

# Bahá'í National Review

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March 1976 Bahá'í Year 132 No. 98

## Living the life is the greatest proclaimer

To the American Bahá'í Community

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The eyes of the world are upon us. Have you noticed how much and by how many means the Faith is being proclaimed now? When in 1967 The Universal House of Justice bade the believers to begin worldwide proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh's message, the Supreme Institution viewed this undertaking as an "unknown sea." Through the sustained devotion and creative energies of the friends everywhere that sea has now been charted. The message of Bahá'u'lláh is being widely proclaimed through mass media, which become more accessible to us day by day. Proclamation is being conducted through a variety of activities at local and national levels. The immediate effect of such wide-scale proclamation is, of course, to draw the attention of the public toward the Bahá'í community and toward the individuals who compose it.

How do we look to other people? This question deserves the serious consideration of the community and of individuals. The more we proclaim the Faith, the more important the question becomes.

The words of our beloved Guardian should guide us now more than ever. Shoghi Effendi tells us that neither the

"force or numbers" nor the "mere exposition of new and noble principles" is sufficient to uphold the claim of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. "One thing and only one thing," he declares, "will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendor of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh

That "one thing," dear friends, has no substitute in our magazine advertisements, newspaper articles, television spots, or in the variety of our public events, necessary as they all are. It dwells only within us. It is, indeed, the greatest proclaimer of the transforming power of Bahá'u'lláh's message.

Let us, then, be aware in our own lives of what is being proclaimed to the public.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

Glenford E. Mitchell, Secretary  
January 27, 1976

## Why Bahá'ís are not involved in politics

In this political year, it is imperative that acts of unwisdom and ignorance by Bahá'ís be avoided. These are the principles which should guide our relationship to political campaigns:

1. A Bahá'í may not become a member of, or associate with, a political party or organization designed to support a political party.

2. It is inappropriate for a Bahá'í to contribute funds or service to political parties or campaigns.

3. A Bahá'í, however, is free to exercise his right as an American citizen to vote for candidates in national and local elections as his conscience dictates. If you are a registered voter, you should be listed as non-partisan.

It is important that we understand the implications of the Bahá'í principle of noninterference in political affairs. In a letter to the National Spiritual Assemblies of Africa dated February 8, 1970, The Universal House of Justice said:

"Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi have given us clear

and convincing reasons why we must uphold this principle. These reasons are summarized below for the study and deepening of the friends. It is our hope that these observations will not only help the friends to intelligently and radiantly follow the holy teachings on this matter, but will help them to explain the Bahá'í attitude to those who may question its wisdom and usefulness:

The Faith of God is the sole source of salvation for mankind today. The true cause of the ills of humanity is its disunity. No matter how perfect may be the machinery devised by the leaders of men for the political unity of the world, it will still not provide the antidote to the poisoning the vigor of present-day society. These ills can be cured only through the instrumentality of God's Faith. There are many well-wishers of mankind who devote their efforts to relief-work and charity and to the material well-being of man, but only Bahá'ís can do the work

which God most wants done. When we devote ourselves to the work of the Faith we are doing a work which is the greatest aid and only refuge for a needy and divided world.

The Bahá'í Community is a worldwide organization seeking to establish true and universal peace on earth. If a Bahá'í works for one political party to overcome another it is a negation of the very spirit of the Faith. Membership in any political party, therefore, necessarily entails repudiation of some or all of the principles of peace and unity proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated: "Our party is God's party; we do not belong to any party."

If a Bahá'í were to insist on his right to support a certain political party he could not deny the same degree of freedom to other believers. This would mean that within the ranks of the Faith, whose primary mission is to unite all men as one great family under God, there would be Bahá'ís opposed to each other. Where, then, would be the example of unity and harmony which the world is seeking?

