for bringing the Faith to the Indians. The youth came from eight different states, many of them at great sacrifice in order to meet, share their experiences and show their love for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. They met in Goodsprings, Nevada Community Hall for classes, sleeping quarters being provided inside for the girls while the boys showed pioneering spirit by sleeping outside in tents and sleeping bags.

Highlights of this very inspiring week-end included a talk by Auxiliary Board member Mrs. Florence Mayberry on the Nine Year Plan, an observance of the Anniversary of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at 1:00 a.m. Saturday, November 28, and a panel of Navajoes on Indian teaching. There was time also for fun and relaxation with a dance and the showing of slides of a trip to Europe and of other youth groups, featured on Saturday evening.

Excellent publicity was obtained, with several inches in a feature column of the local paper devoted to a description of the event. Appropriately, the concluding sentences of this writeup stated:

"Just as they had come in silently and ready for anything, so the crowd left one by one the cars filled to capacity, starting back on the long road to their individual destinations. By Sunday afternoon the village had settled down but never to be quite the same. The Bahá'í youth had marked it with prayers and plans and songs and laughter."



Eight members of the Kansas City, Kansas Local Spiritual Assembly, incorporated on July 6, 1964.

## Mayor Proclaims World Religion Day

For the first time, to our knowledge, a mayor has officially recognized and proclaimed World Religion Day, as established by the Bahá'ís. In a statement dated December 16, 1964, Mayor Edgar M. Elbert, of Maywood, Illinois states:

"I, Edgar M. Elbert, mayor of the Village of Maywood, Illinois in recognition of the annual observance of World Religion Day observed throughout the world and established by the Bahá'í World Faith to promote the oneness of religion and the abolishment of all prejudice whether it be political, racial, national or religious do declare there is but one God and everyone worships the same God it is my duty and privilege to declare the third Sunday in January as World Religion Day, and urge our citizens to gather together for worship and dedicating ourselves to the service of God by abolishing any and all prejudice so that our lives may promote the welfare of all mankind and bring forth peace and harmony to all."

Members of Local Spiritual Assembly of Citrus Judicial District, California, first formed on April 21, 1964. Seated, from left to right: Mrs. Dorothy Nelson, Mrs. Lynn DeWester, Mrs. Joan Beck (secretary), Mrs. Betty Conow. Standing, left to right: Lou Palos, Jack Beck, Arthur Conow, James Nelson (chairman), Scott DeWester.



## Waukesha, Wisconsin Bahá'í Conference on Religion and Race Attended by 600

An interfaith conference on Religion and Race, the first effort of its kind to be held in Waukesha, Wisconsin, took place there on November first and featured Dr. Daniel Jordan, National Spiritual Assembly member as one of the three main speakers.

The Waukesha Bahá'í Community put forth great efforts to promote the conference which was centered around the theme, quoted in part from Bahá'u'lláh, "A mighty instrument in the healing of world problems is the recognition of equality and kinship of all people."

The mayor of Waukesha proclaimed November 1-6 as Religion and Race Week, for which the conference featured not only leading clergymen, and representatives of the Jewish, Christian, and Bahá'í communities but afforded opportunity for discussion of religion and civil rights by lawyers, ministers, and civic officials.

The first speaker on the program for the day was Dr. Daniel Jordan, with the subject, "The Sociology, Anthropology, and Psychology of Race Relations in the World." He was followed by a former city planner of Milwaukee who spoke on the economic waste in segregation. The evening speaker, a monsignore from Chicago, summed up the conference with a talk on solving man's ills through religion.

A permanent committee on Religion and Race has now been established in Waukesha, and the Bahá'ís of this community are happy to have been invited to be a part of this committee.

## Green Lake Institute Attracts 418

On November 13, 14 and 15, 418 Bahá'ís and contacts (301 adults, 56 youth, 61 children) registered for the Green Lake Institute in Wisconsin. The theme for the weekend was "A Divine Command — the Nine Year Plan." The purpose was to prepare Bahá'ís for more effective personal and community participation in the Nine Year Plan. Specific Bahá'í quotations were used as focal points for each session. Highlights of the program included talks and discussion periods, an informal panel discussion for youth, a worship service, dawn prayers, a complete children's program consisting of eight special sessions for three different age groups and group singing.

