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Messages to Canada

by Shoghi Effendi

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THE GUARDIAN'S FIRST LETTER TO CANADA. 1923

THE GUARDIAN'S FIRST LETTER TO CANADA. 1923

The beloved of the Lord and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout Canada.

Care of the members of the Spiritual Assembly in Montreal

Dear Friends,

It is a great pleasure and privilege to me to enter into direct, and I trust, permanent correspondence with those faithful friends of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who though few in number and scattered over that vast and flourishing country, will I trust act as a powerful leaven to the mass of that spiritually-minded people.

Though its people be firmly entrenched in their religious sectarianism and strongly attached to their religious doctrines and traditions, yet who can doubt that with courage and persistence, kindness and wisdom, the all-conquering words of Bahá'u'lláh can fail to break down all these barriers of prejudice and religious exclusiveness and conquer this longstanding stronghold of sectarian belief!

Surely the efficacy of the universal Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh as applied to the cherished and time-honoured religious traditions of the East, has been sufficiently demonstrated to justify at present our confident hopes for the future and speedy re-awakening of that land.

May the small company of the steadfast followers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Canada be filled with the outpourings of the Divine Grace that are being showered so mightily in these days upon the friends of God the world over, and may they arise with undiminished fervour to carry out to their fullest measure the last wishes and instructions of our departed Master for that great and flourishing Dominion!

With all good wishes,

Your brother and co-worker,
SHOGHI.

Haifa, Palestine.
January 2, 1923.

THE BIRTH OF THE INDEPENDENT CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY AND THE FIVE YEAR PLAN. 1948-53

THE BIRTH OF THE INDEPENDENT CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY AND THE FIVE YEAR PLAN. 1948-53

Letter of April 14, 1948

April 14, 1948.

ELECTION OF FIRST NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF FIVE YEAR PLAN

To the First Canadian National Convention.

Hearts uplifted in thanksgiving to Bahá'u'lláh for the epoch-making event of the coming of age of the dearly beloved Canadian Bahá'í Community, the formation of the first National Convention in the City of Montreal and the forthcoming election of Canada's National Assembly constituting the ninth pillar of the institution of the Universal House of Justice. I acknowledge with reverent gratitude and deepest joy the marvellous influence of the operation of the initial stage in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan enabling the northernmost community of the followers of the Faith on the American continent to pass the stage of infancy and attain the status, and to assume the functions of, an independent existence within the World Bahá'í Community. I recall on this auspicious occasion with profound emotion the heroic services to the mother community of May Maxwell¹ whose life and death forged unbreakable links binding the body of the Canadian believers to the sister communities of the United States and Latin America. I am moved to appeal to assembled delegates to arise in conjunction with the first Canadian National Assembly, as a token of gratitude for the manifold blessings of Divine Providence, to initiate in the hour of the birth of their national activities a Five Year Plan designed to associate them, formally and systematically and independently, with their sister community of the United States, in the common task of the prosecution of their world-encompassing mission. The fulfillment of this collective task confronting the rapidly maturing community necessitates the incorporation of the Canadian National Assembly, the establishment of National Bahá'í Endowments, doubling the number of Local Assemblies throughout the Dominion and raising to one hundred the total number of localities where Bahá'ís reside throughout the Provinces, the constitution of a group in Newfoundland and the formation of a nucleus of the Faith in the Territory of Greenland, singled out for special mention by the Author of the Divine Plan, and the participation of Eskimos and Red Indians in membership to share administrative privileges in local institutions of the Faith in

Canada. I fondly hope and ardently pray that the celebration of the first centenary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic mission will witness the triumphant consummation of the first historic Plan launched by the Canadian Bahá'í Community in a land whose future greatness and glory, both materially and spiritually, the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant twice emphatically proclaimed in His immortal Tablets.²

SHOGHI.

Letter of November 4, 1948

November 4, 1948.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated October 6th, has been received, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

AVOID BLANKET RULINGS

Our teachings, as outlined in the Advent of Divine Justice, on the subject of living a chaste life, should be emphasized, but certainly no ruling what-so-ever should be laid down in this matter. The Bahá'ís have certainly not yet reached that stage of moral perfection where they are in a position to too harshly scrutinize the private lives of other souls, and each individual should be accepted on the basis of his faith, and sincere willingness to try to live up to the Divine Standards; further than this we cannot go at present.

Now that your Assembly is formed, and is embarking on its independent existence as a National Body, he wishes to emphasize a point which he is constantly stressing to other National Bodies: you must avoid issuing rules and regulations. The fundamentals laid down in the Bahá'í Administration must, of course, be adhered to, but there is a tendency for Assemblies to constantly issue detailed procedures and rules to the friends, and he considers this hampers the work of the Cause, and is entirely premature. As far as is possible cases which come up should be dealt with and settled as they arise, and not a blanket ruling be laid down to cover all possible similar cases. This preserves the elasticity of the Administrative Order and prevents red tape from developing and hampering the work of the Cause. You must likewise bear in mind that you are now a wholly independent National Body, and must consider the administration of the affairs of the Faith within your jurisdiction as your separate problem. There is no more need for you to follow every single rule laid down by the American N.S.A., than there is for the British or the Australian and New Zealand N.S.A.s to do this. Uniformity in fundamentals is essential, but not in every detail. On the contrary, diversity, the solving of the local situation in the right way, is important.

He will be very happy to receive reports of the measures you are taking to carry out your important Five Year Plan. You have the unique distinction of being the first National Body, yet formed, to be born with a Plan in its mouth! and you may be sure your fellow Bahá'ís, East and West, are watching your progress with keen interest, not unmixed with curiosity, to see how well you fare in your historic work and your newly created independence.

The Guardian has high hopes for the achievements of the Canadian Bahá'ís. Their national character, which so fortuitously combines the progressiveness and initiative of the Americans, and the stability and tenacity of the British, fits them to make great contributions to the progress of the Faith, both in Canada and throughout the world.

He urges you to keep in close touch with him, and assures you that you, and your labours, are very dear to his heart, and he is ardently praying for your success in every field of your manifold activities.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

I hail with a joyous heart and confident spirit the truly compelling and almost simultaneous evidences of the creative, the irresistible power of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as witnessed by the formation of the first Canadian National Bahá'í Assembly and the inauguration of the Five Year Plan, designed to orient its members toward and canalize the energies of the entire Canadian Bahá'í Community in support of the immediate tasks lying before them. So auspicious a beginning, in the life of a community attaining adulthood under the influence of the processes set in motion as the result of the progressive unfoldment of the Divine Plan, in a territory of such vast dimensions, blessed through both the mighty utterances, and the personal visit of the One Who fostered it from the hour of its birth, and Whose Plan enabled it to reach maturity, may well be regarded as one of the most momentous happenings immortalizing the opening years of the second Bahá'í century.

IMPLICATIONS OF PLAN TREMENDOUSLY VAST

The responsibility shouldered by an institution ranking as one of the sustaining pillars of the future Universal House of Justice is indeed staggering. The Plan entrusted to its infant hands is, in both its magnitude and implications tremendously vast. The anxieties, the strenuous exertions attendant upon the proper guidance, the effectual development and the sound consolidation of a community emerging into independent national existence, are inevitably trying. The numerical strength of that community, the immensity of the area serving as the field for the operation of its Plan, the meagerness of the resources now at its disposal, the relative inexperience of its newly-recruited members, the perils overhanging the territory in which they reside in the event of a future global conflict, the intensity of opposition which the unfoldment of its mission may provoke in the strongholds of religious orthodoxy inimical to the liberalizing influences of the Faith it represents—all these offer a challenge at once severe, inescapable and soul uplifting.

The eyes of its twin-sister community in the North American continent, which assisted it in achieving its independence, are fixed upon it, eager to behold, and ready to aid it in its march to glory. Its sister communities in Latin America, whose coming of age is as yet unattained, watch with mingled curiosity and envy, its first strides along the steep path which they themselves are soon to tread. Other sister communities in the European, African, Asiatic and Australian continents, some of venerable age, others rich in experience, and resources, still others tried and tested, by the fires of persecution, observe with keen anticipation in their hearts and benediction on their lips, the manner in which this youngest recruit to their ranks will launch upon its career, the resolution with which it will face its problems, the spirit which will animate it in its battles and the stupendousness of the efforts required to win its victories. Above and beyond them the Spirit of a Master Who nursed it in its infancy and to Whose Plan it now has consecrated its mature energies, overshadows it with that self-same solicitude that called it into existence, that stimulated His tender care in its infancy, that inspired His written promises, that prompted His lavish praise, that impelled Him to cast the radiance of His person, in the evening of His life, on its mother city³, and induced Him, ere His passing, to bequeath to it so rich a legacy in what may be regarded as one of the mightiest repositories of His last wishes. No one, of the galaxy of immortal heroes, now gathered to the glory of Bahá'u'lláh, can contemplate with greater delight the advances, which this community has made, or intercede with greater efficacy on its behalf, than she⁴ who has won the peerless title of the Mother of that community, the initial phase of whose career was signalized by the founding of the mother community in the European continent, and the conclusion of which was crowned by a death cementing the spiritual bonds now indissolubly uniting the North and South American continents.

EXECUTION OF THE PLAN

The Five Year Plan, now set in motion, must under no circumstances be allowed to lag behind its schedule. A befitting start should be made in the execution of the Plan in all its aspects. The initial steps should be relentlessly followed by additional measures designed to hasten the incorporation of your Assembly, to accelerate the multiplication of Local Assemblies, groups and isolated centres, throughout the Provinces of the Dominion, to insure the stability of the outpost of the Faith which must be established in Newfoundland, and to incorporate a steadily growing element, representative of both the Indian and Eskimo races, into the life of the community.

Obstacles, however formidable, will have to be determinedly surmounted. Any reverses that sooner or later may be suffered should be met with stoic fortitude, and speedily offset by

victories in other fields. The glorious vision now unveiled to your eyes must never be dimmed. The illuminating promises enshrined in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets should not be forgotten for a moment. The quality of the success already achieved by so small a number, over so extensive a field, in so brief a period, at so precarious an hour in the destinies of mankind, should spur on the elected representatives of this now fully-fledged community to achieve in as short a period, over still more extensive an area, and despite a severer crisis than any as yet encountered, victories more abiding in their merit and more conspicuous in their brilliance than any as yet won in the service and for the glory of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Your true brother,
SHOGHI.

(Cablegram) May 1949

(Cablegram) May 1949.

INCORPORATION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY PARLIAMENT ACCLAIMED

Acclaim magnificent victory⁵ unique (in the) annals (of) East (and) West. Glorious events foreshadowed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá Tablets (of) Divine Plan (at) long last unfolding. National elected representatives newly fledged highly promising richly blessed community deserve heartiest congratulations. Appeal its members arise token gratitude outpouring divine grace bestowed initial stage its independent development vigorously prosecute plan attain all objectives set imperishable example sister communities Bahá'í world. Ardently praying still greater victories.

SHOGHI.

Letter of June 19, 1949

June 19, 1949.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada

Your letters to our beloved Guardian ... have been received, with their enclosures, as well as the material you sent under separate cover.

FIRST GOVERNMENT TO RECOGNIZE OFFICIAL STATUS

Your Assembly has much to be congratulated upon for your victories during the past Bahá'í Year have been memorable. The passing, in both Houses, of the Bill⁶ relating to the official status of your Assembly was a cause for great rejoicing, as this is the first time in Bahá'í history that any government has taken such action in relation to our Faith's status. He would like, if possible, to receive duplicates of the official Gazette and all publicity given this matter, as the copies you sent were placed in the Mansion at Bahjí, but he wishes to have these documents at hand in his personal files as well.

The increase in membership in the Canadian Bahá'í Community this past year was also most

encouraging. It shows that there is, primarily, unity among the believers, for where this fundamental quality is lacking in a Bahá'í community any real growth is impossible. That is why the beloved Master so constantly admonished the friends to be as one soul in different bodies, for this love and unity constitutes their spiritual health and gives them the strength to overcome all obstacles in their path.

He fully realizes how great are the tasks facing your Assembly, but feels confident that the Canadian Bahá'ís will be able to accomplish them and will, indeed, set an example to their sister communities in different parts of the world. The people of that country, the national character, are such as to hold high promise for the future of the Cause there, and the great range covered by your Plan is stimulating in the extreme. To be the Trustees of such a Faith, in such a place, at such a time is a marvellous privilege, and he is looking forward to your next achievements with confidence and keen interest.

You may be sure his loving prayers are with you in all you do for the beloved Faith.

With warmest greetings,
R. RABBANI.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The progress achieved in the course of the opening year of the Five Year Plan, to which the newly emerged independent Canadian Bahá'í Community is solemnly committed, is such as to excite the admiration, and merit the gratitude, of the entire Bahá'í World. A community, so small in numbers, so restricted in resources, labouring over so extensive a field, shouldering such weighty responsibilities, has passed through the initial stage of its task and discharged its duties with such distinction as to be worthy of the glowing promises and weighty utterances recorded in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets regarding the material as well as the spiritual potentialities with which that great and promising Dominion has been endowed.

OPERATION OF THE PLAN GATHERS MOMENTUM

Through the swift and marvellous increase in its membership, through its faithful and uncompromising adherence to both the spiritual and administrative principles of the Faith it so nobly serves; through the multiplication of its administrative centres from the Atlantic to the Pacific sea-board; through the steady consolidation of its local and national Funds, designed to sustain its ever-unfolding activities, through the spirit consistently manifested by the small yet eager and valiant band of its pioneers and administrators, and more recently through the official recognition providentially accorded the body of its national elected representatives by both chambers of the Legislature in that Dominion—an act wholly unprecedented in the annals of the Faith in any country, in either East or West—this vigorous, divinely sustained, resistlessly advancing community, has not only fulfilled the expectations and hopes that greeted its birth, but set a brilliant example to its sister communities in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

The task which it has so splendidly inaugurated and which is being now prosecuted with such vigour, devotion, single-mindedness, harmony and determination, is still in the initial stage of its development. The process that has stimulated the growth and increased the number of its administrative centres must be accelerated no matter how great the sacrifice involved. The development of the local and national Funds must be continuously maintained as a prelude to the establishment of local and national endowments and the ultimate erection of a House of Worship that will incarnate the soul of a flourishing nation-wide community. The initiation of a systematic and sustained campaign beyond the frontiers of that Dominion, and in obedience to the Mandate of the Author of the Divine Plan, to which it stands inescapably pledged, and aiming at the introduction of the Faith in Greenland and the conversion of the Eskimos still remains to be undertaken. The consolidation of the summer school, the gradual incorporation of firmly established, properly functioning Assemblies are, moreover, objectives that must under no circumstances be overlooked or neglected.

