

Messages to America

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[Frontispiece]

MESSAGES TO AMERICA

by SHOGHI EFFENDI

GUARDIAN OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

Selected Letters and Cablegrams Addressed to the Bahá'ís of North America 1932–1946
“As the end of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era approaches, as the shadows descending upon and enveloping mankind steadily and remorselessly deepen, this community, which can almost be regarded as the solitary champion of the Faith in the Western World, is increasingly evincing and demonstrating its capacity, its worth, and ability as the torchbearer of the New, the World Civilization which is destined to supplant in the fulness of time the present one.”—Shoghi Effendi, December 3, 1940.

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

WILMETTE, ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

1947

NABÍL'S NARRATIVE

Feel impelled appeal entire body American believers to henceforth regard Nabil's soul-stirring Narrative as essential adjunct to reconstructed Teaching program, as unchallengeable textbook in their Summer Schools, as source of inspiration in all literary and artistic pursuits, as an invaluable companion in times of leisure, as indispensable preliminary to future pilgrimage to Bahá'u'lláh's native land, and as unfailing instrument to allay distress and resist attacks of critical, disillusioned humanity.

Cablegram June 21, 1932.

IMMORTAL SPIRIT

Greatest Holy Leaf's immortal spirit winged its flight Great Beyond. Countless lovers her saintly life in East and West seized with pangs of anguish. Plunged in utterable sorrow humanity shall ere long recognize its irreparable loss. Our beloved Faith, well nigh crushed by devastating blow of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's unexpected Ascension, now laments passing of last remnant of Bahá'u'lláh, its most exalted member. Holy Family cruelly divested of its most precious great Adorning. I for my part bewail sudden removal of my sole earthly sustainer, the joy and solace of my life. Remains will repose in the vicinity of the Holy Shrines. So grievous a bereavement necessitates suspension for nine months through Bahá'í world every manner religious festivity. Inform Local Assemblies and groups hold in befitting manner memorial gatherings to extol a life so laden with sacred experiences, so rich in imperishable memories. Advise holding additional Commemoration Service of strictly devotional character in the Auditorium of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

Cablegram July 15, 1932

UNITED WILL, CONCERTED ACTION

I am deeply conscious of the many obstacles that stand in the path of the American believers in their stupendous endeavor to attain their goal—a goal on which our dearly beloved Greatest Holy Leaf had set her fondest hopes. I cannot, however, overlook, much as I sympathize with them in their financial tribulations and anxieties, the mysterious power that resides in the united will and concerted action of all the members of that self-sacrificing community—a community which, since the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, has put an impetus to the advancement of the Cause out of all proportion to its numerical strength, its youthfulness, and experience of the powers latent in this sacred Faith. What an untold wealth of blessings will flow out of a renewed, an irrevocable resolution, representing the combined will of all the steadfast lovers of the Cause of God in that land, to carry out in its entirety during the few remaining months a Plan on which so much that is vital to its world-wide interests depends! The American believers, the stout-hearted supporters of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, have already given too many evidences of their preponderating influence in the direction of its affairs to allow the slightest disappointment to mar the radiance of their past achievements. Their will to succeed must eventually triumph.

October 27, 1932

NON-PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The handling of this delicate and vital problem regarding non-participation by Bahá'ís of East and West in political affairs, calls for the utmost circumspection, tact, patience and vigilance, on the part of those whose function and privilege it is to guard, promote and administer the activities of a world-wide, ever-advancing Cause. The misgivings and apprehensions of individual Bahá'ís should be allayed and eventually completely dispelled. Any misconception of the sane and genuine patriotism that animates every Bahá'í heart, if it ever obscures or perplexes the minds of responsible government officials, should be instantly and courageously dissipated. Any deliberate misrepresentation by the enemies of the Cause of God of the aims, the tenets and methods of the administrators of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh should be vigorously faced and its fallacy pitilessly exposed. The Cause to which we belong stands on the threshold of an era of unprecedented expansion. Its problems are many, diverse and challenging. Our methods and ways of approach must likewise be characterized by unusual sagacity, consummate skill and wisdom. He will surely never fail us in meeting the needs of a critical hour.

March 16, 1933

PERSONALITIES SUBORDINATED

Concerning the removal of believers I feel that such a vitally important matter should be given the most serious consideration and preferably be referred to the National Assembly for further consideration and final decision. We should be slow to accept and reluctant to remove. I fully approve and wholeheartedly and unreservedly uphold the principle to which you refer that personalities should not be made centers around which the community may revolve but that they should be subordinated under all conditions and however great their merits to the properly constituted Assemblies. You and your co-workers can never over-estimate or over-emphasize this cardinal principle of Bahá'í Administration.

April 11, 1933

MOMENTOUS CONVENTION

Message to 1933 Convention

Entire Bahá'í world stirred with expectations to witness results of American believers' momentous Convention. On its proceedings hang issue of incalculable benefit to world-wide Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. To its delegates is given great opportunity to release forces which will usher in an era whose splendor must outshine the heroic age of our beloved Cause. Supreme Concourse waiting for them to seize it.

Cablegram June 1, 1933

AN EMINENT RANK

Keith's precious life offered up in sacrifice to beloved Cause in Bahá'u'lláh's native land. On Persian soil, for Persia's sake, she encountered, challenged and fought the forces of darkness with high distinction, indomitable will, unswerving, exemplary loyalty. The mass of her helpless Persian brethren mourns the sudden loss of their valiant emancipator. American believers grateful and proud of the memory of their first and distinguished martyr. Sorrow stricken, I lament my earthly separation from an invaluable collaborator, an unfailing counselor, an esteemed and faithful friend. I urge the Local Assemblies befittingly to organize memorial gatherings in memory of one whose international services entitled her to an eminent rank among the Hands of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

Cablegram October 30, 1933

POTENTIALITIES OF MAJESTIC EDIFICE

Message to 1934 Convention

American believers' inspired leadership steadily unfolding to Bahá'ís world over the potentialities of the majestic edifice heralding formative period of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Their unerring vision conceived its matchless design. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own hands laid its cornerstone. Their dynamic faith reared its structure. Their sustained self-sacrifice crowned it with immortal glory. May the flame of their unconquerable enthusiasm continue glowing undimmed in their hearts till its naked frame is enveloped in its shining mantle.

Cablegram June 4, 1934

THE VOTING RIGHT

I feel I must reaffirm the vital importance and necessity of the right of voting—a sacred responsibility of which no adult recognized believer should be deprived, unless he is associated with a community that has not as yet been in a position to establish a local Assembly. This distinguishing right which the believer possesses, however, does not carry with it nor does it imply an obligation to cast his vote, if he feels that the circumstances under which he lives do not justify or allow him to exercise that right intelligently and with understanding. This is a matter which should be left to the individual to decide himself according to his own conscience and discretion.

April 28, 1935

UNPRECEDENTED IMPETUS

Message to 1935 Convention

Heartily reciprocate sentiments conveyed in your message. Appeal to assembled delegates and incoming National Assembly to deliberate on measures required to stimulate all local communities and groups to lend immediate, unprecedented impetus to teaching activities throughout United States and Canada. Sustained concentration on this paramount issue can alone reveal the potentialities of beloved Temple and enable the superb self-sacrifice associated with it to yield its fairest fruit.

Cablegram April 29, 1935

SEPARATION FROM OUTWORN CREEDS

The separation that set in between the institutions of the Bahá'í Faith and the Islamic ecclesiastical organizations that oppose it—a movement that has originated in Egypt and is now spreading steadily throughout the middle East and will in time communicate its influence to the West—imposes upon every loyal upholder of the Cause the obligation of refraining from any word or action that might prejudice the position which our enemies have in recent years and of their own accord, proclaimed and established. This historic development, the beginnings of which could neither be recognized nor even anticipated in the years immediately preceding 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, may be said to have signalized the Formative Period of our Faith and to have paved the way for the consolidation of its administrative order. As this movement gains momentum, as it receives added impetus from the attitude and future action of the civil authorities in Persia, it will inevitably manifest its repercussions in the West and will rouse the leaders of the Church and finally the civil authorities to challenge the claims and eventually to recognize the independent status of the Religion of Bahá'u'lláh. Nothing whatever in the meantime should be said or done by any of us, whether in the political field or in our relations with ecclesiastical organizations, that would tend to confuse the issues with which our struggling Cause will sooner or later be confronted. We should accept no position, should avoid any affiliations or commitments that could in any way harm our future position or provide our potential enemies with weapons with which they can resist that complete emancipation of our Cause or retard its ultimate recognition and victory. Though our Cause unreservedly recognizes the Divine origin of all the religions that preceded it and upholds the spiritual truths which lie at their very core and are common to them all, its institutions, whether administrative, religious or humanitarian, must if their distinctive character is to be maintained and recognized, be increasingly divorced from the outworn creeds, the meaningless ceremonials and man-made institutions with which these religions are at present identified. Our adversaries in the East have initiated the struggle. Our future opponents in the West will, in their turn, arise and carry it a stage further. Ours is the duty, in anticipation of this inevitable contest, to uphold unequivocally and with undivided loyalty the integrity of our Faith and demonstrate the distinguishing features of its divinely appointed institutions.

June 15, 1935

THE NATIONAL FUND

As the activities of the American Bahá'í community expand, and its world-wide prestige correspondingly increases, the institution of the National Fund, the bedrock on which all other institutions must necessarily rest and be established, acquires added importance, and should be increasingly supported by the entire body of the believers, both in their individual capacities, and through their collective efforts, whether organized as groups or as local Assemblies. The supply of funds, in support of the National Treasury, constitutes, at the present time, the life-blood of those nascent institutions which you are laboring to erect. Its importance cannot, surely, be overestimated. Untold blessings shall no doubt crown every effort directed to that end. I am eagerly and prayerfully awaiting the news of an unprecedented expansion in so vital an organ of the administrative Order of the Faith.

July 29, 1935

THE NEW HOUR HAS STRUCK

Convey to assembled believers celebrating termination entire dome unit of Mashriqu'l-
Adhkár my heart-felt congratulations on triumphant progress of their undeniably glorious
enterprise. To prayers and testimonies ascending to Throne of Bahá'u'lláh I am moved to add
my fervent though inadequate tribute to solidarity of so dazzling an achievement. The forces
which progressive revelation of this mighty symbol of our Faith is fast releasing in heart of a
sorely tried continent no one of this generation can correctly appraise. The new hour has
struck in history of our beloved Cause, calling for nation-wide, systematic, sustained efforts
in teaching field, enabling thereby these forces to be directed into such channels as shall
redound to the glory of our Faith and to the honor of its institutions.

Cablegram October 26, 1935

THIS IS TRULY PROVIDENTIAL

This new stage in the gradual unfoldment of the Formative Period of our Faith into which we have just entered—the phase of concentrated teaching activity—synchronizes with a period of deepening gloom, of universal impotence, of ever-increasing destitution and wide-spread disillusionment in the fortunes of a declining age. This is truly providential and its significance and the opportunities it offers us should be fully apprehended and utilized. Now that the administrative organs of a firmly established Faith are vigorously and harmoniously functioning, and now that the Symbol (i.e., the House of Worship) of its invincible might is lending unprecedented impetus to its spread, an effort unexampled in its scope and sustained vitality is urgently required so that the moving spirit of its Founder may permeate and transform the lives of the countless multitudes that hunger for its teachings. That the beloved friends in America, who have carried triumphantly the banner of His Cause through the initial stages of its development, will in a still greater measure prove themselves capable of meeting the challenge of the present hour, I, for one, can never doubt. Of the evidences of their inexhaustible vitality I am sufficiently and continually conscious. My fervent plea will not, I feel certain, remain unanswered. For them I shall continue to pray from all my heart.

January 10, 1936

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ’S HISTORIC APPEAL

Message to 1936 Convention

Convey to American believers abiding gratitude efforts unitedly exerted in teaching field. Inaugurated campaigns should be vigorously pursued, systematically extended. Appeal to assembled delegates ponder historic appeal voiced by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Tablets of the Divine Plan. Urge earnest deliberation with incoming National Assembly to insure its complete fulfilment. First Century of Bahá’í era drawing to a close. Humanity entering outer fringes most perilous stage its existence. Opportunities of present hour unimaginably precious. Would to God every State within American Republic and every Republic in American continent might ere termination of this glorious century* embrace the light of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh and establish structural basis of His World Order.

Cablegram May 1, 1936

*The First Century of the Bahá’í Era, ending May 22, 1944.

FRESH CONQUESTS AND UNPRECEDENTED TRIUMPHS

I fervently hope and pray that the year into which we have just entered may be signalized by fresh conquests and unprecedented triumphs in the teaching field within the United States and beyond its confines. A systematic, carefully conceived, and well-established plan should be devised, rigorously pursued and continuously extended. Initiated by the National representatives of the American believers, the vanguard and standard-bearers of the radiant army of Bahá'u'lláh, this plan should receive the wholehearted, the sustained and ever-increasing support, both moral and financial, of the entire body of His followers in that continent. Its supreme immediate objective should be the permanent establishment of at least one center in every state of the American Republic and in every Republic of the American continent not yet enlisted under the banner of His Faith. Its ramifications should gradually be extended to the European continent, and its scope should be made to include those countries, such as the Baltic States, Poland, Greece, Spain and Portugal, where no avowed believer has established any definite residence. The field is immense, the task gigantic, the privilege immeasurably precious. Time is short, and the obligation sacred, paramount and urgent. The American community must muster all its force, concentrate its resources, summon to its aid all the faith, the determination and energies of which it is capable, and set out, single-minded and undaunted, to attain still greater heights in its mighty exertions for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

May 30, 1936

INTENSIFY TEACHING WORK A THOUSANDFOLD

I am eagerly awaiting the news of the progress of the activities initiated to promote the teaching work within, and beyond, the confines of the American continent. The American believers, if they wish to carry out, in the spirit and the letter, the parting wishes of their beloved Master, must intensify their teaching work a thousandfold and extend its ramifications beyond the confines of their native land and as far as the most distant outposts of their far-flung Faith. The Tablets of the Divine Plan invest your Assembly with unique and grave responsibilities, and confer upon it privileges which your sister Assemblies might well envy and admire. The present opportunity is unutterably precious. It may not recur again. Undaunted by the perils and the uncertainties of the present hour, the American believers must press on and prosecute in its entirety the task which now confronts them. I pray for their success from the depths of my heart.

July 28, 1936

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE UNDERTAKING

I cannot allow this communication to be sent without adding a few words in person and stress afresh the significance of the undertaking in which the entire Bahá'í community has embarked. The promulgation of the Divine Plan, unveiled by our departed Master in the darkest days of one of the severest ordeals which humanity has ever experienced, is the key which Providence has placed in the hands of the American believers whereby to unlock the doors leading them to fulfil their unimaginably glorious Destiny. As the proclamation of the Message reverberates throughout the land, as its resistless march gathers momentum, as the field of its operation widens, and the numbers of its upholders and champions multiply, its potentialities will correspondingly unfold, exerting a most beneficent influence not only on every community throughout the Bahá'í world, but on the immediate fortunes of a travailing society. The repercussions of this campaign are already apparent in Europe, India, Egypt, 'Irâq and even among the sore-tried communities in Persia and Russia. The Faith of God is gaining in stature, effectiveness and power. Not until, however, the great enterprise which you are now conducting runs its full course and attains its final objective, at its appointed time, can its world-encompassing benefits be fully apprehended or revealed. The perseverance of the American believers will, no doubt, insure the ultimate realization of these benefits.

November 14, 1936

A COMPLETE REDEDICATION

The progress of the teaching campaign is most remarkable and reassuring: the uninterrupted prosecution of this holy enterprise and its extension to the South American continent and the islands of the Pacific will no doubt attract unimaginable blessings and must entail far-reaching consequences. In the course of this year, when the American believers are commemorating the 25th anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to America, a mighty impetus should be lent to this campaign which you have so splendidly initiated. A complete rededication to its ideals, its purposes and requirements on the part of all individuals and Assemblies, can alone befit such a nation-wide celebration. I pray that you may fulfil your high destiny.

March 22, 1937

INSTITUTION OF GUARDIANSHIP NOW FURTHER REINFORCED

Deeply moved by your message. Institution of Guardianship, head cornerstone of the Administrative Order of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, already ennobled through its organic connection with the Persons of Twin Founders of the Bahá'í Faith, is now further reinforced through direct association with West and particularly with the American believers, whose spiritual destiny is to usher in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. For my part I desire to congratulate community of American believers on acquisition of tie vitally binding them to so weighty an organ of their Faith.

Cablegram March 30, 1937

DUAL GIFT

Message to 1937 Convention

Dual gift providentially conferred upon American Bahá'í community invests recipients with dual responsibility fulfil historic mission. First, prosecute uninterruptedly teaching campaign inaugurated at last Convention in accordance with Divine Plan. Second, resume with inflexible determination exterior ornamentation of entire structure of Temple. Advise ponder message conveyed to delegates through esteemed co-worker, Fred Schopflocher. No triumph can more befittingly signalize termination of first century of Bahá'í era than accomplishment of this twofold task. Advise prolongation of Convention sessions to enable delegates consult National Assembly to formulate feasible Seven Year Plan to assure success Temple enterprise. No sacrifice too great for community so abundantly blessed, so repeatedly honored.

Cablegram May 1, 1937

THE CALL HAS GONE FORTH ... THE PATH IS CLEAR

The responsibilities which, under your direction and in response to my plea, the American community is now assuming, over and above the task they have already undertaken in connection with the Divine Plan, proclaiming in unmistakable terms their unswerving determination to prove themselves worthy of the sublimity of their mission, and of their privileged position among their sister communities in both the East and the West,—the twofold task they have arisen to perform will, if carried out in time, release the potentialities with which the community of the Greatest Name has been so generously and mysteriously endowed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. To carry out in its entirety and to its final consummation this dual enterprise would shed on the closing years of this first century of the Bahá’í Era a luster no less brilliant than the immortal deeds which have signalized its birth, in the heroic age of our Faith. To the American believers, the spiritual descendants of the heroes of God’s Cause, I again address my plea to arise as one soul and to prosecute with unrelaxing resolve the high mission with which their immediate destiny is inextricably interwoven. The call has gone forth, the path is clear, the goal manifest and within their reach. Though their responsibilities be pressing and heavy and the obstacles formidable and manifold, yet the spirit of our invincible Faith will enable them to conquer if they arise unitedly and determinedly and persevere till the very end.

June 4, 1937

CONVENTION DELEGATES INCREASED

Election of hundred seventy-one delegates for this year's and future Conventions absolutely essential. Admitted expansion American community vitally demands it. Appeal delegates unable attend in person exercise conscientiously ballot right by mail. Increased participation by believers in Convention proceedings reinforces authority and broadens basis body national representatives and knits them closer to entire body electorate. Advise share message American believers.

Cablegram November 21, 1937

ALL SHOULD ARISE

As I lift up my gaze beyond the strains and stresses which a struggling Faith must necessarily experience, and view the wider scene which the indomitable will of the American Bahá'í community is steadily unfolding, I can not but marvel at the range which the driving force of their ceaseless labors has acquired and the heights which the sublimity of their faith has attained. The outposts of a Faith, already persecuted in both Europe and Asia, are in the American continent steadily advancing, the visible symbols of its undoubted sovereignty are receiving fresh luster every day and its manifold institutions are driving their roots deeper and deeper into its soil. Blest and honored as none among its sister communities has been in recent years, preserved through the inscrutable dispensations of Divine Providence for a destiny which no mind can as yet imagine, such a community cannot for a moment afford to be content with or rest on the laurels it has so deservedly won. It must go on, continually go on, exploring fresh fields, scaling nobler heights, laying firmer foundations, shedding added splendor and achieving added renown in the service and for the glory of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The seven year plan which it has sponsored and with which its destiny is so closely interwoven, must at all costs be prosecuted with increasing force and added consecration. All should arise and participate. Upon the measure of such a participation will no doubt depend the welfare and progress of those distant communities which are now battling for their emancipation. To such a priceless privilege the inheritors of the shining grace of Bahá'u'lláh cannot surely be indifferent. The American believers must gird up the loins of endeavor and step into the arena of service with such heroism as shall astound the entire Bahá'í world. Let them be assured that my prayers will continue to be offered on their behalf.

November 25, 1937

ARCHBREAKER OF COVENANT

The Hand of Omnipotence has removed the archbreaker of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, his hopes shattered, his plottings frustrated, the society of his fellow-conspirators extinguished. God's triumphant Faith forges on, its unity unimpaired, its purpose unsullied, its stability unshaken. Such a death calls for neither exultation nor recrimination, but evokes overwhelming pity at so tragic a downfall unparalleled in religious history.

Cablegram December 20, 1937

CERTAIN VITAL REQUIREMENTS OF SEVEN YEAR PLAN

The Seven Year Plan, with which the immediate fortunes of the American Bahá'í community are so closely interwoven, demands, at this critical stage in its development, serious and prayerful consideration of certain vital requirements, without which such a stupendous task can never be brought to a successful completion. The evolution of the Plan imposes a three-fold obligation, which all individual believers, all local Assemblies, as well as the National Assembly itself, must respectively recognize and conscientiously fulfil. Each and every believer, undaunted by the uncertainties, the perils and the financial stringency afflicting the nation, must arise and insure, to the full measure of his or her capacity, that continuous and abundant flow of funds into the national Treasury, on which the successful prosecution of the Plan must chiefly depend. Upon the local Assemblies, whose special function and high privilege is to facilitate the admission of new believers into the community, and thereby stimulate the infusion of fresh blood into its organic institutions, a duty no less binding in character devolves. To them I wish particularly to appeal, at this present hour, when the call of God is being raised throughout the length and breadth of both continents in the New World, to desist from insisting too rigidly on the minor observances and beliefs, which might prove a stumbling block in the way of any sincere applicant, whose eager desire is to enlist under the banner of Bahá'u'lláh. While conscientiously adhering to the fundamental qualifications already laid down, the members of each and every Assembly should endeavor, by their patience, their love, their tact and wisdom to nurse, subsequent to his admission, the new-comer into Bahá'í maturity, and win him over gradually to the unreserved acceptance of whatever has been ordained in the teachings. As to the National Assembly, whose inescapable responsibility is to guard the integrity, coordinate the activities, and stimulate the life, of the entire community, its chief concern at the present moment should be to anxiously deliberate on how best to enable both individual believers and local Assemblies to fulfil their respective tasks. Through their repeated appeals, through their readiness to dispel all misunderstandings and remove all obstacles, through the example of their lives, and their unrelaxing vigilance, their high sense of justice, their humility, consecration and courage, they must demonstrate to those whom they represent their capacity to play their part in the progress of the Plan in which they, no less than the rest of the community, are involved. May the all-conquering Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh be so infused into each component part of this harmoniously functioning System as to enable it to contribute its proper share to the consummation of the plan.

January 30, 1938

A YEAR HAS ALMOST ELAPSED

A year has almost elapsed since the Seven Year Plan has been launched with characteristic vigor and noble enthusiasm by the American Bahá'í Community. For no less than six consecutive years this two-fold and stupendous enterprise, which has been set in operation, must, if the American believers are to prove themselves worthy of their high calling, be wisely conducted, continually reinforced and energetically prosecuted to its very end. Severe and unprecedented as may be the internal tests and ordeals which the members of this Community may yet experience, however tragic and momentous the external happenings which might well disrupt the fabric of the society in which they live, they must not throughout these six remaining years, allow themselves to be deflected from the course they are now steadily pursuing. Nay, rather, as the impelling forces which have set in motion this mighty undertaking acquire added momentum and its potentialities are more fully manifested, they who are responsible for its success must as time goes on evince a more burning enthusiasm, demonstrate a higher sense of solidarity, reveal greater depths of consecration to their task, and display a more unyielding determination to achieve its purpose. Then, and only then, will the pleas, the hopes and wishes of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, eternally enshrined in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, be worthily acknowledged and fulfilled. "Let your exertions, henceforth, increase a thousandfold" is the earnest appeal voiced by Him in those Tablets. "Summon the people," He exhorts them, "in these countries, capitals, islands, assemblies and churches, to enter the Abhá Kingdom. The scope of your exertions must needs be extended. The wider its range the more striking will be the evidences of Divine assistance." "The moment," He solemnly affirms, "this Divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America and is propagated through the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa and of Australia ... this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion.... Then will the whole earth resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness." The Seven Year Plan, to which every American believer is fully and irrevocably pledged, during the closing years of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era, is in itself but an initial stage in the unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's vision of America's spiritual destiny—a destiny which only those who will have successfully accomplished this preliminary task can enable the rising generation who will labor after them to fulfil in the course of the succeeding century.

April 14, 1938

DRAW NIGH UNTO BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Message to 1938 Convention

On this auspicious occasion when number elected representatives American Bahá'í Community is well-nigh doubly reinforced moved convey on eve Thirtieth Convention to all delegates friends expression most loving welcome. Gathered within House of Worship which enterprise persevering loyalty self-abnegation American believers reared and adorned summoning their aid vitalizing influence prayers meditations which Author their Faith Himself revealed let them delegates visitors alike draw nigh unto Bahá'u'lláh that He may draw nigh unto them. Community American believers whose hearts have been stirred by tragic tale events immortalizing early history their Faith whose minds have been enriched by further measure fundamental Bahá'í Teachings whose hands have been fortified by fashioning instruments wherein embryonic World Order can mature must at so critical stage in fortunes declining civilization seek purge galvanize their souls through daily prayer meditation that can best sustain them in discharge task still initial stage development. As token my gratitude to such community entrusted beloved co-worker Mrs. Collins locks Bahá'u'lláh's most precious hair arranged preserved by loving hands Greatest Holy Leaf to rest beneath dome of Temple nobly raised by dearly beloved believers in American continent.

Cablegram April 27, 1938

MARCHING TOWARD THEIR GOAL

Pregnant indeed are the years looming ahead of us all. The twin processes of internal disintegration and external chaos are being accelerated and every day are inexorably moving towards a climax. The rumblings that must precede the eruption of those forces that must cause "the limbs of humanity to quake" can already be heard. "The time of the end," "the latter years," as foretold in the Scriptures, are at long last upon us. The Pen of Bahá'u'lláh, the voice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, have time and again, insistently and in terms unmistakable, warned an unheeding humanity of impending disaster. The Community of the Most Great Name, the leaven that must leaven the lump, the chosen remnant that must survive the rolling up of the old, discredited, tottering order, and assist in the unfoldment of a new one in its stead, is standing ready, alert, clear-visioned, and resolute. The American believers, standard-bearers of this world-wide community and torch-bearers of an as yet unborn civilization, have girt up their loins, unfurled their banners and stepped into the arena of service. Their Plan has been formulated. Their forces are mobilized. They are steadfastly marching towards their goal. The hosts of the Abhá Kingdom are rushing forth, as promised, to direct their steps and reinforce their power. Through their initial victories they have provided the impulse that must now surge and, with relentless force sweep over their sister-communities and eventually overpower the entire human race. The generality of mankind, blind and enslaved, is wholly unaware of the healing power with which this community has been endowed, nor can it as yet suspect the role which this same community is destined to play in its redemption. Fierce and manifold will be the assaults with which governments, races, classes and religions, jealous of its rising prestige and fearful of its consolidating strength, will seek to silence its voice and sap its foundations. Unmoved by the relative obscurity that surrounds it at the present time, and undaunted by the forces that will be arrayed against it in the future, this community, I cannot but feel confident, will, no matter how afflictive the agonies of a travailing age, pursue its destiny, undeflected in its course, undimmed in its serenity, unyielding in its resolve, unshaken in its convictions.

