

1946-1953
The Guardian's Seven Year Plan
for the American Bahá'ís

"The time is ripe, events are pressing, the Hosts on high are sounding the signal for inauguration of a Second Seven Year Plan designed to culminate the first Centennial of the year Nine marking the mystic Birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Mission in Síyáh-Chal, Tíhrán."

SHOGHI EFFENDI

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[1] The Guardian's Message to the Thirty-Eighth Annual Bahá'í Convention

Hail with joyous heart the delegates of the American Bahá'í community assembled beneath the dome of the Mother Temple of the West in momentous Convention of the first year of peace. The souls are uplifted in thanksgiving for the protection vouchsafed by Providence to the preeminent community of the Bahá'í world enabling its members to consummate, despite the tribulations of a world-convulsing conflict, the first stage of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan. The campaign culminating the Centenary of the inauguration of the Bahá'í Era completed sixteen months ere the appointed time the exterior ornamentation of the *Mashriq'u'l-Adhkár*, laid the basis of the administrative order in every virgin State and Province of the North American Continent, almost doubled the Assemblies established since the inception of the Faith, established Assemblies in fourteen Republics of Latin America, constituted active groups in remaining Republics, swelled to sixty the Sovereign States within the Pale of the Faith.

The two-year respite well earned after the expenditure of such a colossal effort, covering such a tremendous range, during so dark a period, is now ended. The prosecutors of the Plan who in the course of six war-ridden years achieved such prodigies of service in the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Magallanes are now collectively summoned to assume in the course of the peaceful years ahead still weightier responsibilities for the opening decade of the Second Century. The time is ripe, events are pressing, Hosts on high are sounding the signal for inauguration of second Seven Year Plan designed to culminate first Centennial of the year Nine marking the mystic birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Mission in Sýáh-Chal at Tíhrán.

A two-fold responsibility urgently calls the vanguard of the dawn-breakers of the West, champion builders of Bahá'u'lláh's Order, torch-bearers of world civilization, executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mandate, to arise and simultaneously bring to fruition the

tasks already undertaken and launch fresh enterprises beyond the borders of the Western Hemisphere.

The first objective of the new Plan is consolidation of victories already won throughout the Americas, involving multiplication of Bahá'í centers, bolder proclamation of the Faith to the masses. The second objective is completion of interior ornamentation of the holiest House of Worship in the Bahá'í world designed to coincide with the Fiftieth Anniversary of the inception of this historic enterprise. The third objective is the formation of three National Assemblies, pillars of the Universal House of Justice, in the Dominion of Canada, Central and South America. The fourth objective is the initiation of systematic teaching activity in war-torn, spiritually famished European continent, cradle of world-famed civilizations, twice-blessed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visits, whose rulers Bahá'u'lláh specifically and collectively addressed, aiming at establishment of Assemblies in the Iberian Peninsula, the Low Countries, the Scandinavian States and Italy. No effort is too great for community belonging to the continent whose rulers Bahá'u'lláh addressed in the Most Holy Book, whose members were invested with spiritual primacy by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and named by Him apostles of His Father, whose country was the first Western nation to respond to the Divine Message and deemed worthy to be first to build the Tabernacle of the Most Great Peace, whose administrators evolved the pattern of the embryonic world order, consummated the first stage of the Divine Plan and whose elevation to the throne of everlasting dominion the Center of the Covenant confidently anticipated. As the resistless impulse propelling the Plan accelerates, the American community must rise to new levels of potency in response to the Divine mandate, scale loftier heights of heroism, insure fuller participation of the rank and file of members, and closer collaboration with the agencies designed to insure attainment of the fourfold objectives, and evince greater audacity in tearing down the barriers in its path.