As the operation of the Plan gathers momentum the members of this community must evince a still greater measure of solidarity, rise to higher levels of heroism, demonstrate a greater capacity for collective achievement, and attract still more abundant blessings on the varied enterprises on which they have embarked.

I am following the unfoldment of their Plan with eager and sustained interest. My ardent prayers will surround and accompany its prosecutors at every stage of their historic undertaking. My confidence in their ultimate success is not only unshaken, but has been immensely reinforced. May He Who watches over them guide every step they take, bless every measure they adopt, remove every obstacle that impedes their onward march and fulfil every desire they cherish for the future glory, honour and greatness of their beloved Faith in that vast and richly blessed

Dominion.

SHOGHI.

Letter of June 23, 1950

June 23, 1950.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada

Your letters ... have been received by our beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He feels sure you will understand the reason for the delay in answering your letters—and, indeed, all the other N.S.A.s' letters—when he explains that not only has this been a terrific winter of work in connection with the construction of the Shrine, but since the beginning of April my dear father, Mr. Maxwell⁷, has been dangerously and desperately ill. The anxiety this caused us all, and the constant coming and going of doctors, nurses, and two periods in hospital, has necessitated putting aside all correspondence for months. Now, however, thank God, Mr. Maxwell is slowly improving, and the threads of normal existence can be taken up again by us all.

The Guardian was very happy to note the community increased this year by 66. He was also delighted to see your Assembly arranged for all delegates to be present. This is very important, especially during this period when full consultation and cooperation is necessary amongst all the far-flung Canadian Assemblies and groups, as well as isolated believers, in order to ensure the success of your first and so important Plan.

He approves of the measures you have inaugurated for intensive teaching during the coming year, and trusts they will meet with great success.

The British victories, in the face of great obstacles, and the consistent success across the border in the U.S.A., must be at once an inspiration and a challenge to the Canadian friends. There is no doubt they can succeed if the entire community applies itself eagerly and confidently to its task.

SETTLEMENT OF PIONEERS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

The Guardian is immensely pleased over the settlement of pioneers⁸ in Newfoundland; this has accomplished one of the specific desires of the beloved Master, and will redound to the glory of the Canadian Bahá'ís.

The next, most important task is to get Miss Gates⁹ into Greenland. This is fraught with many difficulties, but he urges your Assembly to persevere and exert its utmost to remove every obstacle. He will specially pray that a way may open for her to enter that country.

Regarding your question about contributions: it is up to the individual to decide; if he wishes to denote a sum to a specific purpose, he is free to do so; but the friends should recognize the fact that too much labelling of contributions will tie the hands of the Assembly and prevent it from meeting its many obligations in various fields of Bahá'í activity.

Concerning the points your Assembly raised in the letter of December 20, 1949:

The Guardian is very anxious that no new rules and regulations should be introduced. As far as possible each N.S.A. should decide secondary matters for itself, and not try to lay down a rule general in application.

Bahá'u'lláh gives no right of appeal to the law that both parents must give permission to the marriage, if they are living—Bahá'í marriages should be referred to assemblies to officiate; where there is no Assembly to officiate your body is free to decide what procedure should be followed. Whether it is the chairman or secretary or some other person who actually conducts the marriage is, likewise, a matter for your body to decide.

The Guardian has not found it desirable, for various reasons, to send a recorded message to any

Convention.

TEACHING THE CANADIAN INDIANS

The work being done by various Bahá'ís, including our dear Indian believer¹⁰ who returned from the United States in order to pioneer amongst his own people, in teaching the Canadian Indians, is one of the most important fields of activity under your jurisdiction. The Guardian hopes that ere long many of these original Canadians will take an active part in Bahá'í affairs and arise to redeem their brethren from the obscurity and despondency into which they have fallen.

The desire of your Assembly to remain in the closest touch with the Guardian pleases him very much—he assures you that the desire is mutual!

With the assurance of his loving prayers for you all.

Yours in His service,
R. RABBANI.

P.S. The maps you forwarded were of great interest, and he thanks you for them. He intends to have one of them published in the next edition of "Bahá'í World."

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The progress achieved in various fields by the members of the Canadian Bahá'í Community under the direction of its national elected representatives, since the inception of the Five Year Plan, merits the highest praise, and augurs well for its success in the years that lie immediately ahead. The spontaneity with which the members of this community, on the morrow of its having attained an independent, national existence, have arisen to execute the Plan designed for the furtherance of its interests and the consolidation of its newly-born institutions, the zeal and resolution which have characterized the prosecution of the task entrusted to their care, the notable success they have already achieved in the initial stages of their enterprise, have served to heighten my feelings of admiration for those who have directed its course and participated in its unfoldment, and to evoke the unstinted praise of all sister communities in both the East and the West.

A GREATER UNANIMITY IN SACRIFICE REQUIRED

Though much has been achieved in the course of the two years that have elapsed since the formulation of the Plan, the objectives that the members of this struggling, youthful and valiant community have set themselves to attain are still far from being fulfilled. Though the process of the multiplication of Bahá'í centres, over the length and breadth of so vast a territory, has been, steadily and speedily, gathering momentum, the number of groups that have achieved Assembly status is still relatively insignificant, while the pioneer activity designed to awaken and stimulate the interest of the Eskimos in the Faith and enlist their support may hardly be said to have been vigorously and adequately launched. The call to which this newly-fledged community has been summoned is admittedly urgent and challenging. The character of the tasks allotted to it is, in many respects, unique. The resources at its disposal for the discharge of its peculiar responsibilities are no doubt as yet inadequate. The obstacles that stand in its way and obstruct its path seem almost insurmountable. Its membership, when viewed in relation to the range over which it operates, is no doubt wholly inadequate yet the spirit which has consistently animated the members of the entire community, and the energy and determination which have distinguished their elected representatives in the discharge of their sacred duties, are such as to fortify the hopes which I, as well as their fellow-workers in both hemispheres, have cherished in our hearts, since the inauguration of their first collective enterprise in a land so rich in promise, so vast in its potentialities, and so honoured by the visit of the Centre of the Covenant Himself as well as by the glowing references made to it by Him in His immortal Tablets.

As the centenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic Mission approaches, as the first historic Plan, signaling the birth and rise of a highly privileged community, the sole partner of its great sister community in the South in the prosecution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, gathers momentum and enters the concluding stages in its evolution, a dedication even more conspicuous than that already manifested in the hour of the launching of the Plan must needs be displayed by all those who are called upon to participate in its prosecution. A sterner resolve, a nobler

heroism, a greater unanimity in sacrifice, a further intensification of effort must be manifested, as the first stage in the evolution of the mission of the Canadian Bahá'í Community draws to a close, and paves the way for the inauguration of still more splendid enterprises along the path laid down for them by the unerring hand of the Author of the Divine Plan.

That this community will never relax in its high endeavours, that the vision of its glorious mission will not be suffered to be dimmed, that obstacles, however formidable, will neither dampen its zeal or deflect it from its purpose, is my confident hope and earnest prayer. He Who watches over its destinies, from Whose pen testimonies so significant and soul thrilling have flowed, will no doubt continue to direct its steps, to shower upon it His loving bounties, to surround it with His constant care, and to enable it to scale loftier heights on its ascent towards the summit of its destiny.

With a heart brimful with gratitude for all that this community has so far achieved, and throbbing with hope for the future exploits that will distinguish its record of stewardship to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, I pray that by its acts, this community will prove itself worthy of the trust confided to its care, and the station to which it has been called.

Your true and grateful brother,
SHOGHI.

Letter of January, 1951

January, 1951.

SHRINE OF THE BÁB

To the Treasurer of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letter of September 13 has reached the beloved Guardian, as well as the contribution made by the N.S.A. of Canada and some of the friends towards the construction of the Báb's Shrine, a receipt for which I am enclosing.

He is pleased to accept this loving donation for an enterprise so dear to all our hearts—and one which is fulfilling one of the Master's cherished plans.

There are so many obstacles to be overcome and so much red tape to be waded through, but he feels no time must be lost, and has just had the contract signed in Italy for the stone work for the octagon. God has opened all doors so far—he feels sure He will continue to do so.

With warmest loving greetings to you.
RÚHÍYYIH.

May the Almighty bless you and your dear and devoted co-workers, whose labours I deeply appreciate, whose contributions I greatly value, and whose spirit I truly admire. I will supplicate ardently on your behalf, that the Beloved may reward you abundantly, and enable you to win great and memorable victories in His service.

Your true brother,
SHOGHI.

Letter of March 1, 1951

Haifa, Israel,
March 1, 1951.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letters ... with enclosures, have been received; and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf...

Although he is finding it so difficult to keep up with his correspondence, owing to the increase of work here at the International Centre, he follows with interest the progress being made by the believers in Canada; and is delighted to see how your Assembly is growing in maturity and capacity to handle the problems which invariably arise in connection with administering the affairs of the Faith in such a vast area as the Dominion of Canada.

He was very happy to know that the work in connection with the Indians and the Eskimos is receiving special attention; and he would like your Assembly to please express to Miss Nan Brandle¹¹ his deep appreciation of the unique service she is rendering the Cause, and of the exemplary spirit which is animating her. He hopes other believers will follow in her footsteps, and arise to do work in this very important field of Bahá'í activity.

He was also pleased to see that your Assembly had increased the annual budget, as this expresses the determination of the Canadian believers to expand their activities and carry on their work on a larger scale than ever before.

CONTACT WITH ARCTIC ESKIMOS

He was also very pleased to see that Mr. Bond¹² had gone north and had been able to contact the Arctic Eskimos. He hopes that the way will open for this devoted believer to establish a more permanent contact in that area in some field of government work.

He considers the policy of your Assembly of helping delegates from distant points to attend the Convention, an excellent one, as the attendance of these delegates enables them to carry back a very real awareness of the work in hand and the needs of the hour, to their local communities.

STIRRING EXAMPLE OF BRITISH PIONEERS

The Guardian feels that, although the Canadian Bahá'ís are making excellent progress in consolidating their National Assembly and its subsidiary committees, in holding Conferences and Summer Schools, in sending forth travelling teachers, and in contacting the important minority groups, the Eskimos and Indians, that they are not making sufficient progress in the all-important field of pioneer activity. If they are to succeed in accomplishing their plan, a far greater number of Canadian Bahá'ís will have to arise and go into the pioneer field. He feels sure that they can do this, as they have already had the stirring example of how much was done in the British Isles by a community of about their size. In comparing the problem which faced the British Bahá'ís under their Six Year Plan, and that which faces the Canadian Bahá'ís under their Five Year Plan, the friends should bear in mind that they were spared the severest ordeals of the war, the extreme restrictions and rationing which the British believers had to put up with. If the British Bahá'ís, with all their handicaps and suffering real physical and nervous exhaustion from the long war years, could accomplish so much, then surely the Canadian Bahá'ís, who were spared these conditions, are in a much better state to carry on and prosecute their tasks. What was done at the very breaking point in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales could be done—must be done—by the Canadian believers, with much less effort. Although sacrifice is required, he feels sure that the friends are ready and willing to make the necessary sacrifice, and arise to insure that the very first Plan, the very first organized work undertaken by them as an independent National Bahá'í Community, will be carried forward and victory insured by the appointed time.

He assures all the members of your Assembly, and through you, the community that you serve and represent, that your work is very dear to his heart, and that you are often remembered in his prayers. He is waiting to receive the good news that many more objectives have been achieved during this coming Bahá'í year.

With warmest Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The energy, fidelity and courage, with which the Canadian Bahá'í Community has, in the course of this past year, faced its problems, discharged its duties and expanded the scope of its teaching and administrative activities merit the highest praise, and have greatly raised my hopes for the eventual consummation of the Plan which its members are so steadfastly prosecuting. Though unable, owing to a chain of circumstances beyond my control, to address them more frequently and convey to them my feelings of gratitude and admiration for their recent achievements, I have followed closely the course of their manifold activities, perused, with care and interest, the various publications which testify to their unremitting labours, and remembered them in my prayers in the holy Shrines.

FUTURE OF CANADA VERY GREAT

This community though still in its infancy, is manifesting, in the course of the first years of its existence as an independent administrative entity, a virility, a steadfastness of purpose, a dedication to the Cause it serves, an organizing ability in the administration of its affairs that augur well for the glorious destiny disclosed by the Pen of the Author of the Divine Plan in His epoch-making Tablets. Already in the early stages of its life, when its administrative machinery was still merged with the institutions evolved by the followers of the Faith residing in the great Republic of the West, its fame, through a series of memorable events and noble exploits that have greatly enriched the annals of the Cause of God, had spread far and wide and the shadow of its future glory had run before it to the remotest corners of the Bahá'í World. For was it not 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own pen which, as far back as the dark years of the First World War, had forecast the splendor of the memorable achievements which, spiritually and materially, would distinguish and illuminate its annals in the years to come? "The future of the Dominion of Canada ... is very great and the events connected with it infinitely glorious... Again I repeat that the future of Canada is very great, whether from a material or a spiritual standpoint."¹³

IMPERISHABLE RECORD OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

It was a Canadian¹⁴, of French extraction, who through his vision and skill was instrumental in conceiving the design, and delineating the features, of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, marking the first attempt, however rudimentary, to express the beauty which Bahá'í art will, in its plenitude, unfold to the eyes of the world. It was a Canadian woman¹⁵, one of the noblest in the ranks of Bahá'í pioneers, who alone and single-handed, forsook her home, settled among an alien people, braved with a leonine spirit the risks and dangers of the world conflict that raged around her, and who now, at an advanced age and suffering from infirmities, is still holding the Fort and is setting an example, worthy of emulation by all her fellow pioneers of both the East and the West. It was a member¹⁶ of that same community who won the immortal distinction of being called upon to be my helpmate, my shield in warding off the darts of Covenant-breakers and my tireless collaborator in the arduous tasks I shoulder. It was a Canadian subject¹⁷, the spiritual mother of that same community, who, though fully aware of the risks of the voyage she was undertaking, journeyed as far as the capital of Argentina to serve a Cause that had honoured her so uniquely, and there laid down her life and won the everlasting crown of martyrdom. It was, moreover, a Canadian¹⁸ who more recently achieved the immortal renown of designing the exquisite shell destined to envelop, preserve and embellish the holy and priceless structure enshrining the dust of the Beloved Founder of our Faith.