Some of the topics included: "Purpose of Existence";

*One of the many Bahá'í meetings held in the home of Mrs. Ludmila Van Sombeck in Durham, North Carolina.*



"As the Twig Is Bent"; "Youth Today — Adult Tomorrow"; "Community Application"; "Our Bahá'í Heritage"; and "Inter-Community Cooperation." Contributing to these topics were Mrs. Velma Sherrill, Mrs. Jane McCants, Mrs. Margaret Ruhe, Dr. David S. Ruhe and Jack McCants.

The three-day institute brought forth a spirit of re-dedication toward fulfilling the following promise by 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

"Ere long the word of God will display a wonderful influence and finally that region (America) will become the paradise of Abhá. Consequently, strive ye bravely that this aim may be accomplished in the near future. Striving means this: we must live and move according to the Divine commands and behests, be united in loving with joy and ecstasy; . . . engage continually in the service of the Cause of God." (*Divine Art of Living*, p. 62)

## Oneida Indian Choir Featured At Bahá'í Meetings

Friendly contact with the Oneida Indians who live near Green Bay, Wisconsin, has been re-established, with two recent Bahá'í events featuring the Oneida Choir. A group of twelve singers who have learned many songs in the Oneida language sang at a Bahá'í teaching conference in Madison on November 22, and at a public meeting in the Chicago Bahá'í Center on December 5.

On each occasion, Mr. Oscar Archiquette, the translator of the Bahá'í booklet in the Oneida dialect, acted as commentator. He told many interesting stories of the history of his people, stressing their ancient belief in the oneness of mankind.

Mrs. Ruth Baird, of Oneida, Wisconsin, directed the choir, which included a blind singer, Mrs. Ninhem, who told the Bahá'ís afterwards of her joy at "hearing the message."

Sixty Bahá'ís and friends attended the Madison conference sponsored by the Madison Local Spiritual Assembly, with Mrs. Beth McKenty, Wisconsin representative on the National Indian Teaching Committee, as chairman. Following the choir's singing, they were entertained at a Japanese dinner in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Shinji Yamamoto before beginning the long drive back to the reservation.

It is significant that the first Indian in the United States to become a Bahá'í was from this tribe and reservation: Mrs. Marian Steffes, now living in California.

*Oneida Indian singers at the Chicago Bahá'í Center, December 5.*



## State Conventions of United States Consult on Goals and Victories

The fifty-six state and electoral district conventions of the United States called to elect a total of 171 delegates to the 1965 National Bahá'í Convention were held on December 6, 1964. Although much of the country was either suffering or just recovering from a severe winter storm, the total attendance of believers was considerably better than in previous years. The largest of the conventions appears to have been the Northern California District with an estimated attendance of 400.

At most of the conventions there was excellent representation of the youth members who took active part in the consultation. In several places the youth met together during the luncheon recess for consultation among themselves on how to increase their own teaching efforts, reporting later in the afternoon to the adult members their desire and willingness to make maximum use of their time and talents for the Faith.

Besides the election of the allotted number of delegates to the National Convention, the highlight of each convention was the reports from the believers on victories won for the Faith thus far this year. This subject was designated in the program as the "Festival of Accomplishment" and followed the reading in the morning of brief messages from the Hands of the Cause in the Western Hemisphere and a semi-annual report from the National Spiritual Assembly. Time was allotted also for discussion of a message from the National Teaching Committee on the home front goals of the Nine Year Plan, assessment of Bahá'í resources, and recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly.

The flavor of the conventions as a whole can perhaps be conveyed by brief excerpts from or comments on the following reports selected at random:

The report from *Northern California*, besides stating that this was the largest state convention to have been held in that district, comments that it was a very happy gathering, due in large part to the presence of many new Bahá'ís and others who had not attended a convention for several years. Many of the active participants in the consultation were youthful in years and many youthful in their "tenure as Bahá'ís." "The spirit of the convention can best be expressed in one word — teaching" and that "we are prepared to look forward with confidence to the total victory of the Nine Year Plan."