July 5, 1938

UNBROKEN SOLIDARITY, UNQUENCHABLE ENTHUSIASM

I feel truly exhilarated as I witness the ever-recurrent manifestations of unbroken solidarity and unquenchable enthusiasm that distinguish every stage in the progressive development of the nation-wide enterprise which is being so unflinchingly pursued by the whole American Bahá'í community. The marked deterioration in world affairs, the steadily deepening gloom that envelops the storm-tossed peoples and nations of the Old World, invest the Seven Year Plan, now operating in both the northern and southern American continents, with a significance and urgency that cannot be overestimated. Conceived as the supreme agency for the establishment, in the opening century of the Bahá'í Era, of what is but the initial stage in the progressive realization of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan for the American believers, this enterprise, as it extends its ramifications throughout the entire New World, is demonstrating its power to command all the resources and utilize all the facilities which the machinery of a laboriously evolved Administrative Order can place at its disposal. However we view its aspects, it offers in its functioning a sharp contrast to the workings of the moribund and obsolescent institutions to which a perverse generation is desperately clinging. Tempestuous are the winds that buffet and will, as the days go by, fiercely assail the very structure of the Order through the agency of which this twofold task is being performed. The potentialities with which an almighty Providence has endowed it will no doubt enable its promoters to achieve their purpose. Much, however, will depend upon the spirit and manner in which that task will be conducted. Through the clearness and steadiness of their vision, through the unvitiated vitality of their belief, through the incorruptibility of their character, through the adamant force of their resolve, the matchless superiority of their aims and purpose, and the unsurpassed range of their accomplishments, they who labor for the glory of the Most Great Name throughout both Americas can best demonstrate to the visionless, faithless and restless society to which they belong their power to proffer a haven of refuge to its members in the hour of their realized doom. Then and only then will this tender sapling, embedded in the fertile soil of a Divinely appointed Administrative Order, and energized by the dynamic processes of its institutions, yield its richest and destined fruit. That the community of the American believers, to whose keeping so vast, so delicate and precious a trust has been committed will, severally and collectively prove themselves worthy of their high calling, I for one, who in my association with them have been privileged to observe more closely than perhaps any one else the nature of their reactions to the momentous issues that have confronted them in the past, will refuse to doubt.

September 10, 1938

LOYALTY TO WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Loyalty to world order of Bahá'u'lláh, security of its basic institutions, both imperatively demand all its avowed supporters, particularly its champion builders of the American continent, in these days when sinister, uncontrollable forces are deepening the cleavage sundering peoples, nations, creeds, and classes, resolve despite pressure of fast crystallizing public opinion, abstain individually, collectively in word, action, informally as well as in all official utterances and publications from assigning blame, taking sides, however indirectly, in recurring political crises now agitating, ultimately engulfing human society. Grave apprehension lest cumulative effect of such compromises disintegrate fabric, clog channel of grace that sustains system of God's essentially supra-national, supernatural order so laboriously evolved, so recently established.

Cablegram September 24, 1938

NINE HOLY SOULS

Recent swift progress of Temple ornamentation prompts me entreat American Community to focus immediate attention and center energies upon corresponding acceleration in the Teaching enterprise formulated in Seven Year Plan. Final phase in construction of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár already entered. Initial stage in the inaugurated Teaching Campaign still untraversed. End of First Century rapidly approaching. Alaska, Delaware, Nevada, South Carolina, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Manitoba and Nova Scotia still unsettled. Universal, prolonged intensification in pioneer activity is the crying need of this fateful hour. The establishment of one resident believer in each virgin territory is the precondition to the full launching of the subsequent, eagerly-anticipated stage aiming at the spiritual conquest of the Southern Half of the Western Hemisphere. The Concourse on high expectantly await, ready to assist and acclaim the nine holy souls who, independently or as deputies, will promptly, fearlessly volunteer to forsake their homes, cast away their attachments and definitely settle in these territories to lay firm anchorage of the Administrative Order of this undefeatable Faith. I am irresistibly urged and proud of the privilege to pledge nine hundred pounds to facilitate the permanent settlement of pioneers in these States and Provinces whose acts and heroic self-abnegation will mark the conclusion of this shining Epoch in American Bahá'í history.

Cablegram January 26, 1939

THE RAREST PRIVILEGE EVER CONFERRED BY PROVIDENCE UPON THE AMERICAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

Very soon we shall be entering the second half of the last decade of this, the first century of the Bahá'í Era. The five remaining years should essentially be consecrated to the imperative, the spiritual needs of the remaining Republics of both Central and South America, for whose entry into the fellowship of Bahá'u'lláh the Plan was primarily formulated. The prime requisite for the definite opening of what may come to be regarded as one of the most brilliant chapters in American Bahá'í history, is the completion of the initial task which American Bahá'í pioneers must perform in the nine remaining States and Provinces as yet unassociated with the organic structure of the Faith.

The period ahead is short, strenuous, fraught with mortal perils for human society, yet pregnant with possibilities of unsurpassed triumphs for the power of Bahá'u'lláh's redemptive Cause. The occasion is propitious for a display, by the American Bahá'í Community, in its corporate capacity, of an effort which in its magnitude, character, and purpose must outshine its past endeavors. Failure to exploit these present, these golden opportunities would blast the hopes which the prosecution of the Plan has thus far aroused, and would signify the loss of the rarest privilege ever conferred by Providence upon the American Bahá'í Community. It is in view of the criticalness of the situation that I was led to place at the disposal of any pioneer willing to dedicate himself to the task of the present hour such modest resources as would facilitate the discharge of so enviable a duty.

The Bahá'í World, increasingly subjected to the rigors of suppression, in both the East and the West, watches with unconcealed astonishment, and derives hope and comfort from the rapid unfoldment of the successive stages of God's Plan for so blest a community. Its eyes are fixed upon this community, eager to behold the manner in which its gallant members will break down, one after another, the barriers that obstruct their progress towards a divinely-appointed goal. On every daring adventurer in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh the Concourse on high shall descend, "each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light." Every one of these adventurers God Himself will sustain and inspire, and will "cause the pure waters of wisdom and utterance to gush out and flow copiously from his heart." "The Kingdom of God," writes 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "is possessed of limitless potency. Audacious must be the army of life if the confirming aid of that Kingdom is to be repeatedly vouchsafed unto it.... Vast is the arena, and the time ripe to spur on the charger within it. Now is the time to reveal the force of one's strength, the stoutness of one's heart and the might of one's soul."

Dearly-beloved friends! What better field than the vast virgin territories, so near at hand, and waiting to receive, at this very hour, their full share of the onrushing tide of Bahá'u'lláh's redeeming grace? What theatre more befitting than these long-neglected nine remaining states and provinces in which the true heroism of the intrepid pioneers of His World Order can be displayed? There is no time to lose. There is no room left for vacillation. Multitudes hunger for the Bread of Life. The stage is set. The firm and irrevocable Promise is given. God's own Plan has been set in motion. It is gathering momentum with every passing day. The powers of heaven and earth mysteriously assist in its execution. Such an opportunity is

irreplaceable. Let the doubter arise and himself verify the truth of such assertions. To try, to persevere, is to insure ultimate and complete victory.

January 28, 1939

GOD'S CREATIVE PLAN

The task regarded as an essential preliminary to the crusade destined to embrace the whole of Latin America is now in full swing and is being rapidly carried out. A further step, designed to hasten the conclusion of the final phase of the ornamentation of the Temple, has also been taken. As the days roll by, as the perturbations of an imperiled civilization are more alarmingly manifested, the potentialities of God's creative Plan correspondingly unfold, and the valor and heroism of its intrepid supporters are more widely and convincingly demonstrated. With every successful effort to muster its young and scattered forces, to perfect its methods, to extend the range of its operations, to deepen its spiritual life and to scale loftier heights of individual heroism, there will, I cannot but feel confident, be granted to this community a greater opportunity to prove its worth, and a fuller measure of celestial strength to enable it to reenact, on the soil of the United States and Canada and throughout the entire Western Hemisphere, those stirring exploits that have shed such lustre on the apostolic age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Though much has thus far been achieved, yet the processes now set in motion through the evolution of the Plan are still far too rudimentary to permit even a faint glimpse of the brilliancy of the epoch in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own Plan must come to fruition. Not ours to attempt, at the present moment, a survey of the distant scene, or to seek to visualize its glories, or to dwell on the consequences of the eventual attainment of an as yet far-off goal. Ours is the solemn, the inescapable duty to labor faithfully and unremittingly to insure that no opportunity is being missed, that no avenues are left unexplored, that might, however indirectly, contribute to the furtherance of those tasks that claim so insistently our immediate attention. That those into whose hands this dynamic Plan has been entrusted are aware of the essential character of their obligations and will discharge worthily their duties, no one, viewing the range and quality of their achievements, can entertain the slightest doubt.

February 8, 1939

APPROACH OF FINAL ERUPTION

Fresh, ominous rumblings demonstrate the inevitability and foreshadow the approach of the final eruption involving the dissolution of a lamentably defective international order. The privileged community of American believers forewarned, undismayed, spiritually equipped. Notwithstanding the gravity of the times, they will pursue unswervingly the divinely-chartered course, their attention undistracted, their objective unobscured, their resolve unimpaired, their support undiminished, their loyalty unsullied. The immediate obligation is to complete settlement of Delaware, Utah, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia before termination of Bahá'í administrative year. Responsibility solemn, pressing, unavoidable.

Cablegram March 24, 1939

GRATITUDE TO PIONEERS

Assure each pioneer immeasurable gratitude. Such vigorous response at such perilous times to so vital a call opens brilliant epoch in Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. I am impelled to congratulate the Assembly for its wise, efficient trusteeship.

Cablegram April 1, 1939

MY PLEA, MY SUPREME ENTREATY

I have in two recent, successive messages, cabled to your Assembly, giving expression, as far as it lay in my power, to the feelings of overpowering gratitude which the response of so many pioneers to the call of teaching has evoked in my heart. I have moreover felt impelled to convey my congratulations to the members of your Assembly who, through their resource, unity and singlemindedness, have lent so needed and timely an impetus to the mighty work associated with the second year of the Seven Year Plan. There can be no doubt whatever that what the American believers, no less than their elected National representatives, have accomplished, the long and assiduous care of the former and the potent methods employed by the latter, have witnessed to the uprising of a new spirit on which the defamers of the Cause may well pause to reflect, and from which its lovers cannot but derive deep joy and solace. I again wish to thank with all my soul those whose acts have stirred the imagination of friend and foe alike.

In my desire not to omit anything that might help to spur on or reinforce the community of the American believers as they move on to their destiny, I feel it necessary to add a word of warning in connection with the work that has been so splendidly begun lest it should be jeopardized or frustrated. The initial phase of the teaching work operating under the Seven Year Plan has at long last been concluded. They who have pushed it forward have withstood the test gloriously. By their acts, whether as teachers or administrators, they have written a glorious page in the struggle for the laying of a continent-wide foundation for the Administrative Order of their Faith. At this advanced stage in the fulfilment of the purpose to which they have set their hand there can be no turning back, no halting, no respite. To launch the bark of the Faith, to implant its banner, is not enough. Support, ample, organized and unremitting, should be lent, designed to direct the course of that work and to lay an unassailable foundation for the fort destined to stand guard over that banner.

The National Spiritual Assembly, the National Teaching Committee, the Regional and local teaching committees, no less than the itinerant teachers, should utilize every possible means calculated to fan the zeal, enrich the resources and insure the solidity and permanency of the work, of those who, actuated by so laudable and shining a spirit of self-sacrifice, have arisen to face the hazards and perils of so holy and historic an adventure. Indeed every believer, however humble and inexperienced, should sense the obligation to play his or her part in a mission that involves so very deeply the destinies not only of the American Bahá'í community but of the nation itself.

Whether through the frequency of their visits, the warmth of their correspondence, the liberality of their support, the wisdom of their counsels, the choice of the literature placed at the disposal of the pioneers, the members of the community should, at this hour when the sands of a moribund civilization are inexorably running out, and at a time when they are preparing themselves to launch yet another stage in their teaching activities, insure the security and provide for the steady expansion, of the work initiated in those territories so recently set alight from the torch of an inextinguishable Faith.

This is my plea, my supreme entreaty.

April 17, 1939

PENETRATION OF LATIN AMERICA

Message to 1939 Convention

Brilliant conclusion of second year in Seven Year Plan evokes universal admiration of the Bahá'í world, deepens its spiritual consciousness and mitigates the hardships of its increasingly harassed communities. Closing phase of Temple ornamentation already entered. Initial stage of Intercontinental Teaching Campaign successfully terminated. Firm anchorage of the institutions of the Administrative Order permanently established in every State and Province of North American continent. Mexico, lying in the forefront of the southward marching army, recently enlisted. Pedro Espinosa's auspicious attendance at the Convention is welcome evidence. Settlement of the Central American republics is next step in progressive, systematic penetration of Latin America. Upsurge of Bahá'u'lláh's impelling Spirit can not, will not, be stemmed nor impeded. Methodical advance along the line traced by pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá irresistible. Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Cuba, Dominica and Haiti immediate objectives. Though politically unsettled, religiously intolerant, socially backward and climatically inhospitable, these unexplored territories hold forth inestimable prizes for audacious adventures in the path of Bahá'í service. Dearly-beloved Martha's unrivaled experience, indomitable faith and indefatigable labors will soon reinforce powers released for contemplated campaign. Task admittedly laborious, hour laden with fate, privilege incomparable, precious divinely-promised aid unfailing, reward predestined immeasurable. Appeal to all believers, white and Negro alike, to arise and assume rightful responsibilities. Urge prolongation of sessions of Convention to enable delegates to exercise their inalienable right to deliberate and formulate recommendations designed to aid incoming National Assembly resolutely to prosecute this momentous enterprise. Fervor of prayers intensified.

Cablegram April 28, 1939

PROVE THEMSELVES ... WORTHY OF THAT PRICELESS HERITAGE

The concerted activities of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the North American continent assume, as they multiply and develop, a dual aspect, and may be said to fall into two distinct categories, both equally vital and complementary to each other. The one aims at the safeguarding and consolidation of the work already achieved; the other is designed to enlarge the range of its operation. The former depends chiefly for its success upon the capacity, the experience and loyalty of wise, resourceful and judicious administrators, who, impelled by the very nature of their task, will be increasingly called upon to exercise the utmost care and vigilance in protecting the interests of the Faith, in resolving its problems, in regulating its life, in enriching its resources, and in preserving the pristine purity of its precepts. The latter is essentially pioneer in nature, demanding first and foremost those qualities of renunciation, tenacity, dauntlessness and passionate fervor that can alone brave the dangers and sweep away the obstacles with which an infant Faith, struggling against vested interests and face to face with the entrenched forces of prejudice, of ignorance and fanaticism, must needs contend. In both of these spheres of Bahá'í activity the community of the American believers, it is becoming increasingly evident, is evincing those characteristics which must be regarded as the essential foundation for the success of their dual task.

As to those whose function is essentially of an administrative character it can hardly be doubted that they are steadily and indefatigably perfecting the structural machinery of their Faith, are multiplying its administrative agencies, and are legalizing the status of the newly established institutions. Slowly and patiently they are canalizing the spirit that at once directs, energizes and safeguards its operation. They are exploiting its potentialities, broadcasting its message, publicizing its literature, fostering the aspirations of its youth, devising ways and means for the training of its children, guarding the integrity of its teachings, and paving the way for the ultimate codification of its laws. Through all the resources at their disposal, they are promoting the growth and consolidation of that pioneer movement for which the entire machinery of their Administrative Order has been primarily designed and erected. They are visibly and progressively contributing to the enrichment of their unique community life, and are insuring, with magnificent courage and characteristic promptitude, the completion of their consecrated Edifice—the embodiment of their hopes and the supreme symbol of their ideals.

As to those into whose valiant and trusted hands—and no believer, however humble is to think himself debarred from joining their ranks—the standards of a forward marching Faith have been entrusted, they too with no less zest and thoroughness are pushing farther and farther its frontiers, breaking new soil, establishing fresh outposts, winning more recruits, and contributing to the greater diversification and more harmonious blending of the elements comprised in the world-wide society of its followers.

The Edifice of this New World Order, which the Báb has heralded, which the mind of Bahá'u'lláh has envisioned, and whose features 'Abdu'l-Bahá, its Architect, has delineated, we, whatever our capacities, opportunities or position, are now, at so precarious a period in the world's history, summoned to found and erect. The community of the Most Great Name in the Western Hemisphere is, through the nature of its corporate life and the scope of its exertions, assuming, beyond the shadow of a doubt, a preponderating share in the laying of

such a foundation and the erection of such a structure. The eyes of its sister communities are fixed upon it. Their prayers ascend on its behalf. Their hands are outstretched to lend whatever aid lies within their power. I, for my part, am determined to reinforce the impulse that impels its members forward to meet their destiny. The Founders of their Faith survey from the Kingdom on high the range of their achievements, acclaim their progress, and are ever ready to speed their eventual triumph.

Far be it from me to underrate the gigantic proportions of their task, nor do I for one moment overlook the urgency and gravity of the times in which they are laboring. Nor do I wish to minimize the hazards and trials that surround or lie ahead of them. The grandeur of their task is indeed commensurate with the mortal perils by which their generation is hemmed in. As the dusk creeps over a steadily sinking society the radiant outlines of their redemptive mission become sharper every day. The present world unrest, symptom of a world-wide malady, their world religion has already affirmed must needs culminate in that world catastrophe out of which the consciousness of world citizenship will be born, a consciousness that can alone provide an adequate basis for the organization of world unity, on which a lasting world peace must necessarily depend, the peace itself inaugurating in turn that world civilization which will mark the coming of age of the entire human race.

Fortified by such reflections, the American believers, in whichever section of the Western Hemisphere they find themselves laboring, whether at home or abroad, and however dire and distressing the processes involved in the disintegration of the structure of present-day civilization, will, I feel convinced, prove themselves, through their lives and deeds, worthy of that priceless heritage which it is their undoubted privilege to proclaim, preserve and perpetuate.

May 22, 1939

OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF WORLD MISSION

Newly-launched Central American campaign marks official inauguration of long-deferred World Mission constituting 'Abdu'l-Bahá's distinctive legacy to the Bahá'í Community of North America. Chosen Community broadening its basis, gaining in stature, deepening in consecration. Its vanguard now entering arena monopolized by entrenched forces of Christendom's mightiest ecclesiastical institutions. Laboring amidst race foreign in language, custom, temperament embracing vast proportion of New World's ethnic elements. American believers' isolated oversea teaching enterprises hitherto tentative, intermittent, now at end. New epoch opening, demanding exertions incomparably more strenuous, unflinchingly sustained, centrally directed, systematically organized, efficiently conducted. Upon alacrity, tenacity, fearlessness of present prosecutors of the unfolding mission depend speedy and fullest revelation, in the First and Second Centuries, of the potentialities of the birthright conferred upon American believers. Convey to pioneers in North, Middle and South America my eagerness to maintain with each direct, personal contact. Assure Teaching and Inter-America Committees my delight at successive testimonies of believers' glowing spirit reflected in Minutes, letters and reports recently received. Entreat every section of community to labor unremittingly until every nation in Western Hemisphere is illumined by rays and woven into fabric of Bahá'u'lláh's triumphant Administrative Order.

Cablegram May 28, 1939

FULFIL THE REQUIREMENTS

The readiness of your Assembly, as expressed in your recently cabled message, to transfer the National Bahá'í Secretariat to the vicinity of the Temple in Wilmette has evoked within me the deepest feelings of thankfulness and joy. Your historic decision, so wise and timely, so surprising in its suddenness, so far-reaching in its consequences, is one that I cannot but heartily and unreservedly applaud. To each one of your brethren in the Faith, throughout the United States and Canada, who are witnessing, from day to day and at an ever-hastening speed, the approaching completion of their National House of Worship, the great Mother Temple of the West, your resolution to establish within its hallowed precincts and in the heart of the North American continent the Administrative Seat of their beloved Faith cannot but denote henceforward a closer association, a more constant communion, and a higher degree of coordination between the two primary agencies providentially ordained for the enrichment of their spiritual life and for the conduct and regulation of their administrative affairs. To the far-flung Bahá'í communities of East and West, most of which are being increasingly proscribed and ill-treated, and none of which can claim to have had a share of the dual blessings which a specially designed and constructed House of Worship and a fully and efficiently functioning Administrative Order invariably confer, the concentration in a single locality of what will come to be regarded as the fountain-head of the community's spiritual life and what is already recognized as the mainspring of the administrative activities, signalizes the launching of yet another phase in the slow and imperceptible emergence, in these declining times, of the model Bahá'í community—a community divinely ordained, organically united, clear-visioned, vibrant with life, and whose very purpose is regulated by the twin directing principles of the worship of God and of service to one's fellow-men.

The decision you have arrived at is an act that befittingly marks the commencement of your allotted term of stewardship in service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Moreover, it significantly coincides with the inauguration of that world mission of which the settlement of Bahá'í pioneers in the virgin territories of the North American continent has been but a prelude. That such a decision may speedily and without the slightest hitch be carried into effect is the deepest longing of my heart. That those who have boldly carried so weighty a resolution may without pause or respite continue to labor and build up, as circumstances permit, around this administrative nucleus such accessories as the machinery of a fast evolving administrative order, functioning under the shadow of, and in such close proximity to, the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, must demand, is the object of my incessant and fervent prayer. That such a step, momentous as it is, may prove the starting point for acts of still greater renown and richer possibilities that will leave their distinct mark on the third year of the Seven Year Plan is a hope which I, together with all those who are eagerly following its progress, fondly and confidently cherish.

The American believers, while straining to accomplish befittingly this particular task, must simultaneously brace themselves for another sublime effort to discharge, ere the present year draws to a close, their manifold responsibilities allotted to them under the Seven Year Plan. The placing of yet another contract for the casting of the ornamentation of the First Story of the Temple, the permanent settlement of the six remaining Republics of Central America, and the extension of continual support both material and moral, to those weaker States, Provinces and Republics that have been recently incorporated in the body of the Faith, combine to offer, at this hour when the fate of civilization trembles in the balance, the boldest and gravest

challenge that has ever faced the community of the American believers both in the propagative and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity. In the field of pioneer teaching, and particularly in connection with the opening of the Republics of Haiti, Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Dominica and Guatemala, the utmost encouragement should at all times be vouchsafed by the elected representatives of the community to those who, out of the abundance of their hearts, and in direct response to the call of their Faith and the dictates of their conscience, have renounced their comforts, fled their homes, and hazarded their fortunes for the sake of bringing into operation the majestic Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, while special support should be extended to those who appear to be best qualified for the strenuous labors which pioneering under such exacting circumstances demands. Care should be exercised lest any hindrance, should, for any reason, be placed in the way of those who have, whether young or old, rich or poor, so spontaneously dedicated themselves to so urgent and holy a mission.

Towards this newly-appointed enterprise a more definite reorientation is needed. To its purposes a more complete dedication is demanded. In its fortunes a more widespread concern is required. For its further consolidation and speedy fulfilment a larger number and a greater variety of participants are indispensable. For its success a more abundant flow of material resources should be assured.

Let the privileged few, the ambassadors of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, bear in mind His words as they go forth on their errands of service to His Cause. "It behoveth whosoever willeth to journey for the sake of God, and whose intention is to proclaim His Word and quicken the dead, to bathe himself with the waters of detachment, and to adorn his temple with the ornaments of resignation and submission. Let trust in God be his shield, and reliance on God his provision, and the fear of God his raiment. Let patience be his helper, and praiseworthy conduct his succorer, and goodly deeds his army. Then will the concourse on high sustain him. Then will the denizens of the Kingdom of Names march forth with him, and the banners of Divine guidance and inspiration be unfurled on his right hand and before him."

Faced with such a challenge, a community that has scaled thus far such peaks of enduring achievements can neither falter nor recoil. Confident in its destiny, reliant on its God-given power, fortified by the consciousness of its past victories, galvanized into action at the sight of a slowly disrupting civilization, it will—I can have no doubt—continue to fulfil unflinchingly the immediate requirements of its task, assured that with every step it takes and with each stage it traverses, a fresh revelation of Divine light and strength will guide and propel it forward until it consummates, in the fulness of time and in the plenitude of its power, the Plan inseparably bound up with its shining destiny.

July 4, 1939

THE MOST FATEFUL HOUR

A triple call, clear-voiced, insistent and inescapable, summons to the challenge all members of the American Bahá'í community, at this, the most fateful hour in their history. The first is the voice, distant and piteous, of those sister communities which now, alas, are fettered by the falling chains of religious orthodoxy and isolated through the cruel barriers set up by a rampant nationalism. The second is the plea, no less vehement and equally urgent, of those peoples and nations of the New World, whose vast and unexplored territories await to be warmed by the light and swept into the orbit of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The third, more universal and stirring than either of the others, is the call of humanity itself crying out for deliverance at a time when the tide of mounting evils has destroyed its equilibrium and is now strangling its very life.

These imperative calls of Bahá'í duty the American believers can immediately if only partially answer. Their present status, their circumscribed resources, debar them, however great their eagerness, from responding completely and decisively to the full implications of this threefold obligation. They can, neither individually nor through their concerted efforts, impose directly their will upon those into whose hands the immediate destinies of their persecuted brethren are placed. Nor are they as yet capable of launching a campaign of such magnitude as could capture the imagination and arouse the conscience of mankind, and thereby insure the immediate and full redress of those grievances from which their helpless coreligionists in both the East and the West are suffering. They cannot moreover hope to wield at the present time in the councils of nations an influence commensurate with the stupendous claims advanced, or adequate to the greatness of the Cause proclaimed, by the Author of their Faith. Nor can they assume a position or exercise such responsibilities as would enable them by their acts and decisions to reverse the process which is urging so tragically the decline of human society and its institutions.

And yet, though their influence be at the present hour indecisive and their divinely-conferred authority unrecognized, the role they can play in both alleviating the hardships that afflict their brethren and in attenuating the ills that torment mankind is none the less considerable and far-reaching. By the range and liberality of their contributions to mitigate the distress of the bereaved, the exiled and the imprisoned; by the persistent, the wise and judicious intervention of their elected representatives through the authorities concerned; by a clear and convincing exposition, whenever circumstances are propitious, of the issues involved; by a vigorous defence of the rights and liberties denied; by an accurate and dignified presentation of the events that have transpired; by every manner of encouragement which their sympathies may suggest, or their means permit, or their consciences dictate, to succor the outcast and the impoverished; and above all by their tenacious adherence to, and wide proclamation of, those principles, laws, ideals, and institutions which their disabled fellow-believers are unable to affirm or publicly espouse; and lastly, by the energetic prosecution of those tasks which their oppressed fellow-workers are forbidden to initiate or conduct, the privileged community of the American Bahá'ís can play a conspicuous part in the great drama involving so large a company of their unemancipated brethren in the Asiatic, European and African continents.

Their duties towards mankind in general are no less distinct and vital. Their impotence to stem the tide of onrushing calamities, their seeming helplessness in face of those cataclysmic forces that are to convulse human society, do not in the least detract from the urgency of their

unique mission, nor exonerate them from those weighty responsibilities which they alone can and must assume. Humanity, heedless and impenitent, is admittedly hovering on the edge of an awful abyss, ready to precipitate itself into that titanic struggle, that crucible whose chastening fires alone can and will weld its antagonistic elements of race, class, religion and nation into one coherent system, one world commonwealth. "The hour is approaching" is Bahá'u'lláh's own testimony, "when the most great convulsion will have appeared... I swear by God! The promised day is come, the day when tormenting trials will have surged above your heads, and beneath your feet, saying: 'Taste ye, what your hands have wrought.'" Not ours to question the almighty wisdom or fathom the inscrutable ways of Him in whose hands the ultimate destiny of an unregenerate yet potentially glorious race must lie. Ours rather is the duty to believe that the world-wide community of the Most Great Name, and in particular, at the present time its vanguard in North America, however buffeted by the powerful currents of these troublous times, and however keen their awareness of the inevitability of the final eruption, can, if they will, rise to the level of their calling and discharge their functions, both in the period which is witnessing the confusion and breakdown of human institutions, and in the ensuing epoch during which the shattered basis of a dismembered society is to be recast, and its forces reshaped, re-directed and unified. With the age that is still unborn, with its herculean tasks and unsuspected glories, we need not concern ourselves at present. It is to the fierce struggle, the imperious duties, the distinctive contributions which the present generation of Bahá'ís are summoned to undertake and render that I feel we should, at this hour, direct our immediate and anxious attention. Though powerless to avert the impending contest the followers of Bahá'u'lláh can, by the spirit they evince and the efforts they exert help to circumscribe its range, shorten its duration, allay its hardships, proclaim its salutary consequences, and demonstrate its necessary and vital role in the shaping of human destiny. Theirs is the duty to hold, aloft and undimmed, the torch of Divine guidance, as the shades of night descend upon, and ultimately envelop the entire human race. Theirs is the function, amidst its tumults, perils and agonies, to witness to the vision, and proclaim the approach, of that re-created society, that Christ-promised Kingdom, that World Order whose generative impulse is the spirit of none other than Bahá'u'lláh Himself, whose dominion is the entire planet, whose watchword is unity, whose animating power is the force of Justice, whose directive purpose is the reign of righteousness and truth, and whose supreme glory is the complete, the undisturbed and everlasting felicity of the whole of human kind. By the sublimity and serenity of their faith, by the steadiness and clarity of their vision, the incorruptibility of their character, the rigor of their discipline, the sanctity of their morals, and the unique example of their community life, they can and indeed must in a world polluted with its incurable corruptions, paralyzed by its haunting fears, torn by its devastating hatreds, and languishing under the weight of its appalling miseries demonstrate the validity of their claim to be regarded as the sole repository of that grace upon whose operation must depend the complete deliverance, the fundamental reorganization and the supreme felicity of all mankind.