If the institutions of the Faith, God forbid, became involved in politics, the Bahá'ís would find themselves arousing antagonism instead of love. If they took one stand in one country, they would be bound to change the views of the people in another country about the aims and purposes of the Faith. By becoming involved in political disputes, the Bahá'ís instead of changing the world or helping it, would themselves be lost and destroyed. The world situation is so confused and moral issues which were once clear have become so mixed up with selfish and battling factions, that the best way Bahá'ís can serve the highest interests of their country and the cause of true salvation for the world, is to sacrifice their political pursuits and affiliations and wholeheartedly and fully support the divine system of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Faith is not opposed to the true interests of any

nation, nor is against any party or faction. It holds aloof from all controversies and transcends them all, while enjoining upon its followers loyalty to government and a sane patriotism. This love for their country the Bahá'ís show by serving its well-being in their daily activity, or by working in the administrative channels of the government instead of through party politics or in diplomatic or political posts. The Bahá'ís may, indeed are encouraged to, mix with all strata of society, with the highest authorities and with leading personalities as well as with the mass of the people, and should bring the knowledge of the Faith to them; but in so doing they should strictly avoid becoming identified, or identifying the Faith, with political pursuits and party programs.

"So vital is this principle of noninterference in political matters, which must govern the acts and words of Bahá'ís in every land, that Shoghi Effendi has written that 'Neither the charges which the uninformed and the malicious may be led to bring against them, nor the allurements of honors and rewards' would ever induce the true believers to deviate from this path, and that their words and conduct must proclaim that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh 'are actuated by no selfish ambition, that they neither thirst for power, nor mind any wave of unpopularity, of distrust or criticism, which a strict adherence to their standards might provoke.'

" 'Difficult and delicate though be our task,' he continues, 'the sustaining power of Bahá'u'lláh and of His Divine guidance will assuredly assist us, if we follow steadfastly in His way, and strive to uphold the integrity of His laws. The light of His redeeming grace, which no earthly power can obscure, will if we persevere, illuminate our path, as we steer our course amid the snares and pitfalls of a troubled age and will enable us to discharge our duties in a manner that would redound to the glory and honor of His blessed Name.' "

## National Committee updates

Local Spiritual Assembly and District Teaching Committee secretaries should change their National Committee Directory for 1975-76 to reflect the following updates:

**Council for the John and Louis Bosch Bahá'í School:** New Committee appointed. Please change entire listing to read:

Mrs. Dorothy L. Wolfrom, Secretary, 1005 Moffett Circle, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Mr. Kenton Allen                      Miss Frederica Kaiser

Mrs. Cynthia Barnes                Mr. Robert Malouf

Mr. Ronald Gilpatrick               Mrs. Ruth Somerhalder

**Green Acre Bahá'í School Council:** New committee

appointed. Please change entire listing to read: Mrs. Jane Edmunds, Secretary, Nine Gables, Eliot, Maine 03903

Mr. Herman Grammer                Mrs. Pamela Crocker

Mrs. Shirley Grammer                Mr. Richard Crocker

Mrs. Beatrice Lockwood

**Council for the Louis G. Gregory Bahá'í Institute:** New Secretary and add Mr. Bruce and Mrs. Linda Jones to Council.

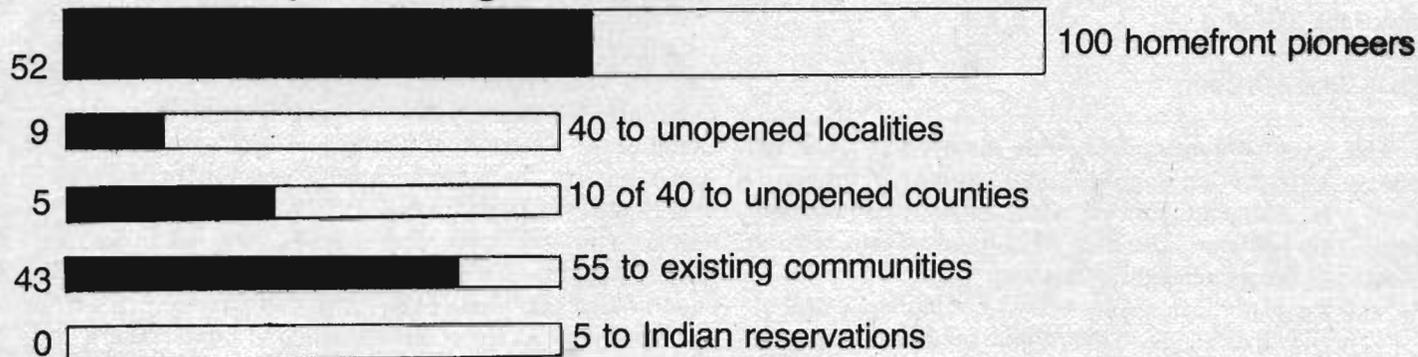
Mrs. Linda Jones, Secretary, 164 Gannett Street, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina 29928