The host Assembly, Citrus Judicial District, for *Southern California District No. 1* Convention, had invited any community wishing to do so to prepare a display for exhibition. Prizes given for the three best went to Bakersfield, Pomona, and Pasadena, respectively.

Among the specially interesting reports given during the "Festival of Accomplishments" was one by the Glendale Judicial District community of twelve members which had sponsored a series of cultural evenings, each attended by approximately 100 persons of mixed races. Another community reported many interested contacts having been made as a result of one Bahá'í recruiting volunteers to assist the Foundation for the Junior Blind address hundreds of envelopes for its annual Christmas drive for funds. Among the successful firesides reported are several being held in the area on a regular basis for Spanish-speaking persons.

In the small and sparsely Bahá'í-populated State of

*Delaware* the believers consulted specially on such subjects as: personal obligations to the Faith; how isolated believers can serve more effectively; ways of involving non-Bahá'ís in efforts to promote knowledge of the Faith; social activities geared to the Faith, and how to work with non-Bahá'í mates.

At Sarasota, host to the *Florida* Convention for the past three years, the manager of the hotel in which the meeting was held thanked the Bahá'ís for coming, saying the Bahá'ís are "one of our favorite groups." He expressed special appreciation of the fact that "the Bahá'ís are demonstrating integration." Two of the bell-boys sent word that they wanted to become Bahá'ís.

A highlight of the *Idaho* Convention was choral singing by the children of the Boise-Ada County Children's Hour. During the summer months the attendance at the classes numbered forty children and parents.

Another accomplishment of these two communities was the winning of the "theme prize" for its float entered in the Treasure Valley Fairland Parade sponsored by the Boise Chamber of Commerce. This received excellent press and television coverage.

Both the *Northern Illinois* and *Wisconsin* State Conventions were greatly inspired by the brief appearance of Hand of the Cause William B. Sears who spoke on the spiritual meaning of elections held "in the rarefied atmosphere" of prayer.

At the *Southern Illinois* Convention every community in the district was called upon to report its outstanding achievements. They showed great variety, such as securing from the Governor of the State of Illinois a proclamation for the observance of World Peace Day, special door-to-door proclamation efforts, week-end institutes in a Negro area, displays and exhibitions, and increase in the number of children's classes.

In *Kansas* also the various communities were called upon to report their victories. All had made excellent advances in public relations, in publicity and various other fields, Wichita, to take one example, reported a very successful youth conference and a good public teaching program. As part of the UN Day observance the community had presented a suitably engraved plaque of appreciation to the person in Wichita who had given the greatest service to the UN during the preceding year. This event alone brought the Bahá'ís much publicity. Another victory directly related to the goals of the Nine Year Plan was the incorporation of the Kansas City Spiritual Assembly.

At the *Missouri* Convention it was strongly recommended that Bahá'í children be taught early to sacrifice for and make contributions to the Bahá'í Fund by saving a portion of their allowances or earnings for this purpose. It was also recommended that health education programs be developed in minority group housing projects and that every community engage in teaching youth and children even though there are no Bahá'í children in the community at the time.

The *New Hampshire* Bahá'ís who are scattered and few in number agreed in their consultation on more association and cooperation to achieve "universal participation" in the Nine Year Plan.

The report from *New Jersey* referred to the large number of "new" Bahá'ís among the 102 believers in attendance and to "the high peak of spiritual maturity" reflected in the consultation.

*Western New York* also commented that "undaunt-



ed by hazardous weather conditions" the convention welcomed a number of new believers, and that seven new localities were represented.

At the *North Dakota* convention where there was much discussion on teaching the Faith to the American Indians, it was agreed that the most effective methods were (1) by the Indian believers themselves and (2) by all Bahá'ís living the life. There was also good consultation on how all the Bahá'í manpower in the state could be marshalled to support monthly public meetings in Bismarck, a goal city, starting in January by the use of radio programs.

The *South Dakota* Bahá'ís discussed the possibility of cooperating with college foreign students in sponsoring an international festival of some kind.