A community which, in the course of less than fifty years, has to its credit such an imperishable record of international service, and standing now on the threshold of a new epoch in its evolution, recognized as a self-governing member of the family of Bahá'í national communities, functioning according to a Plan of its own conceived for its orderly and efficient development, must, if it is to maintain the standard of excellence it has already attained, display on a still wider front, and continue to demonstrate, a no less profound spirit of dedication, as it forges ahead, in the years to come, along the road laid down for it by the Centre of the Covenant Himself in His historic Tablets.

As co-partner with the American Bahá'í Community in the execution of the Divine Plan, it must evince in both the administrative and pioneer fields, a heroism that may be truly worthy of its high calling. In the remote and inhospitable regions of the North, amidst the Eskimos of Greenland and the Indians of the Dominion of Canada; throughout the Provinces of a far flung territory where newly fledged assemblies, and nuclei of future Bahá'í institutions in the form of groups and isolated centres, lie scattered; in its relationships and negotiations with the local, provincial and national representatives of civil authority in issues affecting matters of personal status and the independence of the Faith and the establishment of its endowments; in its contact with the masses and in its effort to publicize the Faith, enhance its prestige and disseminate its literature, this community, so young, so vibrant with life, so laden with blessings, so rich in promise, must rise to such heights, achieve such fame as shall eclipse the radiance of its past administrative and pioneer achievements.

Then and only then, will this community acquire the spiritual potentialities that will enable it to discharge, as befits a co-heir of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, the tremendous responsibilities, and fulfil the functions, devolving upon it beyond the oceans, and in all the continents of the globe.

May this community, the leaven placed by the hands of Providence in the midst of a people belonging to a nation, likewise young, dynamic, richly endowed with material resources, and assured of a great material prosperity by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, play its part not only in lending a notable impetus to the world-wide propagation of the Faith it has espoused, but contribute, as its resources multiply and as it gains in stature, to the spiritualization and material progress of the nation of which it forms so vital a part.

SHOGHI.

Letter of October 30, 1951

October 30, 1951.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letters ... have been received, with enclosures, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

The Administrative Order is not a governmental or civic body, it is to regulate and guide the internal affairs of the Bahá'í community; consequently it works, according to its own procedure, best suited to its needs. A Bahá'í who does more than visit temporarily a community is considered for our administrative purposes as a resident and can vote and serve accordingly. Students in foreign lands, most obviously not residents, are registered as local Bahá'ís, and therefore entitled to do their share of work and play their part in the local community life. This should be pointed out to ... who seem to be confusing our internal administration with external practices which have no relation to it. As regards their personal attitudes the Guardian, remembering what a devoted worker ... has been in the past, is very sorry to see she is no longer active. He does not feel this will lead to either her happiness or that of ...; for, whenever we compromise with what is noblest and best in ourselves, we are the losers invariably.

The Guardian was delighted to hear the friends are at last responding to the urgent needs of the Plan and going forth as pioneers. Plans are concrete things, and not mere honors, and victories—like all other achievements in life—must be purchased at the cost of persistent efforts! He feels sure the Canadian Bahá'ís, perhaps slow to get under way, will display the counterpart of this British characteristic, and cling like bull dogs to their tasks, once they do get under way.

PIIONEER TO GREENLAND

The departure of Mr. Bond¹⁹ for the Arctic made the Guardian very happy; this, as well as the sailing of Mr. Bischoff²⁰ for Greenland, mark the opening stage of the campaign to carry the Faith to the Eskimos, a plan set forth by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and very dear to His heart.

Encouraging as these steps are, they do not take care of the main body of the work—the establishment of new Assemblies and groups. In order to accomplish this the entire Canadian Community will have to rise to a new level of activity, consciousness, and sacrifice, just as did the British Bahá'í Community during their Six Year Plan. Their success is perhaps one of the most remarkable ever achieved in the Bahá'í World because they were few in number, run down in health from the long years of suffering during the war, and poor in financial resources. Their determination, dedication and moral stamina, however, carried them through, and Bahá'u'lláh gave them the victory. He will give the same victory to everyone who shows the same characteristics. Success breeds success, and this same Community, now rightfully proud and conscious of its importance, is carrying on its African work in a brilliant manner. The Canadian Bahá'ís, more prosperous, less restricted, and equally capable, can accomplish just as much if they unitedly determine to do so.

The response made by the Canadian friends to the Guardian's appeal for support of the Shrine work has touched him very much. He wishes to thank all those who contributed for their loving generosity, and to assure them that their cooperation in this wonderful task has added to the spiritual beauty of an Edifice already so Holy and so beloved by all the believers the world over.

He wishes you all every success in the discharge of your arduous duties, and is praying for a marked quickening in the pace of the Five Year Plan.

With Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

CRITICAL FINAL PHASE OF FIVE YEAR PLAN

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The Plan on which the attention of the Canadian Bahá'í Community is focused and upon the success of which must depend its immediate destinies, is now entering a critical stage, demanding increasing vigilance on the part of all of its members, utter consecration to the Plan's objectives, and a determined, inflexible resolve to carry it to a successful conclusion.

Little over a year separates this valiant community, still in the earliest stage of its independent existence, from the fateful hour that will mark the termination of the first collective enterprise undertaken in its history. The vastness of the field in which its infant strength is being tested is indeed staggering. The resources it can command are severely limited. The number of active participators, whether as pioneers or administrators, is admittedly small. The experience of the vast majority of its supporters is inadequate to the tremendous obligations it has assumed. The obstacles confronting it whether in Greenland, or among the Indians and the Eskimos of the extreme North, are truly formidable. Yet the potency infused into this community, through the Revelation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, and the spiritual capacity engendered in its earliest members through His visit to their native land—distinctions which it fully shares with its sister community in the Great Republic of the West—empower it to discharge—if it but rise to the occasion—all the responsibilities it has undertaken and consummate the task to which it stands pledged.

The eyes of the Bahá'í World are expectantly turned towards this newly erected pillar, designed to sustain in conjunction with other National Assemblies the weight of the Supreme Legislative Body of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Sister communities in both the East and the West, less privileged than it and deprived of the primacy with which the twin Bahá'í national communities labouring in the North American continent have been invested by the unerring Pen of the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, yet able to achieve, under circumstances no less challenging, a success wholly out of proportion to their numbers, are eagerly awaiting the outcome of this initial crusade embarked upon by this blessed, this envied community in conformity with the Mandate issued by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His immortal Tablets²¹. He Himself Who nourished and watched over it with such loving care from the earliest days of its inception, Who, in unmistakable language and on more than one occasion, foreshadowed its glorious future, both materially and spiritually, is from His station on high, gazing down upon the youthful efforts exerted by a community so dear to His heart, so newly launched upon a course which He Himself has charted.

This final phase of the first Plan, undertaken by a newly fledged, repeatedly blessed community, as it speeds to a close, must witness an upsurge of spirit, of courage and determination, a display of activity, a demonstration of self-sacrifice, and of solidarity such as to eclipse its brightest achievements in the past. The highly meritorious tasks initiated in both Greenland and Newfoundland need not be enlarged at the present hour, but should, under no circumstances, be allowed to suffer any setback. The work started among the Eskimos and Indians should be maintained at its present level, and should not be permitted to decline. An extraordinary concentration of effort, systematic, determined and sustained, is however required throughout all

the nine Provinces of the Dominion, aiming at an unprecedented flow of contributions by the entire body of the believers, each according to his or her means, into the National Treasury; a marked increase in the number of pioneers; a much greater dispersion; a higher degree of austerity; a still nobler display of consecration—all of which must result in a speedy multiplication of Assemblies and groups, which constitutes the core of the Plan, and on which hinges its fortunes.

UNUTTERABLY PRECIOUS OPPORTUNITY

The fleeting months ahead will be truly decisive. Upon the success of the present Plan must depend, not only the joint tribute to be paid by the Canadian Bahá'í Community to the memory of the Founder of the Faith on the occasion of the centenary of the Birth of His Revelation, but also the rapid unfoldment of subsequent stages of the Mission which the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá so clearly, and emphatically entitle it to fulfil.

The opportunity given to this community is precious, unutterably precious. The fate of this first historic Plan now hangs in the balance. The present chance, if lost, cannot be retrieved. The issues on which hinge the successful prosecution of the Plan are so weighty that none can assess them at present. The needs of a sorely-stricken society, groping in its distress for God's redemptive Message, are growing more acute with every passing hour. The Canadian Bahá'í Community, newly emerged as an independent member of the Bahá'í World Community, so richly blessed through its elevation to the rank of a chosen prosecutor of a Divine Plan, unique, in many respects, among its sister communities in both Hemispheres in the manifold blessings bestowed upon it, can neither afford to flinch for a moment or hesitate in the discharge of its sacred duty. Every effort exerted by this community, during these fate-laden months, every sacrifice willingly endured by its members, will, if they but persevere, be richly blessed by Him Who brought it into being, Who nursed it through His love, Who conferred upon it so distinguished a Mission, Who made such magnificent promises regarding its future, and Who will continue to sustain it through His unfailing, His abounding grace and favour.

May this community, ever aware of the position it occupies, and of the bright prospects unfolding before it, brace itself for one last, supreme effort, and ensure, while there is yet time, the complete and total success of the enterprise to which it stands committed.

SHOGHI.

Letter of June 8, 1952

Haifa, Israel,
June 8, 1952.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letters ... with their various enclosures, have been received, and the beloved Guardian has requested me to answer you on his behalf.

He was very happy to hear that the Convention had been such a success, and above all, that the delegates had realized how urgent are the teaching tasks still facing the Canadian Community. He hopes that they will carry back to their local communities a sense of this urgency, and stimulate the friends to make a heroic last effort and succeed. They say success breeds success; and there can be no doubt that, upon the accomplishment of the present goals, must depend the work in the immediate future—both the degree of spiritual help that will be vouchsafed by God, and the number of tasks that will be entrusted to the Canadian Bahá'ís. He feels sure that if the believers become sufficiently aroused to an awareness of the critical nature of the coming months, they will take the necessary action, however great the sacrifice involved.

CHARLOTTETOWN MUST BE MAINTAINED

As he cabled you, he feels that Charlottetown²², representing as it does, one of the Canadian Provinces, must be maintained at any cost.

In regard to the question you asked about the holding of the Canadian Convention in Wilmette, this would not be possible, as the National Body must hold its Convention in its own country. He suggests, however, that you make an effort to coordinate the dates in such a way that the friends can later proceed to Wilmette for the Intercontinental Teaching Conference and the dedication of the Temple. As long as it is held within the Ridván period, the dates can be arranged any way that suits your convenience, and of course the Convention can be convened in any place in Canada your Assembly decides upon, even on the American frontier at a point en route to Chicago.

The Guardian was most happy to hear of the excellent work some of the Bahá'ís are doing with the Eskimos and the Indians, and considers their spirit most exemplary. They are rendering a far greater service than they, themselves, are aware of, the fruits of which will be seen, not only in Canada, but because of their repercussions, in other countries where primitive populations must be taught.

He feels that the opening for a Canadian believer to visit the Governor of Greenland and his wife is extremely important.

The personality of the Bahá'í who accepts this invitation should be carefully considered, because to be a guest of people in a different climate and environment, of a different nationality and speaking a different language, so far away, might be a little trying, and of course the impression that this Bahá'í creates will be of infinite importance to the Faith in its future development in Greenland. Whether ... makes the sacrifice and goes, or some other individual is chosen, he urges your Assembly to above all consider this matter tactfully and from the human standpoint, rather than the religious one, if one can put it that way.

LAURENTIAN BAHÁ'Í SCHOOL

Your Assembly must decide, as the Guardian already told dear Mr. Schopflocher²³ when he was here, upon the advisability of maintaining the Laurentian School²⁴, in an objective spirit. The Guardian can only outline to you the principle, which is that Bahá'í funds should not be invested in building up a place that has dear associations for a number of the friends, but is not going to really serve a large group of the believers.

The Guardian's point is that National Bodies when creating national institutions, should use sound judgment, because of the financial investment involved. This is only reasonable.

Your Assembly must therefore decide what to do about the Laurentian School, and you are free to make your own decisions.

He would be very happy to have the National Assembly maintain the grave of dear Sutherland Maxwell²⁵. His association, not only with Canada and the inception of the Faith there, but with the World Centre and the Shrine of the Báb, naturally endears him to all the friends, and his grave should be a national memorial. When the time comes to erect the tombstone, the question of receiving contributions from your Body can be considered.

He feels that the Canadian Community, old in the Northern Hemisphere, but young in its independence, is showing great promise, and he is proud of it and of the spirit that animates both its National Assembly and its members. He also feels confident it will distinguish itself, not only during the coming year, but during the next 10 years before our Most Great Jubilee falls due in 1963.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

P.S.—Regarding your question concerning St. John's, Newfoundland, and the believers living outside the town limits: no exception to the general rule can be made in this case.

Dear and Valued Co-Workers:

The Plan, with which the immediate destinies of the valiant, newly emerged independent, highly promising Canadian Bahá'í Community are linked is, as it approaches its closing stage, passing through a very critical period in its unfoldment. Proclaiming as it does the formal association of the second Bahá'í community to attain an independent status in the Western Hemisphere with its

sister communities who, in various parts of the Bahá'í World, are prosecuting specific Plans designed to foster their organic development, signaling the alignment of this community as the sole ally of the chief Executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Master Plan, this collective fate-laden enterprise upon which this youthful and virile member of the World Bahá'í Family has so whole-heartedly and enthusiastically launched—an enterprise on the successful consummation of which the effective initiation of its glorious mission, far beyond the borders of the Dominion of Canada, must ultimately depend—such an enterprise, however vast the field in which it operates, and no matter how circumscribed the resources of the small band of stalwart pioneers engaged in its prosecution—must, under no circumstances be allowed to register a failure.

In Newfoundland, in Greenland, among the Eskimos and Indians, through the incorporation of its National Assembly, the immediate objectives have been practically attained. The attention of the entire community must, in the remaining months ahead, be focused on the dire necessity of multiplying, at whatever cost, the number of pioneers, the rapid formation of groups, and the conversion of groups into Assemblies, so that the complete and total success of the Plan may be assured, and a triumphant community may step forward, confident and unencumbered by any liabilities, into a vast arena of service, prosecute a still more glorious mission, and win still mightier victories.