Upon the success of the second Seven Year Plan depends the launching, after a respite of three brief years, of a yet more momentous third Seven Year Plan which, when consummated through the establishment of the structure of the administrative order in the remaining Sovereign States and chief dependencies of the entire globe, must culminate in and be befittingly commemorated through world-wide celebrations marking the Centennial of the formal assumption by Bahá'u'lláh of the Prophetic Office associated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá with Daniel's prophecy and the World Triumph of

the Bahá'í revelation and signaling the termination of the initial Epoch in the evolution of the Plan whose mysterious, resistless processes must continue to shed ever-increasing luster on successive generations of both the Formative and Golden Ages of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Pledging ten thousand dollars as my initial contribution for the furtherance of the manifold purposes of a glorious Crusade surpassing every enterprise undertaken by the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the course of the first Bahá'í century.

Cablegram received
April 25, 1946

—SHOGHI

[2] Convention Message to the Guardian

One hundred and twenty delegates and unusual number of visiting friends assembled in Convention reminiscent of Centenary in spirit and size, listened with profound emotion to momentous decisions of beloved Guardian's cable on first goals of second Bahá'í century.

Overwhelmingly grateful for Guardian's confidence in American believers, completely humbled by immense responsibilities, Convention dedicates itself to prayerful consultation on new goals within well-defined plan so graciously given to canalize our efforts.

Spurred by Guardian's generous gifts, we prepare for sacrifice and achievement, and beseech fresh measures of spiritual grace. Desire ever closer bond beloved Guardian and long his presence.

—THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTION

Temple Foundation Hall
Wilmette, Illinois
Friday, April 26, 1946

[3] The Guardian's Reply to Convention Message

Deeply touched by response of delegates to new call to service unprecedented in history of Faith in West. Urge delegates contribute their share arouse believers in respective states and provinces to exert their utmost to insure speedy attainment of glorious objectives.

—SHOGHI

Cablegram received
May 2, 1946

[4] Cablegram to the Guardian from Newly-Elected National Spiritual Assembly

You have disclosed to American Bahá'ís the glorious path of faith leading to world spread of Bahá'u'lláh's Message and ascendency of the authority and dominion of His Divine Revelation. Awed but resolute the Assembly has pondered the four objectives of Seven Year Plan, formulated measures, established necessary agencies and adopted annual budget of \$250,000 sanctified by your contribution. Our essential aim is constancy of effort by entire community unified and directed to achievement of definite, successive goals. Invoking divine aid for purification of the souls and attainment of the spiritual worthiness requisite to success of America's mission under mandate conferred by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

National Bahá'í Office

May 5, 1946

[5] The Four Objectives to Be Attained by the Year Nine of Second Bahá'í Century (1953)

First Objective

“The first objective of the New Plan is consolidation of victories already won throughout the Americas, involving multiplication of Bahá'í Centers, bolder proclamation of the Faith to the masses.”

Second Objective

“The second objective is completion of interior ornamentation of the holiest House of Worship in the Bahá'í world designed to coincide with the Fiftieth Anniversary of the inception of this historic enterprise.”

Third Objective

“The third objective is the formation of three National Assemblies, pillars of the Universal House of Justice, in the Dominion of Canada, Central and South America.”

Fourth Objective

“The fourth objective is the initiation of systematic teaching activity in war-torn, spiritually-famished European continent, cradle of world-famed civilizations, twice blessed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visits,

whose rulers Bahá'u'lláh specifically and collectively addressed, aiming at establishment of Assemblies in the Iberian Peninsula, the Low Countries, the Scandinavian States, and Italy.”

[6] Plans Adopted by the National Spiritual Assembly for Attainment of the Four Objectives

I. CONSOLIDATION OF VICTORIES ALREADY WON

The aim of this objective is to bring about a great increase in the number of local Spiritual Assemblies, groups and confirmed believers throughout North, Central and South America. Only through a powerful massing of our spiritual forces can we as the community of the Greatest Name develop the energy and capacity needed to sustain the work of the new Seven Year Plan. Where there are now only a few hundred over five thousand Bahá'ís in North, Central and South America, there must in the near future be thousands more. Where there are now a total of about one hundred sixty-five local Assemblies in these American regions, there must be scores of new and vigorous centers of loyal devotion under the Guardian's direction.

We are building the instrument of victory for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh that the oneness of mankind may be consummated and the Most Great Peace attained.

