

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

September 1971

To the Friends assembled in the North Atlantic Conference in Reykjavik

Dearly loved Friends,

To each and every one of you in this historic Conference we send our most cordial and loving greetings. The famous island in which you are now gathered, so strategically placed between the two great continents flanking the vast oceanic area which surrounds it, to which the Teachings of Christ were brought a millennium ago, and which, in this Dispensation, was mentioned by the Center of the Covenant in His Tablets of the Divine Plan, first heard the Name of Bahá'u'lláh in 1924 when the Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins stopped briefly in Reykjavik and made the acquaintance of Hólmfríður Árnadóttir who subsequently became the first Bahá'í of Iceland. Eleven years later the beloved Martha Root spent a month in this land which she loved so well. On that occasion, with the help of Hólmfríður, the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh was widely proclaimed in the press, on the radio and from the lecture platform.

The great Ocean extending from the equator to the Pole and from Europe to North America, which has been both the barrier and the link between the Old and the New Worlds, has played a highly significant part in the later history of mankind. Long before Columbus arrived in the West Indies the Vikings, forebears of Icelanders of today, were plying its northern waters. In later centuries wave upon wave of Europeans sailed from east to west, engaging in one of the most significant migrations in human history. In the twentieth century 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself sailed across it and back, a voyage unique in the religious history of mankind and creating a remarkable parallel with the Light of the Cause itself, beaming from the East across the great Ocean to the heart of the North American Continent, being reflected back again, firing new beacon lights in Europe and in later years diffusing its radiance throughout the world. The great Republic whose eastern shore forms part of the boundary of this Ocean has become the Cradle of the Administrative Order and at this present time the banner of the Most Great Name is being raised in island after island of this Ocean, two of which—Iceland and Ireland—will raise, next Ridván, new pillars of the Universal House of Justice.

The Faith of God is flourishing in the lands around the North Atlantic; a new wind is blowing, promoting an upsurge of proclamation and teaching. In Europe the youth are afire with enthusiasm and vigor. In Canada and the United States a ground swell of unknown proportions is carrying Bahá'í communities to heights of unprecedented achievement.

You are gathered in this Conference to consult on ways and means of winning, in the few fleeting months ahead, the remaining goals of the Nine Year Plan. In Europe particularly there is much to be done, but we have full faith that the friends, galvanized by their love for Bahá'u'lláh and fortified by His promises of Divine assistance, will, with the enthusiasm which they already display, commit their resources to the tasks ahead and will surely attain the victory.

The beloved Master prayed that holy souls would arise from the Northern Territories of the West and become signs of God's guidance and standards of the Supreme Concourse. In one of the Tablets of the Divine Plan He refers to an inhospitable island of that area saying:

Should the fire of the love of God be kindled in Greenland, all the ice of that country will be melted, and its cold weather become temperate—that is, if the hearts be touched with the heat of the love of God, that territory will become a divine rose garden and a heavenly paradise, and the souls, even as fruitful trees, will acquire the utmost freshness and beauty. Effort, the utmost effort is required....

As the friends gathered in Reykjavik and Sapporo bring this worldwide series of Oceanic and Continental Conferences to a triumphant close our thoughts are with you and our prayers on your behalf rise from the Sacred Threshold. May untold blessings and confirmations be showered upon you as you go forth to labor for the advancement of the Cause of God and may your brows be crowned with victory.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]