These and other conventions also discussed the importance of every believer making and adopting his own Nine Year Plan, and of both local assemblies and individual Bahá'ís lining up their Bahá'í goals and activities with the goals of the world wide Nine Year Teaching Plan given to us by the Universal House of Justice. The importance of each one solving his own spiritual problems was also stressed. Some conventions sent telegrams of love and dedication to the Universal House of Justice, the Hands of the Cause in the Western Hemisphere, and the National Spiritual Assembly, and a few sent spontaneous, unsolicited contributions to the International and National Bahá'í Funds.

The recommendations to the National Spiritual Assembly from all conventions were promptly sent to that body for its study and action at its December 31-January 3 meeting.

## NEWS BRIEFS

The Bahá'ís of Peoria Heights, Illinois sponsored a display at the Peoria Heights public library during the month of November, featuring the great books of all religions with the symbol of each religion placed in relation to its book. In connection with the display a small ad was run in the local newspaper stating: "Have you seen the display of the books of all religions at your public library?" This helped to generate interest and several groups of church women visited the library to see the exhibit.

Mr. Robert Amerson, a Bahá'í of Racine, Wisconsin has instituted an arrangement with his employees which may be the first of its kind in the United States. Heretofore his firm has permitted employees leave from their work for a total of five religious and national holidays but without pay. Recently Mr. Amerson informed all employees that all work will be suspended on the nine Bahá'í Holy Days for which all will receive their full salaries. This is indeed the Bahá'í Faith in action.

As a follow-up to the article on the Faith published in a recent issue of the *Kiwanis Magazine* one of the Bahá'ís of Baltimore County, Maryland, was able to arrange to have a talk on the Faith given at the Kiwanis Club of Loch Raven, Maryland. On November 12 Paul Pettit, member of the National Spiritual Assembly, addressed a meeting of 125 Kiwanis Club members, representing 12 different clubs and including several clergymen. In response about 35 people took pamphlets and there were numerous favorable comments on the program.

The Bahá'í Faith is represented at the newly dedicated Henry Kohl Memorial Chapel at the Washoe County Medical Center in Reno, Nevada. By contributing to the inter-religious project the Bahá'ís are recognized by a pew with the name of the Faith inscribed and Bahá'í books displayed. Baha'ís conduct prayer and meditation services there on two evenings a month. At the dedication of this Chapel in September a member of the local Spiritual Assembly read two Bahá'í prayers as part of the program.

By invitation two Bahá'ís spoke on certain aspects of the Bahá'í Faith before the Gravity Research Foundation Institute in New Boston, New Hampshire on August 29, 1964. They were Mr. Matthew Bullock who outlined the history of the Faith and introduced the second speaker, Mrs. Robert Lee Moffett who spoke on some of the scientific teachings found in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh that must motivate all sciences in this New Age.

Winston G. Evans from Keene, New Hampshire gave the Bahá'ís of Delaware County, Pennsylvania much new teaching encouragement and incentive during his visit to that community in early November. On a previous visit he had talked with a teacher at Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester and was asked to speak there at some future time. Excellent publicity including a radio interview preceded his well-attended talk in the seminary lounge where he spoke on "An Introduction to the Bahá'í Faith." This was a very vital message to give at this time when some theologians actually profess the "death of God" theology.

Evanston, Illinois Bahá'ís all worked under the leadership of its public teaching committee to sponsor a meeting in Kendall College's attractive, new auditorium in November, drawing 150 in attendance. The program featured a narrated slide program by Robert Quigley, largely based upon Africa, including the Temple in Kampala. The impact of the Faith in Africa, as well as other parts of the world, was dramatically presented. Over 500 invitations were mailed, nearly 100 posters were silk-screened by the committee for window and bus display, radio and newspaper publicity was secured and the entire community telephoned friends and contacts.

## The Luminous Hour

### Remembrance of an Early Believer

I first heard of the Bahá'í Cause a little before 1900, while I was in school in Paris. There I met a small group of people, a few American students, like myself, who seemed to be involved in a new religion stemming from Persia. I can't say that I was especially impressed by what they said. Rather I was attracted by these people as unusual people — one in particular, a very beautiful girl who seemed to radiate a special magnetic charm. I was completely captivated by her and not understanding what she was saying, I just silently sat in wonder, somehow feeling her special station. Her name was May Bolles, who later became the mother of Ruhíyyih Khánum.

