

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

May 1971

To the Friends of God assembled in the Conference of the South Pacific Ocean

Dearly loved Friends,

We send our warmest greetings and deepest love on the occasion of the first Conference in the heart of the Pacific Ocean. Praise be to God that you have gathered to consult on the vital needs of the hour!

Recalling the promise of Bahá'u'lláh "Should they attempt to conceal His light on the continent, He will assuredly rear His head in the midmost heart of the ocean and, raising His voice, proclaim: 'I am the lifegiver of the world!'" we now witness its fulfillment in the vast area of the Pacific Ocean, in island after island mentioned by the Master in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. How great is the potential for the Faith in localities blessed by these references!

At the inception of the Formative Age, the Cause was little known here. Agnes Alexander had brought the Teachings to the Hawaiian Islands. Father and Mother Dunn had only recently arrived in Australia. Later the name of Martha Root was to be emblazoned across the Pacific. Still later, at the beginning of the Ten Year Crusade, a vanguard of twenty-one Knights of Bahá'u'lláh raised His call as they settled in the islands of this great Ocean. The names of these valiant souls, together with the names of the army of pioneers and teachers who followed, will be forever enshrined in the annals of the Faith.

Their mighty endeavors brought about the enrollment of thousands of the peoples of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia under the banner of the Most Great Name, the opening in Australasia of more than 800 centers and the establishment of ten pillars of the Universal House of Justice. We can but marvel at such triumphs attained despite great difficulties imposed by the vast expanse of ocean separating the island communities, especially when it is recalled that in many of these islands even the Christian Gospel was unknown as late as the 1830s.

How great is the responsibility to continue spreading the Word of God throughout the Pacific. It was in the Tablets of the Divine Plan that 'Abdu'l-Bahá called for teachers "speaking their languages, severed, holy, sanctified and filled with the love of God," to "turn their faces to and travel through the three great Island groups of the Pacific Ocean—Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia ... With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with tongues commemorating the mention of God" to "deliver the Glad Tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people."

The Nine Year Plan, the current phase of the unfoldment of the Divine Plan, is now approaching its final stages. It is incumbent on the friends to assess what has been accomplished and to anticipate and plan for such rapid acceleration of the teaching and consolidation work as is necessary to win all goals by 1973. Time is short; the needs critical. No effort must be spared; no opportunity overlooked.

Our prayers ascend at the Holy Threshold that every session of this historic meeting will attract Divine blessings, and that the friends will go forth, armed with the love of God and enthusiasm born of the Spirit, fully prepared to scale the heights of victory!

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