Though the obstacles confronting the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the American continent in their efforts to completely emancipate their fellow-Bahá'ís on the one hand, and to speedily rehabilitate the fortunes of their fellow-men on the other, be in the main unsurmountable, such impediments cannot as yet be said to exist that can frustrate their efforts to fully discharge the second duty now incumbent upon them in the inter-continental sphere of Bahá'í teaching. The field, in all its vastness and fertility, is wide open and near at hand. The harvest is ripe. The hour is over-due. The signal has been given. The spiritual forces, mysteriously released, are already operating with increasing momentum, unchallenged and unchecked. Victory, speedy and unquestioned, is assured to whosoever will arise and respond to this second, this urgent and vital call. In this field, as in no other, the American believers can most

easily evince the full force of their latent energies, can exercise in their plentitude their conspicuous talents, and can rise to the highest level of their God-given opportunities.

Fired by their zeal, their love for and faith in Bahá'u'lláh; armed with that Holy Charter, wherein 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mandate investing them with their world mission is inscribed; piloted through the instrumentality of those agencies which a divine, a smoothly functioning Administrative Order has providentially placed at their disposal; disciplined and invigorated by those immutable verities, spiritual principles and administrative regulations that distinguish their religious beliefs, govern their individual conduct and regulate their community life; aspiring to emulate the example of those heroes and martyrs, the narrative of whose exploits they have admired and pondered, it behooves all members of the American Bahá'í community to gird themselves as never before to the task of befittingly playing their part in the enactment of the opening scene of the First Act of that superb Drama whose theme is no less than the spiritual conquest of both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. Their immediate task, under the Seven Year Plan, the object of which is the establishment of a minimum of one Bahá'í center in each of the Republics of Middle and South America, has now been gloriously ushered in through the settlement of one pioneer in most of the Central American Republics, and bids fair to be recognized by posterity as the original impulse imparted to an enterprise that will go round the world. That impulse must, as time goes by, communicate itself to the farthest extremities of Latin America, and must be reinforced in every manner, by as many of the American believers as possible. The broader the basis of this campaign, the deeper its roots, the finer the flower into which it shall eventually blossom. That its call may be heeded, that its implications may be recognized and its potentialities progressively unfold, is my earnest prayer, and the supreme longing of my heart.

July 28, 1939

IMPERILLED HUMANITY

Shades of night descending on imperilled humanity are inexorably deepening. American believers, heirs of Bahá'u'lláh's covenant, prosecutors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan, are confronted by supreme opportunity to vindicate indestructibility of their faith, inflexibility their resolution, their incorruptibility, sanctity for appointed task. Anxiously, passionately entreat them, whatever obstacles the march of tragic events may create, however distressing barriers predicted calamities raise between them and sister communities and possibly Faith's World Center, to unwaveringly hold aloft torch whose infant light heralds the birth of the effulgent World Order destined to supplant disrupting civilization.

Cablegram August 30, 1939

IN GALAXY OF BAHÁ'Í IMMORTALS

Martha's unnumbered admirers throughout Bahá'í world lament with me the earthly extinction of her heroic life. Concourse on high acclaim her elevation to rightful position in galaxy of Bahá'í immortals. Posterity will establish her as foremost Hand which 'Abdu'l-Bahá's will has raised up in first Bahá'í century. Present generation of her fellow-believers recognize her to be the first, finest fruit which the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has as yet produced. Advise hold befitting memorial gathering in Temple to honor one whose acts shed imperishable lustre on American Bahá'í community. Impelled share with National Assembly expenses of erection of monument in symbolic spot,* the meeting-place of East and West, to both of which she unsparingly dedicated the full force of her mighty energies.

Cablegram October 3, 1939

*Honolulu

MANDATE CONFERRED BY 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

Weighty resolutions of San Francisco meeting call forth emotions too deep for expression. Fondest hopes excelled. Indomitable courage and overflowing energy of the firmly-welded, providentially-directed American Bahá'í community impelling them outstrip pace and surpass the limits of the theatre of action assigned to the third year of the Seven Year Plan. Welcome particularly recent action designed expedite termination of Divinely-founded Temple ordained to be the Ark destined to ride triumphant the tidal wave of world-encircling calamities and offering sole refuge to storm-tossed sufferers of sinful, steadily sinking civilization. Kindly renew to every established and intending pioneer in enumerated Republics and dependencies my ardent plea to resolve to refuse, despite the deepening world confusion, to abandon their posts and surrender the responsibilities solemnly assumed under the Mandate conferred by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Cablegram October 23, 1939

THE SPIRITUAL POTENCIES OF THAT CONSECRATED SPOT

The transfer of the sacred remains of the brother and mother of our Lord and Master ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to Mount Carmel and their final interment within the hallowed precincts of the Shrine of the Báb, and in the immediate neighborhood of the resting place of the Greatest Holy Leaf, constitute, apart from their historic associations and the tender sentiments they arouse, events of such capital institutional significance as only future happenings, steadily and mysteriously unfolding at the world center of our Faith, can adequately demonstrate.

The circumstances attending the consummation of this long, this profoundly cherished hope were no less significant. The swiftness and suddenness with which so delicate and weighty an undertaking was conducted; the surmounting of various obstacles which the outbreak of war and its inevitable repercussions necessarily engendered; the success of the long-drawn out negotiations which the solution of certain preliminary problems imposed; the execution of the plan in the face of the continued instability and persistent dangers following the fierce riots that so long and so violently rocked the Holy Land, and despite the smoldering fire of animosity kindled in the breasts of ecclesiastics and Covenant-breakers alike—all combined to demonstrate, afresh and with compelling power, the invincible might of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.

The Purest Branch, the martyred son, the companion, and amanuensis of Bahá’u’lláh, that pious and holy youth, who in the darkest days of Bahá’u’lláh’s incarceration in the barracks of Akká entreated, on his death-bed, his Father to accept him as a ransom for those of His loved ones who yearned for, but were unable to attain, His presence, and the saintly mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, surnamed Navváb by Bahá’u’lláh, and the first recipient of the honored and familiar title of “the Most Exalted Leaf,” separated in death above half a century, and forced to suffer the humiliation of an alien burial-ground, are now at long last reunited with the Greatest Holy Leaf with whom they had so abundantly shared the tribulations of one of the most distressing episodes of the Heroic Age of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh. Avenged, eternally safeguarded, befittingly glorified, they repose embosomed in the heart of Carmel, hidden beneath its sacred soil, interred in one single spot, lying beneath the shadow of the twin holy Tombs, and facing across the bay, on an eminence of unequalled loveliness and beauty, the silver-city of Akká, the Point of Adoration of the entire Bahá’í world, and the Door of Hope for all mankind. “Haste thee, O Carmel!” thus proclaims the Pen of Bahá’u’lláh, “for lo, the light of the countenance of God, the Ruler of the Kingdom of Names and Fashioner of the heavens, hath been lifted upon thee.” “Rejoice, for God hath in this Day established upon thee His throne, hath made thee the dawning-place of His signs and the day-spring of the evidences of His Revelation.”

The machinations of Badí’u’lláh—the brother and lieutenant of the Focal Center of sedition and Arch-Breaker of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh, the deceased Muḥammad-‘Alí—who with uncommon temerity and exceptional vigor addressed his written protest to the civil authorities, claiming the right to oppose the projected transfer of the remains of the mother and brother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, have been utterly frustrated. So foolish a claim, advanced by one who in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has been denounced as an “alert and active worker of mischief,” and whose life has been marked by so many instances of

extravagance, of betrayal and folly, has been summarily rejected by the fairness and justice of the civil authorities, in whose custody the notorious Sadhíj, the daughter of that same Badí'u'lláh, is still retained, as a direct result of her ceaseless instigations to rebellion and terrorism, and whose acts constitute a clear and double violation of the civil law of the land and of the spiritual ordinances of Bahá'u'lláh, in Whose Faith she professes to believe.

Unabashed by his appalling mistakes and blunders; undeterred by the galling failure of his persistent efforts, in conjunction with his brother, to establish, in the days following the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, their alleged right to the custody of the Most Holy Tomb; unrestrained by the memory of the abortive attempt of Muḥammad-'Alí to retain the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh as a private residence for himself and his family; unchastened by the spiritual and material misery into which he and his kindred have sunk; and impotent to perceive the contrast between that misery and the consolidating strength and ever-enhancing prestige of the institutions heralding the birth of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh at its international center, he has, with characteristic insolence, dared to raise once again his voice against the resistless march of events that are steadily accelerating the expansion and establishment of the Faith in the Holy Land.

For it must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasized, that the conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which, under the wings of the Báb's overshadowing Sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal center of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and which are to function in consonance with the principles that govern the twin institutions of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. Then, and then only, will this momentous prophecy which illuminates the concluding passages of the Tablet of Carmel be fulfilled: "Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee (Carmel), and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names."

To attempt to visualize, even in its barest outline, the glory that must envelop these institutions, to essay even a tentative and partial description of their character or the manner of their operation, or to trace however inadequately the course of events leading to their rise and eventual establishment is far beyond my own capacity and power. Suffice it to say that at this troubled stage in world history the association of these three incomparably precious souls who, next to the three Central Figures of our Faith, tower in rank above the vast multitude of the heroes, Letters, martyrs, hands, teachers and administrators of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, in such a potentially powerful spiritual and administrative Center, is in itself an event which will release forces that are bound to hasten the emergence in a land which, geographically, spiritually and administratively, constitutes the heart of the entire planet, of some of the brightest gems of that World Order now shaping in the womb of this travailing age.

For such as might undertake, in the days to come, the meritorious and highly enviable pilgrimage to these blessed shrines, as well as for the benefit of the less privileged who, aware of the greatness of their virtue and the pre-eminence of their lineage, desire to commune with their spirits, and to strive to acquire an added insight into the glory of their position, and to follow in their footsteps, let these testimonies written by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá be their inspiration and guidance in their noble quest:

“At this very moment,” Bahá’u’lláh testifies, “My son is being washed before My face, after Our having sacrificed him in the Most Great Prison. Thereat have the dwellers of the Abhá Tabernacle wept with a great weeping, and such as have suffered imprisonment with this Youth in the path of God, the Lord of the promised Day, lamented. Under such conditions My Pen hath not been prevented from remembering its Lord, the Lord of all nations. It summoneth the people unto God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. This is the day whereon he that was created by the light of Bahá has suffered martyrdom, at a time when he lay imprisoned at the hands of his enemies.”

“Upon thee, O Branch of God!” He solemnly and most touchingly, in that same Tablet, bestows upon him His benediction, “be the remembrance of God and His praise, and the praise of all that dwell in the Realm of Immortality, and of all the denizens of the Kingdom of Names. Happy art thou in that thou hast been faithful to the Covenant of God and His Testament, until Thou didst sacrifice thyself before the face of thy Lord, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. Thou, in truth, hast been wronged, and to this testifieth the Beauty of Him, the Self-Subsisting. Thou didst, in the first days of thy life, bear that which hath caused all things to groan, and made every pillar to tremble. Happy is the one that remembereth thee, and draweth nigh, through thee, unto God, the Creator of the Morn.”

“Glorified art Thou, O Lord, my God!” He, in a prayer, astoundingly proclaims, “Thou seest me in the hands of Mine enemies, and My son bloodstained before Thy face, O Thou in Whose hands is the kingdom of all names. I have, O my Lord, offered up that which Thou hast given Me, that Thy servants may be quickened and all that dwell on earth be united.”

“Blessed art thou,” He, in another Tablet affirms, “and blessed he that turneth unto thee, and visiteth thy grave, and draweth nigh, through thee, unto God, the Lord of all that was and shall be.... I testify that thou didst return in meekness unto thine abode. Great is thy blessedness and the blessedness of them that hold fast unto the hem of thy outspread robe.... Thou art, verily, the trust of God and His treasure in this land. Erelong will God reveal through thee that which He hath desired. He, verily, is the Truth, the Knower of things unseen. When thou wast laid to rest in the earth, the earth itself trembled in its longing to meet thee. Thus hath it been decreed, and yet the people perceive not.... Were We to recount the mysteries of thine ascension, they that are asleep would waken, and all beings would be set ablaze with the fire of the remembrance of My Name, the Mighty, the Loving.”

Concerning the Most Exalted Leaf, the mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’u’lláh has written: “The first Spirit through which all spirits were revealed, and the first Light by which all lights shone forth, rest upon thee, O Most Exalted Leaf, thou who hast been mentioned in the Crimson Book! Thou art the one whom God created to arise and serve His own Self, and the Manifestation of His Cause, and the Day-Spring of His Revelation, and the Dawning-Place of His signs, and the Source of His commandments; and Who so aided thee that thou didst turn with thy whole being unto Him, at a time when His servants and handmaidens had turned away from His Face. ...Happy art thou, O My handmaiden, and My Leaf, and the one mentioned in My Book, and inscribed by My Pen of Glory in My Scrolls and Tablets. ...Rejoice thou, at this moment, in the most exalted Station and the All-highest Paradise, and the Abhá Horizon, inasmuch as He Who is the Lord of Names hath remembered thee. We bear witness that thou didst attain unto all good, and that God hath so exalted thee, that all honor and glory circled around thee.”

“O Navváb!” He thus, in another Tablet, addresses her, “O Leaf that hath sprung from My Tree, and been My companion! My glory be upon thee, and My loving-kindness, and My

mercy that hath surpassed all beings. We announce unto thee that which will gladden thine eye, and assure thy soul, and rejoice thine heart. Verily, thy Lord is the Compassionate, the All-Bountiful. God hath been and will be pleased with thee, and hath singled thee out for His own Self, and chosen thee from among His handmaidens to serve Him, and hath made thee the companion of His Person in the day-time and in the night-season.”

“Hear thou Me once again,” He reassures her, “God is well-pleased with thee, as a token of His grace and a sign of His mercy. He hath made thee to be His companion in every one of His worlds, and hath nourished thee with His meeting and presence, so long as His Name, and His Remembrance, and His Kingdom, and His Empire shall endure. Happy is the handmaid that hath mentioned thee, and sought thy good-pleasure, and humbled herself before thee, and held fast unto the cord of thy love. Woe betide him that denieth thy exalted station, and the things ordained for thee from God, the Lord of all names, and him that hath turned away from thee, and rejected thy station before God, the Lord of the mighty throne.”

“O faithful ones!” Bahá’u’lláh specifically enjoins, “Should ye visit the resting-place of the Most Exalted Leaf, who hath ascended unto the Glorious Companion, stand ye and say: ‘Salutation and blessing and glory upon thee, O Holy Leaf that hath sprung from the Divine Lote-Tree! I bear witness that thou hast believed in God and in His signs, and answered His Call, and turned unto Him, and held fast unto His cord, and clung to the hem of His grace, and fled thy home in His path, and chosen to live as a stranger, out of love for His presence and in thy longing to serve Him. May God have mercy upon him that draweth nigh unto thee, and remembereth thee through the things which My Pen hath voiced in this, the most great station. We pray God that He may forgive us, and forgive them that have turned unto thee, and grant their desires, and bestow upon them, through His wondrous grace, whatever be their wish. He, verily, is the Bountiful, the Generous. Praise be to God, He Who is the Desire of all worlds; and the Beloved of all who recognize Him.”

And, finally, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself in one of His remarkably significant Tablets, has borne witness not only to the exalted station of one whose “seed shall inherit the Gentiles,” whose Husband is the Lord of Hosts, but also to the sufferings endured by her who was His beloved mother. “As to thy question concerning the 54th chapter of Isaiah,” He writes, “This chapter refers to the Most Exalted Leaf, the mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. As a proof of this it is said: ‘For more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife.’ Reflect upon this statement, and then upon the following: ‘And thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.’ And truly the humiliation and reproach which she suffered in the path of God is a fact which no one can refute. For the calamities and afflictions mentioned in the whole chapter are such afflictions which she suffered in the path of God, all of which she endured with patience and thanked God therefor and praised Him, because He had enabled her to endure afflictions for the sake of Bahá. During all this time, the men and women (Covenant-breakers) persecuted her in an incomparable manner, while she was patient, God-fearing, calm, humble and contented through the favor of her Lord and by the bounty of her Creator.”

December 21, 1939

THE SEAL OF COMPLETE TRIUMPH

The association of the First Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West with the hallowed memories of the Purest Branch and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mother, recently re-interred under the shadow of the Báb's holy Shrine, inaugurates a new, and at long last the final phase of an enterprise which, thirty years ago, was providentially launched on the very day the remains of the Forerunner of our Faith were laid to rest by our beloved Master in the sepulchre specifically erected for that purpose on Mount Carmel. The birth of this holy enterprise, pregnant with such rich, such infinite possibilities, synchronized with, and was consecrated through, this historic event which, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself has affirmed, constitutes the most signal act of the triple mission He had been prompted to perform. The site of the Temple itself was honored by the presence of Him Who, ever since this enterprise was initiated, had, through his messages and Tablets, bestowed upon it His special attention and care, and surrounded it with the marks of His unfailing solicitude. Its foundation-stone was laid by His own loving hands, on an occasion so moving that it has come to be regarded as one of the most stirring episodes of His historic visit to the North American continent. Its superstructure was raised as a direct consequence of the pent-up energies which surged from the breasts of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's lovers at a time when His sudden removal from their midst had plunged them into consternation, bewilderment and sorrow. Its external ornamentation was initiated and accelerated through the energizing influences which the rising and continually consolidating institutions of a divinely established Administrative Order had released in the midst of a community that had identified its vital interests with that Temple's destiny. The measures devised to hasten its completion were incorporated in a Plan which derives its inspiration from those destiny-shaping Tablets wherein, in bold relief, stands outlined the world mission entrusted by their Author to the American Bahá'í community. And finally, the Fund, designed to receive and dispose of the resources amassed for its prosecution, was linked with the memory and bore the name of her whose ebbing life was brightened and cheered by those tidings that unmistakably revealed to her the depth of devotion and the tenacity of purpose which animate the American believers in the cause of their beloved Temple. And now, while the Bahá'í world vibrates with emotion at the news of the transfer of the precious remains of both the Purest Branch and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mother to a spot which, watched over by the Twin Holy Shrines and in the close neighborhood of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf, is to become the focus of the administrative institutions of the Faith at its world center, the mere act of linking the destiny of so far-reaching an undertaking with so significant an event in the Formative Period of our Faith will assuredly set the seal of complete triumph upon, and enhance the spiritual potentialities of, a work so significantly started and so magnificently executed by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the North American continent.

The Plan which your Assembly has suggested to raise the sum of fifty thousand dollars by next April, which will enable you to place the necessary contracts for the final completion of the entire First Story of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, meets with my unqualified approval. It was specially in order to initiate and encourage the progress of such a plan that I felt impelled to pledge the sum of one thousand pounds in the memory of these two glorious souls who, apart from the Founders of our Faith and its Exemplar, tower together with the Greatest Holy Leaf, above the rank and file of the faithful.

The interval separating us from that date is admittedly short. The explosive forces which lie dormant in the international field may, ere the expiry of these fleeting months, break out in an

eruption that may prove the most fateful that mankind has experienced. It is within the power of the organized body of the American believers to further demonstrate the imperturbability of their faith, the serenity of their confidence and the unyielding tenacity of their resolve.

We stand at the threshold of the decade within which the centenary of the birth of our Faith is to be celebrated. Scarcely more than four years stand between us and that glorious consummation. No community, no individual, neither in the East nor in the West, however afflictive the circumstances that now prevail, can afford to hesitate or falter. The few years immediately ahead are endowed with potencies that we can but dimly appreciate. Ours is the duty and privilege to utilize to the full the opportunities which these fate-laden years offer us. The American Bahá'í community, already responsible, over such a long period, for such heroic acts, under such severe handicaps, cannot and will not hesitate or falter. The past is a witness of their splendid triumphs. The future will be no less a witness of their final victory.

December 30, 1939

DUAL, VITALLY URGENT OBLIGATION

Urge Assembly focus attention at its forthcoming meeting upon the dual, vitally urgent obligation: the conservation of the vigor and spiritual health of the community and the intensification of effort aiming at realization of recently approved Temple Plan. Sleepless vigilance to ward off subtle attacks of enemies is first prerequisite to sound unfoldment of the processes of the enterprise already operating. The fateful forties, pregnant for weal and woe, are ushered in. The American believers enter them firmly rooted in the fertile soil of the administrative order and bountifully nourished by the vital sap of the animation of its institutions, spreading its sheltering shadow to the farthest corners of the Western Hemisphere. Centenary of the Birth of the Faith is approaching. Victories unsuspected are within reach of community. The sooner they are achieved, the sharper the contrast offered with distracting miseries afflicting a generation which the Faith alone can and must eventually redeem.

Cablegram January 18, 1940

BELOVED HANDMAID

'Abdu'l-Bahá's beloved handmaid, the distinguished disciple, May Maxwell, is gathered into the glory of the Abhá Kingdom. Her earthly life, so rich, eventful, incomparably blessed, is worthily ended. To sacred tie her signal services had forged, the priceless honor of a martyr's crown is now added, a double crown deservedly won. The Seven Year Plan, particularly the South American campaign, derive fresh impetus from the example of her glorious sacrifice. Southern outpost of Faith greatly enriched through association with her historic resting place, destined to remain a poignant reminder of the resistless march of the triumphant army of Bahá'u'lláh. Advise believers of both Americas to hold befitting memorial gathering.

Cablegram March 3, 1940

THEIR GOD-GIVEN TASK

The fourth year of the Seven Year Plan enters upon its course in circumstances that are at once critical, challenging, and unprecedented in their significance. The year that has passed has in so far as the rise and establishment of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the Western Hemisphere is concerned, been one of the most eventful since the Plan began to operate and exercise its potent and beneficent influence. Both within and without the Community of the Most Great Name, the events which the last twelve months has unfolded have in some mysterious way, whether directly or indirectly, communicated their force to the Plan's progressive unfoldment, contributed to the orientation of its policy and assisted in the consolidation of the diversified undertakings, both primary and subsidiary that fall within its orbit. Even the losses which the ranks of its stout-hearted upholders have sustained will, when viewed in their proper perspective, be regarded as gains of incalculable value, affecting both its immediate fortunes as well as its ultimate destiny.

The successive international crises which agitated the opening months of the year that has elapsed, culminating in the outbreak of the war in Europe, far from drowning the enthusiasm or daunting the spirit of the prosecutors of God's Plan, served by deflecting their gaze from a storm-tossed continent, to focus their minds and resources on ministering to the urgent needs of that hemisphere in which the first honors and the initial successes of the heroes of the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh are to be scored and won.

The sudden extinction of the earthly life of that star-servant of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, Martha Root, who, while on the last lap of her fourth journey round the world—journeys that carried her to the humblest homes as well as the palaces of royalty—was hurrying homeward to lend her promised aid to her fellow-countrymen in their divinely-appointed task—such a death, though it frustrated this cherished resolution of her indomitable spirit, steeled the hearts of her bereaved lovers and admirers to carry on, more energetically than ever, the work which she herself had initiated, as far back as the year 1919, in every important city in the South American continent.

The subtle and contemptible machinations by which the puny adversaries of the Faith, jealous of its consolidating power and perturbed by the compelling evidences of its conspicuous victories, have sought to challenge the validity and misrepresent the character of the Administrative Order embedded in its teachings have galvanized the swelling army of its defenders to arise and arraign the usurpers of their sacred rights and to defend the long-standing strongholds of the institutions of their Faith in their home country.

And now as this year, so memorable in the annals of the Faith, was drawing to a close, there befell the American Bahá'í community, through the dramatic and sudden death of May Maxwell, yet another loss, which viewed in retrospect will come to be regarded as a potent blessing conferred upon the campaign now being so diligently conducted by its members. Laden with the fruits garnered through well-nigh half a century of toilsome service to the Cause she so greatly loved, heedless of the warnings of age and ill-health, and afire with the longing to worthily demonstrate her gratitude in her overwhelming awareness of the bounties of her Lord and Master, she set her face towards the southern outpost of the Faith in the New World, and laid down her life in such a spirit of consecration and self-sacrifice as has truly merited the crown of martyrdom.

To Keith Ransom-Kehler, whose dust sleeps in far-off Iṣfáhán; to Martha Root, fallen in her tracks on an island in the midmost heart of the ocean; to May Maxwell, lying in solitary glory in the southern outpost of the Western Hemisphere—to these three heroines of the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, they who now labor so assiduously for its expansion and establishment, owe a debt of gratitude which future generations will not fail to adequately recognize.

I need not expatiate on other, though less prominent, events that have contributed their share to the furtherance of the Seven Year Plan, or marked its systematic development. The association of the Fund, specifically inaugurated for its prosecution, with the hallowed memories of both the Mother and Brother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; the establishment of at least one pioneer in each of the Republics of Central and South America; the ushering in of the last phase of the external ornamentation of the Temple; the conjunction of the institutions of the Hazíratu'l-Quds and the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the heart of the North American continent; the founding of yet another institution designed as a training school for Inter-America teaching work; the steady rise in the number of groups and Assemblies functioning within the Administrative Framework of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—these stand out as further evidences of the animating Force that propels the Plan towards its final consummation.

Varied and abundant as have been the past manifestations of this driving, resistless Force, they cannot but pale before the brilliant victories which its progressive and systematic development must achieve in the future.

The American believers, standing on the threshold of the fourth year of the Seven Year Plan, pursue their God-given task with a radiance that no earthly gloom can dim, and will continue to shoulder its ever-growing duties and responsibilities with a vigor and loyalty that no earthly power can either sap or diminish.

April 15, 1940

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S SPIRITUAL SOVEREIGNTY

Message to 1940 Convention

Overjoyed, elated that dynamic energy, invincible valor of American believers impelled them far outstrip the goal fixed for third year of Seven Year Plan. Temple ornamentation has been uninterruptedly pursued. The theatre of operation of the teaching campaign is already embracing entire Central America and every South American Republic excepting Paraguay and Colombia. Number of countries within the orbit of the Faith is now exceeding sixty. Intercontinental crusade, through path broken by Martha Root and seal set by May Maxwell's death yielding destined fruit. Galvanized, permanently safeguarded. Together with Keith they forged through sacrifice a triple cord indissolubly knitting the community of North American believers to cradle of Faith in every continent of Old World and Latin America. Unperturbed by gathering gloom of tottering civilization without, contemptuous of the assault of the perfidious enemies within, the executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mandate must and will strain every nerve in the course of the ensuing year to multiply the number of enrolled pioneers to consolidate work achieved in newly opened North American States and Provinces, to insure prompt settlement of remaining Republics, to prosecute unremittingly ornamentation of last unit of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, to expedite formation in isolated centers of nuclei capable of the establishment of local Assemblies. Urgently plead, fervently pray that all ranks of the valiant forerunners of Bahá'u'lláh's Commonwealth may, ere expiry of allotted term, bring fruition of mission to insure ascendancy of Bahá'u'lláh's spiritual sovereignty over entire Western Hemisphere.