This first objective constitutes the preliminary stage in the realization of the third objective which calls for the formation of three new National Spiritual Assemblies. Now that the Guardian has disclosed to us the glory of the goal, we can strive to win it with true unity of spirit and singleness of aim.

The National Committees directly associated with and responsible for these tremendous tasks are:

National and Regional Teaching Committees of the
United States

National and Regional Teaching Committees of Canada
Inter-America

Youth

Summer Schools

Study Aids

A separate National and Regional Teaching Committee appointment has been made for Canada in order to enable the believers in the Dominion to assume more and more of the responsibility and acquire more of the experience needed for the formation of their own National Spiritual Assembly.

The first objective likewise calls for bolder proclamation of the Faith to the masses, which directly challenges each Assembly, group and individual Bahá'í, as well as the following National Committees:

Public Relations	College Speakers Bureau
Public Meetings	Questionnaire
Radio	Service to the Blind
Temple Program	Library
Race Unity	Temple Librarian and Sales
World Order Magazine	World Language
Visual Aids	Temple Guides

An appeal is made for the closest possible association of the believers and the Assemblies in the work of all these committees, with direct knowledge of their plans and participation in the collective activities they maintain.

II. COMPLETION OF INTERIOR ORNAMENTATION OF TEMPLE

Once again we have the blessed privilege of contributing to the construction of this sacred House of Worship, whose fame has gone forth to the ends of earth, whose spiritual power gives wings to every effort we make.

The Guardian has directed that the interior designs made by Mr. Louis Bourgeois be used, but modified in the direction of simplicity. Preliminary investigations were made for the Temple Trustees by Mr. McDaniel before the Convention opened. It appears that the work will include these items: Nine entrance ways, eight small rooms and stairway, the great auditorium, and the nine permanent (metal) outside doors. Study is under way at the Guardian's direction to determine how the areas provided in the designs for the eight small rooms can be made an integral part of the auditorium, thus greatly increasing its capacity for throngs of worshipers.

The friends note the Guardian's reference to the "Fiftieth Anniversary of the inception of this historic enterprise." As he

stated in "God Passes By," the Master in 1903 revealed the Tablet which sanctioned the beginning of the Temple undertaking. The fiftieth anniversary of the inception thus coincides with the Centenary of the "mystic Birth" of Bahá'u'lláh's "prophetic Mission," or 1953.

The plan is to place the first contract at the earliest possible moment, when through consultation with experts the Trustees are thoroughly familiar with the whole task and can act on the best advice not only with respect to materials, methods, costs and other construction items but also the selection of the contractor or contractors best qualified to perform the work. The annual budget calls for \$75,000 to be made available for Temple construction during the first year of the Seven Year Plan.

Frequent reports will be made to the Bahá'í community on the successive stages of this inspiring Temple enterprise.

III. FORMATION OF THREE NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES

With dramatic suddenness the Guardian has disclosed to us the raising up of three pillars of the future House of Justice—the formation of a National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, the formation of a National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central America, and a National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of South America.

An exchange of cablegrams with Shoghi Effendi enables the National Assembly to announce a definite schedule, as follows:

A. The National Spiritual Assembly is to be established in Canada during the Ridván period of 1948.

B. The National Spiritual Assembly is to be established in Central America during the Ridván of 1951.

C. The National Spiritual Assembly is to be established in South America during the Ridván of 1951.

Thus we have two years to prepare for the formation of a separate Bahá'í community in Canada, and five years for the formation of the two Bahá'í communities in the Latin American areas.

The prospect is inspiring to the believers in those three areas, for they are soon to constitute independent administrative bodies operating directly under the Guardian, and their National Assemblies will participate in the election of the Universal House of

Justice when the Guardian calls that august body into existence. But until their own National Assemblies are formed, the Bahá'ís of Canada and of Central and South America are spiritually one with us and it is our blessed privilege to contribute our effort and our wealth abundantly in furtherance of these high goals.

IV. TEACHING ACTIVITY IN EUROPE

The continent of Europe is now prepared for the steady development of the Bahá'í administrative order. The Guardian has sounded the fateful hour, and the unseen Hosts rush before us as we make our first advance.

