

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

2 July 1967

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

In just over three months the period of the worldwide proclamation of the Faith will be opened at the six Intercontinental Conferences called to celebrate the centenary of the revelation of the Súriy-i-Mulúk. Those conferences will provide an opportunity for representatives of the National Spiritual Assemblies to exchange ideas and coordinate plans for the proclamation which will continue throughout the remaining four and a half years of the Plan.

The stimulating effect of this interchange of ideas will produce greatly increased momentum throughout the world, but inasmuch as many projects must be worked out before that date, we feel a few additional comments on the nature and purpose of proclamation will be helpful now.

Proclamation comprises a number of activities, of which publicity is only one. The Universal House of Justice itself will be conveying the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the heads of all states, but, in addition to this, one of the most important duties of each National Spiritual Assembly is to acquaint leaders of thought and prominent men and women in its country with the fundamental aims, the history and the present status and achievements of the Cause. Such an activity must be carried out with the utmost wisdom, discretion and dignity. Publicity connected with such approaches must be weighed very carefully, as it may be unwise or discourteous. This is, of course, a long-range program, for such things cannot be rushed, but it must be given constant attention.

Another aspect of proclamation is a series of teaching programs designed to reach every stratum of human society—programs that should be pursued diligently and wisely, using every available resource.

Publicity itself should be well-conceived, dignified and reverent. A flamboyant approach which may succeed in drawing much initial attention to the Cause, may ultimately prove to have produced a revulsion which would require great effort to overcome. The standard of dignity and reverence set by the beloved Guardian should always be upheld, particularly in musical and dramatic items; and photographs of the Master should not be used indiscriminately. This does not mean that activities of the youth, for example, should be stultified; one can be exuberant without being irreverent or undermining the dignity of the Cause.

Every land has its own conditions, thus the kind of proclamation activity to be followed in each country should be decided by its National Spiritual Assembly. National Spiritual Assemblies need not follow or copy programs initiated in other countries.

In all proclamation activities, follow-up is of supreme importance. Proclamation, expansion and consolidation are mutually helpful activities which must be carefully interrelated. In some places it is desirable to open a teaching campaign with publicity—in others it is wiser to establish first a solid local community before publicizing the Faith or encouraging contacts with prominent people. Here, again, wisdom is needed.

We have been elated by the enthusiasm with which the Bahá'í community is preparing for the challenging months and years ahead, and we eagerly await those days but a few short months away which will open a period of such promise for the diffusion of God's Word.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