I was leaving for home, New York City, and before leaving May gave me a letter to a friend who she said would explain things to me. . . . I found her to be a beautiful woman, beautiful and on fire with the religion she had embraced. Her name was Elfrida Martin. With her was a Persian, Anton Haddad, whom I found out later was the translator of the famous Súratu'l-Haykal. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had sent him to America to teach and it was listening to him that I caught the first impact of something far greater than I could grasp at the moment. It all seemed too big, too incomprehensible for my understanding, too fantastic for my mind to grasp, but my heart seemed to know what my mind was unable to take in.

Anton's theme was that the Spirit of Christ was on earth again to bring the people back to God. This thrilled me as ever since childhood I had in my heart a love for Jesus. I longed for Him always. Now was that divine Spirit here again? It must be so, I wanted it to be so. It flooded my heart with hope until I came to believe even before I knew anything about what I was to learn later, the greatness, the majesty of Bahá'u'lláh. So it was that Mrs. Martin and I were the first Bahá'ís at that time in New York. In her apartment, where Anton Haddad gave the lessons of the Cause, the wonder of it, the holy words, entranced me. The holy words, life-giving fountains, revealing, ever new, to this very day since 1900. I believe I am thus the oldest living Bahá'í, who was living in New York City at that time.

Soon after that I returned to school in Paris and joined that first Bahá'í group of Europe, of which the Guardian many years later wrote me how blessed I was to have been a member of that group. A small group but there was radiance, the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh so strong, a tightly united group; it made me speechless; all I wanted was to be with them; my whole life was changed. There were no books . . . the teachings of the Manifestation of God were spread by word of mouth and from heart to heart! How powerful the Spirit that radiated from this group, out into the far reaching corners of this earth, until from that small beginning the radiance of the Cause of God is now felt by people, remote and far away.

There were no books, just a few words brought back to us from pilgrims who had gone to 'Akká to see the prisoner, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They had seen Him, they had

felt the magnetic power of the "Servant of God," the only title He wanted; they told us about Him and brought back the first teachings, His love, His hopes for those who believed in Him.

In those days we in Paris wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá to confirm our love and devotion to Him and those letters were always answered by Him. After my schooling I returned to New York City having lived in Paris four years. The Tablets I received, thirteen of them, made a strange impact upon me. I was unable to "digest" them — that's not the best word — it was simply I could not believe that they were addressed to me. It was as if I should look over my shoulder to see the person for whom they were meant. To this day this one sentence still makes me stop short; "Praise be to God, thou hast been accepted in the threshold of the Almighty and are mentioned in the Supreme Course!" These Tablets are now safe in the Archives. I no longer remember dates, years, what happened in such and such a year. My life was a simple one, sometimes hard, many heartbreaks, but over the long span of life since 1900, now 1964 and close to ninety, I at last have made the words in the Tablets my own — everything 'Abdu'l-Bahá had predicted for me has come true.

Year 1905: "O thou who art advanced to God!

Be assured and content with the great bounty and generosity of God, and be cheerful because all that which is absolutely good will become possible for thee. In this day all that which is conducive to the eternal happiness is attainable by thee. Be not grieved at all — neither sit down dispirited. Every difficulty will be changed to enlargement, and every affliction will be transformed to the mercy of omnipotence."

"Upon thee be greeting and praise."

(signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás

Years passed with just living until, unexpectedly, I had a chance to go to Haifa. Years before 'Abdu'l-Bahá had given me permission in one of His Tablets, but I had to wait all those years and by then 'Abdu'l-Bahá had passed, in 1921. Four unforgettable weeks were spent in the Holy Places, surrounded by so much love, the hours spent in the shrines, in prayer and meditation, the precious time spent with the Greatest Holy Leaf — a pure spirit — as well as several visits with the Guardian. . . . by his bedside, as he was ailing and depressed. The burden of responsibility thrust upon him so suddenly almost crushed him. Looking back now, since he has passed away, I have felt that he too was a martyr, for the responsibilities became ever more heavy. However, under it all he gained in strength spiritually which helped him to become a brilliant leader. . . .