The countries in which the American Bahá'ís are responsible for establishing local Spiritual Assemblies by 1953 are:

- A. Iberian Peninsula—*Spain, Portugal.*
- B. Low Countries—*Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg.*
- C. Scandanavial States—*Sweden, Norway, Denmark.*
- D. *Italy, Switzerland.*

To assume the vigorous, unremitting and well-conceived development of this enterprise—the planting of the Banner of Bahá'u'lláh in no less than ten new countries within the next seven years, the National Spiritual Assembly has appointed a new National Committee, the European Teaching Committee, to conduct Bahá'í activities in those countries. Its functions include: (1) Study of available teachers and settlers for the respective countries; (2) Survey of available teachers and settlers for the respective countries; (3) Survey of Bahá'í facilities in these countries at the present time; (4) Correspondence with Bahá'í administrative bodies and isolated believers throughout Europe.

Bahá'í literature will have to be supplied in considerable quantity in these different languages: *Spanish, Portuguese, Netherlands, French, Norwegian, Danish, Italian.*

The opening up of the “spiritually-famished” European continent will require a number of new pioneer teachers and settlers, and those who wish to respond will communicate with the European Teaching Committee. Translators will also be needed. This field will give a special opportunity to all those American Bahá'ís who through family descent have roots in one of these countries, are familiar with its language and now have or can acquire personal contacts and acquaintance among its people.

[7] National Budget for First Year of Seven Year Plan

The Annual Budget for the year 1946-1947 carries items which call for a total contribution of \$250,000 from the American Bahá'í community, or \$20,833.34 per month beginning May 1, 1946. The budget represents the measure of sacrifice required. It is not reducible, nor can the sacrifices be deferred to a later year.

To bring this budget home to each Bahá'í, it means that every contribution made last year must be doubled in amount. Every Bahá'í is to give twice as much as he has in the past, or rather, every Bahá'í is to *give, donate, contribute, sacrifice.*

Shoghi Effendi has shown us the path to victory. Now it is for us to advance steadily until the final goal is won.

Note that the budget items are arranged so as to show the relationship of each committee appropriation to the objective for which the committee is directly responsible. Since, however, certain committees, like the National Teaching and Inter-America Committees, are concerned with both the first and third objectives the appropriation in such cases is allocated to two objectives and not to one.

There are also certain committees, like the Publishing Committee, which contribute to the Bahá'í activity as a whole, and their appropriations appear under the heading of "Bahá'í Service Committees."

FOR OBJECTIVES ONE AND THREE

Consolidation of Victories—Formation of New National Assemblies—
Proclamation of Faith to Masses.

A. Consolidation—Formation of New National Assemblies

1. National and Regional Teaching Committees	\$ 10,000.00
2. Inter-America Committee	25,000.00
3. Canadian National & Regional Teaching Committees	3,000.00
4. National Youth Committee	400.00
5. Summer Schools	1,500.00
6. Study Aids	25.00

B. Proclamation of Faith to Masses

1. Public Relations Committee	15,000.00
2. Public Meetings Committee	12,000.00

3. Radio Committee	12,500.00
4. Temple Program Committee, including paid newspaper advertising	1,500.00
5. Temple Guides Committee	500.00
6. Race Unity Committee	1,000.00
7. World Order Magazine Committee	300.00
8. Visual Aids Committee	500.00
9. College Speakers Bureau	1,000.00
10. Questionnaire Committee	500.00
11. Service to the Blind Committee	500.00
12. Library Committee	1,000.00
13. Temple Librarian and Sales Committee	0,000.00
14. World Language Committee	50.00
15. Teaching Literature (NSA)	1,000.00

FOR OBJECTIVE TWO

Temple Construction (First Year of Plan)	75,000.00
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FOR OBJECTIVE FOUR

Initiation of Systematic Teaching Activity in Europe

1. European Teaching Committee	10,000.00
2. Literature for European Teaching	2,500.00

Total for Seven Year Plan\$174,795.00

FOR SERVICE COMMITTEES

1. Publishing Committee	0,000.00
2. Bahá'í News Committee	2,500.00
3. Bahá'í World Editorial Committee	250.00
(Operating Expenses)	
4. Reviewing Committee	25.00
5. International Relief Committee (Operating Expense)	50.00
6. Child Education Committee	25.00
7. Archives Committee	50.00
8. Committee on American Memorial to 'Abdu'l-Bahá	150.00
9. Index Committee	25.00