HAZÍRATU'L-QUDS TO BE ESTABLISHED

While the energy of this community is being expended on the conduct of this fateful undertaking, marking the baptism of this community, a collateral effort must, owing to unforeseen circumstances, be exerted for the establishment of an institution which, though not an integral part of the Plan formulated for that community, is none the less regarded as indispensable owing to its emergence into an independent existence, and the necessity of its following the lead of its sister communities in East and West, which have, at various stages in their development, adopted this vital measure for the consolidation of their national institutions and the raising of the prestige of the Faith in their respective countries. The selection of the city to serve as the seat of the national Hazíratu'l-Quds in the Dominion of Canada; the purchase of either a plot to serve as a site for the construction of this Edifice, or, preferably, of a building to serve as a provisional national administrative headquarters for a rising, steadily expanding community; the association of all other National Assemblies throughout the Bahá'í World in contributing towards this highly meritorious enterprise; my own association with the Bahá'ís the world over in providing for the early emergence of such a Centre towards which the manifold activities initiated throughout the length and breadth of a vast Dominion must converge, and from which the impulses generated by a rapidly evolving, divinely appointed Administrative Order must radiate—these constitute the imperative needs of the present hour. The consummation of this added undertaking, the prompt discharge of this additional responsibility will, no doubt, constitute a befitting contribution by one of the youngest national communities in the Bahá'í World to the world-wide celebrations that are to commemorate the centenary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission, and which will parallel the termination of the fifty-year old enterprise of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, and its official opening for public Bahá'í worship.

In conjunction with the various National Administrative Headquarters purchased or constructed, in the course of the last three decades, in five continents of the globe, and for the most part in the capital cities of several countries in the Eastern Hemisphere, this latest Edifice in the chain of Bahá'í national institutions linking five continents will, no doubt, serve to enhance the growing prestige of a world-wide Faith and consolidate the foundations of its administrative structure. From far-off Sydney, on the shores of the South Pacific Ocean, and successively through New Delhi in the heart of the Indian sub-continent, Tíhrán, the capital of Bahá'u'lláh's native land, Baghdád, the Iráqí capital enshrining His most holy House, Cairo, the Egyptian capital the admitted centre of both the Arab and Muslim worlds, the city of Frankfurt in the heart of both Germany and of the European continent, and as far as the heart of the North American continent and in the neighbourhood of the first Bahá'í Centre established in the Western Hemisphere, this chain of Bahá'í bastions of a world-encircling Order, must be further extended through an additional link to be forged in the northern part of the Western Hemisphere, and its subsequent prolongation into Latin America as far as the Republics of South America.

One more word in conclusion. The passing, at this juncture, of one²⁶ who, through a long career of distinguished service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, not only since the birth of this community but in more recent years in the heart and centre of the Bahá'í World, has left an indelible mark on the annals of the Faith, has evoked not only the deepest sorrow but the utmost regret at a time when this community is beginning to reap at long last the first fruits of its stewardship to the Cause of God, and the whole Bahá'í World is on the eve of celebrating one of its greatest Jubilees. By reason of his own saintly life, his self-effacement, gentleness, loving kindness and nobility of soul; by virtue of his remarkable endowments which he so devotedly consecrated to both the embellishment of the slopes of God's holy mountain and the creation of a befitting design for the second most holy Bahá'í Edifice embosomed in its very heart; and because of his kinship, on the one hand, with a wife²⁷ whom posterity will regard, not only as the mother of both the Canadian Bahá'í Community and of the first Bahá'í centre established on the European continent but also as one of the foremost pioneers and martyrs of the Faith and, on the other with a daughter²⁸, whose unfailing support to me as my helpmate, in the darkest days of my life, has earned her the title already conferred on her father—Sutherland Maxwell has left a legacy, and achieved a position excelled by only a few among the supporters of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the eleven decades of its existence.

Inspired by the example and the accomplishments of those of its members who have distinguished themselves in the Holy Land, on the European continent and in both the northern and southern continents of the Western Hemisphere this community must forge on, with thanksgiving and redoubled zeal, on the road leading it to a still more glorious destiny in the years immediately ahead. That it may press forward, conquer still greater heights, plumb greater depths of consecration, spread wider and wider the fame of the Cause of God is the cherished desire of my heart and the object of my constant supplication.

SHOGHI.

Letter of September 19, 1952

Haifa, Israel,
September 19, 1952.

To the Bahá'ís who were gathered at the Ontario Summer School Conference.

The beloved Guardian has received your loving letter of August 9th, and has instructed me to write you on his behalf.

He was most happy to learn that it was possible for so large a number of the friends to attend, and that such a spirit of love and unity was present amongst them; also that a number of the attracted friends have been so touched by the spirit of the Conference, that they have declared their intention of enlisting their services in the Pathway of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Guardian was made happy also to learn that several of the believers have responded to the call for pioneers. A great bounty and a great responsibility will be given the Canadian believers within the coming few months, with the launching of the Ten Year Plan, and a firm foundation in the teaching field must be laid now, so that the friends will be fully equipped to shoulder their tasks, both at home and abroad, during the coming World Crusade.

The Guardian will pray for each one of you.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,
R. RABBANI.

May the Almighty guide your steps, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable you to win great and memorable victories in the service of His glorious Faith.

Your true brother,
SHOGHI.

CANADA'S PART IN THE TEN YEAR WORLD SPIRITUAL
CRUSADE. 1953-57

CANADA'S PART IN THE TEN YEAR WORLD SPIRITUAL CRUSADE. 1953-57

(Cablegrams) April 22, 1953

To the Sixth Canadian National Convention.

(Cablegrams) April 22, 1953.

Profoundly impressed magnificent victories. Love. SHOGHI.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOALS OF TEN YEAR CRUSADE

Overjoyed grateful triumphant conclusion Five Year Plan most momentous enterprise launched Canadian Bahá'í history initiated morrow emergence independent existence Canadian Bahá'í Community culminating centenary birth Bahá'u'lláh's Mission constituting prelude mightier undertaking designed consolidate magnificent victories achieved homefront inaugurate community's historic mission beyond confines Dominion. Ten Year Plan its valiant members now embarking upon enabling them push outposts faith northernmost territories Western Hemisphere associating them members seven other sister communities raising aloft banner Faith Pacific Islands involves:

FIRST opening following virgin territories eleven North America: Anticosti Island, Baranof Island, Cape Breton Island, Franklin, Grand Manan Island, Keewatin, Labrador, Magdalen Islands, Miquelon Island and St. Pierre Island, Queen Charlotte Islands, Yukon; Two Asias—Marquesas Islands, Samoa Islands.

SECOND consolidation Faith Iceland, Greenland, Mackenzie, Newfoundland.

THIRD purchase land Toronto anticipation construction first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár Canada.

FOURTH establishment national Bahá'í endowments.

FIFTH doubling number Local Spiritual Assemblies.

SIXTH raising number incorporated Assemblies nineteen.

SEVENTH formation Israel Branch Canadian National Spiritual Assembly.

EIGHTH establishment American Asian teaching committees entrusted task stimulate coordinate teaching activities initiated Plan. Appeal members entire community worthy allies chief executors 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan dedicate themselves immediate requirements steadily unfolding mission discharge nobly sacred strenuous tasks ahead contribute memorable share prosecution decade long World Spiritual Crusade pay befitting tribute through future accomplishments memory Founder Faith occasion most great Jubilee commemorating centenary declaration His Mission city Baghdád.

SHOGHI.

Letter of May 1, 1953

May 1, 1953.

Deeply touched message fervently supplicating signal victories loving remembrance shrines.

SHOGHI.

Letter of June 20, 1953

Haifa, Israel,
June 20, 1953.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letters ... have been received by the beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He regrets very much the delay in answering your letters. Unfortunately he has had to delay in replying to all national bodies during the last year, because of the pressure of work here, which has steadily increased during this Holy Year.

ACQUISITION OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND SHRINE

The purchase of your national headquarters, he feels, was an important milestone in the history of the Faith in Canada, and he hopes that it will be put to good use, during the coming years, by your Assembly. To this institution you will soon be adding the Maxwell Home²⁹ in Montreal, which should be viewed in the nature of a national shrine, because of its association with the beloved Master, during His visit to Montreal. He sees no objection to having one room in the house being used as a little museum associated with Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell.

He was most happy to hear that all of your goals were achieved. This augurs well for the future of your activities, especially during the Ten Year Plan just launched. He wishes through your body to thank all the pioneers, teachers and Bahá'ís who helped achieve this great victory. They have every reason to feel proud of themselves, and grateful to Bahá'u'lláh. Undoubtedly His divine assistance, combined with their determination and faith, enabled them to fulfill their objectives.

He was very happy to know that Charlottetown not only achieved Assembly status, but that the believers there are mostly self-supporting, as this is a sound basis for the expansion of the work in any place, especially in such a difficult one.

The Bahá'í Exhibit held at the Canadian National Exhibition was an excellent means of obtaining publicity. He hopes that advantage will be taken of similar opportunities in the future.

He urges your assembly to press for recognition of the Bahá'í marriage in Ontario, and, gradually, where the Cause is strong enough, in other Provinces.

Regarding the question you asked him about one of the believers who seems to be flagrantly a homosexual—although to a certain extent we must be forbearing in the matter of people's moral conduct because of the terrible deterioration in society in general, this does not mean that we can put up indefinitely with conduct which is disgracing the Cause. This person should have it brought to his attention that such acts are condemned by Bahá'u'lláh, and that he must mend his ways, if necessary consult doctors, and make efforts to overcome this affliction, which is corruptive for him and bad for the Cause. If after a period of probation you do not see an improvement, he should have his voting rights taken away. The Guardian does not think, however, that a Bahá'í body should take it upon itself to denounce him to the Authorities unless his conduct borders on insanity.

The Guardian attaches the greatest importance, during this opening year of the Ten Year Campaign, to settling the virgin areas with pioneers. He has informed, or is informing, the other National Assemblies that there is no reason why believers from one country should not fill the goals in other countries. In other words, Canada should receive foreign pioneers for her goals, who would operate under her jurisdiction; likewise, Canadians could go forth and pioneer in other countries' goal territories if the way opened for them to do so. Naturally, they must feel their first responsibility should be toward the Canadian part of the Plan, as they are Canadians, but sometimes health, business openings or family connections might take people into other goal countries.

He realizes that the objectives in the far north are perhaps the hardest. On the other hand, the harder the task, the more glorious the victory.

You may be sure that he is praying for your success, and, what is more, he is confident that this young, virile Canadian Community can and will succeed in carrying out its share of the World Spiritual Crusade, so vast and challenging, upon which we are now launched.

With warmest Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

INITIAL STAGE OF GLORIOUS MISSION

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The brilliant success achieved by the Canadian Bahá'í Community, marking the triumphant conclusion of the Plan formulated on the morrow of the emergence of the community as an independent member of the International Bahá'í Family, is to be regarded as a milestone of far-reaching importance in the evolution of the Faith not only in the Dominion of Canada but throughout the entire Western Hemisphere. The vitality displayed so strikingly by this youthful community, the exemplary fidelity demonstrated by its members to the spiritual as well as administrative principles of the Faith in the conduct of their manifold activities; the splendid cooperation with their national and local elected representatives which they have invariably shown, at every stage in the development of the Plan; the sacrifices they have repeatedly made; the vigilance and care which they have exercised while discharging their sacred and weighty responsibilities; the soundness of judgement, the enthusiasm and perseverance that have distinguished them in the pursuance of their tasks—all these have, in recent years, contributed, in no small measure, to the raising of the prestige of this community in the eyes of its sister communities in both the East and West, and in evoking feelings of profound admiration in the hearts of the followers of the Faith in every continent of the globe.

I myself am deeply touched, and feel a profound gratitude for the superb contribution made by this community, still in the early years of its development, to the world-wide progress of the Faith achieved since the inception of the successive Plans undertaken by various National Assemblies for the systematic propagation of the Faith throughout the world.

The great strides which this virile and highly promising community has made in so short a period, over so vast a continent, despite such formidable obstacles, and in the service of so glorious a Cause, fill my heart with confidence that the tasks it has now assumed, on the morrow of the successful termination of the first collective enterprise undertaken in Canadian Bahá'í history, will be consummated in a manner that will redound to the glory of the Faith to which its members are so wholly dedicated.

The Ten Year Plan which your Assembly has now launched, in its capacity as the elected representatives of the Canadian Bahá'í Community—the recognized allies of the chief executors of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan—and which constitutes so important a phase of the global Spiritual Crusade on which the followers of the Faith have embarked, marks the inauguration of the initial stage in the unfoldment of the glorious Mission of this community, a Mission which will enable it to implant, in collaboration with its sister community in the Great Republic of the West, and with the support of the Latin American Bahá'í communities associated in the execution of the Divine Plan, the standard of the Faith in all continents of the Globe.

TWO PARAMOUNT OBJECTIVES

Of all the objectives of this momentous Ten Year Plan, with which the immediate destinies of this firmly-grounded, fully consecrated, high-minded, spiritually quickened community are so closely linked, the purchase of the site of the Mother Temple of the Dominion of Canada and the settlement of pioneers in the thirteen virgin territories and islands, eleven of which are situated in North America and two in the South Pacific Ocean, may be regarded as the most important.

Prompt and effective measures must, no matter how great the sacrifice involved, be taken to ensure that, ere the termination of the first two years of the Plan, these two paramount

objectives, which constitute the opening phase of the Plan, will have been fully attained. The entire community must arise, as it has never risen before, to meet the challenge of the present hour. The time fixed for the achievement of the initial victories of the Plan is admittedly brief. The prizes to be won in distant fields, under the most trying circumstances, by the members of a community so youthful, so circumscribed in number and resources, are so precious that none of them can as yet even dimly imagine their transcendent glory. On the homefront, as well as in the far-off islands of the Pacific Ocean, in both the teaching and administrative fields, the Canadian Bahá'í Community must labour incessantly in anticipation of the fulfilment of the inspiring prophecies made by the Centre of the Covenant Who, repeatedly and in unmistakable language, promised to this community a glorious future, and predicted both the material and spiritual advancement of the nation of which it forms a part.