Cablegram April 25, 1940

SECTION OF ORNAMENTATION

Section of Temple ornamentation has been placed in the precincts of the Báb's Shrine.
Magnificent reminder of American believers' stupendous efforts.

Cablegram April 27, 1940.

CONTINUOUS CONSECRATION

To these words, written on my behalf, and in answer to your particular questions relating to the administrative issues that confront you in these days, I wish to add my own tribute to the magnificent manner in which you face the problems, both spiritual and administrative, which the expansion of the Faith is continually raising, and to the way in which you resolve them, explain their nature, and derive fresh strength from your experience of any one of them. The text of the annual reports demonstrates this fact and establishes for all time the high standard according to which the administrative machinery of the Faith is functioning, developing and consolidating itself under your able and energetic direction. As the administrative processes expand, as their operation steadily improves, as their necessity is more fully and strikingly demonstrated, and their beneficent influence correspondingly grows more apparent and evident, so will the blessings, the strength and guidance bestowed by Him Who animates and directs these processes be more abundantly vouchsafed to those who have been called upon to utilize them, in this age, for the execution of God's Purpose and for the ultimate redemption of a sore-stricken travailing humanity. Many will be the setbacks, the shocks and the disturbances, which the commotions of a convulsive age must produce; yet no force, however violent and world-wide in its range and catastrophic in its immediate consequences, can either halt these processes or deflect their appointed course. How great, then, the privilege, and how staggering the responsibility, of those who are destined to guard over them and to bring them eventually to full fruition. Nothing short of utter, of continuous consecration to His Will and Purpose can enable them to fulfil their high destiny.

May 15, 1940

EMERGENCE OF SPIRITUAL WORLD ORDER

The stupendous struggle now convulsing the major part of the European continent is progressively revealing the ominous features, and increasingly assuming the proportions, of the titanic upheaval foreshadowed seventy years ago by the prophetic Pen of Bahá'u'lláh. The disruptive forces associated with humanity's world-shaking ordeal are closely interrelated with the constructive potentialities inherent in the American believers' Divinely-ordained Plan. Both are directly hastening the emergence of the spiritual World Order stirring in the womb of a travailing age. I entreat the American Bahá'í Community, whatever the immediate or distant repercussions of the present turmoil on their own continent, however violent its impact upon the World Center of their Faith, to pledge themselves anew, before the Throne of Bahá'u'lláh, to discharge, with unswerving aim, unfailing courage, invincible vigor, exemplary fidelity and ever-deepening consecration, the dual responsibility solemnly undertaken under the Seven Year Plan. I implore them to accelerate their efforts, increase their vigilance, deepen their unity, multiply their heroic feats, maintain their distant outposts in the teaching field of Latin America and expedite the termination of the last stage in the ornamentation of the Temple. I am praying continually with redoubled fervor.

Cablegram June 13, 1940

SUPREMELY CHALLENGING HOUR

The long-predicted world-encircling conflagration, essential pre-requisite to world unification, is inexorably moving to its appointed climax. Its fires, first lit in the Far East, subsequently ravaging Europe and enveloping Africa, now threaten devastation both in Near East and Far West, respectively enshrining the World Center and the chief remaining Citadel of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The Divinely-appointed Plan must and will likewise pursue undeflected its predestined course. Time is pressing. The settlement of the two remaining Latin Republics, the sounder consolidation through formation of firmly-knit groups in newly-opened territories, the provision of adequate means for the ornamentation of last six faces of first story of Temple, stand out as vital requirements of approaching supremely challenging hour. My eyes and heart are anxiously, longingly turned to the New World to witness the evidences of a new, still more heroic phase of enterprise confidently entrusted to vigilant care of the American believers by the ever-watchful, powerfully-sustaining Master. I refuse to believe that a community so richly endowed, so greatly envied, so repeatedly honored, will suffer the slightest relaxation of its resolution to jeopardize the spiritual prizes painstakingly and deservedly won throughout the States and Provinces of the Republics of the Western Hemisphere.

Cablegram July 21, 1940

CHAOS AND REDEMPTION

Present world chaos, exhibiting the impetuosity, follies, rebelliousness characteristic of humanity's adolescent stage of development, and harbinger of the long-promised Golden Age of the maturity of the human race, is relentlessly spreading and distressingly intensified. The alternating victories and reverses, heralding parallel transition of proscribed Cause of Bahá'u'lláh struggling towards emancipation, world recognition and spiritual universal dominion, are simultaneously multiplying. The recrudescence of the chronic persecution afflicting the cradle of the Faith, the grave danger threatening the appropriated Temple and disbanded centers in Turkistan and Caucasus, the repressive measures successively choking the life and paralyzing the action of both the long-standing and the newly-fledged communities of Central, Western and South-Eastern Europe, the intermittent outbursts of religious fanaticism directed against the North African Assemblies, and the aggravation of the situation at the world Spiritual and Administrative Center, contrast with, and are outweighed by, the surging spirit, the startling expansion, the sweeping conquests, the superb consolidation of the swiftly-accumulating resources of the one remaining community singled out for the proclamation of the Administrative Order throughout the length and breadth of the Western Hemisphere. I appeal to the New World champions of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh to stand fast at this tragic hour in the fortunes of mankind and the challenging state of the evolution of the Faith. I beg them to close their ranks jointly, severally and vow themselves to incomparably sublime task whose operation must hasten the ascendancy of the beloved Cause and the spiritual redemption of a reconstructed mankind.

Cablegram October 29, 1940

TORCHBEARER OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

My heart is thrilled with delight as I witness, in so many fields, and in such distant outposts, and despite such formidable difficulties, restrictions, obstacles and dangers, so many evidences of the solidarity, the valor, and the achievements of the American Bahá'í community. As the end of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era approaches, as the shadows descending upon and enveloping mankind steadily and remorselessly deepen, this community, which can almost be regarded as the solitary champion of the Faith in the Western World, is increasingly evincing and demonstrating its capacity, its worth, and ability as the torchbearer of the New, the World Civilization which is destined to supplant in the fulness of time the present one. And more particularly in the virgin and far-flung territories of Latin America, it has in recent months, abundantly given visible evidence of its merits and competence to shoulder the immense responsibilities which the carrying of the sacred Fire to all the Republics of the Western Hemisphere must necessarily entail.

Through these initial steps, which, in pursuance of the Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this community has taken, through the settlement in each of these sovereign states of the New World of American Bahá'í pioneers, through the formation of Bahá'í groups and the establishment of two Assemblies in Buenos Aires and Bahia, the American National Assembly, as well as its Inter-America Committee, and all subsidiary agencies, no less than the individual members of the North American Bahá'í community who have sacrificed and are still sacrificing so much in their support of this Divine and momentous Plan, have earned the unqualified admiration and the undying gratitude of sister Assemblies and fellow-workers throughout the Bahá'í World.

Their work, however, is only beginning. The dispatch of pioneers, the provision of adequate means for their support, their settlement and initiation of Bahá'í activities in these far-off lands, however strenuous and meritorious, are insufficient if the Plan is to evolve harmoniously and yield promptly its destined fruit. The extension by the Parent Assembly—the immediate source from which this vast system with all its ramifications is now proceeding—of the necessary support, guidance, recognition and material assistance to enable these newly-fledged groups and Assemblies to function in strict accordance with both the spiritual and administrative principles of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, would seem as essential and urgent as the preliminary task already achieved. To nurse these tender plants of the Vineyard of God, to foster their growth, to direct their development, to accord them the necessary recognition, to help resolve their problems, to familiarize them with gentleness, patience and fidelity with the processes of the Administrative Order and thus enable them to assume independently the conduct of future local and national Bahá'í activities, would bring the plan to swift and full fruition and would add fresh laurels to the crown of immortal glory already won by a community that holds in these days of dark and dire calamities, valiantly and almost alone, the Fort of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Fortified by these reflections, let them gird up their loins for still mightier exertions and more brilliant victories.

December 3, 1940

THIS VETERAN WARRIOR

I share your sorrow in the loss, and participate in your rejoicings for the triumph of beloved Father Dunn. The magnificent career of this veteran warrior of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh reflects the purest luster of the world historic mission conferred upon American community by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. To the three heroines whose dust reposes in the heart of Persia, in the Pacific Islands and southern extremity of the American continent, a fourth witness in far-off Australasia is now added, attesting the first vital sparks of far-flung spiritual dominion American believers have been commissioned to establish. I am moved to congratulate them for the resplendent successes of the Plan destined to encircle the entire globe. Advise hold National Memorial Gathering in Mashriqu'l-Adhkár befitting the rank of Australia's spiritual conqueror.

Cablegram February 21, 1941*

*The next message, dated April 23, 1941, will be found on page 110.

THE ANGER OF GOD AND HIS CORRECTION

The internecine struggle, now engulfing the generality of mankind, is increasingly assuming, in its range and ferocity, the proportions of the titanic upheaval foreshadowed as far back as seventy years ago by Bahá'u'lláh. It can be viewed in no other light except as a direct interposition by Him Who is the Ordainer of the Universe, the Judge of all men and the Deliverer of the nations. It is the rod of both the anger of God and of His correction. The fierceness of its devastating power chastens the children of men for their refusal to acclaim the century-old Message of their promised, their Heaven-sent Redeemer. The fury of its flames, on the other hand, purges away the dross, and welds the limbs of humanity into one single organism, indivisible, purified, God-conscious and divinely directed.

Its immediate cause can be traced to the forces engendered by the last war of which it may be truly regarded as the direct continuation. Its first sparks were kindled on the eastern shores of the Asiatic continent, enveloping two sister races of the world in a conflagration which no force seems able to either quench or circumscribe. This cataclysmic process was accelerated by the outbreak of a fierce conflict in the heart of Europe, fanning into flame age-long animosities and unchaining a series of calamities as swift as they were appalling. As the turmoil gathered momentum, it swept remorselessly into its vortex the most powerful nations of the European continent—the chief protagonists of that highly-vaunted yet lamentably defective civilization. The mounting tide of its havoc and devastation soon overspread the northernmost regions of that afflicted continent, subsequently ravaged the shores of the Mediterranean, and invaded the African continent as far as Ethiopia and the surrounding territories. The Balkan countries, as predicted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, were soon to sustain the impact of this tragic ordeal, communicating in their turn the commotions to which they had been subjected to both the Near and Middle East, wherein are enshrined the heart of the Faith itself, its Cradle, its chief center of Pilgrimage, and its most sacred and historic sites.

Its menace is overleaping the limits of the Old World and is plunging into consternation the Great Republic of the West, as well as the peoples of Central and South America. The New World as well as the Old is experiencing the terrific impact of this disruptive force. Even the peoples of the Antipodes are trembling before the approaching tempest that threatens to burst on their heads.

The races of the world, Nordic, Slavonic, Mongolian, Arab and African, are alike subjected to its consuming violence. The world's religious systems are no less affected by the universal paralysis which is creeping over the minds and souls of men. The persecution of world Jewry, the rapid deterioration of Christian institutions, the intestine division and disorders of Islám, are but manifestations of the fear and trembling that has seized humanity in its hour of unprecedented turmoil and peril. On the high seas, in the air, on land, in the forefront of battle, in the palaces of kings and the cottages of peasants, in the most hallowed sanctuaries, whether secular or religious, the evidences of God's retributive act and mysterious discipline are manifest. Its heavy toll is steadily mounting—a holocaust sparing neither prince nor peasant, neither man nor woman, neither young nor old.

The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—that priceless gem of Divine Revelation enshrining the Spirit of God and incarnating His Purpose for mankind in this age—can neither aspire nor expect to escape unhurt amid the hurricane of human disasters that blows around it. By most men

unnoticed, scorned and ridiculed by some, feared and challenged by others, this world redemptive Faith, for whose precious sake the world is undergoing such agonies, finds its virgin strength assailed, and its infant institutions hemmed in, by the dark forces which a godless civilization has unloosed over the face of the planet. In the Old World, whether in Europe, Asia or Africa, it is being buffeted about, ostracized, arraigned and repressed. In certain countries its community life is being extinguished, in others a ban is severely imposed on its propagation, in still others its members are denied all intercourse with its World Center. Dangers, grave and unsuspected, confront its cradle and surround its very heart.

Not so, however, with the countries of the Western Hemisphere. The call of Bahá'u'lláh summons, at this challenging hour, the peoples of the New World, and its leaders to redress the balance of the old. "O Rulers of America," He thus addresses the Chief Magistrates of that continent, "and the Presidents of the Republics therein.... Adorn the temple of your dominion with the ornament of Justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of the remembrance of your Lord, the Maker of the heavens." The Great Republic of the West, an object of special solicitude throughout the ministry of the Center of the Covenant, whose soil has been hallowed by His footsteps, and the foundation of whose edifice—the Mother Temple of the West—has been consecrated by His hand, has been singled out through the operation of His Will, and been invested by His Pen with an unique, an inescapable, a weighty and most sacred responsibility. The Mission entrusted to the community of the North American believers in the darkest days of the last war, is, after a period of incubation of well nigh twenty years, and through the instrumentality of the administrative agencies erected after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, efflorescing under our very eyes. Already, since the inception of the Seven Year Plan, this community can well claim to have attained, through its deeds, a stature that dwarfs its sister communities, and can glory in a parentage that embraces every Republic of Latin America. The first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, its beauteous and noble handiwork, is virtually completed. A nucleus for a future flourishing local community is already formed in every state and province in North America. The administrative structure, following the pattern of its prototype in the U.S.A. is, through the agency of that same Plan, raising its triumphant head in the Central and South American Republics. The Plan itself, propelled by the agencies released by those immortal Tablets which constitute its charter, bids fair, in the fifth year of its operation, to exceed the highest expectations of those who have so courageously launched it. Its consummation, coinciding with the termination of the first century of the Bahá'í Era, will mark the opening of yet another phase in a series of crusades which must carry, in the course of the succeeding century, the privileged recipients of those epoch-making Tablets beyond the Western Hemisphere to the uttermost ends of the earth, to implant the banner, and lay an unassailable basis for the administrative structure of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

The quality and magnitude of the work already achieved by these stalwart champions of God's New World Order are inexpressibly exhilarating and infinitely meritorious. The immensity of the task still to be performed staggers our fancy and inflames our imagination. The potentialities with which these tasks are endowed elude our shrewdest calculations. The promise they enshrine is too dazzling to contemplate. What else can we do but bow our heads in thanksgiving and reverence, steel our hearts in preparation for the strenuous days ahead, and intensify a hundredfold our resolution to carry on the task to which our hands are set at present.

May 25, 1941

FATE-LADEN WORLD ORDEAL

The fate-laden world ordeal is moving in steady, pre-ordained crescendo. The blaze of a seemingly uncontrollable fire is leaping, ravaging last remaining great Power on European continent. Shadows of God's retributive act are fast gathering. As the arena of world convulsing contest broadens; as wounds it inflicts deepen; as issues it raises aggravate and multiply, so will the operation of the spiritual forces, destined to cast the burden of a travailing age, be accelerated. As the old world sinks beneath the weight of a crumbling old order, so must new world exponents of Bahá'u'lláh's nascent, integrating World Order climb loftier summits of their sublime calling. I urgently, insistently plead that all American believers, particularly the National Teaching and Inter-America Committees, above all the National elected representatives, arm their souls, labor more resolutely, cooperate more closely, scatter more widely, sacrifice more abundantly, to insure, during remaining years of Seven Year Plan, the brilliant discharge of the one remaining obligation of their dual task, whose consummation must signalize the termination and seal the triumph of First Bahá'í Century.

Cablegram July 4, 1941

ELIZABETH GREENLEAF

Share deep grief of bereaved community at passing of Elizabeth Greenleaf, beloved handmaid of Bahá'u'lláh. Her radiant spirit, staunch loyalty, noble character, effective teaching method were distinguishing features of her consecrated life. Praying abundant blessings in life beyond.

Cablegram August 7, 1941

UNCONQUERABLE POWER

As I survey the activities and accomplishments of the American believers in recent months, and recall their reaction to the urgent call for service, embodied in the Seven Year Plan, I feel overwhelmed by a three-fold sense of gratitude and admiration which I feel prompted to place on record, but which I cannot adequately express. Future generations can alone appraise correctly the value of their present services, and the Beloved, whose mandate they are so valiantly obeying, can alone befittingly reward them for the manner in which they are discharging their duties.

The virtual completion of a thirty year old enterprise, which was initiated in His days and blessed by His Hand, is the first and foremost accomplishment that must shed imperishable luster not only on the administrative annals of the Formative Age of the Faith, but on the entire record of the signal achievements performed in the course of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era. The steady expansion and consolidation of the world mission, entrusted by that same Master, to their hands and set in operation after His passing, constitutes the second object of my undying gratitude to a community that has abundantly demonstrated its worthiness to shoulder the superhuman tasks with which it has been entrusted. The spirit with which that same community has faced and resisted the onslaught of the enemies of the Faith who, for various reasons and with ever-increasing subtlety and malice, have persistently striven to disrupt the administrative machinery of an Order, foreshadowed by the Báb, enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, and established by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is yet another testimony to the unrivalled merits and the eminent position attained by its privileged members since the ascension of the Center of the Covenant.

The extinction of the influence precariously exerted by some of these enemies, the decline that has set in in the fortunes of others, the sincere repentance expressed by still others, and their subsequent reinstatement and effectual participation in the teaching and administrative activities of the Faith, constitute in themselves sufficient evidence of the unconquerable power and invincible spirit which animates those who stand identified with and loyally carry out the provisions and injunctions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

And now more particularly concerning the prime mover of this latest agitation, which, whatever its immediate consequences, will sooner or later come to be regarded as merely one more of those ugly and abortive attempts designed to undermine the foundation, and obscure the purpose, of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Obscure in his origin, ambitious of leadership, untaught by the lesson of such as have erred before him, odious in the hopes he nurses, contemptible in the methods he pursues, shameless in his deliberate distortions of truths he has long since ceased to believe in, ludicrous in his present isolation and helplessness, wounded and exasperated by the downfall which his own folly has precipitated, he, the latest protagonist of a spurious cause, cannot but in the end be subjected, as remorselessly as his infamous predecessors, to the fate which they invariably have suffered.

Generated by the propelling and purifying forces of a mysterious Faith, born of delusion or malice, winning a fleeting notoriety derived from the precarious advantages of wealth, fame or fortune, these movements sponsored by deluded, self-seeking adventurers find themselves,

sooner or later, enmeshed in the machinations of their authors, are buried in shame, and sink eventually into complete oblivion.

The schism which their foolish leaders had contrived so sedulously to produce within the Faith, will soon, to their utter amazement, come to be regarded as a process of purification, a cleansing agency, which, far from decimating the ranks of its followers, reinforces its indestructible unity, and proclaims anew to a world, skeptical or indifferent, the cohesive strength of the institutions of that Faith, the incorruptibility of its purposes and principles, and the recuperative powers inherent in its community life.

Were anyone to imagine or expect that a Cause, comprising within its orbit so vast a portion of the globe, so turbulent in its history, so challenging in its claims, so diversified in the elements it has assimilated into its administrative structure, should, at all times, be immune to any divergence of opinion, or any defection on the part of its multitudinous followers, it would be sheer delusion, wholly unreasonable and unwarranted, even in the face of the unprecedented evidence of the miraculous power which its rise and progress have so powerfully exhibited. That such a secession, however, whether effected by those who apostatize their faith or preach heretical doctrines, should have failed, after the lapse of a century, to split in twain the entire body of the adherents of the Faith, or to create a grave, a permanent and irremediable breach in its organic structure, is a fact too eloquent for even a casual observer of the internal processes of its administrative order to either deny or ignore.

Therein, every loyal and intelligent upholder of Bahá'u'lláh's incomparable Covenant—a Covenant designed by Him as the sole refuge against schism, disruption and anarchy—will readily recognize the hall-mark of His Faith, and will acclaim it as the supreme gift conferred by Him Who is the Lord of Revelation upon the present and future generations who are destined, in this greatest of all Dispensations, to flock, from every creed and religion, to the banner, and espouse the Cause, of His Most Great Name.

Dear friends! Manifold, various, and at times extremely perilous, have been the tragic crises which the blind hatred, the unfounded presumption, the incredible folly, the abject perfidy, the vaulting ambition, of the enemy have intermittently engendered within the pale of the Faith. From some of its most powerful and renowned votaries, at the hands of its once trusted and ablest propagators, champions, and administrators, from the ranks of its most revered and highly-placed trustees whether as companions, amanuenses or appointed lieutenants of the Herald of the Faith, of its Author, and of the Center of His Covenant, from even those who were numbered among the kindred of the Manifestation, not excluding the brother, the sons and daughters of Bahá'u'lláh, and the nominee of the Báb Himself, a Faith, of such tender age, and enshrining so priceless a promise, has sustained blows as dire and treacherous as any recorded in the world's religious history.

From the record of its tumultuous history, almost every page of which portrays a fresh crisis, is laden with the description of a new calamity, recounts the tale of a base betrayal, and is stained with the account of unspeakable atrocities, there emerges, clear and incontrovertible, the supreme truth that with every fresh outbreak of hostility to the Faith, whether from within or from without, a corresponding measure of outpouring grace, sustaining its defenders and confounding its adversaries, has been providentially released, communicating a fresh impulse to the onward march of the Faith, while this impetus, in its turn, would through its manifestations, provoke fresh hostility in quarters heretofore unaware of its challenging implications—this increased hostility being accompanied by a still more arresting revelation of Divine Power and a more abundant effusion of celestial grace, which, by enabling the

upholders of that Faith to register still more brilliant victories, would thereby generate issues of still more vital import and raise up still more formidable enemies against a Cause that cannot but, in the end, resolve those issues and crush the resistance of those enemies, through a still more glorious unfoldment of its inherent power.

The resistless march of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, viewed in this light, and propelled by the stimulating influences which the unwisdom of its enemies and the force latent within itself, both engender, resolves itself into a series of rhythmic pulsations, precipitated, on the one hand, through the explosive outbursts of its foes, and the vibrations of Divine Power, on the other, which speed it, with ever-increasing momentum, along that predestined course traced for it by the Hand of the Almighty.

As opposition to the Faith, from whatever source it may spring, whatever form it may assume, however violent its outbursts, is admittedly the motive-power that galvanizes on the one hand, the souls of its valiant defenders, and taps for them, on the other, fresh springs of that Divine and inexhaustible Energy, we who are called upon to represent, defend and promote its interests, should, far from regarding any manifestation of hostility as an evidence of the weakening of the pillars of the Faith, acclaim it as both a God-sent gift and a God-sent opportunity which, if we remain undaunted, we can utilize for the furtherance of His Faith and the routing and complete elimination of its adversaries.

The Heroic Age of the Faith, born in anguish, nursed in adversity, and terminating in trials as woeful as those that greeted its birth, has been succeeded by that Formative Period which is to witness the gradual crystallization of those creative energies which the Faith has released, and the consequent emergence of that World Order for which those forces were made to operate.

Fierce and relentless will be the opposition which this crystallization and emergence must provoke. The alarm it must and will awaken, the envy it will certainly arouse, the misrepresentations to which it will remorselessly be subjected, the setbacks it must, sooner or later, sustain, the commotions to which it must eventually give rise, the fruits it must in the end garner, the blessings it must inevitably bestow and the glorious, the Golden Age, it must irresistibly usher in, are just beginning to be faintly perceived, and will, as the old order crumbles beneath the weight of so stupendous a Revelation, become increasingly apparent and arresting.

Not ours, dear friends, to attempt to survey the distant scene; ours rather the duty to face the trials of the present hour, to ponder its meaning, to discharge its obligations, to meet its challenge and utilize the opportunity it offers to the fullest extent of our ability and power.

August 12, 1941

THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

Heart thrilled with pride at message announcing the approaching completion of the ornamentation of seven faces of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, proclaiming an intensification of North American teaching campaign, and revealing the adamant resolution of the Temple builders and stalwart crusaders, in face of the perfidy, ingratitude and opposition of the enemies both within and without the Holy Faith. As the fury and destructiveness of the tremendous world ordeal attains its most intensive pitch, so the Mission conferred twenty years ago by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will on the worldwide, indivisible and incorruptible body of His followers unfolds its fullest potentialities. Securely abiding and confidently battling within the impregnable structure which that Will has divinely established, the dwellers in the ark of the divine Covenant the world over watch with awe, pride and delight the evidences of the mounting momentum of the eternal process of integration and disintegration hurrying the Faith along its predestined course. The royal adversary, personally responsible for the recrudescence of persecution closing all Bahá'í schools in Bahá'u'lláh's native land, has been humbled to the dust. The sufferings endured by the builders of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár are being avenged. The cornerstone of the National Administrative Headquarters of the Egyptian Bahá'í community has been ceremoniously laid. The first officially recognized Bahá'í cemetery is ready to receive the precious remains of the illustrious Abu'l-Fadl and the immortal Lua. The Hazíratu'l-Quds in Baghdád has been extended and is nearing completion. The property dedicated as first Administrative Center of the Syrian Bahá'ís has been purchased. A group of families of Persian believers, Muslim, Jewish, Zoroastrian in origin, afire with the example set by American pioneers, are settling the adjoining territories of Hijáz, Yemen, Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Bahrein Island. The spiritual competition galvanizing the organized followers of Bahá'u'lláh in East and West waxes keener as first Bahá'í century speeds to its close. With bowed head, exultant spirit and thankful heart I acclaim these recurrent, increasingly compelling manifestations of the solidarity, loyalty and unquenchable spirit animating, throughout five continents, the community of the followers of the Most Great Name.

Cablegram November 22, 1941

THE CRUCIBLE OF WORLD CONFLAGRATION

The most great convulsion envisaged by the Prophets from Isaiah to Bahá'u'lláh, cataclysmic in violence, planetary in range, is assailing, at long last, the predominating nations of the Asiatic and American continents. The leading Power of the Western Hemisphere which, together with sister republics, Bahá'u'lláh's ringing call significantly summoned in His Most Holy Book, the object of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's tender solicitude and ardent prayers, the center of His hopes, the recipient of His promises and the beneficiary of His blessings, has been suddenly though not unexpectedly plunged into the crucible of world conflagration. Purged, tested, galvanized, coalescing with its sorely-trying sister nations the world over, the great Republic of the New World, the enviable parent of System heralding the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, must assume through adversity its preponderating share of responsibility to lay down, once for all, broad, worldwide, unassailable foundations of that discredited yet immortal System. Though the immediate future be dark, critical and fraught with anguish, I feel it my bounden duty to appeal in this hour as never before to the Trustees of Bahá'u'lláh's priceless Revelation whether teachers or administrators, individuals or Assemblies, North or South, white or colored, young or old, to refuse at all costs to surrender their solemn spiritual responsibilities, refrain from relaxing their teaching efforts, determine never to slacken their sacred task of building the institutions whose progress destiny has indissolubly linked with the fortunes of the most disastrous, most challenging, most pregnant period of human history.