Total for Service Committees\$ 3,075.00

FOR BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTER

Bahá'í World Center—Annual Contribution	3,600.00
(Channelled to International Relief by instruction of the Guardian January 1946)	

FOR THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

Printing cost, Bahá'í World, Volume X	5,000.00
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FOR MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES

1. Temple	12,000.00	
2. Other Trustee Properties	4,800.00	
Total for Properties Maintenance		\$ 16,800.00

FOR ADMINISTRATION

1. Expense of Annual Convention, State and Provincial Conventions	1,500.00	
2. General Administrative Expenses	6,000.00	
3. Secretary's Office	9,540.00	
4. Treasurer's Office	3,000.00	
Total for Administration		\$ 18,040.00

FOR RESERVE

Reserve for Contingenices	26,710.00
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TOTAL NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í BUDGET.... \$250,000.00

[8] Schedule of Meetings of National Spiritual Assembly 1946-1947

April 28, 30, May 1, 4, 5	December 5, 6, 7, 8
June 8, 9, 10	January 18, 19
July 4, 5, 6, 7,	March 21, 22, 23, 24, 25
August 30, 31, September 1, 2	April 30
October 11, 12	1947 Convention, May 1, 2, 3, 4

[9] The Immediate Goal

To assure the steady progress of the work in all its many fields, the National Spiritual Assembly has requested the committees to submit brief progress reports every two months covering the following items: Projects initiated; Projects completed; Expenditures; Committee attendance; Recommendations.

More particularly, a report is requested from each committee by July 1, 1946 on the plans it has worked out within the appropriation assigned in the annual budget.

By August first a report is to be made by the National Treasurer on the receipt of contributions made to the National Fund from May 1 to July 31, to determine the condition of the budget of \$250,000 at the end of the first three months of the Seven Year Plan.

[10] The First Year of Seven Year Plan—Our Spiritual Responsibility

Beloved friends of the American Bahá'í community! The Guardian has set the goals of our individual and collective effort for seven crucial years. Each of you has his message, with its potent affirmation, its inspiring appeal, its mystic and world-embracing vision of the Faith in its days of final victory. Our part is by union, directed effort, concentration of energy, clear knowledge of the details of the plans, personal dedication to this true Crusade, and by sacrifice and prayer, to march forward in perfect assurance that success will be won.

This new Seven Year Plan transforms our words into deeds, and in a time of confusion and frustration discloses the path of assurance.

Each individual believer is made a vital part of the effort and the destined triumph of this Plan. Its very difficulties confirm us in the unique power of Bahá'ís to maintain their unity and cooperation. Let us realize that the institutions of the new World Order were created for this very aim: to overcome difficulties, to accomplish great tasks, to transform our negative self into positive being.

Each local Spiritual Assembly acquires new dignity, worthiness and capacity as it makes itself the representative and trusted instrument of the Seven Year Plan in its community. The greater

things have come; now let us put away the lesser things which confuse and divide the souls. To uphold a high standard of response to the Plan in the local community; to encourage initiative and welcome constructive suggestions; to consider the Nineteen Day Feast as occasion for joyous experience of the pure essence of the Word—these are among the blessings which are offered every Assembly whether old or new, in a large or a small community. *First*: assist in confirming the friends to support the National Fund; *second*; cooperate in every possible manner with these projects and aids offered by National Committees which can be applied in your community; *third*: make sure that the Faith is proclaimed locally with the whole united force of the believers—teaching in one way or another is for all and not restricted to any few.

Shoghi Effendi walks ahead of us every step of the way: “Pledging ten thousand dollars as my initial contribution for the furtherance of the manifold purposes of a glorious Crusade surpassing every enterprise undertaken by the followers of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh in the course of the first Bahá’í century.”

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

May, 1946