FUTURE ROLE CONTINGENT ON ACHIEVEMENTS IN THIS PLAN

On the success of this initial stage in the unfoldment of its Mission in foreign fields—a stage which will witness the departure of the Canadian pioneers from their homeland, in the northern regions of the Western Hemisphere, to the South Sea Islands—must depend the degree to which they will be active in days to come in other continents of the globe and their neighbouring islands. As the chosen allies of the chief executors of the Master's Divine Plan, they shoulder a responsibility which is at once staggering, sacred and inescapable. The greater their exertions, the more abundant will be the outpouring of celestial grace vouchsafed to them by the Author of the Plan Himself, Who in His immortal Tablets has more than once assured of His unfailing aid all who arise to serve His Father's Cause.

Now is the hour to demonstrate to the entire Bahá'í World those qualities which the heroes of God, unfurling in the Western Hemisphere the banners of a world Crusade destined to be carried over the entire surface of the globe, must possess in order to accomplish their exalted Mission. The Canadian Bahá'í Community must stand in the vanguard of this conquering army of Bahá'u'lláh. They must prove themselves increasingly worthy of their high calling as this momentous Crusade steadily unfolds. They must put their entire trust in Him Who guides its destinies from His Station on high. They must dedicate themselves heart and soul to the fulfilment of all its objectives without delay, without any exception.

That they may acquit themselves of their task, as befits their high station in this great spiritual adventure, that they may enrich their heritage, and noise abroad the fame of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh through a whole-hearted and valiant participation in this world-girdling Spiritual Crusade, is the object of my constant prayer and one of my most cherished hopes.

SHOGHI.

Letter of May 6, 1954

Haifa, Israel,
May 6, 1954.

The beloved Guardian has been very happy indeed over the results of the teaching work in the virgin areas, in the first year of the Ten Year Crusade. He is very hopeful that all of the virgin areas outside of the Iron Curtain countries will soon be settled. He urges that your Assemblies keep after this very important matter, so that the settlements can be accomplished at the earliest possible date.

NO PIONEER SHOULD LEAVE HIS POST

The Guardian feels that you should write to all of the pioneers, informing them that he attaches the utmost importance to the services which they are rendering; in fact, he feels there is no

service in the entire Bahá'í World as important as their pioneering work in the virgin areas. They have achieved a great station of service. They are the representatives of the Faith in these virgin areas. They have the inestimable privilege of bringing the light of Bahá'u'lláh to those hitherto deprived of Divine Guidance for this day. The Guardian has repeatedly pointed out that they can and should become the spiritual conquerors of these new lands.

No pioneer should leave his post unless there is some very urgent reason and then only after consultation with the appropriate committee or National Assembly. If it is found someone must leave their post because of very urgent matters, then the National Assembly should arrange to replace the pioneer before the pioneer leaves. The Guardian urges that you pay the very closest attention possible to this important matter, so that the development of the Faith in these virgin areas may move along in an orderly manner, and produce great results.

As the Guardian cabled the entire Bahá'í World at the time of the Conventions, he hopes that the dynamic spirit which was generated during the first year of the Plan will be augmented during the second year of the Plan, and all the Bahá'ís arise everywhere with renewed effort in order to spread the Glad-Tidings. This year must mark a very substantial increase in the number of Bahá'ís throughout the world—on the home fronts, in the consolidation areas, and in the virgin areas. Particular attention should be paid to the home fronts and the consolidation areas. As the Guardian indicates, he is expecting “an upsurge of activity which, in its range and intensity, will excel the exploits which have so greatly enlarged the limits, and noised abroad the fame, of the Cause of God.”

CENTRE ATTENTION ON OBLIGATIONS OF CRUSADE

The Guardian urges that all the Bahá'ís centre their complete attention on the obligations of the Ten Year Crusade. He feels that no new activities should be undertaken of any type, whether of a local or a national nature. The friends must concentrate on the goals of the Ten Year Crusade, which are principally national and universal. For instance, no local Hazírás should be considered during the Ten Year Crusade, no projects on a national scale should be considered which do not definitely relate themselves to the prosecution of the Ten Year Crusade. Funds should not be used for any purpose except the objects of the Ten Year Crusade.

We are embarked upon the greatest spiritual drama the world has ever witnessed; and it is going to require the sacrifice of every individual, every community and every Assembly, whether local or national, in order to reach the goals. The Guardian feels they can be reached if we will concentrate, and not allow our attention to be diverted for a moment for any purpose whatsoever.

The Guardian sends you his loving greetings.

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS,
Assistant Secretary.

Letter of June 15, 1954

Haifa, Israel,
June 15, 1954.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The letters of your Assembly ... with enclosures, have all been safely received, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

Although a number of the matters raised in your various letters have been attended to by cable, he is sorry that he has not been able to answer the letters of your Assembly sooner. It is becoming increasingly difficult for him to get around to National Assembly letters at all.

During the past year, the Canadian Bahá'í Community has gone through a great many experiences of both a sad nature and a pleasant one.

HAND OF THE CAUSE SIEGFRIED SCHOPFLOCHER

The loss of the dear Hand of the Cause, Freddie Schopfloch³⁰, is going to be much felt. He was so intensely loyal, so vigilant in watching over the interests of the Faith, so steadfast and tenacious in serving it, that he will be much missed in the national work. For over thirty years, he promoted, not only the interests of the Faith, but those of the Canadian Bahá'í Community, and rendered on a national and an international scale, through contributions and many teaching trips, valuable services to the Cause of God.

The Guardian was very happy that dear Fred could be buried so close to Sutherland Maxwell³¹. Montreal has indeed been blessed in more ways than one; and, as the Mother Community of Canada, should become increasingly active and united, and live up to the high expectations the Master cherished for her future, and prove herself worthy of the many blessings she has already received.

Another thing which your community has had to pass through this year—both a blessing and a calamity—is the departure of so many active members³² of your National Body for the pioneer fields abroad. It should be a source of great pride that one-third of the membership of your Body set sail for such distant goals, and will render services during the Ten Year Crusade, of such a nature, he feels sure, as to bestow honour upon the entire Canadian Community.

He likewise feels that you have every reason to be satisfied over the progress which has been made during the first year of the Plan in settling the goals entrusted to your care. It is very unfortunate that Anticosti should prove such a hard nut to crack. He appreciates very much the determined efforts which your Body, and particularly Mr. Rakovsky³³, made to get a pioneer into it before last Ridván. No doubt eventually your efforts will be crowned with success; but you will have to be very tactful and careful in order not to arouse a permanently resistant attitude on the part of the Company that owns the Island.

JURISDICTION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

In regard to the question you asked about jurisdiction, the area of jurisdiction is related to the National Spiritual Assembly responsible for the teaching work in the goal country in question, and has nothing to do with what nation the territory belongs to. All Canadian goals are therefore under the jurisdiction of your National Body, and their pioneers must report to you, and people, whose declarations are accepted, should be registered by your National Body, or the Committee in charge of the work, as the case may be.

Regarding the question as to whether your Assembly need do anything about its Israel Branch here; this is a matter which concerns entirely local procedures. Your Canadian Branch has now been legally established, and is entitled to hold property in this country; and he is planning at an early date to register a piece of land in its name. He will send you the title deed as soon as all formalities have been carried out.

CRITERIA FOR TEMPLE SITE

As he has already informed you by cable, he feels that the land which you proposed as a Temple and National Hazíratu'l-Quds site was altogether too large, too expensive, and above all, too far from the city limits. He has given instructions to a number of other National Bodies who were pursuing their investigations in a direction much the same as your own. He realizes that it is difficult, and much more expensive, to find a plot close to the heart of the city. On the other hand, he feels that even a small plot, near to town, is much more reasonable from every standpoint than a large plot way out in the country. The friends must remember that they have to be able to get out to their National Centre and their National Temple and use them; and, as Bahá'ís are all busy, hardworking people for the most part, the time involved must inevitably influence their attendance at Bahá'í meetings in the Hazíratu'l-Quds, and later, Bahá'í services in the Temple.

If the filling of the goals and the purchase of the Temple site can be accomplished before the lapse of two years from the inception of the Plan, he feels you will have carried out his instructions to the letter, and he will indeed be very happy.

He thinks that it is very befitting that your Body, as representatives of the Canadian Bahá'ís, should be responsible for the erection of a tombstone over dear Fred Schopflocher's grave.

As you no doubt are aware, he cherishes the very brightest hopes for the future of the Canadian Bahá'ís. They are a fortunate people, possessing many of the virtues and few of the faults of both the new and old worlds. He remembers them in his prayers in the holy Shrines, and prays that they may speedily advance in the service of the Cause, and accomplish the tasks outlined in the Ten Year Plan as their particular portion of the work.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE HOMEFRONT

He would like to call your attention, and indeed the attention of all the friends, to the fact that it is time for the Bahá'ís everywhere, including Canada, to devote themselves to the consolidation work. The goals on the homefront are going to be, in some ways, even harder to achieve than those abroad. They will require an increase of membership in the community, which means patient and devoted teaching, the multiplication of both Assemblies and groups, the incorporation of many Spiritual Assemblies, etc. They now have nine years in which to do it, but the sooner they get some of the work finished and behind them, the better! We can never tell what the situation may be at a later date, and whether we will not have to carry on our labours under much more difficult circumstances than those prevailing at present.

With warmest Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

P.S.—Regarding the contribution which Mrs. Nan Greenwood wishes to make to the Faith, the Guardian is deeply touched by the spirit which has motivated her; and he feels that she could spend it in no better way than to give it to the British National Spiritual Assembly for their National Hazíratu'l-Quds. They are much in need of money, and it would be of real help in purchasing this important and historic institution.

Please assure her of his admiration for her services, and his loving prayers.

I notice that I have neglected to answer your question concerning ... consent to her daughter's marriage: this must be given in order to be a Bahá'í Marriage. Bahá'u'lláh requires this and makes no provision about a parent changing his or her mind. So they are free to do so. Once the written consent is given and the marriage takes place, the parents have no right to interfere any more.

P.P.S.—The Guardian was very pleased about the publications in Ukrainian and will place copies in the Mansion Library. Please thank the dear believer³⁴ responsible for this work on behalf of the Guardian.

THE TEN YEAR CRUSADE: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The Canadian Bahá'í Community, having recently entered the second phase of the World Spiritual Crusade so auspiciously launched by the followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, on the morrow of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of His prophetic Mission, may well pride itself on the quality as well as the number of achievements which, in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity, have distinguished its stewardship to His Cause ever since its emergence as an independent national entity in the world-encompassing Bahá'í Brotherhood. Its mission in foreign lands has been befittingly inaugurated in the course of the opening phase of this world-girdling Crusade. The expansion and consolidation of its activities on the homefront have kept pace with the progress of the work initiated by its pioneers beyond the borders of its homeland in both the Western Hemisphere and the Pacific Islands. It has, moreover, launched upon its twofold historic enterprise aiming at the acquisition of its new national administrative Headquarters and the purchase of the site of its future Temple. It has, in

addition, been enriched through the donation and legal transfer of a House³⁵ uniquely associated with 'Abdu'l-Bahá's historic visit to the Dominion of Canada, and destined to be regarded as the foremost Bahá'í shrine throughout that Dominion.

The years immediately ahead must witness an intensification of effort, on the part of all of its members, as well as its elected national representatives, which will at once safeguard the prizes won in distant fields, and lend a notable impetus to the consolidation of its administrative institutions within its borders.

The selection of the site for the national Hazíratu'l-Quds and for the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Canada must be made with the utmost care and promptitude. Measures must, without delay, be taken for the construction of the administrative Headquarters of its National Assembly. The process of multiplication of isolated centres, groups and Assemblies must gather momentum in the course of the current year. The incorporation of firmly established Local Spiritual Assemblies must simultaneously be accelerated in order to strengthen the structure of these newly established institutions, and pave the way for the establishment of local Bahá'í endowments. The one remaining virgin territory assigned to it must be speedily opened, and every precaution taken to ensure its preservation in the future. Particular attention should be directed to Iceland and Greenland, as the two foremost objectives of this community in connection with the work of consolidation assigned to its members. The meritorious effort exerted so devotedly and patiently by its national elected representatives for the purpose of obtaining official recognition by the Civil Authorities for the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate should be pursued with the utmost diligence, vigilance and caution.

NEWLY-ESTABLISHED ISRAEL BRANCH OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

While the members of this valiant, this highly gifted, forward marching and deeply consecrated community, and particularly its alert and zealous national representatives, labour to attain these immediate goals, that constitute the distinguishing features and the prime objectives of this newly opened phase of the Crusade, the measures initiated recently in the Holy Land to transfer eventually part of the international Bahá'í endowments on Mt. Carmel to the name of the newly-established Branch of the Canadian National Spiritual Assembly will be steadily and energetically pursued, as a mark of abiding appreciation of the magnificence and exemplary achievements of this community in recent years in the service of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

A community, whose founder³⁶ has conferred upon it such splendid benefits and whose dust now lies on the far-off shores of the South American continent; which has been exalted by reason of the eminent services which two other members^{37, 38} of her family have rendered, in the Holy Land, to the World Bahá'í Community; which can, moreover boast of the enduring and historic achievements of yet another Hand of the Cause³⁹—the third nominated from the ranks of its members; and which, in the course of the past year, has set a further example of steadfastness and devotion through the action of outstanding members⁴⁰ of its National Assembly who have forsaken their homes to settle in the African continent—such a community can well assert its capacity and determination to consummate, within the allotted time, the laborious and mighty task it has risen to shoulder.

The rapidity of its expansion, its sound development, the steadiness, the single-mindedness, the tenacity, the enthusiasm, the unity and staunchness of its members, augur well for the remarkable material and spiritual progress which the nation to which it belongs must achieve in the years to come, in accordance with the explicit promise enshrined in the Tablets of the Divine Plan by the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant.

May this community march forward on its destined path with renewed vigour, with undimmed vision, with complete unity, with utter consecration, and be enabled to play an important part in the execution of the great tasks ahead, and worthily contribute to the prodigious efforts now being collectively exerted by the followers of the Most Great Name, in every continent of the globe, for the world-wide establishment and ultimate triumph of a long-persecuted, divinely impelled, world-redeeming Faith.

Your true brother,
SHOGHI.

Letter of September 5, 1954

Haifa, Israel,
September 5, 1954.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada

Your loving letter of August 3rd came duly to hand, and the questions which you have raised were presented to our beloved Guardian.