Cablegram December 13, 1941

A TRULY WORLD-EMBRACING CRISIS

Dear and valued co-workers: The entry of the United States of America into the war invest it with the character of a truly world-embracing crisis, designed to release world-shaking, world-shaping forces, which, as they operate, and mount in intensity, will throw down the barriers that hinder the emergence of that world community which the World Religion of Bahá'u'lláh has anticipated and can alone permanently establish. It marks a milestone on the road which must lead the peoples of the North American continent to the glorious destiny that awaits them. It confronts the American Bahá'í community, already so well advanced in the prosecution of their Seven Year Plan, with a challenge at once severe and inescapable. The exterior ornamentation of their consecrated Edifice has been providentially expedited to a point where its completion is now assured. The intercontinental and national teaching campaigns, that constitute the second and even more vital aspect of that plan, though progressing magnificently in the States, in Canada and throughout Latin America, are still far from having attained their consummation. The obstacles which the extension of the war to the Western Hemisphere has raised are, I am well aware, manifold and formidable. The heroic self-sacrifice exhibited by the North American Bahá'í community will, I am confident, surmount them. The Hand of Omnipotence, which has led so mighty a member of the human race to plunge into the turmoil of world disaster, that has provided thereby the means for the effective and decisive participation of so promising a nation in the immediate trials and the future reconstruction of human society, will not and cannot allow those who are directly, consciously and worthily promoting the highest interests of their nation and of the world, to fall short of the accomplishment of their God-given task. He will, more than ever before in their history, pour out His blessings upon them, if they refuse to allow the present circumstances, grievous though they are, to interfere with the full and uninterrupted execution of this initial undertaking in pursuance of their world mission. The coming two years must witness, fraught as they may well be with the greatest ordeal afflicting their countrymen, a manifestation of spiritual vitality and an output of heroic action, commensurate with the gravity and afflictions of the present hour, and worthy of the concluding years of the first Bahá'í century.

January 15, 1942

IMPELLED TO DEPUTIZE FIVE MEMBERS

Message to 1942 Convention

Last phase of Seven Year Plan so auspiciously begun, so vigorously prosecuted, is opening. The first Bahá'í Century is fast running out. The agonies of a travailing age are culminating. The Báb's stirring, unique injunction, directing the peoples of the West to leave their cities to insure the triumph of the Divine Cause was recorded a century ago in the Qayyúmu'l-Asmá. Bahá'u'lláh's significant summons calling upon all the Presidents of the Republics of the western hemisphere to champion the Cause of Justice was issued seventy years ago in His Most Holy Book. The broad outlines of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's matchless design, conceived twenty-five years ago for the benefit of the North American believers, was transmitted to posterity in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. The Seven Year Enterprise, regarded as the initial stage in the execution of a World Mission, has been already launched. The gigantic Temple undertaking, constituting the major obligation of this enterprise, has been virtually consummated. The vast Intercontinental Teaching Campaign is visibly yielding first fruits in every Republic of Latin America. Upon the crucial year ahead hinge the fortunes of this historic crusade. From Alaska to Chile, the Americas are astir with the leavening influences of the rising Order of the newborn Revelation. The great Republic of the West is inescapably swept into the swelling tide of the world tribulations, presaging the assumption of a preponderating share in the establishment of the anticipated Lesser Peace. Invisible hosts are marshalled, eager to rush forth and crown every effort, however humble, however belated, exerted to speed the unfinished tasks. Again I renew plea for closer communion with the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh, for more passionate resolve, for more abundant flow of material resources, and for wider dispersion, intenser concentration, by a still greater number of pioneers, settlers and itinerant teachers to insure for the Plan a termination commensurate with and wondrous as the exploits marking the opening decade of first Bahá'í Century. Myself deprived of personal participation in the task allotted to the prosecutors of the epoch-making Plan, I am impelled to deputize five members of the American Bahá'í community to help fulfill in my behalf whatsoever pioneer field is most vital to its urgent requirements. Pledging five thousand dollars for accomplishment of this purpose.

Cablegram April 26, 1942

THE SEVEN YEAR PLAN

Viewed in the perspective of Bahá'í history, the Seven Year Plan, associated with the closing years of the First Bahá'í Century, will come to be regarded as the mightiest instrument yet forged, designed to enable the trustees of a firmly established, steadily evolving Administrative Order to complete the initial stage in the prosecution of the world mission confidently entrusted by the Center of the Covenant to His chosen disciples. The Divine Plan, thus set in operation, may be said to have derived its inspiration from, and been dimly foreshadowed in, the injunction so significantly addressed by Bahá'u'lláh to the Chief Magistrates of the American continent. It was prompted by the contact established by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself, in the course of His historic journey, with the entire body of His followers throughout the United States and Canada. It was conceived, soon after that contact was established, in the midst of what was then held to be one of the most devastating crises in human history. It underwent a period of incubation, after His ascension, while the machinery of a divinely appointed Administrative Order was being laboriously devised and its processes set in motion. Its initial operations were providentially made to synchronize with the final years of a century that witnessed the birth and rise of a Faith of which it is the direct consequence. The opening stage in its execution has been faced by, and will survive, the severe challenge of a crisis of still greater magnitude than that which baptized its birth. The conclusion of the first phase of its tremendous and irresistible unfoldment is now approaching. The hopes and aspirations of a multitude of believers, in both the East and the West, young and old, whether free or suppressed, hang on its triumphant consummation. The Temple itself, that fair incarnation of the soul of an unconquerable Faith, and the first fruit of the Plan now set in motion, stands in its silent beauty, ready to reinforce the strenuous endeavors of its prosecutors. Towering in grandeur and resplendent in its majesty it calls aloud incessantly for a greater, a far greater number of pioneers who, both at home and in foreign fields, will scatter to sow the Divine seeds and gather the harvest into its gates. The Author of the Plan Himself, looking down from His retreats above, and surveying the prodigious labors of His defeatless disciples, voices, with even greater insistence, the same call. The time in which to respond to it is relentlessly shortening. Let men of action seize their chance ere the swiftly passing days place it irretrievably beyond their reach.

May 26, 1942

CONSECRATED TO TEACHING TASKS

The completion of the Temple should, and I feel confident will, release tremendous and unprecedented forces of spiritual energy destined to be wholly consecrated to the teaching tasks now confronting the American believers. The concentrated, the sustained, and undivided attention of the individual believers and all Bahá'í agencies, local, regional, as well as national, should be directed to the attainment of this supreme, this shining goal. The increase in the number of pioneers, of every class, race, age and outlook is the vital need of the present hour. May the Beloved bless richly and continually this mighty and glorious endeavor.

June 17, 1942

A BEFITTING CLIMAX

I am thrilled with admiration as I contemplate, at this advanced stage in the unfoldment of the Seven Year Plan, the vastness of the field already covered by the pioneer activities of its stalwart and valiant prosecutors. The heights of heroic self-sacrifice to which they have attained, the depths of faith and devotion they have plumbed in the course of their ceaseless exertions are no less noteworthy than the immensity of the task they have already performed. An effort so prodigious, a mission so sublime, a solidarity so truly remarkable, an achievement, which in its scope and quality, stands unparalleled in American Bahá'í history, provide a befitting climax to the century old record of magnificent accomplishments associated with the rise and progress of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Such a glorious century, so unique in the annals of mankind's spiritual history, is, however, not yet completed. The gigantic enterprises which the American believers are pledged to consummate are as yet but partially concluded. The remaining two years must witness an intensification of Bahá'í activity, throughout the entire Western Hemisphere on such a scale as to eclipse the splendor of all past achievements, and worthily crown this initial phase in the progressive evolution of the Divine Plan. An unprecedented multiplication in the number of pioneer teachers and settlers; an unexampled flow of material resources for their maintenance and the extension of their labors; a still wider dissemination of Bahá'í literature, to aid and support them in their presentation of the Faith to Latin American peoples; an immediate increase in the number of groups and Assemblies in the States and Provinces of North America; an increased awareness on the part of all believers, whether in the North or in the South, whether newly enrolled or of old standing in the Faith, that every one of them shares, vitally and directly and without any exception, in the responsibility for the successful prosecution of the Plan; a still firmer resolution not to allow a world-convulsing conflict, with its attendant miseries, perils, dislocations, and anxieties, to deflect them from their course or distract their attention; these are the crying needs of this critical, this challenging, this swiftly passing hour; to exploit its possibilities, to meet its challenge, to grasp its implications, is the manifest, the inescapable and urgent duty of every member of the Bahá'í communities now laboring so assiduously in the Western Hemisphere. May the cumulative effect of their concentrated and sustained labors shed further lustre on the concluding years of this, the first century of the Bahá'í Era.

August 15, 1942

ACCLAIM WITH GRATEFUL HEART

Acclaim with grateful heart, on twenty-first Anniversary of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Ascension, the glorious emergence of the firmly-welded, incorruptible American Bahá’í community from severest crisis since His passing which the blindness of the breakers of Bahá’u’lláh’s and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Covenants has, amidst His kindred, and in the City of the Covenant, recently tragically precipitated. Posterity will unhesitatingly recognize so spontaneous, shining, stirring demonstration of fidelity rendered alike to the Lord of the Covenant and to its Center as a victory more enduring, more momentous, than any triumphs, however notable, which the standard-bearers of the Administrative Order, the champion builders of the Temple, the stalwart executors of the Divine Plan have achieved or may yet achieve in the closing years of the expiring First Bahá’í Century. Nursed since birth in the lap of the unfailing solicitude of the Center of the Covenant, torch-bearer of the Divine Order recognized as child of that Covenant, vanguard of that host destined to diffuse the Light of that same Covenant over the face of the entire globe, American Bahá’í community is now assuming rightful place at the forefront of the world-wide, loyal, unbreachable spiritual army of Bahá’u’lláh preparing, both in the East and West, to launch still greater campaigns, scale loftier heights, at the dawning of the Second Bahá’í Century.

November 30, 1942

THE IMMORTAL LUA

The immortal Lua, mother-teacher of the American Bahá'í Community, herald of the dawn of the Day of the Covenant, has been ceremoniously and reverently transferred by Egyptian brethren representing the local Bahá'í communities to the immediate vicinity of the grave of far-famed Abu'l-Fadl in the newly established Bahá'í cemetery in Cairo. The Ismá'íliyyih believers together with Assembly delegates of Egypt have held an inaugural ceremony at the second Bahá'í cemetery allocated by the Egyptian authorities. The sacred rights of the persecuted, expelled community, repeatedly denied legitimate burial, are now vindicated. The progressive emancipation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh from the traditional shackles of religious orthodoxy is increasingly evident and humbly, gratefully recognized by followers of the Faith the world over.

Cablegram January 7, 1943

THE UNFINISHED TASKS

The recent response of the American friends to my appeal for pioneers to go forth and settle in virgin territories and places where the need is greatest has raised a load from my heart, and mightily reinforced the hopes and expectations which their past achievements have aroused within me. We stand at the threshold of the last year of the first Bahá'í century. The unfinished tasks, however much they have been reduced, are still formidable. The Temple is as yet unfinished. The initiation of a nation-wide publicity campaign, intelligently directed and energetically pursued, utilizing to the full the advantages gained in recent years in so many fields of Bahá'í activity still remains to be undertaken. Measures for a befitting celebration of the Centennial anniversary of the Faith must be carefully considered and duly executed. The aims and purposes of our beloved Cause, the achievements of its heroes, martyrs, teachers, pioneers and administrators, the unity of its followers, the character of the institutions they have reared, should, one and all, be ably presented, widely broadcast, carefully explained in publications, through the radio and the press. There is no time to lose. A great responsibility rests on the elected representatives of the most envied community in the Bahá'í world, whose advantages are unique, whose capacities are incomparable, whose vision, courage, tenacity, resolution and loyalty are exemplary; which has amply demonstrated its worthiness to be the recipient of the countless favors showered upon it by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and of the specific bounty conferred upon the rulers and presidents of the continent of which it is a part by no one less than Bahá'u'lláh Himself, in His Most Holy Book. To His "Apostles," as testified by the Center of His Covenant, I direct my fervent plea that they establish, beyond the shadow of a doubt, in these concluding months of the first Bahá'í century, their indisputable right to be designated by so exalted a title, and vindicate their ability to execute the mission with which that title has invested them.

January 8, 1943

COMPLETION OF TEMPLE EXTERIOR

Heart aglow with pride, love, gratitude for superb achievement of completion of exterior of the House of Worship, Mother Temple of the West. Bahá'u'lláh's high behest, enshrined in His Most Holy Book, has been brilliantly executed. The thirty-five year old enterprise, initiated on same day that the Báb's sacred remains were transferred to Mount Carmel, has been triumphantly consummated. The unique Edifice, singled out for consecration by the hands of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, has been nobly reared. The Greatest Holy Leaf's last ardent wish has been befittingly fulfilled. The Concourse on high is jubilant. Myself bow head in joyous, reverent recognition of prodigious accomplishment which deserves to rank among the outstanding enterprises launched in the Heroic Age and the most signal victory won since the inception of the Formative Period of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

Cablegram January 18, 1943

HIS SERVICES UNFORGETTABLE

Assure relatives of Mathew Kaszab of my heartfelt condolences and profound sympathy for the loss of this heroic pioneer. His services are unforgettable and abundantly rewarded. Loving prayers.

Cablegram January 18, 1943

ALL-AMERICA CENTENNIAL CONVENTION

Message to 1943 Convention

I desire to announce to the elected representatives of the valiant, blessed, triumphant American Bahá'í Community assembled beneath the dome of the recently completed Mother Temple of the West on the occasion of the Convention inaugurating the hundredth year of the first Bahá'í Century, the

momentous decision to convene, in May, 1944, an All-America Centennial Convention comprising delegates to be separately elected by each State and Province in the North American continent, and to which every Republic of Latin America may send one representative. All groups, all isolated believers, as well as all local communities already possessing Assemblies, will henceforth share in the election of Convention delegates. The multiplication of Bahá'í Centers and the remarkable increase in the number of groups and isolated believers, prompt my decision. The historic occasion of next year's festivities, commemorating alike the Hundredth Anniversary of the birth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and the Fiftieth Anniversary of its establishment in the Western Hemisphere, and celebrating the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the first House of Worship in the Western World, imperatively demand it. Details of the project have already been mailed. I congratulate the best-loved American believers, I share their joy and wish them God-speed, confident of still greater victories as they forge ahead in the course of the second Bahá'í Century along the path leading them to their high destiny. I hope to forward, in time for the solemn thanksgiving service to be held in the auditorium of the Temple on the evening of May twenty-second, at the hour of His epoch-making Declaration, a sacred portrait of the Báb, the only copy ever sent out from the Holy Land, to be unveiled at the dedication ceremony and to repose for all time, together with Bahá'u'lláh's blessed hair, beneath the dome of the Holy Edifice within the heart of the North American continent.

April 14, 1943

FOUNDATION STONE LAID BY THE CENTER OF THE COVENANT

The completion of the exterior ornamentation of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Wilmette, the most hallowed Temple ever to be erected by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh, and the crowning glory of the first Bahá'í century, is an event of unique and transcendental significance. Neither the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Bahá'í world, reared in the city of Ishqábád, nor any House of Worship to be raised in succeeding centuries, can claim to possess the vast, the immeasurable potentialities with which this Mother Temple of the West, established in the very heart of so enviable a continent, and whose foundation stone has been laid by the hand of the Center of the Covenant Himself, has been endowed. Conceived forty years ago by that little band of far-sighted and resolute disciples of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, members of the first Bahá'í community established in the Western Hemisphere; blessed and fostered by a vigilant Master Who directed its course from the hour of its inception to the last days of His life; supported by the spontaneous contributions of Bahá'ís poured in from the five continents of the globe, this noble, this mighty, this magnificent enterprise deserves to rank among the immortal epics that have adorned the annals of the Apostolic Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

The debt of gratitude owed by the entire Bahá'í world to its champion-builders is indeed immeasurable. The admiration which this brilliant exploit has evoked in the breasts of countless followers of the Faith in East and West knows no bounds. The creative energies its completion must unleash are incalculable. The role it is destined to play in hastening the emergence of the world order of Bahá'u'lláh, now stirring in the womb of this travailing age, cannot as yet be fathomed. We stand too close to so majestic, so lofty, so radiant, so symbolic a monument raised so heroically to the glory of the Most Great Name, at so critical a stage in human history, and at so significant a spot in a continent so richly endowed, to be able to visualize the future glories which the consummation of this institution, this harbinger of an as yet unborn civilization, must in the fulness of time disclose to the eyes of all mankind.

That so laborious, so meritorious an undertaking has been completed a year before its appointed time is a further cause for rejoicing and gratitude, and an added testimony to the vision, the resourcefulness, and enterprising spirit of the American believers.

No need, however, to dwell at length on their past achievements, remarkable and exemplary though they have been, nor is this the time to expatiate on the superb spirit that has characterized their stewardship in the service of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. Tasks of extreme urgency, of great magnitude, of the utmost significance await them in this concluding year of the first Bahá'í century, and at this hour of great peril, of stress and trial for all mankind. The sacred—the pressing, the inescapable teaching responsibilities assumed under the Seven Year Plan must be resolutely faced as befits those whose record has shed so brilliant a light on the annals of the first Bahá'í century. The consolidation of each and every nucleus, formed so painstakingly in every republic of Central and South America, the formation of a Bahá'í Assembly in every virgin State and Province in the North American Continent, call for undivided attention, for further heroism, for a concerted, a persistent, a herculean effort on the part of the stalwart builders of that bounteous Edifice which posterity will recognize as the greatest shrine in the Western world.

Nor must the elaborate preparations in connection with the forthcoming celebration of the centenary of our glorious Faith be overlooked or neglected, if we would befittingly consummate this first, this most fecund, century of the Bahá'í era. An unprecedented, a carefully conceived, efficiently co-ordinated, nation-wide campaign, aiming at the proclamation of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, through speeches, articles in the press, and radio broadcasts, should be promptly initiated and vigorously prosecuted. The universality of the Faith, its aims and purposes, episodes in its dramatic history, testimonials to its transforming power, and the character and distinguishing features of its World Order should be emphasized and explained to the general public, and particularly to eminent friends and leaders sympathetic to its cause, who should be approached and invited to participate in the celebrations. Lectures, conferences, banquets, special publications should, to whatever extent is practicable and according to the resources at the disposal of the believers, proclaim the character of this joyous Festival. An all-American Convention, at which representatives of Bahá'í centers in every Republic in Central and South America will be invited to participate, and to which, for the first time, all isolated believers, all groups, and all communities already possessing local Spiritual Assemblies will have the right to appoint delegates and to share in the election of the National Spiritual Assembly, will, moreover, have to be held to commemorate this epoch-making event. A dedication ceremony, in consonance with the solemnity of the occasion, and held beneath the dome of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, on the very day and at the very hour of the Báb's historic Declaration, followed by a public session, consecrated to the memory of both the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, should constitute the leading features of this historic Convention.

For it should be borne in mind that in the year 1944 we celebrate not only the termination of the first century of the Bahá'í Era, but also the centenary of the birth of the Bahá'í Dispensation, of the inception of the Bahá'í cycle, and the birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and commemorate as well the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Bahá'í Faith in the Western world.

No effort, nor any sacrifice can be deemed too great to insure the decisive, the brilliant success of the celebrations which this historic year, of such manifold significance, must witness. He Who in the past has, in diverse ways and on so many occasions, graciously and unfailingly guided, blessed and sustained the members of this privileged community will, no doubt, continue to aid and inspire them to carry to a victorious conclusion the unfinished tasks which still confront them, and will enable them to crown their labors in a manner that will befit their high destiny.

March 28, 1943

BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITIES OF EAST AND WEST

Successive reports, proclaiming the American believers' brilliant feat, the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the Temple, their historic exploits in the spiritual conquest of every Republic of Latin America, as well as their impending victory to be won through the establishment of the structural basis of the Bahá'í administrative order in the Virgin States and Provinces of North America, are thrilling the Eastern communities of the Bahá'í world with delight, with admiration and with wonder.

Ninety-five Persian families, emulating the example of the American trail-blazers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, have recently forsaken their homes and followed in the footsteps of pioneers already departed from Persia yesterday evening to hoist its banner in the adjoining territories of Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Sulamaniyyih, Hġjáz and Bahrein Island.

Local Assemblies have been founded in Kashmir Valley in the extreme north and in Madras Presidency in the extreme south, as well as in Haydarabad, the leading stronghold of Muslim orthodoxy in India.

The National Bahá'í Administrative Headquarters of the Egyptian believers are nearing completion. A similar institution is in process of establishment in India's capital city, Delhi. A Guest House, adjunct to the newly built Administrative Headquarters of the Bahá'ís of 'Iráq, has been constructed.

Bahá'í communities of East and West are arising in the fourth year of the devastating conflict in the full strength of their undisruptable solidarity, resolved to write, through immortal deeds, further glorious pages in the last Chapter of the first Bahá'í Century.

I appeal to the standard-bearers of Bahá'u'lláh's ever-advancing army to safeguard the spiritual prizes already won and maintain every outpost of the Faith established in the southern hemisphere. I entreat them to exert still more magnificent efforts to discharge befittingly the one remaining responsibility in the North American continent.

I am praying for the achievement of a resounding total victory in all the Americas, thereby sealing the triumph of the first stage in the Divine Plan for whose execution the entire machinery of the Administrative Order was for no less than sixteen years patiently and laboriously erected.

May 27, 1943

THE CROWNING CRUSADE

The American believers' seven year enterprise consecrated to the service of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, deriving direct inspiration from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, launched on the eve of the world catastrophic conflict, recognized as the greatest collective undertaking in the annals of the first Bahá'í Century, is rapidly culminating. Their sister communities of Persia, British Isles, Egypt, 'Iráq, India, Syria, Australia and New Zealand marvel at the scale of the prodigious labors of the American Bahá'í community, gratefully rejoice at the accumulating evidences of its incomparable victories and are galvanized into action, inspired to emulate its example. The multiplication of Bahá'í centers in recent years in both East and West, the erection of administrative headquarters, the purchase of historic sites, the settlement of virgin areas, the migration into neighboring territories are all directly attributable to the potent impulse communicated through the superb action initiated and executed by the American adherents of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The initial stages of the momentous plan have been brilliantly executed. The most formidable obstacles impeding its progress have been courageously faced and progressively swept away. Its first fruits, exemplified by the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the Temple and the formation of a nucleus of the Faith in every Republic of Latin America, have been triumphantly gathered. The pivotal year marking the turning point of its fortunes has been immortalized by the unparalleled exploit of the formation of twenty-eight Assemblies in the States and Provinces of the North American continent. The range of its unfinished tasks is swiftly diminishing. Total victory is within sight but the six remaining virgin areas of Alaska, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, South Carolina, North Dakota and South Dakota, as well as the inadequately reinforced Republics of Nicaragua, San Domingo, Paraguay, Bolivia, Venezuela and Peru still demand the concentrated and sustained attention of the National representatives of the American Bahá'í community, the speedy assistance of the National Teaching and Inter-America Committees, and the systematic support of all subsidiary agencies both regional and local. The goal cities and the far-off Republics are calling for fresh recruits to complete the pioneer roll of honor. Veteran believers, however brilliant their record, neophytes, however limited their experience, are alike summoned as the final hour approaches to rush forth in a last supreme effort to bridge the remaining gaps in the spiritual front extending the entire length of the Western Hemisphere. I am ardently supplicating fresh outpourings of the sustaining grace of the Lord of Hosts to enable His stalwart warriors befittingly to consummate the crowning crusade of the first century of the Bahá'í Era.

August 2, 1943

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CENTENARY

The latest evidences of the magnificent success that has marked the activities of the members of the American Bahá'í community have been such as to excite the brightest hopes for the victorious consummation of the collective undertaking they have so courageously launched and have so vigorously prosecuted in recent years. As the first Bahá'í Century approaches its end, the magnitude and quality of their achievements acquire added significance and shed increasing luster on its annals. The proceedings of the recently held annual Convention; the formation of twenty-eight Assemblies in the course of the year that has just elapsed; the splendid progress achieved in the Latin-American field of Bahá'í activity; the superb spirit evinced by the pioneers holding their lonely posts in widely scattered areas throughout the Americas; the exemplary attitude shown by the entire body of the faithful towards the machinations of those who have so sedulously striven to disrupt the Faith and pervert its purpose—these have, to a marked degree, intensified the admiration of the Bahá'í communities for those who are contributing so outstanding a share to the enlargement of the limits, and the enhancement of the prestige, of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. The preparations which the American believers are undertaking for the celebration of the Centenary of the Faith must be such as to crown with immortal glory the fifty-year long record of their stewardship in the service of that Faith. Such a celebration must, in its scope and magnificence, fully compensate for the disabilities which hinder so many Bahá'í communities in Europe and elsewhere, and even in Bahá'u'lláh's native land, from paying a befitting tribute to their beloved Faith at so glorious an hour in its history. The few remaining months of this century must witness a concentration of effort, a scale of achievement, a spirit of heroism that will outshine even the most daring exploits that have already immortalized the Seven Year Plan and covered with glory its valiant prosecutors. The plea I addressed to them, at this late hour, will, I am sure, meet with a response no less remarkable than their past reactions to the appeals I have felt impelled to make to them ever since the inception of the Plan. He Who, at every stage of their collective enterprise, has so abundantly blessed them, will, no doubt, continue to vouchsafe the blessings until the seal of unqualified victory is set upon their epoch-making task.

August 8, 1943

THE BELOVED FAITH IS SURGING FORWARD

My heart is overflowing with joyous gratitude at the magnificent advance made in numerous spheres of Bahá'í activity. The formation of an Assembly in the few remaining areas of the North American continent, the consolidation of the foundation of the newly-established Assemblies, and the preservation of the status of the Bahá'í centers in all Republics of Latin America, imperatively demand vigilant care, concentrated attention and further self-sacrifice from the vanguard of the valiant army of Bahá'u'lláh. The beloved Faith is surging forward on all fronts. Its undefeatable, stalwart supporters, both teachers and administrators, are steeling themselves for noble tasks, braving acute dangers, sweeping away formidable obstacles, capturing new heights, founding mighty institutions, winning fresh recruits and confounding the schemes of insidious enemies. The American Bahá'í community must, and will at whatever cost, despite the pressure of events and the desolating war, maintain among its sister communities the exalted standard of stewardship incontestably set during the concluding years of the first Bahá'í Century. The confident spirit, unfaltering resolution animating its members, their tenacious valor, elevated loyalty, nobleness of spirit and mighty prowess, will, ere the expiry of the century, crown with complete victory the monumental enterprises undertaken during the course of the fifty years of its existence.

October 5, 1943

A STILL MORE COMPELLING DISPLAY

The vigorous action promptly taken by your assembly to insure the success of the forthcoming Centenary Celebrations is highly commendable, and provides a fresh demonstration of the magnificent response made by the American believers to every call demanding renewed exertion on their part in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The progress recently achieved in building up Spiritual Assemblies in the virgin areas of the North American continent has been truly remarkable. To consummate so vast an enterprise, however, a still more compelling display of the vitality of the spirit animating the American Bahá'í community is required, a still greater concentration of effort is needed, an even more stirring evidence of the daring boldness of its members is imperative. Whoever will arise, in these concluding, fast-fleeting months of the last year of the first Bahá'í Century, to fill the remaining posts, and thereby set the seal of total victory on a Plan so pregnant with promise, will earn the lasting gratitude of the present generation of believers in both the East and the West, will merit the acclaim of posterity, will be vouchsafed the special benediction of the Concourse on High, and be made the recipient of the imperishable bounties of Him Who is the Divine Author of the Plan itself. Whoever will rush forth, at this eleventh hour, and cast his weight into the scales, and contribute his decisive share to so gigantic, so sacred and historic an undertaking, will have not only helped seal the triumph of the Plan itself but will also have notably participated in the fulfillment of what may be regarded as the crowning act of an entire century. The opportunity that presents itself at this crucial hour is precious beyond expression. The blessings destined to flow from a victory so near at hand are rich beyond example. One final surge of that indomitable spirit that has carried the American Bahá'í community to such heights is all that is required, as the first Bahá'í century speeds to a close, to release the flow of those blessings that must signalize the termination of the first, and usher in the dawn of the second, Bahá'í Century.