Nineteen Hundred is a long time ago that I caught a glimpse of what was to come, but to me the year to be remembered is 1817 — November 12, when at the hour of dawn a child was born in the city of Tíhrán. To me that hour must have stirred the very atoms of the earth, making the earth tremble with joy, for on it would

walk the spirit of God and in another city an unnamed disciple of Ahmad-i-Ahsá'í (the forerunner of the Báb) bowed to the ground in an act of wonderment, testifying that "At this hour the light of the Promised One has broken and is shedding illumination upon the whole world." How shining was that hour! And as the believers multiply, their army marching into the far off countries of the earth, exiles from home and kin, they carry the torch held high to tell the people of that luminous hour — November 12, 1817.

As to the moment of my actual meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá this was at the house of Ed Kinney. As He entered the room there was a strange stillness; we were awed by His presence; majestic yet very human, He looked at us with compassion. He strode about the room, some of us were sitting on the floor and every time He passed me I touched His garment. He spoke at length and each sentence was translated but what these words were I have no idea, for I like others was completely engulfed in an exalted consciousness in which the mind had no place. I don't believe those words were taken down at that time, tape recording was still half a century away. Many of those present have described this scene and it can be found in several books. For me the words were lost — we were all caught up in an intensely vibrant atmosphere. As we gazed at the beautiful face of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we were not in this world. A few who were there then are still alive, carrying the spirit of that moment out into the far reaching corners of the earth and all who hear them too are given a portion of radiance emanating from 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

—MRS. BERTHALIN ALLIEN

## BAHA'I IN THE NEWS

*La Vie Protestante*, a Calvinistic weekly, Geneva, Switzerland, has published an article which mentions the Bahá'í Faith for the first time. The article has resulted from the publication of a book by the secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr. Visser't-Hooft, entitled *L'Eglise, face au syncrétisme* (The Church Facing Syncretism). In this work, the author attempts to approximate the Faith with various syncretistic movements and beliefs.

*Twenty-five Swiss newspapers have published articles on the Bahá'í House of Worship in Germany in both French and German languages. Another Swiss magazine, L'Essor, a bi-weekly, has published a review of Dr. Wm. Hatcher's lecture at the Ecumenical Center of Bossey of the World Council of Churches near Geneva, as published in a Bahá'í quarterly teaching bulletin.*

*La Prensa*, a Buenos Aires, Argentina newspaper, mentioned the Bahá'ís in an article about Israel. In discussing the population of Haifa the article stated: "Among them is also found a group unique in character called Bahá'í, the name of its founder and Prophet, and whose main characteristics are propagation throughout the world of the idea of justice and peace, love of mankind, and the practice of good actions and an honest life (but is there a religion which does not uphold these wonderful principles?). The community owns the most beautiful garden and the city has a golden domed shrine on Mount Carmel, world center of the followers."

*Our Religion and Our Neighbors* by Milton G. Miller and Sylvan Schwartzman, published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (New York) discusses Judaism in relation to the three major divisions of Christianity, in comparison with Islám and the far eastern religions and includes some statements on the Bahá'í Faith. This large, beautifully illustrated book contains many interesting statistical and comparative charts on various aspects of the major religions. The Bahá'í Faith is mentioned four times in the text including a glossary definition and a half-page photo of the Bahá'í Headquarters in Haifa. One of the excerpts about the Faith states: "Its teachings affirm the unity of God and all mankind and incorporate many of the ethical teachings of the major religions. Bahá'í predicts the coming of a day, brought about by the Spirit of God working through His 'Chosen Mouthpiece' (that is, men like Moses, Jesus, Muḥammed, and those like Bahá'u'lláh, who have written its scriptures), when the whole human race will be united. There is no priesthood or ritual, but several distinctive temples are maintained, one of which is in Chicago." This book has been selected for use by youth in Jewish religious schools.