VIRGIN TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATIVELY SEPARATE

About a year ago, there was some correspondence with your Assembly with regard to the Bahá'ís who are in the virgin territories of the Ten Year Crusade, etc.

The Guardian renews the advice given at that time, that all pioneers in virgin areas, or new Bahá'ís who are confirmed in those virgin areas, are not part of the National Bahá'í Community, and cannot vote in elections.

The virgin areas are separate, administratively, and under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly responsible for their development. The same ruling applies to any Assemblies which might develop in these virgin areas. They do not become part of the National Bahá'í Community.

The Guardian was distressed to learn of the problems which arose concerning the election of the Spiritual Assembly of However, the ruling is quite definite, that an Assembly must be elected on the first day of Ridván, April 21st. Regretful as it is, ... must now be considered a Group, until the elections which take place April 21st, 1955.

The beloved Guardian assures you all of his prayers in your behalf. He sends you his loving greetings.

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS,
Assistant Secretary.

Letter of December 4, 1954

Haifa, Israel,
December 4, 1954.

LAND TITLE TRANSFERRED TO ISRAEL BRANCH

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has directed me to write you in connection with a recent communication you submitted to him, in which you stated that you were pleased to note that the Israel Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada was to be established, and land on Mount Carmel registered in your name.

In the Guardian's Ridván Message of April, 1954, you will note he has advised that the Israel Branch of the Bahá'ís of Canada was formed. The actual date of the formation was November 20, 1953.

The land of Mount Carmel, which the Guardian had instructed be registered in the name of the

Israel Branch of the Canadian Assembly was transferred to the title of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, Israel Branch, on October 1, 1954.

I am attaching hereto, for preservation in your files, the title deed covering this particular piece of land, which is Parcel No. 304, Block 10811, Mount Carmel, Haifa.

With loving Bahá'í greetings, I am

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS,
Assistant Secretary.

Letter of March 3, 1955

Haifa, Israel,
March 3, 1955.

DEPRIVATION OF VOTING RIGHTS

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Our beloved Guardian has instructed me to write you on his behalf and bring to your attention a certain matter.

He has heard from a number of sources that some of the Canadian believers have been deprived of their voting rights; and he feels that all National Spiritual Assemblies should bear in mind that this is the heaviest sanction we possess at present in the Faith, short of excommunication, which lies within the powers of the Guardian alone; and is consequently a very weighty weapon to wield.

He considers that under no circumstances should any Bahá'í ever be suspended from the voting list and deprived of his administrative privileges for a matter which is not of the utmost gravity. By that he means breaking of laws, such as the consent of parents to marriage etc., or acts of such an immoral character as to damage the good name of the Faith.

He has informed, some years ago, the American National Spiritual Assembly that, before anyone is deprived of their voting rights, they should be consulted with and lovingly admonished at first, given repeated warnings if they do not mend their immoral ways, or whatever other extremely serious misdemeanor they are committing, and finally, after these repeated warnings, be deprived of their voting rights.

He feels that a great many problems within the communities would be solved if the believers would more constructively devote their attention to the teaching work and carrying out the provisions of the Ten Year Plan as they affect Canada. The leadership of your Assembly in these matters will no doubt be of great help and inspiration to the friends; and he on his part will reinforce you with his prayers.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

Letter of July 16, 1955

Haifa, Israel,
July 16, 1955.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your letters ... have been received by the beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He considers the revised criteria you sent him for the Temple and Hazíratu'l-Quds land, as outlined in your letter of December 15, satisfactory.

DIFFICULTIES IN PURCHASE OF TEMPLE SITE

He is extremely anxious to have these properties purchased, either together in one place, or if this is not feasible, then in two separate places, as he has already informed you. Eight of the eleven Temple sites have been purchased, and many of them in very difficult places; and he feels very strongly that it is a great pity that Canada should be behind-hand in this matter, in view of the fact that she is one of the oldest Bahá'í Communities in the western world. No doubt the problem is more difficult for you to solve, owing to special conditions in Toronto and vicinity; but we know that all problems are solvable for the Bahá'ís, with the power of God to help them; and he is eagerly awaiting news of your success.

As regards your question about the nature of the endowment, which is one of the objectives of your part of the Ten Year Crusade: although the Maxwell house⁴¹ in Montreal is really a national endowment he feels in conformity to the policy being pursued in other countries, Canada should acquire one also at this time. This may be a small piece of land purchased for Two Thousand Dollars or even less, or for that matter, given to the National Assembly as a gift. The important point is that Canada should have its own National Endowment, as distinguished from the school property.

The Guardian does not feel that it is possible or right to change Anticosti and to substitute another goal in its place. He fully realizes the difficulties involved; but feels convinced that sooner or later, through perseverance and prayer, a way will open and a believer will be able to get into the Island on a more-or-less permanent basis.

As regards the money you have received on account of the estate of dear Fred Schopflocher⁴² : this your Body is free to use for the purposes of the Faith, at its discretion.

He hopes that the National Assembly, through its love, wisdom, patience and leadership, will carry the members of the Canadian Community forward during the coming year on the difficult road leading to the achievement of their goals. The spirit of enthusiasm and consecration which animates the Canadian Bahá'ís will, he feels sure, bring forth a warm and generous response to all the plans made by your Assembly for obtaining your objectives.

He assures you, and through you all the members of the Canadian Community that the work in Canada is very dear to his heart, and that he will remember you all in his loving prayers in the holy Shrines.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

P.S.—He is very happy to see you are expediting building Mr. Schopflocher's grave. The details he leaves to the discretion of your Assembly, as he is too busy to go into such matters. The most suitable passages should be chosen from his cable regarding Freddie at the time of his death, and engraved on the tombstone of this distinguished Hand of the Cause.

As regards building the grave of Mr. Maxwell⁴³, this has already been taken care of by his family. However, he thanks you for the loving offer.

He approves of your taking steps right away to erect a worthy monument on the grave of dear and heroic Marion Jack⁴⁴.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The steady progress of the manifold activities in which the Canadian Bahá'í Community is now so devotedly and unflaggingly engaged is a source of great joy and satisfaction to all who have, in recent years, observed its growth and noted its consolidation throughout that vast and promising Dominion.

Though some of its most capable and active members have, urged by a compelling force to forsake their homes and settle in distant fields, ceased to lend to the members of this brave and greatly consecrated community their valued support, and though a few others to be reckoned among its oldest and most distinguished supporters have passed to the Abhá Kingdom, leaving a gap difficult indeed to fill, yet the body of the Canadian believers, far from flinching or relaxing in its noble endeavours, has amply demonstrated its capacity to assume and discharge its heavy and

multiple responsibilities, has steadily enlarged the scope of its achievements, has preserved its unity, and coherence, and set an inspiring example to Bahá'í communities, both young and old, throughout all the continents of the globe.

The superb feats achieved by this community's indomitable pioneers far beyond the Arctic circle, in neighbouring islands of both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, as well as in far off isolated territories; the incorporation of the elected body of its national representatives; the notable increase in the number of its members; its response to the urgent needs of the National Fund, and the rapid enlargement in the scope of its teaching and administrative activities, are all evidences of the intense vitality of the faith which animates it, and of the firm attachment of its members to the Cause which it has espoused.

TASKS STILL UNACCOMPLISHED

Though much has been achieved in various fields, the work that still remains unaccomplished is so vital and urgent that none of its members can afford to relax for a moment, or to lose sight of the significance and sacredness of the immediate tasks now confronting it.

The virgin areas, so laboriously opened, must, under no circumstances, be neglected; nay rather constant attention must be focused upon them in order to consolidate the glorious historic work initiated in those areas. The Island of Anticosti, the one remaining goal as yet unattained, and the only island in the Atlantic Ocean as yet unopened in pursuance of the Ten Year Plan, should continue to be the object of the special solicitude of the national elected representatives of this community. The purchase of the site of the Mother Temple of the Dominion of Canada and the establishment of the national Hazíratu'l-Quds constitute a double task that can brook no further delay, as the entire Bahá'í World, having hailed the erection of such an indispensable institution in no less than eighteen countries scattered throughout the continents and oceans of the Globe, is now intently fixing its eye on this community, so richly blessed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, eager to witness this twofold consummation destined to considerably enrich the record of the services rendered by its members. The acceleration in the process of incorporating firmly established Local Assemblies is yet another objective to which the closest attention must be paid—a task which will, to a very great extent, contribute, from a legal standpoint, to the consolidation of these Assemblies. No less important and vital is the multiplication of isolated centres and groups, the rapid increase in the number of Local Assemblies, and the steady numerical growth of the community—the one enduring foundation on which the security and future prosperity of the community must ultimately rest.

ÍRÁNIAN PERSECUTIONS MUST ACT AS STIMULUS

The sudden and indeed tragic turn of events in the land of the birth of our Faith⁴⁵ must act as an unprecedented and powerful stimulus to the spirit which animates the members of the Canadian Bahá'í Community. It must not, indeed it cannot for a moment, dampen their ardour, deflect them from their purpose, or weaken their resolve to accomplish the tasks assigned to them under the Ten Year Plan.

Conscious of their inescapable, their sacred and multiple responsibilities; spurred on by the realization of the great and varied sacrifices being made, and the vicissitudes experienced, by the great mass of their long-suffering brethren in Bahá'u'lláh's native land; mindful of the prophecies made by the Centre of the Covenant regarding the spiritual and material destiny of their country; following the noble and immortal example set by the founder⁴⁶ of their community and by the two Hands of the Cause⁴⁷ ranking among its foremost members; encouraged by their own splendid achievements in recent years; thankful for the unrestricted freedom enabling them to proclaim, unreservedly and far and wide, the fundamental verities of their Faith; and fully aware of the shortness of the time allotted to them for the performance of their arduous and mighty task, the members of the Canadian Bahá'í Community must arise, at this very hour, and evince such a whole-hearted dedication to the mission they have pledged themselves to carry out as to astonish the entire Bahá'í World, and bring everlasting consolation to the hearts of the persecuted followers of the Faith in the land of its birth.

That this community may rise to this occasion, and may befittingly fulfil this glorious mission, and enrich immeasurably the record of its splendid and unforgettable achievements is the object of

my constant prayer and the dearest wish of my heart.

Your true brother,
SHOGHI.

Letter of January 13, 1956

Haifa, Israel,
January 13, 1956.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has instructed me to write you the following: He was sorry to hear that the piece of plaster from the walls of the Prison of Máh-kú had not been placed in the grave of Mr. Maxwell⁴⁸; and he would like the National Assembly, with the greatest of care, to see that somehow or other in the foundation of the monument this piece of plaster is carefully inserted and preserved; if necessary, the head-stone can be removed, and it can be put under it, and the head-stone rebuilt in such a way as not to damage the head-stone.

He has decided that, in view of the fact that Anticosti is so extremely difficult to get into, the Canadian Assembly can choose some other goal as substitute for Anticosti. In other words, a territory or an island in the vicinity of Canada, which has never been opened to the Faith, may be opened in the place of Anticosti, and thus the goals of the Ten Year Plan will not be decreased. On the other hand, Anticosti should be maintained as an objective; and every effort be made to get a Bahá'í in there.

At present, Mr. Allan Raynor⁴⁹ of your Assembly is visiting here, and, although unfortunately he has been laid up with a cold, it has been a great pleasure to have a Canadian Assembly member here.

With warmest Bahá'í greetings,
R. RABBANI.

Letter of March 10, 1956

Haifa, Israel,
March 10, 1956.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has been reviewing the progress of the teaching work, particularly in the goal areas during the Ten Year Crusade.

Tremendous progress has been achieved. If the few remaining virgin goals of the Ten Year Crusade could be promptly settled, and those which were settled and again became virgin areas, could again be settled, it would be a great victory at this time.

The virgin areas coming under the jurisdiction of the Canadian N.S.A. are Anticosti and Marquesas Islands. Likewise he feels it important that Greenland, Newfoundland, Mackenzie and the Yukon be reinforced.

It will be appreciated if you will let me know as promptly as possible what can be done to establish the Faith solidly in these areas.

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS.

Letter of June 26, 1956

Haifa, Israel,
June 26, 1956.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your communications with their enclosures and material sent under separate cover have all been safely received by the beloved Guardian; and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf...

PIONEER REACHES ANTICOSTI

The recent news that Anticosti had at last received a pioneer⁵⁰ was immensely welcome, and enabled the Guardian to take off his list one of the few remaining virgin territories (aside from those under Soviet domination) on the list of countries to be opened to the Faith under the Ten Year Plan.

The remarkable achievements of the friends during the last three years in opening the virgin areas no doubt will be looked back upon by posterity with astonishment and admiration; and the Canadian friends have certainly played an active part in this process and forged ahead in carrying out their own Plan.

He is particularly eager that Iceland should have a Bahá'í nucleus formed, a country which has for many years had the blessing of knowing about the Faith⁵¹, but never the blessing of resident local Bahá'ís. It deserves particular attention at this time.

The achievement of the friends in the far northern territories is a source of great pride to him; and his warm admiration surrounds the valiant pioneers who, forgetful of self, have arisen to follow 'Abdu'l-Bahá's expressed wishes.

Another achievement during the past year of the Canadian friends has been the publication of literature in Ukrainian and in some of the Indian languages. He feels sure that this will speed up their teaching work immensely amongst both of these minorities; and he hopes that more of the Bahá'ís will make a special effort to get jobs in the reservations or amongst Indian people, so that they can carry to them the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

He was glad to know that a number of Spiritual Assemblies have been incorporated, and hopes that this process will also be accelerated during the coming months, and that all of the Assemblies that seem to have a firm foundation, however small the community may be, will take out their incorporation papers.

GRAVE OF MARION JACK

He hopes that it has been possible to make the arrangements to have Miss Jack's⁵² grave built. This is a task which is indeed a precious trust for your Assembly. When the friends realize that her grave will become in the future a place of visitation, they will appreciate the bounty bestowed upon the Canadian Community through being able to claim one of the most distinguished of all pioneers as a member of their community.

It was a great pleasure to him to have Mr. Raynor⁵³, a member of your Assembly, as his guest here in the Holy Land, and he feels sure that this contact has forged yet another link between the Canadian Bahá'ís and the World Centre.

Regarding various matters raised in your letters: there is nothing in the Teachings to prevent a Bahá'í from willing his body for medical research after death. However, it should be made clear that the remains must be buried eventually and not cremated, as this is according to Bahá'í law.