November 16, 1943

THE AUSPICIOUS YEAR

The auspicious year destined to witness the Centenary of the Birth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is brilliantly opening. The last year of the first Bahá'í Century is more than half spent. The tempo of organized, concerted activities of the members of the worldwide Bahá'í community is correspondingly accelerating. Teaching campaigns, enterprises of institutional significance, publicity measures, publication projects, and celebration plans are rapidly multiplying. Inter-community competition is steadily mounting. The world-desolating conflict, now in its fifth year, is powerless to cloud the splendid prospect of the triumphant termination of the first, most shining century of the Bahá'í Era. Tīhrán reports thirty-four Assemblies constituted, fifty-four groups reinforced, fifty-eight new centers established. Messages from Delhi indicate that Bahá'ís have established residence in over sixty localities in India and eighteen Assemblies are already functioning. To the National Bahá'í Headquarters previously founded in Tīhrán, Wilmette and Baghdád, are now added similar centers in Cairo, Delhi and Sydney, officially registered in the names of their respective National Assemblies, and representing an addition to Bahá'í national endowments amounting to approximately eighteen thousand pounds. The Bahá'í international endowments have been further enriched by a recent acquisition on Mount Carmel in the vicinity of the Báb's Shrine transferred to the name of the Palestine Branch of the American National Assembly. Twenty-five acres of land situated in the Jordan Valley have just been dedicated to the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh. The recent acquisition of land adjacent to the site of the projected Tīhrán Temple raises the holding to over three and a half million square meters. The Seven Year Plan, providing the chief impulse to the extraordinary expansion of these magnificent activities, must, during the remaining five months, as befitting thanksgiving act for continued outpouring of God's unfailing grace, surge ahead to dazzling victory surpassing our highest expectations. The prosecution of the Plan, whose scope transcends every other enterprise launched by Bahá'í communities throughout the whole century, must, ere the hundred years run out, culminate in one last, supreme effort whose repercussions will resound throughout the Bahá'í world.

January 4, 1944

ADDITION TO ENDOWMENTS

Since the transmission of my recent message conveying news of the magnificent progress achieved by Bahá'í communities, a substantial addition to the endowments dedicated to the Shrines raises the holdings in the Jordan Valley to over five hundred acres. The extension of teaching enterprises East and West, the multiplication of Bahá'í endowments, national and international, the consolidation of administrative institutions, above all the superb evidences of incorruptible loyalty to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His Will, equally proclaim the unyielding determination of the world community to seal with triumph the first Bahá'í Century.

January 16, 1944

PARTICIPATION OF LATIN AMERICAN BELIEVERS

The participation of Latin American believers in the Bahá'í Centennial Convention is vital to the future development of the Faith in the Americas. I urge individuals as well as the National Assembly to extend assistance, financial and otherwise, to enable as many representatives as possible to join the North American believers in the proceedings of a gathering of such momentous importance and historic significance in the evolution of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the western hemisphere.

January 29, 1944

BEFITTINGLY CONSUMMATE THE ENTERPRISES

The brilliant achievements of the heroic pioneers, the itinerant teachers, the indefatigable administrators of Bahá'í teaching activities whether local, regional or national, set the seal of total victory on the Seven Year Plan, befittingly consummate the fifty year long enterprises undertaken by the American Bahá'í Century. My heart is filled with joy, love, pride and gratitude at the contemplation of the stupendous shining deeds immortalizing the valiant prosecutors of the greatest collective enterprise ever launched in the course of the history of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

April 2, 1944

TURNING POINT IN BAHÁ'Í HISTORY

The one remaining and indeed the most challenging task confronting the American Bahá'í Community has at long last been brilliantly accomplished. The structural basis of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has, through this superb victory, and on the very eve of the world-wide celebrations of the Centenary of His Faith, been firmly laid by the champion-builders of His World Order in every state of the Great Republic of the West and in every Province of the Dominion of Canada. In each of the Republics of Central and South America, moreover, the banner of His undefeatable Faith has been implanted by the members of that same community, while in no less than thirteen Republics of Latin America as well as in two Dependencies in the West Indies, Spiritual Assemblies have been established and are already functioning—a feat that has outstripped the goal originally fixed for the valiant members of that Community in their inter-continental sphere of Bahá'í activity. The exterior ornamentation of the first *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* of the West—the culmination of a forty year old enterprise repeatedly blessed and continually nurtured by 'Abdu'l-Bahá has, furthermore, through a remarkable manifestation of the spirit of Bahá'í solidarity and self-sacrifice so powerfully animating the members of that stalwart community, been successfully completed, more than a year in advance of the time set for its termination.

The triple task undertaken with such courage, confidence, zeal and determination—a task which ever since the inception of the Seven Year Plan has challenged and galvanized into action the entire body of the American believers and for the efficient prosecution of which processes of a divinely appointed Administrative Order had, during no less than sixteen years, been steadily evolving—is now finally accomplished and crowned with total victory.

The greatest collective enterprise ever launched by the Western followers of Bahá'u'lláh and indeed ever undertaken by any Bahá'í community in the course of an entire century, has been gloriously consummated. A victory of undying fame has marked the culmination of the fifty year long labors of the American Bahá'í community in the service of Bahá'u'lláh and has shed imperishable lustre on the immortal records of His Faith during the first hundred years of its existence. The exploits that have marked the progress of this prodigious, this three-fold enterprise, covering a field stretching from Alaska in the North to the extremity of Chile in the South, affecting the destinies of so great a variety of peoples and nations, involving such a tremendous expenditure of treasure and effort, calling forth so remarkable a spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice, and undertaken notwithstanding the vicious assaults and incessant machinations of the breakers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Covenant, and despite the perils, the trials and restrictions of a desolating war of unexampled severity, augur well for the successful prosecution, and indeed assure the ultimate victory, of the remaining stages of the Plan conceived, a quarter of a century ago, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the North American continent.

To the band of pioneers, whether settlers or itinerant teachers, who have forsaken their homes, who have scattered far and wide, who have willingly sacrificed their comfort, their health and even their lives for the prosecution of this Plan; to the several committees and their auxiliary agencies that have been entrusted with special and direct responsibility for its efficient and orderly development and who have discharged their high responsibilities with exemplary vigor, courage and fidelity; to the national representatives of the community itself, who have vigilantly and tirelessly supervised, directed and coordinated the unfolding

processes of this vast undertaking ever since its inception; to all those who, though not in the forefront of battle, have through their financial assistance and through the instrumentality of their deputies, contributed to the expansion and consolidation of the Plan, I myself, as well as the entire Bahá'í world, owe a debt of gratitude that no one can measure or describe. To the sacrifices they have made, to the courage they have so consistently shown, to the fidelity they have so remarkably displayed, to the resourcefulness, the discipline, the constancy and devotion they have so abundantly demonstrated, future generations viewing the magnitude of their labors in their proper perspective, will no doubt pay adequate tribute—a tribute no less ardent and well-deserved than the recognition extended by the present-day builders of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh to the Dawn-Breakers, whose shining deeds have signaled the birth of the Heroic Age of His Faith.

To the elected representatives of all the Bahá'í communities of the New World, assembled beneath the Dome of the Mother Temple of the West, on the occasion of the historic, first All-American Bahá'í Convention—a Convention at which every state and province in the North American continent is represented, in which the representatives of every Republic of Latin America have been invited to participate, whose delegates have been elected, for the first time in American Bahá'í history, by all local communities already possessing Assemblies, by all groups and isolated believers throughout the United States and Canada, and whose proceedings will be for ever associated with the celebration of the Centenary of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Bahá'í Faith in the Western Hemisphere, and of the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the First Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, to all the privileged attendants of such an epoch-making Convention, I, on my own behalf, as well as in the name of all Bahá'í Communities sharing with them, at this great turning point in the history of our Faith, the joys and triumphs of this solemn hour, feel moved to convey the expression of our loving admiration, our joy and our gratitude for the brilliant conclusion of what posterity will no doubt acclaim as one of the most stirring episodes in the history of the Formative Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, as well as one of the most momentous enterprises undertaken during the entire course of the first Century of the Bahá'í Era.

April 15, 1944

INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Bahá'ís have established residence in seventy-eight countries, fifty-six of which are sovereign states. Bahá'í literature has been translated and published in forty-one languages. Translations have been undertaken in twelve additional languages. Thirty-one races are represented in the Bahá'í world community. Five National Assemblies and sixty-one local Assemblies belonging to ten countries are incorporated and legally empowered to hold property. The Bahá'í international endowments held in the Holy Land are estimated at a half million pounds sterling. National Bahá'í endowments in the United States are estimated at one million, seven hundred thousand dollars.

The area of land in the Jordan Valley dedicated to the Bahá'í Shrines is over five hundred acres. The site purchased for future Bahá'í Temple of Persia comprises three and a half million square meters. The cost of the structure of the first Bahá'í Temple in the West has been one million, three hundred thousand dollars.

In every state and province of North America Bahá'í Assemblies are functioning. In thirteen hundred localities of the United States and Canada Bahá'ís reside. Bahá'í Centers have been established in every republic of Latin America, fifteen of which possess Spiritual Assemblies. The Faith in the Western Hemisphere now stretches from Anchorage, Alaska, to Magallanes, the world's southernmost city. Sixty-two Centers have been established in India, twenty-seven with Spiritual Assemblies.

Among the historic sites purchased in Persia are the Tīhrán home of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb's shop in Bushire, the burial place of Quddús, part of the village Chihríq, three gardens in Badasht, and the place where Táhirih was confined.

Bahá'í administrative headquarters have been founded in Tīhrán, Delhi, Cairo, Baghdád, Wilmette and Sydney. Bahá'í endowments in the Holy Land and the United States have been exempted from taxes by the civil authorities. Civil recognition has been extended to Bahá'í Assemblies in five states of the United States to solemnize Bahá'í marriages.

May 9, 1944

MESSAGE TO CENTENARY CONVENTION

Hail with glad, grateful heart the historic Assembly of the elected representatives of the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the Western Hemisphere participating in the first All-America Convention gathered in the vicinity of the first Bahá'í Center of the Western World beneath the dome of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West to commemorate alike the Anniversary of the founding of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and the Birth of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Anniversary of its establishment in the Occident and to celebrate the completion of the exterior ornamentation of the most hallowed House of Worship in the entire Bahá'í world. I recall with profound emotion on this solemn, auspicious occasion the milestones in the progress of the community whose rise constitutes one of the noblest episodes in the history of the First Bahá'í Century. Called into being through the operation of the will of the Center of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, energized at the hour of its birth by dynamic spirit communicated to it by the band of first returning pilgrims, purged in its infancy by fiery tests involving the defection of its acknowledged founder, nursed through the dispatch of unnumbered Tablets by the vigilant Master, as well as by the successive messengers designed to support its infant strength, launched upon its rapid career through series of institutional acts and missionary journeys signaling the first stirrings of its community life, infinitely enriched by priceless benefits conferred upon its members in the course of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sojourn in their midst, invested with a unique mission through the revelation of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, firmly knit through processes proclaiming the emergence of the Divinely appointed Administrative Order, immortalized through the signal acts of its illustrious member who succeeded in winning the allegiance of royalty to its cause, consummating its record of achievements through total victory of the Seven Year Plan thereby sealing the triumph of the first stage in the Mission bestowed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this repeatedly blessed, much envied community deserves to be acclaimed the Torchbearer of the civilization, the foundations of which the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is destined unassailably to establish in the course of the Second Bahá'í Century. I am moved to pay a well deserved tribute at this great turning point in the career of so privileged a community to the gallant band of its apostolic founders whose deeds heralded the dawn of the Day of the Covenant in the West, to its intrepid pioneers who labored to enlarge the bounds of the Faith in the five continents, to its indefatigable administrators whose hands reared the fabric of the Administrative Order, to its heroic martyrs who followed in the footsteps of the Dawn-Breakers of the heroic age, to its itinerant teachers who with written and spoken word pleaded its cause and repulsed the attacks of its adversaries, to its munificent supporters whose liberality accelerated the expansion of its manifold activities, and last but not least to the mass of its stout-hearted, self-denying members whose strenuous, ceaseless, concerted efforts so decisively contributed to the consolidation and broadening of its foundations. I desire to direct a particular appeal to the Latin American representatives participating in the Centennial Convention to deliberate on measures to reinforce the ties binding them to their Sister Community, unitedly devise means for the inauguration of teaching campaigns in their respective Republics, the dissemination of Bahá'í literature, the multiplication of Bahá'í administrative centers as preliminary steps in the formation of Bahá'í National Assemblies, and lend impetus to the prosecution of any enterprise launched to carry still further the Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the American Bahá'í Community.

May 15, 1944

CONSOLIDATION OF NOBLY-WON VICTORIES

The magnificent victories achieved in the teaching field and the sphere of administrative activity by the American Bahá'í community crowned with glory the historic services rendered by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the West during the last fifty years of the first Bahá'í Century. I rejoice in the brilliant celebrations befittingly consummating the record of splendid achievements. Immediate attention should be focused in the course of the opening year of the Second Century on consolidation of the nobly-won victories through reinforcement of newly formed Assemblies, multiplication of groups and increase in number of Assemblies as well as corresponding effort through Latin America. Praying for continuous flow of Divine outpourings.

Cablegram May 27, 1944

A SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY IN EVERY REMAINING REPUBLIC

I rejoice in the success of the vitally needed, timely conference with Latin American representatives; greatly welcome the decisions reached and the plans formulated. The first year of the second Bahá'í century should witness the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly in every remaining Republic and be signalized by a steady increase in the number of pioneers for both Latin and North America; by a further multiplication of groups, a wider dissemination of Bahá'í literature in both Spanish and Portuguese, closer relationships consolidating the communities and more effective contact by these communities with the masses of the population and all races and classes. I am ardently praying for mighty victories in every field as essential preliminary to the emergence of independent National Spiritual Assemblies and as indispensable prelude to launching in other continents, soon after the termination of the world conflict, the second stage of the momentous World Plan so intimately associated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá with the future destinies of the illustrious American Bahá'í Community.

July 17, 1944

THE SEAL OF SPIRITUAL TRIUMPH

The splendid and unique success that has attended the Centenary celebrations so admirably conducted by the American Bahá'í community, has befittingly crowned not only the fifty year record of services rendered by its valiant members, but the labors associated with the entire body of their fellow-workers in East and West in the course of an entire century. The consummation of the Seven Year Plan, immortalizing the fame of this richly blessed community, set the seal of complete spiritual triumph on these historic celebrations. A memorable chapter in the history of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the West has been closed. A new chapter is now opening, a chapter which, ere its termination, must eclipse the most shining victories won so heroically by those who have so fearlessly launched the first stage of the Great Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the American believers. The prizes won so painstakingly in both the North and South American continents must be preserved at all costs. A mighty impetus should, at however great a sacrifice, be lent to the multiplication of Bahá'í centers in Latin America, to the expansion of Bahá'í literature, to the translation of the Bahá'í sacred writings, to the proclamation of the verities of the Faith to the masses, to the strengthening of the bonds binding the newly-fledged communities to each other, and to the deepening of the spiritual life of their members.

The task so marvelously initiated in the Latin Republics must be further consolidated ere the prosecutors of the World Plan bequeathed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá can embark on further stages, of still greater significance, in their world teaching mission. The cessation of hostilities will open before them fields of service of tremendous fertility and undreamed-of magnitude. The advantages and opportunities these fields will offer them cannot be exploited unless and until the work to which they have already set their hand in the Western Hemisphere is sufficiently advanced and consolidated. Time is pressing. The new tasks are already beginning to loom on the horizon. The work that still remains to be accomplished ere the next stage is ushered in is still considerable and exacting. I feel confident that the American Bahá'í community will, as it has in the past, rise to the occasion and discharge its high duties as befits the unique position it occupies.

August 18, 1944

FAITHFUL PIONEER

Share grief at passing of devoted, faithful pioneer (John Stearns). His services have been unforgettable and highly meritorious. Advise the construction of a memorial. Assure friends in Lima (Peru) my deepest, loving sympathy.

Cablegram November 19, 1944

PASSAGES IN “GOD PASSES BY”

Comforted, strengthened by assurance of sympathy and loyalty of American believers in the deplorable, delicate situation created by dishonorable alliances made by members of my family, first with Covenant-breakers and now with external enemies of the Faith.

The marvelous, rapid, sound evolution of the institutions of the Faith in five continents, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, constitutes best monition, most effective counteraction to the detrimental influence of those whose acts proclaim their severance from the Holy Tree and their forfeiture of their sacred birthright.

The occasion demands that you direct special attention to passages in “God Passes By” indicating the gravity of the past crises precipitated since the inception of the Faith by kinsmen both of the Manifestation and the Center of His Covenant, demonstrating the pitiful futility of their nefarious activities and the sad fate overtaking defectors and betrayers.

The present hour calls for unrelaxing vigilance, continued heroism, redoubled efforts, renewed dedication by rank and file of the community enjoying preponderating share alike in the erection, the defense, and the consolidation of the worldwide Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh since the passing of the Center of His Covenant.

I urge the entire Bahá’í community of the Western Hemisphere to focus its attention during the remaining months of the opening year of the second century on the formation of local Assemblies in the remaining Republics of Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela, Bolivia and San Domingo, guard against dissolution of Assemblies already painstakingly established throughout the Americas, exert effort on further multiplication of groups, wider dissemination of literature, greater use of radio, closer contact with masses, more audacious proclamation of the Faith, more effective coordination of local and national activities aiming at fuller demonstration of the rights and claims of the Faith to be regarded as sole refuge of humanity in its hour of bitterest agony.

The American believers’ meritorious activities, individual, local, interstate, intercontinental, will be the object of my special prayers during the approaching Anniversary of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Ascension.

Cablegram November 21, 1944

THE SUCCEEDING STAGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF THEIR WORLD MISSION

1944, a year memorable for the sharp contrast between the rising tide of spiritual victories culminating in the Centenary celebrations of a world-embracing Faith and the swiftly ebbing fortunes of a war-ravaged, disillusioned and bankrupt society, is drawing to a close. In every continent of the globe; in the Holy Land, the Heart and Center of our Faith and Pivot of its institutions; in the land of its birth; in the adjoining territory of 'Irâq; throughout the Western Hemisphere; in the British Isles, so severely subjected to the violence of a world tempest; throughout the length and breadth of India; in far-off Australasia and in the Nile Valley—all with the sole exception of the distant Republics of the West subjected in varying degrees to the imminent danger of becoming the theatre of war—the communities laboring for the promotion of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have, throughout five tumultuous years, been providentially spared to hold aloft its banner, to preserve its integrity, to maintain the continuity of its institutions, to enrich its annals, to consolidate its structure, to further disseminate its literature and to befittingly celebrate its Centenary. Preponderant indeed has been the share of that privileged community, which has been invested by the Pen of the Center of the Covenant with a world-wide mission, in the prosecution of a task which, ever since the onset of this world upheaval and despite its mounting horrors, the builders of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have so unflaggingly pursued. Neither the participation of the Great Republic of the West in this fierce contest, nor the sorrows, burdens and restrictions which such direct association with the agonies of a travailing age has entailed, have thus far been capable of dimming the splendor of the exploits that have immortalized the record of the services of this community since the ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Indeed, coincident with the period of America's direct participation in this world struggle and in direct proportion to the turmoil and the tribulations which such a participation has engendered, the members of this community have evinced a heroism and proved themselves capable of a concerted effort that have eclipsed the notable achievements that have heralded the establishment of the Administrative Order of the Faith as well as the first stage in the development of the Seven Year Plan.

What the year 1945, on whose threshold we now stand, has in store for the members of this determined, this valiant, this watchful, this exemplary community only the future can reveal. That the trials and afflictions suffered by their country and its people must wax as this world upheaval moves towards a climax no one can any longer doubt. The challenge that will face this stalwart community will no doubt be severe. To allow the prizes so nobly won, over so vast a field, at so great a cost, at so critical an hour, to fall into jeopardy would be unworthy of a career so auspiciously initiated, so completely dedicated to the Cause of God, so rich in promise and so brilliant in almost every phase of its evolution. Every local Assembly, the ordained pivot of a divinely-ordained System, which has been established in the States and Provinces of the North American continent, as well as in the Republics of Latin America, must, through a supreme effort on the part of pioneers, visiting teachers and Regional Committees, be steadfastly maintained. Simultaneously a no less determined effort should be exerted to enable the admittedly large number of groups scattered throughout the Americas to attain Assembly status. No less urgent is the obligation to proclaim the verities enshrined in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh by every means which individuals, Assemblies and committees can devise, through the press and radio, through an unprecedented dissemination of literature,

through its systematic translation into Spanish and Portuguese and above all through active association with leaders of public thought as well as direct contact with the masses of the people. Through such means as these, and through such means only can the members of the American Bahá'í Community, who have so audaciously and successfully launched the first stage of the Divine Plan, be enabled to pave the way and usher in, soon after the cessation of hostilities, the succeeding stage in the evolution of their world mission. My prayers and loving thoughts surround them continually in their devoted labors.

December 24, 1944

THE ADMISSION OF PERSIANS

I desire to reiterate the warning that no Persian, student or otherwise, must be admitted into the community under any circumstances unless provided with full credentials. Exception and compromise would be detrimental to the vital interests of the Faith at the present juncture. The utmost caution and vigilance is imperative.

January 20, 1945

STAUNCH PIONEER

Deeply grieve passing of indefatigable, staunch pioneer (i.e., Miss Mary Lesch) of the Faith in the Day of the Covenant. The record of her services imperishable, her reward great in the Abhá Kingdom.

Cablegram, March 27, 1945

THE ONE MESSAGE THAT CAN EXTRICATE HUMANITY

The Divine Plan conceived by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for the American Bahá’í community, in the midst of one of the darkest periods in human history and with which the destinies of the followers of Bahá’u’lláh in the North American continent must for generations to come remain inextricably interwoven, has, during the concluding years of the first Bahá’í Century, triumphantly emerged from the first stage of its evolution. Its initiation, officially and on a vast scale, had, for well nigh twenty years, been held in abeyance, while the processes of a slowly emerging administrative Order, were, under the unerring guidance of Providence, creating and perfecting the agencies for its efficient and systematic prosecution. The next stage in the evolution of the Plan cannot, however, be embarked upon, until the external causes, hampering its further unfoldment in other continents of the globe, are removed through the cessation of hostilities and the signal victories already won through its initial development are sufficiently consolidated throughout the Western Hemisphere. The tasks confronting those who have so valiantly and brilliantly inaugurated the first stage in the execution of the Great Design unfolded by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for the promulgation of the Faith of His Father, during this transitional period, are manifold, exacting, urgent, and sacred. The local administrative units, so laboriously constituted throughout the Americas, must needs, as already pointed out and repeatedly stressed, be maintained, reinforced, closely integrated and their number steadily multiplied. The spirit that has inflamed the pioneers who have set the seal of triumph on the Seven Year Plan, must under the vigilant care of the National representatives of the American Bahá’í community be constantly watched, kept alive and nourished. The literature of the Faith, particularly in Spanish and Portuguese, must be widely disseminated in both Central and South America, as a necessary adjunct to the systematic consolidation of the work that has been undertaken. Above all, the healing Message of Bahá’u’lláh must during the opening years of the second Bahá’í Century, and through the instrumentality of an already properly functioning Administrative Order, whose ramifications have been extended to the four corners of the Western Hemisphere, be vividly, systematically brought to the attention of the masses, in their hour of grief, misery and confusion. A more audacious assertion of the challenging verities of the Faith; a more convincing presentation of its distinguishing truths; a fuller exposition of the character, the aims and the achievements of its rising Administrative system as the nucleus and pattern of its future world-embracing order; a more direct and intimate contact and association with the leaders of public thought, whose activities and aims are akin to the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, for the purpose of demonstrating the universality, the comprehensiveness, the liberality and the dynamic power of His Divine Message; a closer scrutiny of the ways and means whereby its claims can be vindicated, its defamers and detractors silenced, and its institutions safeguarded; a more determined effort to exploit, to the fullest extent possible, the talents and abilities of the rank and file of the believers for the purpose of achieving these ends—these stand out as the paramount tasks summoning to a challenge, during these years of transition and turmoil, the entire body of the American believers. The facilities which the radio and press furnish must be utilized to a degree unprecedented in American Bahá’í history. The combined resources of the much-envied exemplary American Bahá’í community must be harnessed for the effectual promotion of these meritorious purposes. Blessings undreamt of in their scope and plenteousness, are bound to be vouchsafed to those who will, in these dark yet pregnant times, arise to further these noble ends and to hasten through their acts the hour at which a still more momentous stage in the evolution of a Divine and worldwide Plan can be launched.

There is no time to lose. The hour is ripe for the proclamation, without fear, without reserve, and without hesitation, and on a scale never as yet undertaken, of the One Message that can alone extricate humanity from the morass into which it is steadily sinking, and from which they who claim to be the followers of the Most Great Name can and will eventually rescue it. The sooner they who labor for the recognition and triumph of His Faith in the new world arise to carry out these inescapable duties, the sooner will the hopes, the aims and objectives of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as enshrined in His own Plan, be translated from the realm of vision to the plane of actuality and manifest the full force of the potentialities with which they have been endowed.

March 29, 1945

MY HEAVY-LADENED HEART

My heavy laden heart, already oppressed by repeated defections of the unworthy kindred of the beloved Master, is relieved by latest signal evidence of the indomitable spirit of the members of divinely chosen American Bahá'í community now unfurling the banner of the Faith and establishing the structural basis of its administrative order in the world's southernmost city. I hail the staunchness and fidelity distinguishing the winners of such superb victories. I acclaim them true brothers and sisters worthy of the name 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I urge the Inter-America Committee to devote special attention and undertake prompt measures designed to increase the number of believers, establish local administrative headquarters, and multiply the subsidiary agencies indispensable to the maintenance of a flourishing community in the southern extremity of the western hemisphere. Praying ever increasing successes.

Cablegram April 21, 1945

NATIONWIDE, INTERCONTINENTAL PLANS

Assure newly-elected members of my fervent prayers for divine guidance and strength to accomplish the tasks confronting the American Bahá'í community in the second year of the second Bahá'í century. I appeal to National Teaching, Regional and Inter-America Committees to intensify efforts for multiplication of groups and Assemblies the length and breadth of the western hemisphere. An ever-increasing flow of pioneers is indispensable to meet the urgent requirements of the present hour. Renewed, determined, continued exertions by individuals aimed at an unprecedented increase in the number of enrolled believers is vital to the consolidation of activities undertaken by pioneers. Systematic, well-conceived, carefully coordinated plans, nationwide and intercontinental, devised by elected national representatives of the community, are likewise a necessary preliminary to a seed-sowing unexampled both in range and effectiveness in American Bahá'í history. The attainment of this threefold objective in North, Central and South America will signalize the initiation, in other continents, of the world mission constituting the sacred birthright of the American followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Cablegram May 8, 1945

A SINGLE, ORGANICALLY-UNITED WORLD COMMONWEALTH

The followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout five continents unanimously rejoice in the partial emergence of a war-torn humanity from the titanic upheaval unerringly predicted seventy years ago by the Pen of the Author of their Faith. The cessation of hostilities in the European continent signalizes yet another chapter in the tragic tale of fiery trials providentially decreed by inscrutable wisdom designed ultimately to weld the mutually antagonistic elements of human society into a single, organically-united, unshatterable world commonwealth. They gratefully acclaim the signal evidence of the interposition of divine Providence which during such perilous years enabled the World Center of our Faith to escape what posterity will recognize as one of the gravest dangers which ever confronted the nerve center of its institutions. They are profoundly aware of the bountiful grace vouchsafed by that same Providence insuring, unlike the previous world conflict, uninterrupted intercourse between the spiritual Center and the vast majority of the communities functioning within the orbit of a far-flung Faith. They are immeasurably thankful for the miraculous preservation of the Indian, Persian, Egyptian, British and Iráqí communities, long threatened by dire perils owing to their proximity to the theatre of military operations. They are deeply conscious that the progress achieved, despite six tempestuous years, in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, through the collective enterprises launched by these communities, outshines the sum total of the accomplishments since the inception of the Formative Age of the Faith.

The Seven Year Plan inaugurated by the American Bahá'í community under the lowering clouds of the approaching conflict victoriously completed the exterior ornamentation of the Mother Temple of the West, established the structural basis of the Faith in every State and Province of the North American continent, and hoisted its banner in every Republic of Latin America. The Indian believers' Six Year Plan, launched on the eve of hostilities, more than quadrupled the centers functioning within the pale of the Administrative Order. The edifices consecrated to the administrative affairs of an ever-advancing Cause, involving the expenditure of over a hundred thousand dollars, were erected, purchased or completed in the Capital Cities of India, 'Iráq and Egypt as well as Sydney, Australia. The acquisition of numerous properties in Bahá'u'lláh's native land, on Mount Carmel and in the Jordan Valley, as well as the purchase of several important historic sites associated with the Lives of both the Herald and the Author of the Faith, swelled to an unprecedented degree our Bahá'í endowments.