**Wilhelm Bahá'í Council:** Add Lawrence Rothfeder to committee and change Mr. Ben Kaufman from Convener to Secretary, same address.

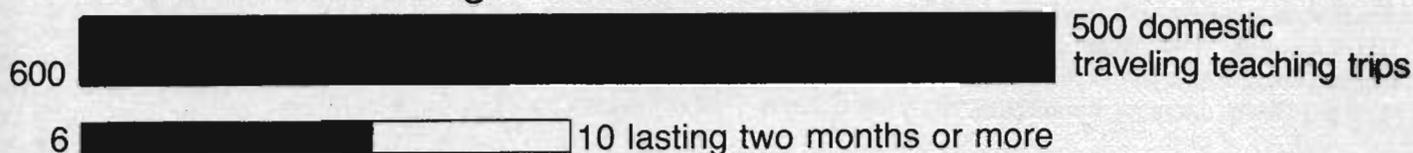
**Davison Bahá'í Council:** New secretary: Mr. David L. Smith, 716 Wildes, Midland, Mich. 48640.

## Progress of the Two Year Youth Program

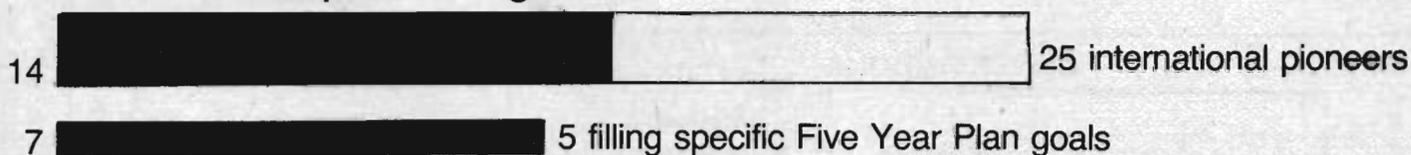
### Homefront pioneering



### Homefront teaching



### International pioneering



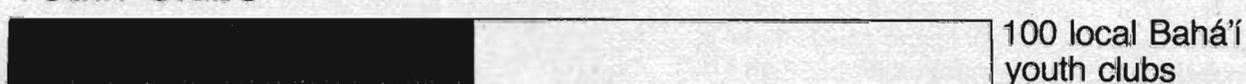
### International teaching



### College clubs



### Youth Clubs



# National Bahá'í Fund

## It is time to evaluate our record of giving

To all Local Spiritual Assemblies and Bahá'í Groups

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The level of contributions this month was quite discouraging to the National Spiritual Assembly. Perhaps we need to stop for a moment and consider some fundamentals regarding giving. In the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá we read the following:

"The Lord, as a sign of his infinite bounties, hath graciously favored His servants by providing for a fixed money offering . . . to be dutifully presented unto Him, though He, the True One and His servants have been at all times independent of all created things, and God verily is the All-Possessing, exalted above the need of any gift from His Creatures. This fixed money offering, however, causeth the people to become firm and steadfast and draweth Divine increase upon them."