He was very sorry to hear of the prolonged inharmony in the ... Bahá'í community.... Some of the ... believers, from letters and reports received here, seem to lack a firm grounding on such matters as the Will and Testament and the deeper spiritual teachings of the Faith. Whenever the grasp of these fundamentals is weak, the friends are almost sure to pay undue attention to secondary procedures, to quibble over details, to lose themselves in personalities, and to founder

in a sea of unnecessary inharmony. This has nothing to do with their devotion, their loyalty, their zeal, their eagerness to serve. It is merely a question of not having received, perhaps through lack of sufficient teachers to carry on the all-important work of deepening the friends in their own faith, a strong enough education in the Covenant before the duties and responsibilities of the Administrative Order were thrust upon them.

He has the greatest confidence in the abilities, and the loyalty and devotion of the Canadian friends. They have proved themselves over and over again, and distinguished their community through acts of great sacrifice, vision, courage and devotion. He hopes that, during the coming year, your Assembly will be able to send out more teachers, to assist the friends in grasping the fundamentals of the Faith, in uniting them, and stimulating their desire to do more in the teaching field. If the supply of teachers is limited in Canada—and the area to be covered is certainly vast!—perhaps your Sister Assembly in the United States can help through lending visiting teachers.

He assures all the members of the National Assembly of his loving prayers for the success of your indefatigable labours.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

P.S.—As regards the question about a person who is mentally ill attending the Feasts, anybody who is well enough mentally to attend a Bahá'í Feast and understand what it is all about is certainly well enough to be a voting member. Only people who are very seriously deranged mentally and confined to institutions or under constant supervision should be deprived of their voting rights.

BAHÁ'Í MARRIAGE LAW

Regarding your question of applying the sanction of suspension of voting rights to people who marry without the consent of parents, this should be done from now on. The law of the Aqdas is explicit and not open to any ambiguity at all. As long as the parents are alive, the consent must be obtained; it is not conditioned on their relationship to their children. If the whereabouts of the parents is not known legally, in other words, if they are legally dead, then it is not necessary for the children to obtain their consent, obviously. It is not a question of the child not knowing the present whereabouts of its parents, it is a question of a legal thing—if the parents are alive, they must be asked.

As regards the question of alcohol, the Guardian explained this to Mr. Raynor⁵⁴, and he feels that his understanding of it is quite correct. The Assemblies must be wise and gentle in dealing with such cases, but at the same time must not tolerate a prolonged and flagrant disregard of the Bahá'í Teachings as regards alcohol.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The Canadian Bahá'í Community, whose members are so valiantly participating in the furtherance of the World Spiritual Crusade, now claiming the attention of the entire body of followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in all continents of the globe, has ever since the inception of this world-embracing enterprise, proved itself capable of carrying its share of responsibility in the accomplishment of this collective, colossal task, and has rendered services that have enriched the annals of the Faith, not only in a land so dear to the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but in far-off islands and territories which it is the mission of this community to illuminate and conquer.

Ever since the emergence of this progressive, youthful and dynamic community, as an independent entity, and particularly since the inception of the Ten Year Plan, it has demonstrated, on several occasions, those qualities which alone can provide the guarantee of success in carrying out, as a worthy ally of her sister community in the great Republic of the West, the sacred and historic mission assigned to it by the Author of the Tablets of the Divine Plan. The staunchness of the faith of its members, their unyielding resolve, their ceaseless efforts, their willingness to sacrifice, their exemplary loyalty, their steadfast courage, have, time and again, been strikingly displayed, and served to fortify the hopes which I have always cherished for their future destiny.

The vastness of the field in which this firmly knit, irresistibly advancing, steadily consolidating community now operates, stretching as it does from the Atlantic to the Pacific seaboard, and touching, on the one hand, the fringes of the Arctic Region, and extending, on the other, as far as the islands of the South Pacific, contrasts with the extremely restricted area, in which, for so many years, and until recently, the administrative activities of this community were confined. The diversity and multiplicity of the enterprises in which it finds itself now engaged, the manner in which it is consolidating its strength, enlarging its membership, safeguarding the unity of its members, and noising abroad its fame, may be regarded as additional evidences of its spiritual vigour, and of its rapid rise to maturity at so significant a period in the evolution of the Faith throughout the Western Hemisphere.

At this crucial hour, when the Plan to which this highly promising community stands committed is entering on the third phase in its unfoldment, the responsibilities confronting its members are at once manifold, pressing and inescapable. The situation on the homefront, so extensive and so varied in character, calls for careful consideration and energetic action on the part of your Assembly. The steady increase in the number of those enlisted under the banner of the Faith must be paralleled by a multiplication of Assemblies, groups and isolated centres. The incorporation of all firmly established Assemblies must simultaneously be accelerated. The virgin areas now opened, and particularly Anticosti, Greenland, Iceland and Franklin, as well as those territories deprived recently of the benefits of a resident pioneer, must be made the object of the special attention and solicitude of your Assembly, for upon the preservation of these hard-won prizes must depend the ultimate triumph of this community's collective and historic task, and the enhancement of the prestige it has deservedly won in recent years throughout the Bahá'í World.

Of equal importance is the strenuous yet highly meritorious obligation to add, steadily and rapidly, to the number of the American Indian and Eskimo adherents of the Faith, and to ensure their active participation in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity—a task so clearly emphasized by the Pen of the Centre of the Covenant, and in the consummation of which the Canadian Bahá'í Community is destined to play so conspicuous a part.

DEEPENING OF NEWLY-ENROLLED BELIEVERS

Above all, the utmost endeavour should be exerted by your Assembly to familiarize the newly enrolled believers with the fundamental and spiritual verities of the Faith, and with the origins, the aims and purposes, as well as the processes of a divinely appointed Administrative Order, to acquaint them more fully with the history of the Faith, to instil in them a deeper understanding of the Covenants of both Bahá'u'lláh and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to enrich their spiritual life, to rouse them to a greater effort and a closer participation in both the teaching of the Faith and the administration of its activities, and to inspire them to make the necessary sacrifices for the furtherance of its vital interests. For as the body of the avowed supporters of the Faith is enlarged, and the basis of the structure of its Administrative Order is broadened, and the fame of the rising community spreads far and wide, a parallel progress must be achieved, if the fruits already garnered are to endure, in the spiritual quickening of its members and the deepening of their inner life.

The duties incumbent upon this community, and particularly its elected national representatives, multiply with every passing day. Heavy is the burden they carry. Rich and immense are the possibilities stretching before them. Priceless are the rewards which a befitting discharge of their multiple responsibilities must bring in its wake. Boundless are the favours and bestowals which a loving and watchful Providence is ready to confer upon those who will arise to meet the challenge of the present hour.

May the members of this community, as well as its elected representatives, consecrate themselves anew to the mission which 'Abdu'l-Bahá has conferred upon them, and immortalize their stewardship to the Faith of His Father through acts which future generations will unanimously acclaim and for which they will feel eternally grateful.

SHOGHI.

December 14, 1956.

TEACHING FRENCH CANADIAN CATHOLICS

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has directed me to write you, that he feels it is time for the Canadian Bahá'ís, in their teaching work, to concentrate, to the extent possible, on bringing Catholics into the Faith.

There are the vast number of French Canadians who are of Catholic persuasion. They would make fine Bahá'ís, and if representative members could be brought into the Faith, it will add prestige to the Faith, and help solidify its institutions.

Thus, to the extent possible, the friends should do what they can to attract Catholics and then confirm them in the Faith.

He sends the members of the National Assembly his loving greetings.

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS.

Letter of December 22, 1956

Haifa, Israel,
December 22, 1956.

DEAL WITH EACH CASE INDIVIDUALLY

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

I have been instructed on behalf of our beloved Guardian to answer the questions raised in your recent letter.

There are two things which he wishes to impress upon you. The first is that depriving people of their voting rights is the heaviest sanction which can be imposed at the present time (with the exception of excommunication, which is a right the Guardian has never permitted anyone else to exercise). Therefore, the greatest care should be exerted to try and remedy a situation before depriving anybody of their voting rights, and the action itself should only be taken if absolutely necessary.

The other point is that the Guardian is very anxious that no more rules and regulations should be introduced by any National Spiritual Assemblies. He has continually impressed this upon the American, the British and other National Bodies. The spirit of the Cause will be stifled, the initiative of the friends killed, and the teaching work come to a stand-still if the friends are continually hemmed in by instructions. In view of this, he has instructed the National Bodies to deal with each case as it arises.

The understanding conveyed in the quotation from "Principles of Bahá'í Administration" is correct; also people who are deprived of their voting rights should not receive Bahá'í News or Bulletins, as they are no longer active in the administrative affairs of the Faith.

He is very happy at present to have a member⁵⁵ of your Assembly visiting Haifa, and hopes that Miss Harvey will carry back to you a fresh impetus from the Holy Land, which will assist the Canadian Assembly members in carrying on their many heavy burdens in the service of the Faith.

With warm Bahá'í greetings,
R. RABBANI.

December 27, 1956.

TEACHING MINORITIES

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has directed me to write you concerning the important matter of teaching the minorities of Canada.

He has spoken in some detail to Miss Harvey⁵⁶ concerning the subject, and she can and will amplify this communication.

He feels it most important that active work be done in connection with the French Canadians, Eskimos, and Indians. You are also now actively in touch with the Poles and Ukrainians in your country.

In order to intensify this work, the Guardian feels you should establish a Minorities Teaching Committee, with sub-committees to specialize in the teaching of French Canadians, Eskimos, and Indians. As the work spreads, you can add other sub-committees, such as one for Eastern Europe, or the countries under active consideration. In other words, sub-committees might be formed for regional areas of the globe, where their people form a goodly number of inhabitants of Canada.

Thus you would now have a Minorities Committee, with sub-committees to specialize in the teaching work of the Eskimos, another sub-committee for the Indians, another for the French Canadians, and another one for the Poles and Ukrainians.

With loving Bahá'í greetings, I am,
Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS.

Letter of March 30, 1957

Haifa, Israel,
March 30, 1957.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

The beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer certain matters raised in your recent correspondence with him.

He is delighted to see that substantial progress is being made in Samoa. It is too early for him to say under whose administrative jurisdiction the Samoan Bahá'ís will come in the future. It will probably be Australia, but at the present time, these things have not been definitely settled.

DEFINITION OF COVENANT-BREAKING

People who have withdrawn from the Cause because they no longer feel that they can support its Teachings and Institutions sincerely, are not Covenant-breakers—they are non-Bahá'ís and should just be treated as such. Only those who ally themselves actively with known enemies of the Faith who are Covenant-breakers, and who attack the Faith in the same spirit as these people, can be considered, themselves, to be Covenant-breakers. As you know, up to the present time, no one has been permitted to pronounce anybody a Covenant-breaker but the Guardian himself.

With warm Bahá'í greetings, and assuring you all of his prayers for the success of your important work,

R. RABBANI.

Letter of October 19, 1957

Haifa, Israel,
October 19, 1957.

IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING THE INDIANS

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your loving letter of October 5 was duly received and its contents have been presented to the beloved Guardian.

He was very happy indeed to learn of the very active manner in which the Canadian Bahá'ís have taken hold of this most important subject of teaching the Indians.

He attaches the greatest importance to this matter as the Master has spoken of the latent strength of character of these people and feels that when the Spirit of the Faith has a chance to work in their midst, it will produce remarkable results.

You⁵⁷ yourself are to be congratulated on the very wonderful work you have been doing with the Indians on the Tyendinaga Reserve. The Guardian greatly appreciates this service, and wishes you to know that he values it very highly. He hopes nothing will interfere with your carrying it forward to the fine conclusion which you hope will be the establishment of an Assembly on this reserve. It would be a distinct victory for the Faith if that is accomplished.

The Guardian will pray for you and the success of your work.

Faithfully yours,
LEROY IOAS.

Letter of July 18, 1957

Haifa, Israel,
July 18, 1957.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada.

Your Assembly's communications with their enclosures have all arrived safely, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf...

MOST URGENT TASKS

It is a pity that the Canadian believers are having so much difficulty settling the question of both their Temple land and their National Headquarters. He was very surprised and distressed to

learn that the Temple site you had chosen has entirely fallen through, and that you have to begin all over again looking for a Temple site. He feels that your Assembly should appreciate the fact that the important thing at this time is to acquire a Temple site. It does not have to be a very large piece of land, and, if the worst comes to the worst, at a future date, when the time comes to build a Temple in Canada, it can be exchanged or sold and a better site procured; but the question for this present National Body to settle once and for all is the purchase of a Temple plot as a beginning in order to remove from the Ten Year Plan one of its most important goals, and one the accomplishment of which has been dragging too long. He feels that your Assembly should also look around for a suitable and permanent Hazíratu'l-Quds in Toronto, and try and dispose of the one you have without loss, if possible, in order to enable you to acquire the new and he hopes permanent one at once.

As regards the matter of those who have withdrawn from the Faith: as you know, no one has the right to excommunicate anybody except the Guardian of the Faith, himself. Those people who have withdrawn from the Faith, though critical of it and disgruntled, are not necessarily Covenant-breakers. If they were associating with Ahmad Sohrab⁵⁸ and upholding his claims actively, then they would come into an entirely different category. If this is the case, you should inform the Guardian, but otherwise the friends should be advised to just leave these people alone, for their influence can be nothing but negative and destructive, and the less they breathe the breath, so to speak, of those who have turned their back on the light of this Faith, the better.

It is not enough to bring people into the Faith, one must educate them and deepen their love for it and their knowledge of its teachings, after they declare themselves. As the Bahá'ís are few in number, especially the active teachers, and there is a great deal of work to be done, the education of these new believers is often sadly neglected, and then results are seen such as the resignations you have had recently. In this respect, the Summer Schools can be of the greatest help to the friends, new and old Bahá'ís alike, for in them they can study, and enjoy the feeling of Bahá'í companionship which is, alas, usually lacking in their home communities, owing to the smallness of their numbers.

He is very happy to see that the friends are making every effort to execute the provisions of the Ten Year Plan, as they apply to the Canadian Community. The most urgent of all tasks facing them in connection with the execution of their part of the Ten Year Plan is to increase the number of Spiritual Assemblies.