Preliminary steps for the completion of the Báb's Sepulchre and the establishment of the World Administrative Center through the removal of the Remains of the Brother and Mother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá were undertaken. The termination of the First Century of the Bahá'í Era, synchronizing with the climax of the raging storm, was publicly and befittingly celebrated, despite the multiplication of restrictions. Above all, the unity and integrity of an incorruptible world community was consistently safeguarded in face of the insidious opposition of avowed enemies without and the Covenant-breakers within.

Such splendid victories, over so vast a field, amidst such tribulations during so prolonged an ordeal, augur well for the colossal tasks destined to be accomplished during the course of the

peaceful years ahead by the builders of the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh amidst the wreckage of a disrupted, disillusioned society.

Cablegram May 12, 1945

A NEW PHASE OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

The cessation of hostilities on the continent of Europe, the prospect of an early termination of the bloody conflict raging in the Far East, invest the members of the world Bahá'í community, and particularly its standard-bearers in the great Republic of the West, with a great, a unique, and inescapable responsibility. The first stage of the mission laid upon them by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the inauguration of which has been so long retarded while the processes of a slowly emerging administrative order were being set in motion, and which coincided with one of the darkest and most tragic periods in human history, has been brought to a triumphant conclusion, and added a golden page to the annals of the closing years of the first Bahá'í century.

As a new phase in the painful evolution of a sorely-tried and wayward humanity opens, a new challenge summons the prosecutors of a Divine Plan to gird up their loins, muster their resources, and prepare themselves for the launching of the second stage of an enterprise which, as it reveals its full potentialities, must stretch to embrace the five continents of the globe. World turmoil, grave dangers, severe restrictions, the lethargy of the public engrossed in its war problems, have failed to dampen the zeal, or to undermine the resolve, or to interfere with the successful discharge of the duty assumed by those who have so determinedly embarked on the opening stage of their world encircling, divinely appointed mission. With the return to more normal conditions, with the improvement of the means of travel and communication, with the lifting of the deadening weight of fear and care and the growing receptivity of the masses schooled in adversity and groping for the means of ultimate salvation, opportunities without number and unprecedented in their significance, present themselves to those whose privilege and obligation it is to pave the way for the launching of the succeeding stage of their historic and ever unfolding task.

Not until, however, normal conditions are fully restored and the world situation is stabilized, and, above all, the prizes won through the operation of the Seven Year Plan are adequately safeguarded and the basis of the newly established Administrative Order sufficiently consolidated throughout the Western Hemisphere, can the ambassadors of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, carrying aloft the banner of His Name in the American continent, be called upon to undertake unitedly and systematically, collective responsibility for the diffusion of His Message, and for the erection of the fabric of His Administrative Order, amidst the sorrow-stricken, war-lacerated, sorely bewildered nations and peoples of the European continent.

The sooner the home tasks are fully discharged and newly fledged Assemblies in Central and South America enabled to function adequately and vigorously, the sooner will the stalwart members of the American Bahá'í community, who, during so brief a period, and despite the prevailing darkness, achieved such wonders throughout the Americas, extend the healing influence of their Faith, on a scale as yet unprecedented, to the waiting masses of that agitated continent.

As already observed, an intensification of effort is imperatively required aiming at a bolder proclamation of the verities of a God-given Faith, at a systematic and continent-wide dissemination of its authentic literature, at a closer contact with the masses as well as the leaders of public thought, at a further consolidation and multiplication of the administrative centers scattered throughout the new world, and constituting the nuclei of its future World

Order, and, above all, at a more convincing revelation of Bahá'í love, unity, solidarity and self-sacrifice, which alone can hasten the consummation of the preliminary undertakings required to terminate the period of transition intervening between the first and second stages of the greatest crusade ever launched in the history of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Time is pressing, the work that still remains to be accomplished in the new world is vast and urgent, the need of the suffering masses the world over, and particularly in Europe, is pitiable, the sustaining grace destined to be vouchsafed from on high to those who will arise to achieve that task and fulfill this need is boundless and assured. Its potency has been already fully experienced, and abundantly demonstrated in the years that have witnessed the most prodigious efforts exerted by the American believers. A still more powerful display of its miraculous force can be confidently anticipated, if those who have felt its impact in the past arise to carry out, in the years that lie immediately ahead, the sublime and twofold task of the redemption of mankind and the establishment of the world sovereignty of Bahá'u'lláh.

Cablegram August 10, 1945

HEARTS UPLIFTED IN THANKSGIVING

Our hearts are uplifted in thanksgiving for complete cessation of the prolonged, unprecedented world conflict. I hail the prospects of the removal of the restrictions enabling American Bahá'í Community to expedite the preliminary measures required to launch the second stage of the Divine Plan. I appeal focus attention upon the requirements of the all-important Latin American work. The adequate fulfillment of this vital task precludes the assumption of collective responsibility by triumphant community of the spiritual enlightenment and ultimate redemption of sorely-trying, war-ravaged European continent, destined to be associated with exploits which must immortalize the second stage of the World Mission entrusted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the apostles of His Father's Faith in the western world. The opportunities of the present hour are infinitely precious, the time is pressing, the call of the distressed, groping peoples of Europe pitiful, insistent. The work still to be accomplished to consummate the mighty enterprise undertaken in Latin America is considerable. The Almighty's sustaining grace is assured, unfailing. I am praying from the depths of a joyful, thankful heart for the outpouring of blessings no less remarkable than the divine bounties vouchsafed unto the valiant prosecutors of the Plan in the course of the opening phase of their World Mission.

Cablegram August 20, 1945

THE WORK OF REHABILITATION

The reports recently received from various sources, regarding the sad conditions prevailing among the members of the sorely-stricken, long-suffering Bahá'í communities in Germany and Burma, are of such a distressing nature as to merit the energetic, the immediate, and collective intervention of their fellow-workers in lands which have providentially been spared the horrors of invasion and all the evils and miseries attendant upon it. Upon the American Bahá'í community, in particular, which throughout this prolonged and bloody conflict, has of all its sister communities in East and West, enjoyed the greatest immunity and been privileged not only to maintain and preserve its institutions, but to prosecute so successfully a Plan of such magnitude and significance, a special responsibility now rests—a responsibility which, despite its manifold and pressing duties in the Western Hemisphere, it can neither afford to neglect nor ignore.

Particularly in the heart of the European continent, where the present turmoil, suffering and destitution are mysteriously paving the way for the revival of a Faith which the Beloved Himself has unequivocally prophesied, where a once flourishing community is struggling to fulfil the high hopes entertained for it by Him, and where the prosecutors of the Divine Plan, are to lend their direct and systematic assistance when launching the second stage of their world mission, must the American believers contribute the major share in the work of rehabilitation which the followers of Bahá'u'lláh must arise to perform.

Through the extension of whatever financial assistance is feasible, through the provision and distribution of adequate literature, through the initiation of any measures, official or otherwise, which they can undertake for the protection, reinstatement and revival of a greatly-tested, highly promising and much loved community, the American believers have the golden opportunity of adding a fresh chapter to the brilliant record of their past international services to the Cause of God.

Nor should the urgency of the task in far-away Burma, where a flourishing community had furnished so shining an example of Bahá'í fellowship and solidarity, be underestimated. The spirit which its remnant has displayed after so many years of persecution, dispersion and danger, merits the widest measure of encouragement and support, both moral and financial. Pressed as the American Bahá'í community must be by the twofold obligation of proclaiming the verities of their Faith to the American public and of consolidating the vast enterprises initiated throughout Latin America, the stalwart and privileged followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in North America cannot allow so great an opportunity to advance the vital international interests of His Cause to slip from their grasp. I feel confident that in the discharge of this additional task they will exhibit those same traits that have distinguished their stewardship for so many years to so glorious a Cause.

December 21, 1945

THE GERMAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

The German Bahá'í community, dearly beloved, highly honored by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and destined to play an outstanding role in the spiritual revival of an oppressed continent, has abundantly demonstrated in the course of ten years of severest tribulations, dire peril and complete suppression, the high character of its indomitable faith. I appeal to the entire community of the greatly blessed, highly privileged American believers, to arise unitedly and contribute generously through dispatch of funds and literature designed to alleviate the distress and rehabilitate the institutions with which the future prosecutors of the second stage of the Divine Plan must be closely associated.

Cablegram December 31, 1945

EXEMPLARY PIONEER

Deeply grieve passing of exemplary pioneer of the Faith, Emogene Hoagg. Her long record of national and international services is unforgettable, her reward in the Abhá Kingdom assured and abundant.

Cablegram December 31, 1945

LYDIA ZAMENHOF

Heartily approve nationwide observance for dauntless Lydia Zamenhof. Her notable services, tenacity, modesty, unwavering devotion fully merit high tribute by American believers. Do not advise, however, that you designate her a martyr.

Cablegram January 28, 1946

HISTORIC DECISIONS

Overjoyed, profoundly thankful for munificent donation made by American Bahá'í community for international relief. Urge establishment of communication with German believers and careful consultation with their representatives to collaborate in publication and expansion of much needed German Bahá'í literature. Delighted at news of consolidation of activities in Central America, the progress of the Public Campaigns and development of youth activities. Advise address special immediate appeal to American believers to insure large, representative attendance at approaching Convention owing to momentous, historic decisions to be disclosed to assembled representatives of ever-victorious, increasingly blessed, spiritually maturing American Bahá'í community.

Cablegram February 25, 1946

MOMENTOUS RESPONSIBILITIES

The assistance extended by the American Bahá'í Community to the long-suffering German believers is a further evidence of their readiness, so abundantly demonstrated in the past, to champion the interests, and to rehabilitate the institutions of their sister communities throughout the Bahá'í world. This support, so generously extended, so consistently and faithfully offered by the rank and file of the American believers, and particularly by their elected National representatives, is but a subsidiary aspect of the tremendous undertakings which, in both the North and South American continents, the standard bearers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have initiated and developed, for the promotion of its interests, during the concluding decades of the first Bahá'í century.

The twofold task which they have so nobly undertaken—the proclamation of the Faith in the North American continent and the consolidation of its nascent institutions in Latin America—must, whatever plan is devised in the coming years for the furtherance of their world-wide mission—be relentlessly prosecuted. That further responsibilities, of a momentous character, will have to be superimposed on the stalwart prosecutors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, as they gird up their loins to carry a stage further their historic labors in obedience to His wishes, no one can for a moment doubt. As the field of their activities, ranging over entire continents, grows in scope and in importance, the aims and purposes associated with the first stage of their glorious mission must, in no wise, be either neglected or forgotten. The steady multiplication of groups and of Spiritual Assemblies throughout the States of the great American Republic, the continual broadcasting of the Divine Message to the leaders of public opinion and the masses, as well as the establishment of the newly fledged local Assemblies throughout Latin America on an unassailable basis, and the dissemination of Bahá'í literature among its people, demand whatever the nature of the supplementary responsibilities that will have to be assumed in the years to come, the closest attention on the part of the entire body of the American believers, and must continue to be regarded as the fundamental issues facing their national representatives. The exploits immortalizing the first stage of the Divine Plan, however glorious their record, have yet to yield their noblest fruits. Efforts unremitting, systematic, and continent-wide in their scope, can alone garner a harvest worthy of the high confidence placed in them by 'Abdu'l-Bahá. May they prove themselves increasingly worthy of so high a privilege, so glorious a task.

March 25, 1946

INAUGURATION OF SECOND SEVEN YEAR PLAN

Message to 1946 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 Mashriqu'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 Síyáh-Chál at Tíhrán.

A two-fold responsibility urgently calls the vanguard of the dawn-breakers 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 the 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-blest 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 brief 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 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 lustre 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.

April 25, 1946

SPIRITUAL CONQUEST OF THE OLD WORLD

Opening phase of spiritual conquest of the old world under divinely conceived Plan must be speedily and befittingly inaugurated. Feel necessity prompt dispatch of nine competent pioneers to as many countries as feasible charged to initiate systematic teaching work, commence settlement and promote dissemination of literature. Urge establishment of auxiliary office in Geneva as adjunct to International Bureau equipped with facilities to foster development of Assemblies in countries falling within the scope of Plan. Recommend European Teaching Committee undertake without delay measures aiming at close collaboration of British Publishing Trust and Publishing Committee of German National Assembly. Advise include Duchy of Luxembourg in Low Countries and enlarge range of Plan through addition of Switzerland. Owing to considerable sum already accumulated in Tīhrán I prefer to divert sum for International Relief not yet forwarded to Persia, as well as Assembly's annual contribution to World Center, to funds earmarked for all-important far-flung European teaching and publication activities. The challenge offered by virgin fields of Europe outweighs momentous character of task already confronting American Bahá'í Community in the Americas. Vast distances sundering the old and new world are visibly, providentially contracting, enabling the ambassadors of Bahá'u'lláh's New World Order swiftly to discharge their apostolic mission through the continent destined to be stepping-stone to still vaster enterprises associated with future stages of divinely impelled, ever-unfolding, world-encircling Plan.

Cablegram June 5, 1946

THIRTY NEW ASSEMBLIES

Appeal National Teaching Committee unitedly arise play notable part in stupendous exertions now being made by Bahá'í communities throughout Americas in furtherance of second Seven Year Plan. Plead focus attention enable thirty groups having six or more members speedily attain Assembly status. Devoutly praying number of Assemblies functioning in North America will reach one hundred and seventy-five ere expiry of second year of second stage of Divine Plan. Attainment of this immediate objective will challenge and galvanize all other agencies functioning in Latin America and European continent to follow the superb example set for sister committees laboring at the heart of the mother community of the Western hemisphere.

Cablegram June 13, 1946

A GOD-GIVEN MANDATE

The opening years of the second century of the Bahá'í Era are witnessing the launching of yet another stage of an enterprise the range of whose unfolding processes we can, at the present time, but dimly visualize. However familiar we may be with its origin, however conscious of its magnitude and bold character, however cognizant of the signal success that has attended its initial operation, in the Western Hemisphere, we find ourselves nevertheless incapable of either grasping the import of its tremendous potentialities, or of correctly appraising the significance of the present phase of its development. Nor can we assess its reaction, as the momentum of the mysterious forces driving it onward augments, on the fortunes of the divers communities whose members are consciously laboring for the achievement of purposes akin to the high aims that animate its promoters, or estimate its impact, as its scope is further enlarged and its fruition is accelerated, on the immediate destinies of mankind in general.

The impulse from which this historic world-embracing crusade, which, alike in the character of its Founder and the nature of the tasks committed to its participants, is unprecedented in religious history, derives its creative power may be said to have in a sense originated with the mandate issued by the Báb in His "Qayyúmu'l-Asmá," one of His earliest and greatest works, as far back as the opening years of the first Bahá'í century, and directed specifically to the "peoples of the West," to "issue forth" from their "cities" and aid His Cause.

To this initial impulse given by the Herald of our Faith, whilst confined in the heart of far-away Asia, a still greater force was communicated, and a more specific direction given, when the Author of our Faith Himself, having already set foot on the fringes of the continent of Europe, addressed, in His Kitáb-i-Aqdas, from behind the walls of the prison-city of Akká, some of the most celebrated passages of that Book to the Chief Magistrates of the entire American continent, bidding them "bind with the hands of justice the broken," and "crush the oppressor" with the "rod of the commandments" of their Lord. Unlike the kings of the earth whom He had so boldly condemned in that same Book, unlike the European Sovereigns whom He had either rebuked, warned or denounced, such as the French Emperor, the most powerful monarch of his time, the Conqueror of that monarch, the Heir of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Caliph of Islám, the Rulers of America were not only spared the ominous and emphatic warnings which He uttered against the crowned heads of the world, but were called upon to bring their corrective and healing influence to bear upon the injustices perpetrated by the tyrannical and the ungodly. To this remarkable pronouncement, conferring such distinction upon the sovereign rulers of the Western Hemisphere, must be added not only the passages in which the Author of our Faith clearly foreshadows the revelation of the "signs of His dominion" in the West, but also the no less significant verbal affirmations which, according to reliable eye-witnesses, He more than once made in regard to the glorious destiny which America was to attain in the days to come.

That same impulse was markedly accelerated when the Center of the Covenant Himself, through a series of successive acts, chose to disclose, to an unprecedented extent, the character of the Mission reserved for the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in that continent, and to delineate the tasks whereby that God-given design was to be fulfilled. No sooner had He mounted the helm of the Faith than He unmistakably revealed to His followers His purpose of making the establishment of that Faith in the West, and particularly in the New World, one of the chief objectives of His ministry. No sooner had that great feat been accomplished than He

undertook to visit those centers which His disciples had labored to establish, and, through a number of symbolic acts and weighty pronouncements, to pave the way for the inauguration of the collective undertaking He was preparing those disciples to carry out. In the Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed at a later stage, and in circumstances almost as critical as those which had accompanied the inception of the Faith in the West, and which may be designated as the Charter of the Plan with which He was to entrust them in the evening of His life, He, in a language still more graphic and in terms more definite than those used by either the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh, revealed the high distinction and the glorious work which America, and particularly the United States and Canada, was to achieve in both the Formative and Golden Ages of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

His references to the “extraordinary brilliancy” of the light which His Father’s Revelation was to shed in the West; His prediction that “the West will have replaced the East” “through the splendor” of that Faith; His specific prophecies regarding the future of the American continent, as the “land wherein the splendors of His light shall be revealed” and “the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled,” and which “will lead all nations spiritually”; His even more specific tribute to the Great Republic of the West which He proclaims to be “worthy of being the first to build the Tabernacle of the Most Great Peace and proclaim the oneness of mankind,” to be “equipped and empowered to accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the envy of the world, and be blest in both the East and the West”; His yet more startling words addressed to the followers of the Faith in that Republic, referring to them as “apostles of Bahá'u'lláh,” characterizing their mission as “unspeakably glorious,” and assuring them that “should success crown your enterprise ... the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established”; and finally, His soul-stirring assertion that “the moment this Divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America, and is propagated through the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa and of Australasia, and as far as the islands of the Pacific, this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion,” and that “the whole earth” will “resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness”—all these, in conjunction with the explicit and detailed instructions embodied in His Tablets, in connection with the execution of their mission, may be regarded as having fixed the pattern, and revealed a measure of the glory, of the Plan itself, which, after His ascension, was to be collectively and formally prosecuted.

The creation of the administrative machinery of the Faith, according to the precepts laid down in ‘Abdu'l-Bahá’s Will and Testament, and on which, during the opening years of its Formative Age, the resources and attention of the trustees of the Plan were chiefly concentrated, provided, after several years of assiduous labor, the agencies for its proper and systematic execution. The first stage of that enterprise, which had been held in abeyance, for well nigh twenty years, while the administrative institutions of the Faith were slowly taking shape and were being perfected, was finally launched during the last decade of that same century whose opening years will be associated with the earliest though veiled intimation of the phenomenal destiny which the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the New World are to fulfill. The successful consummation of the first stage of that long-deferred Mission, made possible through the brilliant execution of a Seven Year Plan, embracing the entire Western Hemisphere, synchronized with, and was befittingly commemorated through, the historic celebrations that marked the termination of that century.

The opening decade of the second Bahá'í century coincides with the launching of the second Seven Year Plan, destined alike to consolidate the exploits that have shed such lustre on the last years of the preceding century, and to carry the Plan a stage further across the ocean to

the shores of the Old World, and to communicate, through the operation of its regenerative power, its healing influence to the peoples of the most afflicted, impoverished and agitated continent of the globe. We who stand on the threshold of this gigantic and two-fold undertaking are unable to discern the exact course which its immediate operation, both on the home front and in fields far from the scene of its earliest victories, is destined to take, the setbacks it may suffer, or the triumphs it must ultimately achieve. The objectives, however, which must orientate its prosecutors, and arouse them to a higher pitch of concerted endeavor, are clearly defined, and by no means beyond their collective power to achieve.

The double task already undertaken to enlarge the basis of the administrative structure of the Faith throughout the states and provinces of the North American continent and throughout Latin America, and to proclaim its truths and principles to the masses, should be relentlessly pursued, whilst the range of the operation of the Plan is being steadily enlarged. The administrative centers—foci at which the ever expanding activities of a rising Order must converge—whose total number had not exceeded forty at the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to America, which at the inception of the first Seven Year Plan had risen to three hundred, and had swelled to over a thousand ere the expiry of the first Bahá’í century, should through resolute effort and careful planning, be continually and speedily multiplied. Particular care should be constantly exercised to enable the groups scattered throughout the length and breadth of the states and provinces of the United States and Canada to attain Assembly status, and assume gradually the responsibilities and functions assigned to them in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and the Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. A corresponding increase in the number of such centers throughout both Central and South America should likewise be aimed at. Bolder measures designed to proclaim the verities of the Faith, its tenets, its claims and the purpose of its institutions, through the press and radio, through displays, exhibits and conferences, and through a wider dissemination of its literature in English, Spanish and Portuguese, as well as a more convincing presentation of its aims and teachings to the leaders of public opinion, should, moreover, be seriously and systematically undertaken not only in the mother country but also throughout the Latin Republics where the structural basis of Bahá’u’lláh’s embryonic Order has already been established.

Collateral with this process of consolidation in North, Central and South America, a special effort should be exerted to bring to a final conclusion the construction of the most holy Temple which will ever be erected by the followers of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, and whose inception, forty-three years ago, synchronized with the erection in the city of *Ishqábád* of the first *Mashriqu’l-Adhkár* of the Bahá’í world. The completion of the interior ornamentation of the Temple, following upon its exterior decoration, and fitting it for the purposes for which it was ordained, and coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of its inception, will, in itself, pave the way for the gradual erection of those Dependencies which are designed to supplement the functions which the Central Edifice is destined to perform, and whose future development must needs be provided for during successive stages in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan itself.

Parallel with this double process of consolidation and construction particular attention should be devoted to the provision of the necessary means whereby the newly fledged centers in the Dominion of Canada and throughout the Republics of Latin America can be coordinated and further consolidated, through the formation of three National Spiritual Assemblies, designed to participate in time in the international elections that must precede the constitution of the First Universal House of Justice. The erection of these three pillars, raising to eleven the number of existing National Spiritual Assemblies, which are to be designated in future as Secondary Houses of Justice, and are designed to support the highest legislative body in the

administrative hierarchy of the Faith, will, as the Divine Plan continues to unfold, be supplemented by the formation of similar bodies which, as they multiply, will, of necessity, broaden the basis and reinforce the representative character, of the supreme elective institution which, in conjunction with the institution of Guardianship, must direct and coordinate the activities of a world-encircling Faith. Through the formation of these National Spiritual Assemblies, as the implications of the Divine Plan gradually unfold in the coming years, the American Bahá'í Community will, in addition to its missionary activities throughout five continents and the islands of the seven seas, be contributing directly to the laying of the foundation, and hastening the formation, of an institution which, when constituted, will have consummated the threefold process involved in the erection of the total structure of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

In conjunction with these afore-mentioned objectives, and in a sense, more far-reaching in its repercussions and of greater urgency, is the task of extending the ramifications of the Divine Plan to a continent which not only stands in dire need of the ennobling, the reinvigorating, and spiritualizing influence of a world-redeeming Faith, but must serve as a stepping-stone to the spiritual conquest of the vast and numerous territories, lying as yet beyond the scope of the plan, in both the Asiatic and African continents, and which must, in the course of successive epochs, be warmed and illuminated by the rays of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation as prescribed in the Tablets revealed by the Center of His Covenant and the Authorized Interpreter of His teachings.

In the western extremity of that continent, in the Iberian Peninsula, the parent land and fountain-head of the culture of those Republics which have already been quickened by the first stirrings of the Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; in the extreme North, among the Scandinavian peoples, and further south, amidst their Flemish and French neighbors, whose conversion will considerably enrich the diversity of the races to be included within the orbit of its operation; in the extreme South, in the Italian Peninsula, the cradle of a far-famed civilization and the seat and stronghold of the most powerful Church in Christendom; in the very heart of that continent, amidst a freedom-loving, peace-pursuing, high-minded people, the prosecutors of the second Seven Year Plan must, preferably in the capitals of these countries, arise to establish, on an unassailable foundation, the structural basis of the nascent institutions of their Faith, which future promoters of the Divine Plan must, in the course of succeeding epochs, enlarge, and thereon erect the mightiest edifices of that Faith. Any assistance which the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles and of Germany can, through the instrumentality of their Publishing Committees and other agencies, extend, any facilities which the establishment of an Office, acting as an adjunct to the International Bahá'í Bureau in Geneva can provide, should be promptly and fully utilized for the speedy accomplishment of the initial tasks to be undertaken in Europe under the present Seven Year Plan.

Through the prompt settlement of nine wholly dedicated souls, aglow with enthusiasm and keenly aware of the plight of the peoples for whose sake they are abandoning the comfort and security of their homeland, and who will head the Roll of Honor as the curtain rises on this new and glorious phase of American Bahá'í enterprise; through the dispatch of itinerant teachers who, either delegated by the American National Spiritual Assembly or of their own accord, will cross and re-cross the vast distances, now providentially shrunk, which separate the old and new worlds, who will assiduously water the seeds sown by these pioneers, consolidate the work already started by isolated believers, and act as intermediaries between the various groups which, as the present Plan develops, must evolve into Spiritual Assemblies; through the vigorous dissemination of literature, properly translated, promptly

printed, and comprehensive in range, in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch and each of the Scandinavian languages; through a steady process of concentration on a few receptive souls, who can be relied upon to embrace, wholeheartedly and with alacrity, the truth of the Faith, identify themselves unreservedly with its tenets, actively support its institutions, and join in forming its initial Assemblies; through the persistent efforts, at a later stage, of a considerable number of settlers who, joining forces with the original pioneers and the native and newly enrolled believers, will provide the necessary requisites for the constitution of properly functioning local Assemblies; through the participation, as the situation on the continent improves and the restrictions are relaxed, of these settlers, itinerant teachers, native and isolated believers in conferences and organizations, humanitarian, educational and otherwise designed to promote ends akin to our own; through the liberal supply of funds to those who have forsaken their homes and kindred in the new world, and journeyed so far afield in the service of both their Faith and their fellowmen; through the exertion of a special effort, as the present Plan approaches its close and the general condition in most European countries improves, aimed at securing, through the radio and the press, the widest possible publicity for the Faith, its tenets and institutions, to serve as a means of reinforcing the number of its avowed promoters and of consolidating the basis of its evolving institutions—through these, and similar measures which the American National Spiritual Assembly and its European Teaching Committee may initiate and promote, the American Bahá'í Community must demonstrate, in this new field of their inter-continental enterprise, an initiative, a tenacity, a resourcefulness, a self-sacrifice and an audacity comparable to, and even exceeding, the qualities evinced by those who, ever since the inception of the Faith in the West, have, haphazardly, single-handed and with no organization to sustain them, labored with such fidelity and devotion in various countries throughout that continent.

The first century of the Bahá'í Era witnessed in darkest Persia the birth of the Faith, as well as the establishment of the Administrative Order—the Child of that Faith—an Order which, cradled in the heart of the North American continent, has already succeeded, in less than a decade and in direct consequence of the initial operation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan, and through the concerted, the sustained, and richly blessed efforts of the champion builders of that Order, in spreading out its roots and in rearing its institutions in no less than twenty Republics throughout the length and breadth of the Western Hemisphere. The second century is destined to witness a tremendous deployment and a notable consolidation of the forces working towards the world-wide development of that Order, as well as the first stirrings of that World Order, of which the present Administrative System is at once the precursor, the nucleus and pattern—an Order which, as it slowly crystallizes and radiates its benign influence over the entire planet, will proclaim at once the coming of age of the whole human race, as well as the maturity of the Faith itself, the progenitor of that Order. As the Plan bequeathed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá unfolds, through successive decades of the present century, its measureless potentialities, and gathers within the field of its operations nation after nation in successive continents of the globe, it will be increasingly recognized not only as the most potent agency for the development of the world Administrative System, but also as a primary factor in the birth and efflorescence of the World Order itself in both the East and the West.