Although this quotation refers specifically to a law not yet applicable to American believers, within it can be found the general basis upon which all giving to God is estab-

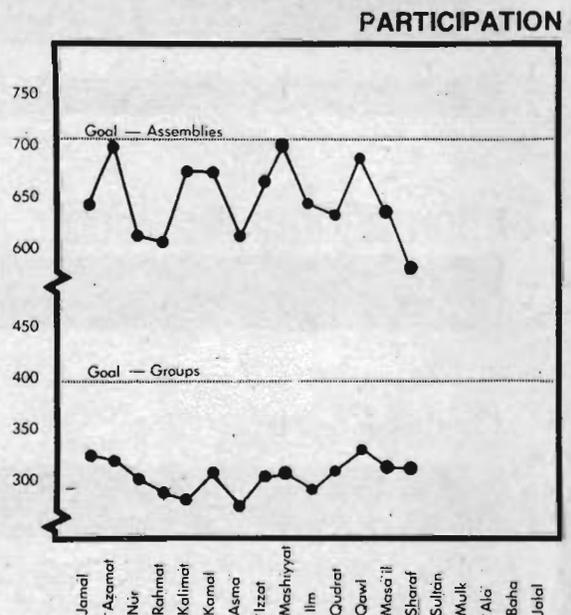
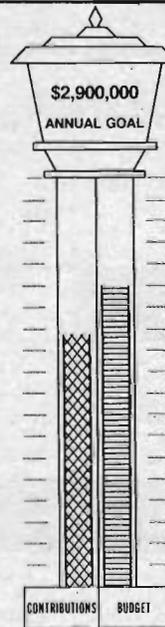
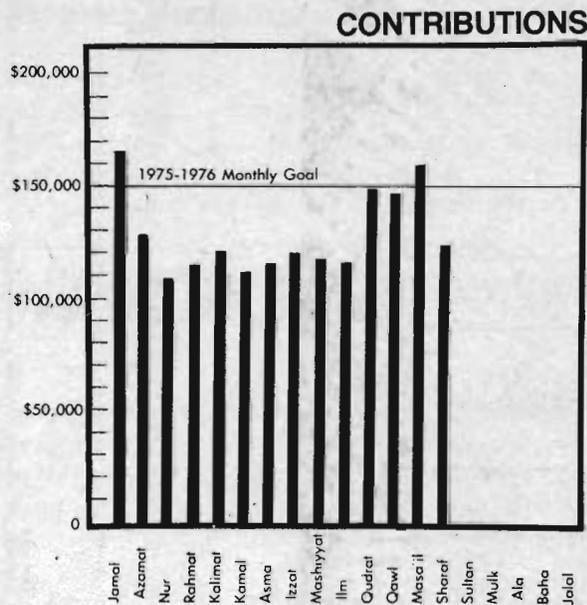
lished. We give, not to fulfill any need on the part of God, but rather because we recognize that everything we possess is a trust from Him and wish to demonstrate our gratitude for His bountifulness. Furthermore, we believe that God has a plan for the unification of mankind and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Therefore, we give out of our love for humanity and our concern for the future.

Friends, the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh will not become a reality through beautiful words and good intentions. Bills must be paid from a sorely depleted National Fund. We call upon every individual believer to carefully reconsider his personal reasons for contributing to the Fund and critically evaluate his private record of giving this year. Does it truly measure up to the pressing needs of the hour and adequately demonstrate our gratitude for the bounties being showered upon us from heaven?

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

Dorothy W. Nelson, Treasurer  
January 30, 1976



	Month of	Year
	Sharaf	to Date
Budget goal . . . . .	\$153,000	\$2,142,000
Contributions . . . . .	123,733	1,799,956
Overage (shortage) . . . . .	\$(29,267)	\$ (342,044)

Contributions may be addressed to: National Bahá'í Fund, 112 Linden Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091; Bahá'í International Fund, P.O. Box 155, Haifa, Israel; and Continental Bahá'í Fund, 418 Forest Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091.