DEADLY INFLUENCE OF MATERIALISTIC CIVILIZATION

The Bahá'ís should realize that today's intensely materialistic civilization, alas, most perfectly exemplified by the United States, has far exceeded the bounds of moderation, and, as Bahá'u'lláh has pointed out in His Writings, civilization itself, when carried to extremes, leads to destruction. The Canadian friends should be on their guard against this deadly influence to which they are so constantly exposed, and which we can see is undermining the moral strength of not only America, but indeed of Europe and other parts of the world to which it is rapidly spreading.

The fortuitous combination of British solidity and good judgment and American get-up-and-go and enthusiasm, which has characterized Canada, must not be lost in the Canadian Bahá'í Community. Its members must demonstrate their outstanding abilities, and, through a greater vision, more consecration and renewed self-sacrifice, arise and attain their goals.

He is very happy over the work in the Pacific region in general, and was glad to receive word recently of the formation of the Samoan Assembly, a feat of which your Assembly can be duly proud. However, the situation in the Marquesas needs immediate attention, and every effort should be exerted to reinforce the work initiated there, at the cost of much self-sacrifice, by the first pioneer⁵⁹.

INFERTILE FIELDS EQUALLY VITAL

The work in the north should likewise be consolidated, and every effort made to get more pioneers to join those heroic souls already labouring in such an infertile field. This applies equally to Labrador and Greenland, where Bill Carr⁶⁰, the lone Canadian pioneer, is demonstrating the Bahá'í spirit in such an exemplary manner. It is hard for the friends to appreciate, when they are isolated in one of these goal territories, and see that they are making no progress in teaching

others, are living in inhospitable climes for the most part, and are lonesome for Bahá'í companionship and activity, that they represent a force for good, that they are like a light-house of Bahá'u'lláh shining at a strategic point and casting its beam out into the darkness. This is why he so consistently urges these pioneers not to abandon their posts. Apropos of this, he hopes that it will again be possible in the near future to get someone into Anticosti. It is a great pity that the friend⁶¹ who went there could not remain.

The beloved Guardian sends all the members of your Assembly his loving greetings and assures you all of his ardent prayers for your success.

With warm Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI.

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The opening of the second year of the third phase of the Ten Year Bahá'í Spiritual Crusade presents the entire Canadian Bahá'í Community, and, particularly, its elected representatives, with an opportunity, and brings them face to face with a challenge, unique since its inception over half a century ago.

The achievements that have distinguished the record of its stewardship, ever since its founding, and particularly since the launching of the World Bahá'í Crusade, both on the homefront and beyond its confines, have been such as to ennoble the annals of the Faith to which it is so wholeheartedly dedicated, and to arouse in the hearts of all those who have watched, throughout succeeding decades, the rise, its emergence into independent existence, and its rapid consolidation, feelings of profound admiration, of pride and of thankfulness.

The distance that has been traversed, in the course of the four brief years since the inauguration of the Ten Year Plan, by a community, still highly restricted in numbers and circumscribed in resources, and faced with tremendous responsibilities, as a result of the colossal task it has willingly shouldered, is admittedly great, and augurs well for its further advancement along the path traced for it by the Pen of the Centre of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant in His immortal Tablets⁶².

VINDICATE INDEPENDENT CHARACTER OF THE FAITH

The utmost care and vigilance, however, should be exercised by this youthful and dynamic community, so richly laden with the prizes it has so deservedly won, lest the momentum, so painstakingly gained in recent years, in both the teaching and administrative spheres of Bahá'í activity, be lost or reduced. The standard of dedication and of efficiency, attained, while pursuing the goals it has pledged itself to achieve, must never be allowed, through apathy, neglect or faint-heartedness, to be lowered. The vision that has fired its members, on the occasion of the centenary celebrations which witnessed the launching of the Ten Year Plan must, no matter how prolonged or arduous the task, never grow dim. Their unswerving fidelity to the Covenant established by the Author of their Faith, and their attachment to the ideals and precepts enshrined in His Revelation, should, under no circumstances, no matter how active and subtle the machinations of its enemies, both within and without, be weakened. The momentous and highly exacting task, initiated far beyond the confines of their homeland,—a task which posterity will recognize as the opening chapter of their glorious Mission overseas—must be pursued with undiminished diligence, nay with redoubled zeal, and renewed determination and dedication. The no less vital obligation to expand, and consolidate the manifold activities conducted on the homefront, from the Atlantic to the Pacific seaboard, and from the northern confines of the Great Republic of the West to the fringes of the Arctic Ocean, must be faithfully discharged. The setbacks and difficulties that have, unexpectedly and most unfortunately, been recently experienced in connection with the acquisition of both the National Hazíratu'l-Quds and the site of the future Mother Temple of Canada, must be faced with resolution and vigour, and a definite and permanent solution be found which will ensure the full attainment of these twofold primary objectives. The long overdue conversion of the American Indians, the Eskimos and French Canadians, as well as the representatives of other minorities permanently residing within the borders of that vast Dominion, must receive, in the months immediately ahead, such an impetus as to astonish and stimulate the members of all Bahá'í communities throughout the length and breadth of the Western Hemisphere. The independent character of the Faith they profess and champion must, moreover, be fully vindicated through a closer adherence, on the part of the rank and file of the believers, to its distinguishing tenets and precepts, as well as through a fuller recognition by the civil authorities concerned, of the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate and of the Bahá'í Holy Days. The integrity of the fundamental teachings of the Faith, its security, the healthy and steady development, and ultimate fruition, of its nascent institutions, must, above all, be ensured and safeguarded, for upon these will depend the consummation of the Mission with which the Author of the Tablets of the Divine Plan has chosen to entrust them.

THIS COMMUNITY MUST FORGE AHEAD

The few remaining years, separating the steadfast and high-minded members of the Canadian Bahá'í Community, striving so assiduously to achieve their goals, from the time fixed for the termination of a swiftly unfolding Crusade, are rapidly slipping by. A community which, ever since its inception, has, through the instrumentality of its most distinguished members, and particularly its founder⁶³ and those nearest to her, as well as a number of her spiritual children and associates, won such prizes at the World Centre of the Faith, in Latin America, in Europe, in Africa and in the Pacific area—such a community, at this crucial hour, cannot afford to either stand still, falter or hesitate. As this World Crusade sweeps majestically forward and draws nearer to its close, exploits as superb as those its sons and daughters have successively achieved in widely scattered areas of the globe, must continue to distinguish and ennoble the imperishable record of its services.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's prophetic words regarding the future of its homeland, spiritually as well as materially—the initial evidences of which are becoming more apparent every day, must not be lost sight of for a moment, however exacting and all-absorbing the strenuous task ahead, however complex the problems its prosecution involves, however burdensome the preoccupations which it must needs engender.

Afire with that same love that burned so brightly in the hearts of its earliest pioneers, holding fast to the strong cord of the spiritual precepts and administrative principles of the Faith it has so whole-heartedly espoused, confident of its ability to achieve, in its entirety, the Mission entrusted to it by the Author of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, this community must forge ahead, with undeviating loyalty, with indomitable courage, with unbreakable unity, and exemplary consecration, striving to scale loftier heights, and widening constantly the range of its operations, on the American mainland as well as in neighbouring and distant islands, until each and every objective of its allotted task has been triumphantly attained.

SHOGHI.

Footnotes

1. Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá'í community, became a believer in 1898, visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá'í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved "the priceless honor of a martyr's death" in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see "Bahá'í World" Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
2. The Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1916-17, and addressed severally to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, constitute the authority for the successive Plans inaugurated by the Guardian for the spread of the Faith and the establishment of its Institutions throughout the world.
3. The city of Montreal, Quebec, visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá August 30-September 12, 1912.
4. Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá'í community, became a believer in 1898, visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá'í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved "the priceless honor of a martyr's death" in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see "Bahá'í World" Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
5. The Bill to incorporate the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada was passed by both Houses of the Canadian Parliament, and given Royal assent on April 30, 1949.
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7. William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His “saintly life” is described in “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
8. The first pioneers to Newfoundland, arriving in 1949, were Miss Margaret Reid, Miss Dorothy Sheets, and Miss Doris Skinner (who remained there until 1955).
9. Miss Nancy Gates—American pioneer to Denmark who attempted to pioneer to Greenland, but was unable to do so.
10. James and Mrs. Melba Loft—believers who pioneered from the United States to the Tyendingaga (Mohawk) Indian Reserve, near Shannonville, Ontario, 1949-.
11. Miss Nan Brandle—beginning in 1950 served several years as a pioneer to the Indians in Department of Indian Affairs hospitals at Fisher River, Hodgson, Manitoba and at Moose Factory and Ohsweken, Ontario.
12. Jameson Bond—first pioneer to the Canadian Arctic (District of Keewatin 1950, District of Franklin 1951-63, with Mrs. Gale Bond from 1953 on).
13. The Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1916-17, and addressed severally to the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada, constitute the authority for the successive Plans inaugurated by the Guardian for the spread of the Faith and the establishment of its Institutions throughout the world.
14. Louis Bourgeois—architect of the Mother Temple of the West, in Wilmette, Illinois, the construction of which was the first collective enterprise undertaken by the Bahá’ís of America. He died in 1930.
15. Miss Marion Jack—“immortal heroine” and “shining example to pioneers”, who remained at her post in Sofia, Bulgaria from 1930 until her death in 1954. Her imperishable services are recorded in “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
16. Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúm Rabbani—daughter of May and Sutherland Maxwell, became the wife of Shoghi Effendi in 1937, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1952.
17. Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá’í community, became a believer in 1898, visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá’í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved “the priceless honor of a martyr’s death” in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see “Bahá’í World” Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
18. William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His “saintly life” is described in “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
19. Jameson Bond—first pioneer to the Canadian Arctic (District of Keewatin 1950, District of Franklin 1951-63, with Mrs. Gale Bond from 1953 on).
20. Palle Bischoff—Danish believer, the first pioneer to Greenland (1951-54).
21. The Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1916-17, and addressed severally to the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada, constitute the authority for the successive Plans inaugurated by the Guardian for the spread of the Faith and the establishment of its Institutions throughout the world.
22. Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island formed its first Local Spiritual Assembly in 1944.
23. Siegfried Schopflocher—known as “the Temple Builder” because of his great contributions to the completion of the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the West, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1952, died in Montreal 1953. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
24. Laurentian Bahá’í School, near Beaulac, Quebec—founded 1946, transferred in 1949 to the National Spiritual Assembly, the first national endowment.
25. William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His “saintly life” is described in “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
26. William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His “saintly life” is described in “Bahá’í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.

- [27.](#) Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá'í community, became a believer in 1898, visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá'í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved “the priceless honor of a martyr's death” in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see “Bahá'í World” Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
- [28.](#) Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum Rabbani—daughter of May and Sutherland Maxwell, became the wife of Shoghi Effendi in 1937, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1952.
- [29.](#) Maxwell Home, 1548 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Quebec—'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed in this house during his visit to Montreal in 1912. It was given to the Canadian Bahá'í community by Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum in 1953.
- [30.](#) Siegfried Schopflocher—known as “the Temple Builder” because of his great contributions to the completion of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1952, died in Montreal 1953. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see “Bahá'í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
- [31.](#) William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His “saintly life” is described in “Bahá'í World” Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
- [32.](#) Emeric and Rosemary Sala pioneered to South Africa, and John and Mrs. Audrey Robarts to Bechuanaland. The first three named were members of the National Spiritual Assembly 1948-53. In 1957 John Robarts was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God.
- [33.](#) Albert Rakovsky—first Bahá'í to visit Anticosti Island, member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1953-56.
- [34.](#) Peter Pihichyn—a believer of Ukrainian descent.
- [35.](#) Maxwell Home, 1548 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Quebec—'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed in this house during his visit to Montreal in 1912. It was given to the Canadian Bahá'í community by Hand of the Cause Rúhíyyih Khánum in 1953.
- [36.](#) Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá'í community, became a believer in 1898, visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá'í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved “the priceless honor of a martyr's death” in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see “Bahá'í World” Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
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- [45.](#) The resurgence of persecution of the Bahá'í community in Írán during 1955 is described in the booklet "Bahá'í Appeal for Religious Freedom in Írán".
- [46.](#) Mrs. May Ellis Maxwell—spiritual mother of the Canadian Bahá'í community, became a believer in 1898, visited 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1899 and returned to Paris to found the first Bahá'í centre on the European continent, married Sutherland Maxwell and settled in Montreal in 1902, achieved "the priceless honor of a martyr's death" in Argentina in 1940. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see "Bahá'í World" Vol. VIII, In Memoriam.
- [47.](#) Sutherland Maxwell and Siegfried Schopflocher.
- [48.](#) William Sutherland Maxwell—architect of the Shrine of the Báb, appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951, died in Montreal in 1952. His "saintly life" is described in "Bahá'í World" Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
- [49.](#) Allan Raynor—member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1954-60.
- [50.](#) Miss Mary Zabolotny (now Mrs. Kenneth McCulloch)—first pioneer to Anticosti Island (1956).
- [51.](#) Iceland appears to have been visited first by Mrs. Amelia Collins in 1924. Miss Martha Root spent a month in Iceland in 1935.
- [52.](#) Miss Marion Jack—"immortal heroine" and "shining example to pioneers", who remained at her post in Sofia, Bulgaria from 1930 until her death in 1954. Her imperishable services are recorded in "Bahá'í World" Vol. XII, In Memoriam.
- [53.](#) Allan Raynor—member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1954-60.
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- [55.](#) Miss Winnifred Harvey—member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1950-61.
- [56.](#) Miss Winnifred Harvey—member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1950-61.
- [57.](#) Mrs. Peggy Ross—member of the National Spiritual Assembly 1954-63, appointed a member of the Auxiliary Board for Teaching in 1958.
- [58.](#) Aḥmad Sohrab—former secretary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, declared a Covenant-breaker by the Guardian, died 1958.
- [59.](#) Miss Greta Jankko—first pioneer to the Marquesas Islands (1954).
- [60.](#) William Carr—Canadian pioneer to Thule Air Base, Greenland 1955-. From 1955 to 1963 Mrs. Kaya Holck, a Danish believer, pioneered among the Greenlanders.
- [61.](#) Miss Mary Zabolotny (now Mrs. Kenneth McCulloch)—first pioneer to Anticosti Island (1956).
- [62.](#) The Tablets of the Divine Plan, revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1916-17, and addressed severally to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, constitute the authority for the successive Plans inaugurated by the Guardian for the spread of the Faith and the establishment of its Institutions throughout the world.
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