The first Seven Year Plan, ushered in on the eve of the greatest conflict that has ever shaken the human race, has, despite six years of chaos and tribulation, been crowned with a success far exceeding the most sanguine hopes of its ardent promoters. Within so short a period, during such troublous years, such exploits were achieved as will forever illuminate the pages of Bahá'í history. The exterior ornamentation of the House of Worship was completed sixteen months before the appointed time. The administrative basis of the Faith was laid in every virgin state and province of the North American continent. The number of Spiritual

Assemblies in the United States and Canada was almost doubled. No less than fourteen Republics of Latin America were provided with such Assemblies. Active groups began to function in the remaining Republics, raising thereby the number of sovereign states within the pale of the Faith to sixty. Extension work in which the newly constituted Assemblies were vigorously participating was initiated. Two of the newly fledged Assemblies in Latin America, as well as a considerable number in the United States, were incorporated. An International School to provide training for Bahá'í teachers in Central and South America was founded. Considerable literature in Spanish and Portuguese was disseminated. Newspaper and radio publicity, teacher training courses, and Bahá'í Youth Symposiums were inaugurated. A distributing center of Bahá'í literature for Latin America was established in the capital of Argentina, and the outposts of the Faith, in the Western Hemisphere, were pushed as far north as Anchorage in Alaska, in the vicinity of the Arctic Circle, and as far as the extremity of Chile, to Magellanes, the world's southernmost city.

The second Seven Year Plan, set in motion on the morrow of that universal and cataclysmic upheaval, must, despite the great confusion that still prevails, the spiritual torpor, the disillusionment, the embitterment, the political and social restlessness that still afflict the human race, meet, as it gathers momentum and multiplies its agencies across the ocean, in lands and amidst races that have borne, for the most part, the brunt of this dire and bloody contest, with a success no less startling and complete than that which rewarded the self-sacrifice, the vigilance and the strenuous labors of those who inaugurated the initial phase of this glorious Mission. Might not this second and still greater adventure, undertaken by the trustees of a God-Given Mandate, demonstrate in both hemispheres, despite the prodigious scale on which it is launched, such prodigies of service as will carry its prosecutors far beyond their avowed objectives, and eclipse, through the wisdom, the valor and the exploits of those pioneers and administrators immediately responsible for its planning and execution, the splendor of every previous collective enterprise undertaken by the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the West?

Let them as they gird up their loins, as they deliberate in their council chambers, as they embark on their bold and holy mission, as they encounter the hazards, and suffer the setbacks, and are confronted with the formidable obstacles, which so vast, so complex, so arduous an enterprise must necessarily involve, call to mind the illuminating, the comforting, the sustaining words enshrined for all time in those epoch-making Tablets wherein the unerring pen of their Master has traced the course of their mission: "May America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment, and all the world receive this heavenly blessing! For America has developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations... May the inhabitants of this country ... rise from their present material attainments to such a height that heavenly illumination may stream from this center to all the peoples of the world." And again: "O ye apostles of Bahá'u'lláh! May my life be sacrificed for you!... Behold the portals which Bahá'u'lláh hath opened before you. Consider how exalted and lofty is the station you are destined to attain; how unique the favors with which you have been endowed... The full measure of your success is as yet unrevealed, its significance still unapprehended. Ere long ye will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate in the firmament of your country the light of Divine Guidance, and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life.... The range of your future achievements still remains undisclosed. I fervently hope that in the near future the whole earth may be stirred and shaken by the results of your achievements. The Almighty will no doubt grant you the help of His grace, will invest you with the tokens of His might, and will endue your souls with the sustaining power of His Holy Spirit." And again: "Be not concerned with the smallness of your numbers, neither be

oppressed by the multitude of an unbelieving world... Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established.... The hope which 'Abdu'l-Bahá cherishes for you is that the same success which has attended your efforts in America may crown your endeavors in other parts of the world, that through you the fame of the Cause of God may be diffused throughout the East and the West and the advent of the Kingdom of the Lord of Hosts be proclaimed in all the five continents of the globe.... Thus far ye have been untiring in your labors. Let your exertions henceforth increase a thousandfold. Summon the people in these countries, capitals, islands, assemblies and churches to enter the Abhá Kingdom. The scope of your exertions must needs be extended. The wider its range, the more striking will be the evidence of Divine assistance." And finally, this apocalyptic vision of the consummation of the task entrusted to the American Bahá'í community, as evoked by that same Pen in those same Tablets: "The moment this Divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America, and is propagated through the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa and of Australasia, and as far as the islands of the Pacific, this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion. Then will 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."

What greater reward can crown the labors of that community, now launched on the second stage of its world mission, than that the consummation of the second Seven Year Plan should coincide with the celebrations commemorating the centenary of the "Year Nine," the year which alike marked the termination of the Bábí Dispensation, and signaled the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Mission? It was at a time when the Faith for which the Báb had suffered and died was hovering on the brink of extinction, when Bahá'u'lláh lay wrapped in the gloom of the Síyáh-Chál of Tíhrán, His feet in stocks, His neck freighted with chains, and surrounded by vile and wretched criminals, that the auspicious year 1269 A.H., acclaimed by the Báb as the "Year Nine," dawned upon the world, ushering in the most glorious and momentous stage in the Heroic Age of the greatest religious Dispensation in the spiritual history of mankind. To that year He had referred as the year in which "the realities of the created things" will "be made manifest," the year in which mankind "will attain unto all good," in which the "Bayán," as yet "in the stage of seed," will manifest "its ultimate perfection," in which the "embryo of the Faith will attain the station of 'the most comely of forms,'" and in which "a new creation" will be beheld. It was in that same year that the "third woe," as anticipated by St. John the Divine, quickly succeeded the second. To that same year Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Ahsá'í, who had heralded the Faith of the Báb, had alluded as the year "after Hín" (68), when, according to his written testimony, the "mystery" of the Cause of God would be "manifested," and the "secret" of His Message "divulged." It was in that same year that, according to Bahá'u'lláh Himself, "the requisite number of pure, of wholly consecrated, and sanctified souls" had been "most secretly consummated."

It was in such dramatic circumstances, recalling the experience of Moses when face to face with the Burning Bush in the wilderness of Sinai, the successive visions of Zoroaster, the opening of the heavens and the descent of the Dove upon Christ in the Jordan, the cry of Gabriel heard by Muḥammad in the Cave of Hira, and the dream of the Báb, in which the blood of the Imám Ḥusayn touched and sanctified His lips, that Bahá'u'lláh, He "around Whom the Point of the Bayán hath revolved," and the Vehicle of the greatest Revelation the world has yet seen, received the first intimation of His sublime Mission, and that a ministry which, alike in its duration and fecundity, is unsurpassed in the religious history of mankind,

was inaugurated. It was on that occasion that the “Most Great Spirit,” as designated by Bahá’u’lláh Himself, revealed itself to Him, in the form of a “Maiden,” and bade Him “lift up” His “voice between earth and heaven”—that same Spirit which, in the Zoroastrian, the Mosaic, the Christian, and Muḥammadan Dispensations, had been respectively symbolized by the “Sacred Fire,” the “Burning Bush,” the “Dove,” and the “Angel Gabriel.”

“One night in a dream,” Bahá’u’lláh Himself, recounting His soul-shaking experience of the first stirrings of His prophetic Mission, in the Year Nine, in that abominable pit, has written, “these exalted words were heard on every side: ‘Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy Pen. Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee, neither be Thou afraid, for Thou art in safety. Ere long will God raise up the treasures of the earth—men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name, wherewith God hath revived the hearts of such as have recognized Him.’” And again, “During the days I lay in the prison of Ṭihrán, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.”

What still greater reward could await those who, inspired by the success achieved by the prosecutors of the second Seven Year Plan, will have arisen to carry forward to a triumphant conclusion the third phase of the Mission entrusted to them by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, than that their prodigious labors, having embraced territories far beyond the confines of the continents of Europe and of America, should climax in, and be worthily commemorated through, the world-wide celebrations of the “Most Great Festival,” the “King of Festivals,” the “Festival of God” Himself—the Festival associated with the accession of Him Who is the Lord of the Kingdom to the throne of everlasting glory, and with the formal assumption by Him of His prophetic office? What greater reward than that the consummation of the third Seven Year Plan, marking the close of the first, and signaling the opening of the second, epoch in the evolution of the Divine Plan, should synchronize with that greatest of all Jubilees, related to the year 1335, mentioned by Daniel in the last Chapter of His Book, and associated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with the world triumph of His Father’s Faith? What greater glory than that those who have brought this initial epoch in the resistless march of a world-embracing Plan to a triumphant termination should be made to feel that they, and those gone before them, have, through their collective, their sustained, and heroic endeavors, organized through three successive stages, and covering a span of almost a quarter of a century, been vouchsafed by the Almighty the privilege of contributing, more than any other community consciously laboring in the service of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, to this blissful consummation, and to have played a preponderating role in the world triumph of its institutions?

Dearly-beloved friends! It is not for us, at this crucial hour, to delve into the future, to speculate on the possibilities of the Plan and its orientation, to conjecture on its impact on the unfoldment of an embryonic World Order, or to dwell on the glories and triumphs which it may hold in store, or to seek to delineate the mysterious course which a God given Mission, impelled by forces beyond our power to predict or appraise, may pursue. To try to obtain a clear view of the shape of things to come would be premature inasmuch as the glittering prizes to be won are directly dependent on the measure of success which the combined efforts that are now being exerted must yield. Ours is the duty to fix our gaze with undeviating attention on the duties and responsibilities confronting us at this present hour, to concentrate our resources, both material and spiritual, on the tasks that lie immediately ahead, to insure that no time is wasted, that no opportunity is missed, that no obligation is evaded, that no task

is half-heartedly performed, that no decision is procrastinated. The task summoning us to a challenge, unprecedented in its gravity and force, is too vast and sacred, the time too short, the hour too perilous, the workers too few, the call too insistent, the resources too inadequate, for us to allow these precious and fleeting hours to slip from our grasp, and to suffer the prizes within our reach to be endangered or forfeited. So much depends upon us, so pregnant with possibilities is the present stage in the evolution of the Plan, that great and small, individuals, groups and Assemblies, white and colored, young and old, neophytes and veterans, settlers, pioneers, itinerant teachers and administrators, as isolated believers, as organizers of groups, and as contributors to the formation of local or national Assemblies, as builders of the Temple, as laborers on the home teaching front, or in Latin America, or in the new transatlantic field of service—all, without exception and in every sphere of activity, however modest, restricted, or inconspicuous, must participate and labor, assiduously and continually, until every ounce of our energy is spent, until, tired but blissful, our promised harvest is brought in, and our pledge to our Beloved fully redeemed.

However dark the outlook, however laborious the task, however strange and inhospitable the environment, however vast the distances that must be traversed, however scarce the amenities of life, however irksome the means of travel, however annoying the restrictions, however listless and confused the minds of the peoples and races contacted, however trying the setbacks that may be suffered, we must, under no circumstances, either falter or flinch. Our reliance on the unfailing grace of an all-loving, all-preserving, ever-sustaining, ever-watchful Providence, must, however much we may be buffeted by circumstances, remain unshaken until the very end. Shall we not, when hardships seethe about us, and our hearts momentarily quail, recall the ardent desire so poignantly voiced by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in those immortal Tablets that enshrine forever His last wishes for His chosen disciples: “Oh! that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of Yá-Bahá’u’l-Abhá in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, also, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it.”

To be privileged to render, in His stead, on so colossal a scale, at such a challenging hour, and in the service of so sublime a Plan, so great and enduring a service, is a bounty which we can never adequately appraise. We stand too close to the noble edifice our hands are rearing, the din and tumult into which a war-devastated world is now plunged are too distracting, our own share in the furtherance of those global aims, task and problems that are increasingly absorbing the attention of mankind and its leaders is as yet too circumscribed, for us to be in a position to evaluate the contribution which we, as the executors of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Mandate, as the champion-builders of Bahá’u’lláh’s Order, as the torch-bearers of a civilization of which that Order is the mainspring and precursor, are now being led, through the inscrutable dispensations of an almighty Providence, to make to the world triumph of our Faith, as well as to the ultimate redemption of all mankind.

Great have been the blessings, and divers the bestowals, vouchsafed to this Community ever since the compelling will of a loving Master called it into being, and raised it up for the glory and honor of His Father’s Faith. Unnumbered have been the marks of solicitude which, down the years, He showered upon it, as He nursed it in its infancy, as He fostered its growth, as He sent forth His messengers and communicated His written instructions to initiate it into the mysteries of His Cause, as He vitalized it through personal contact with His own dynamic and vibrant personality, as He consecrated, through a series of significant acts, the initial activities which He Himself had enabled it to inaugurate, as He invested it, at a later stage, in the evening of His life, with that primacy that was to empower it to launch the Plan which He had conceived for its future development, as He, through the sustaining power of His spirit

from on high, assisted it to erect the framework of those institutions that were to safeguard its unfoldment and canalize its energies, as He led it forward to embark upon the first stage of His own revealed Plan which was to enable it to achieve such exploits and garner such a harvest in the virgin territories of the New World, and as He, with that same watchful and loving care, is now marshalling its forces and sounding the signal for a still greater and more brilliant deployment of those forces, at a time of great commotion and distress, in one of the most agitated storm centers of the world.

Strange, indeed, as we look back over the last fifty years that have witnessed the creation and unfoldment of so powerful an agency for the execution of Bahá'u'lláh's purpose for mankind, that he who had first raised his voice in public on behalf of so mighty a Faith should have sprung from the ranks and been recognized as one of the leading representatives of that narrow and hostile ecclesiastical order which, as the Faith advances and storms still greater heights, will increasingly launch against it its determined attacks. Stranger still that he whom posterity will recognize to have been the founder of that Faith in the Western Hemisphere, whom the Center of the Covenant, in recognition of so signal a service, had acclaimed as "Bahá's Peter" and "the Second Columbus", should have, in his vanity and ambition, deserted the Fold he had labored to gather, should have allied himself with the Arch-Breaker of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, and remained until the end of his life, a sworn and bitter enemy of the One Who had entrusted him with such a holy and historic errand, and conferred upon him such glowing tributes. More extraordinary still that he who had been instrumental in carrying the Tablets of the Divine Plan from the One Who had revealed them to those into whose care they were to be committed, who had enjoyed, for so long and so intimately, near access to his Master as amanuensis, companion and interpreter, should have been blinded by his inordinate ambition, and should have arisen, with all the resources at his disposal, to attack and undermine the institutions of an Order which, springing from the authentic Will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, had been designed by Him to be the chief instrument for the vigorous prosecution of that Plan and the fulfillment of its ultimate purpose.

Such reflections, far from engendering in our minds and hearts the slightest trace of perplexity, of discouragement or doubt, should reinforce the basis of our convictions, demonstrate to us the incorruptibility, the strange workings and the invincibility of a Faith which, despite the assaults which malignant and redoubtable enemies from the ranks of kings, princes and ecclesiastics have repeatedly launched against it, and the violent internal tests that have shaken it for more than a century, and the relative obscurity of its champions, and the unpropitiousness of the times and the perversity of the generations contemporaneous with its rise and growth, has gone from strength to strength, has preserved its unity and integrity, has diffused its light over five continents, reared the institutions of its Administrative Order and spread its ramifications to the four corners of the earth, and launched its systematic campaigns in both the Western and Eastern Hemispheres.

For such benefits, for such an arresting and majestic vindication of the undefeatable powers inherent in our precious Faith, we can but bow our heads in humility, awe and thanksgiving, renew our pledge of fealty to it, and, each covenanting in his own heart, resolve to prove faithful to that pledge, and persevere to the very end, until our earthly share of servitude to so transcendent and priceless a Cause has been totally and completely fulfilled.

June 15, 1946.

THE UTMOST VIGOR, VIGILANCE AND CONSECRATION

The new Plan on which the American Bahá'í community has embarked, in the course of the opening years of the second Bahá'í century, is of such vastness and complexity as to require the utmost vigor, vigilance and consecration on the part of both the general body of its prosecutors and those who are called upon, as their National elected representatives, to conduct its operation, define its processes, watch over its execution, and insure its ultimate success. The obstacles confronting both its participants and organizers, particularly in the European field, are formidable, and call for the utmost courage, perseverance, fortitude and self-sacrifice.

The precarious international situation in both Hemispheres, the distress and preoccupation of the masses, in most of the countries to which pioneers will soon be proceeding, with the cares of every day life, the severe restrictions which are still imposed on visitors and travellers in foreign lands, the religious conservatism and spiritual lethargy which characterize the population in most of the lands where the new pioneers are to labor, add to the challenge of the task, and render all the more glorious the labors of the national community that has arisen to achieve what posterity will regard as the greatest collective enterprise, not only in the history of the community itself, but in the annals of the Faith with which it stands identified.

The initial success of the enterprise which has been so auspiciously launched, the enthusiasm which it has already engendered throughout Latin America, the hopes it has aroused amid the suffering and scattered believers in war-torn Europe, the feelings of admiration and envy it has excited throughout several communities in the Bahá'í world in both the East and the West, augur well for the future course of its operation, and foreshadow the splendors of the victories which its consummation must witness. The forces that have been released through the birth of the Plan must be directed into the most effective channels, the spirit that has been kindled must be continually nourished, the facilities at the disposal of its organizers must be fully utilized, each and every barrier that may obstruct its expansion must be determinedly removed, every assistance which Bahá'í communities in various lands may wish, or be able, to offer, should be whole-heartedly welcomed, every measure that will serve to reinforce the bonds uniting the newly-fledged communities in the Latin world, and to stimulate the movement, and raise the spirits, of itinerant teachers and settlers laboring in the continent of Europe, must be speedily undertaken, if the colossal task, which in the course of seven brief years must be carried out, is to be befittingly consummated.

The sterner the task, the graver the responsibilities, the wider the field of exertion, the more persistently must the privileged members of this enviable community strive, and the loftier must be the height to which they should aspire, in the course of their God-given mission, and throughout every stage in the irresistible and divinely guided evolution of their community life.

Setbacks may well surprise them; trials and disappointments may tax their patience and resourcefulness; the forces of darkness, either from within or from without, may seek to dampen their ardor, to disrupt their unity and break their spirit; pitfalls may surround the little band that must act as a vanguard to the host which must, in the years to come, spiritually raise up the sorely ravaged continent of Europe. None of these, however fierce, sinister or unyielding they may appear, must be allowed to deflect the protagonists of a God-impelled

Plan, from the course which 'Abdu'l-Bahá has chosen for them, and which the agencies of a firmly established, laboriously erected, Administrative Order, are now enabling them to effectively pursue.

That they may press forward with undiminished fervor, with undimmed vision, with unfaltering steps, with indivisible unity, with unflinching determination until the shining goal is attained is my constant prayer, my ardent hope, and the dearest wish of my heart.

July 20, 1946

DISTINGUISHED SERVANT

Profoundly grieve passing dearly-beloved, great-hearted, high-minded, distinguished servant Bahá'u'lláh, John Bosch. His saintly life, pioneer services, historic contribution of institution of summer school, entitle him to rank among outstanding figures of the closing years heroic, and opening years of the formative age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. Concourse on high extol his exalted services. Assure his wife and valiant companion of my deepfelt sympathy. Advise hold special gathering in Temple as tribute to his imperishable memory.

Cablegram July 29, 1946

THIS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CRUSADE

As the opening phase of the Second Seven Year Plan draws inexorably to a close, the American Bahá'í community, which has already abundantly demonstrated its capacity to carry to a triumphant conclusion the initial stage of the Plan conceived by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, must equally—nay, even more convincingly—prove to the entire Bahá'í world, its inflexible determination and undoubted ability to discharge befittingly whatever responsibilities the constant evolution of the Plan may impose upon its members under any circumstances and in whatever continent of the globe. As the field of their historic labors steadily widens, as the implications of their high mission become more apparent, as the complexity of their task increases, as the agencies designed to facilitate and accelerate its execution multiply, the members of this community must, individually as well as collectively, redouble their efforts, evince a nobler spirit of self-sacrifice, display greater resourcefulness, unity, initiative, steadfastness and enterprise, rise to loftier heights of heroism and self-abnegation, and establish, more convincingly than ever, their right to be regarded as the worthy champions of a glorious Cause, the principal builders of a unique Order, the chosen trustees and executors of a divinely conceived Plan.

Theirs is the duty, at once urgent, inescapable and sacred, to scatter more widely and as far as the extremities of both the North and South American continents, to cross the ocean in ever-increasing numbers, and reinforce, rapidly and systematically, the outposts of the Faith in Western Europe, lay, on a definite and unassailable basis, the foundations of new and flourishing communities, disseminate, energetically, and on a far more extensive scale, the literature of the Faith in all the languages which the execution of the Plan, at its present stage, demands, collaborate more closely with the two National Assemblies and their subsidiary agencies already functioning in that continent, initiate, wisely and patiently, whatever measures may be required to further the purposes of the Plan, and surmount, at whatever cost, every obstacle they may encounter in their path.

As to those who, owing to circumstances beyond their control, are unavoidably prevented from participating in this national and inter-continental crusade, and are denied the privilege of struggling in the forefront of battle, either at home or abroad, theirs is the no less meritorious task, to aid by every means in their power, whether through financial assistance, constant support and encouragement, the supply of literature or the appointment of deputies, the little band of their heroic brethren, who have assumed so preponderating a share of the responsibilities now facing the entire community: all, without exception, without reservation, without further delay, must participate. Each and every one, to the fullest extent of his or her ability, and however distracting the prevailing circumstances, or circumscribed the means, must arise to contribute to the success of this new enterprise, that will at once safeguard the fruits already garnered through the successful conclusion of the first stage of the Divine Plan, and enable its prosecutors to launch, at the appointed time, the third and a still more glorious stage in its evolution.

There is no time to lose. The task, though prodigious, is not beyond the capacity of those, who, in so short a time, in such distant fields, over so wide an area, and in the midst of a people so alien in temperament, language and custom, have won such conspicuous victories for their beloved Faith, and laid so enduring a foundation for its nascent institutions.

This gallant community is now summoned to undertake, further afield and in circumstances admittedly more adverse and challenging, a task infinitely more meritorious, and considerably richer in its potentialities. To fail, at this critical juncture to rise to the height of the occasion, would jeopardize the colossal work so painstakingly achieved in the course of many long years, and irretrievably shatter the hopes for the early opening of the third and most shining phase of the Divine Plan,—a stage whose completion must mark the closing of the initial Epoch in the Plan's progressive unfoldment.

May this community, faithful to its pledge and obedient to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mandate, arise as one man and carry out, in its entirety and within the stipulated time, the task on which it has so spontaneously embarked.

October 5, 1946

THE FORCES MYSTERIOUSLY RELEASED

The opening year of the second Seven Year Plan so auspiciously inaugurated is half spent. The entire American Bahá'í Community, galvanized through fuller perception of the progressive unfoldment of its glorious destiny, is geared to a higher speed of organized activity, and uplifted to a new level of collective achievement. The forces mysteriously released, designed to direct the operation and stimulate the processes to insure the consummation of the second stage of the Divine Plan, are inconceivably potent. Full, rapid use of these forces, by an organized community alive to the sublimity of its mission, is imperative. The manifold agencies, local, regional, national and intercontinental, directly responsible for prosecution of the Plan are now called upon to achieve, in their respective spheres, ere termination of this current year, successes so conspicuous as shall immeasurably fortify hopes of winning, within the stipulated time, a total, decisive victory. An immediate notable increase in the number of pioneers, particularly for the newly-opened transatlantic field of service, is the supreme necessity of this challenging hour. The present trickle must at all costs swell into a steady flow of consecrated settlers and itinerant teachers, who, mindful of the Master's poignant plea, careless of their limited resources, undismayed by the somber international outlook, undeterred by the formidable character of the tasks undertaken or by the obstacles to be surmounted, will, in both the administrative and teaching spheres, arise to accomplish feats outshining the exploits immortalizing the record of American Bahá'í stewardship in both continents of the New World since the inception of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan. May the months immediately ahead be productive of results exceeding my fondest expectations.

Cablegram October 7, 1946

THE PIVOT ON WHICH HINGES SUCCESS

I recall with profound emotion, on the morrow of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, the dramatic circumstances marking simultaneously the termination of the Heroic Age, and the commencement of the Formative Period, of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

I acclaim with thankfulness, joy and pride the American Bahá'í community's manifold, incomparable services rendered the Faith at home and across the seas in the course of this quarter century.

I hail with particular satisfaction the consummation of the twin major tasks spontaneously undertaken and brilliantly discharged by the same community in both the administrative and missionary fields, constituting the greatest contribution ever made to the progress of the Faith by any corporate body at any time, in any continent, since the inception of the administrative order.

Nursed during its infancy by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's special care and unfailing solicitude; invested at a later stage with spiritual primacy through the symbolic acts associated with His historic visit to the North American continent; summoned subsequently to the challenge through the revelation of the epoch-making Tablets of the Divine Plan; launched on its career according to the directives of and through the propelling force generated by these same Tablets; utilizing with skill, resourcefulness and tenacity, for the purpose of executing its mission, the manifold agencies evolving within the administrative order, in the erection of whose fabric it has assumed so preponderating a share; emerging triumphantly from the arduous twofold campaign undertaken simultaneously in the homeland and in Latin America; this community now finds itself launched in both hemispheres on a second, incomparably more glorious stage, of the systematic crusade designed to culminate, in the course of successive epochs, in the spiritual conquest of the entire planet.

The task of this stern hour is challenging, its scale of operation continually widening, the races and nations to be contacted highly diversified, the forces of resistance more firmly entrenched, yet the prizes destined for the valiant conquerors are inestimably precious and the sustaining Grace of the Lord of Hosts promised to the executors of His mandate is indescribably potent.

The present European project heralding the spiritual regeneration of the entire continent is the pivot on which hinges the success of the second Seven Year Plan. I appeal to the National representatives of the community, in conjunction with the European Teaching Committee, to focus attention upon its immediate requirements. The dispatch of nine additional pioneers to facilitate the immediate formation of stable groups in the goal towns of the ten selected countries is imperative. The selection of suitable literature, its prompt translation into the languages required, its publication and wide dissemination, is essential. The visit of an ever-swelling number of itinerant teachers designed to foster the development of the groups is urgently required. A more liberal allocation of funds for the furtherance of the most vital objective is indispensable.

I entreat the entire community to arise, while time remains, contribute generously, volunteer its services and accelerate its momentum, to assure the total success of the first, most momentous collective enterprise launched by the American Bahá'í community beyond the barriers of the Western Hemisphere.

Cablegram December 3, 1946

FIFTH YEAR OF PLAN MESSAGE TO 1941 CONVENTION

The Fifth Year of the Seven Year Plan is opening under circumstances of utmost gravity in Eastern and Western Hemispheres. The fever of the times is steadily mounting, throwing into sharper relief the contrast between the rising greatness of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and the falling fortunes of a moribund civilization. The American Bahá'í Community, rapidly pursuing the career traced by unerring finger of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, can neither halt nor waver. I cannot forbear address my particular plea to focus, owing to virtual termination of Temple ornamentation, attention on teaching requirements of the Plan. I appeal to incoming National Assembly, its auxiliary Teaching Committees and subsidiary agencies to deliberate and devise means to insure prompt reinstatement of the Assemblies recently disbanded and formation of Assembly in each newly-opened State and Province of North America and continuity of the consolidation of the pioneer work initiated in every Latin Republic. Undismayed by aggravation of the fury of the world tempest threatening their shores, scornful of the agitation stirred up by their adversaries, the breakers of the Covenant, the resolute upholders of the Divine Plan will, indeed cannot but, persist in their ordained task to propagate the flame, enlarge the administrative limits, and strike deeper roots of the world-encircling world-redeeming Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi Rabbani

Cablegram received April 23, 1941.