*Guam Times Weekly* published in Agana, Guam, Saturday, August 8, 1964, carries a very interesting article, "The Many Faces of Time," by Marjorie Smith reporting on a visit to Guam by Dr. Willard E. Edwards, a professional electrical engineer who has made it his hobby and his leisure time business to work toward simplifying the Gregorian calendar and who is known as the originator of "The Perpetual Calendar." Dr. Edwards has travelled around the world five times in the interests of the eventual adoption of a world calendar. A half page of the article carries the Bahá'í calendar for the Bahá'í year 121 with a brief legend explaining that the Bahá'í era dated from "the Declaration of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh in 1844 A.D." and that the basic tenet of Bahá'í philosophy is the assertion that the Founder of the religion represents the "final coming of God" and that the Bahá'ís are confident that this calendar will eventually prevail.

## Danville, Illinois Baha'is

### Participate in Interfaith Tea

The Bahá'í Faith was represented this year for the first time at the Annual Interfaith Tea in Danville, Illinois on December 4.

The purpose of the tea was "for all Danville churches and congregations to come together in fellowship . . . in order to grow in understanding and appreciation of one another's beliefs."

The Reverend Calvin T. De Vries, Presbyterian, spoke on "Interfaith Relations." He said: "A proper understanding of man's existence as the result of 'divine intention' forms the basis for healthy interfaith relations."

The tea was held in a large school (Lutheran) auditorium with display tables for books, charts, pamphlets, etc., placed in a large circle. The Bahá'í table occupied a prominent spot in the circle, the two Bahá'ís in attendance being kept busy answering questions and distributing pamphlets. Interest shown by visitors was unusually keen.



*Bahá'ís at Florida State Convention enjoy a banquet at the Sarasota Terrace Hotel, Sarasota, Florida. A photograph of the banquet, held the night before the Convention was published in the local newspaper.*



*Some of the Bahá'ís who attended the South Dakota State Convention.*

### BAHA'I PUBLISHING TRUST

**Release the Sun** (cloth). By Wm. Sears. The cloth-bound edition of this work was not listed in the recent catalog. It is now back in print again and available at the same, original price.

Per copy .....\$2.50

**Bahá'í Pocket Calendar.** Indicates all Feast and Holy Days in small, billfold size; runs from May 1, 1965 to April 30, 1966. (Please state clearly if 1964-65 pocket calendar is being ordered or the new, 1965-66.)

25 copies .....\$1.00  
 100 copies .....\$3.00

**Mysticism Science and Revelation.** (cloth) By Glenn A. Shook. This title, imported from England, is now back in print again. Written by a physicist, it evaluates mystical practice throughout the centuries and also gives an interesting approach to the reconciliation of science and religion. Cloth only.

Per copy .....\$2.50

### Few Bahá'í World Volumes Still In Print

A number of volumes of *The Bahá'í World* are now out of print and can no longer be purchased. The following editions are still available and can be ordered as long as the supply lasts: Volume VI, \$3.00; Volume X, \$8.50; Volume XI, \$9.50. They are shipped postpaid within the U.S. and territories and for an additional \$.50 per volume in shipping charges to any point in the world.

### Correction

In BAHÁ'Í NEWS for December, 1964, page 20, first paragraph, line 11 it is stated that Mr. Anthony Lease was a speaker at the World Peace Day program in Los Angeles, California. The speaker was Tony Lee, Los Angeles Bahá'í youth. The editors regret this error.

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Bahá'í News is edited by an annually appointed Editorial Committee: Mrs. Sylvia Parmelee, Managing Editor; Mrs. Eunice Braun, International Editor; Miss Charlotte Linfoot, National Spiritual Assembly Representative.

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### Calendar of Events

#### Feasts

- February 7—Mulk (Dominion)
- March 2—'Alá' (Loftiness)

#### Intercalary Days

- February 26—March 1

#### Days of Fasting

- March 2-21

#### U.S. National Spiritual Assembly Meetings

- February 12-14

### Baha'i House of Worship

#### Visiting Hours

#### Weekdays

- 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Auditorium only)

#### Sundays and Holidays

- 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Entire building)

#### Service of Worship

#### Sundays

- 3:30 to 4:10 p.m.

#### Public Meeting

#### Sunday, February 21

- 4:15 p.m.