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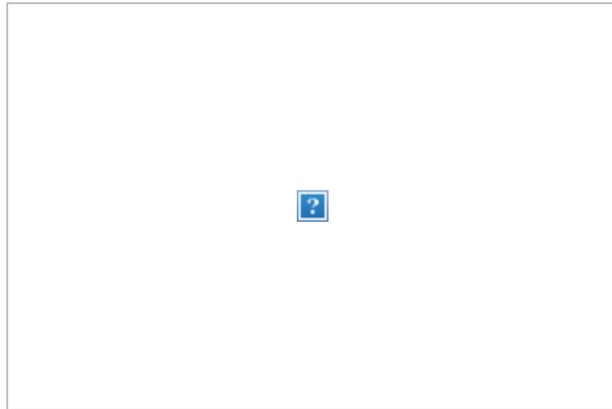
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 LARGE PRINT / Standard Print.In Memoriam

Convention 160 BE — some thoughts

ON APRIL 21, the members of our National Spiritual Assembly will gather with those of other National Assemblies from around the world on the slopes of Mount Carmel to participate in the Ninth International Convention; and there to elect our Supreme Body, the Universal House of Justice for its next term of office.

It will be 40 years to the day since the first election of that august body on the first day of Ridván 1963. On that occasion, the assembled delegates represented 56 countries; it will now be over 180.



The World Congress in the Albert Hall, 1963

Those of us who were Bahá'ís at the time, particularly those of us who had the priceless bounty of attending the World Congress in the Albert Hall when the members of the newly-elected Universal House of Justice were presented by Hand of the Cause, Paul Haney, can recall the joy and excitement of those days. But even now, so many years on, we stand too close to truly appreciate the historical significance of that momentous event, which, in the words of the Guardian, marked the “last and crowning stage in the erection of the framework of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh,” to be regarded as “the last refuge of a tottering civilisation”; as well as fulfilling the prophetic vision revealed in the Tablet of Carmel.

Today Bahá'ís throughout the world can marvel at the remarkable electoral system inherent in this divinely created Administrative Order. The election of the Universal House of Justice marks the culmination of a process which is unique to the Bahá'í Faith. It is a process in which all of us, every adult member of the Bahá'í World Community, will have participated, or at least will have had the opportunity to do so. Our involvement in the current election can be traced back to the unit conventions held some fifteen months ago when we gathered to choose our delegates for last year's Convention.

It is a system based on words revealed by Bahá'u'lláh and explained by ‘Abdu'l-Bahá. “*At whatever time all the beloved of God in each country appoint their delegates, and these in turn elect their representatives, and these representatives elect a body, that body shall be regarded as the Supreme House of Justice.*”

(The Bahá'í World Vol. XIV, p. 440)

We can extend our involvement in this wonderful process by attending this year's National Convention, whether as delegates or spectators, and welcoming back our National Assembly members on their return; draw fresh inspiration and insight as they recount their experiences and convey news and information from that Sacred Spot. National Convention 160 BE promises to be rather special.

Malcolm Lee, on behalf of
Venues Logistics and Arrangements Committee

National Convention 2003
Saturday, Sunday, and Monday May 24–26, 2003
North Wales Conference Centre, Llandudno

- Parking tickets are available for the Disabled. If anybody needs special help regarding use of facilities, please let Venues Logistics and Arrangements Committee (VLAC) know.
- Volunteers are needed to act as stewards during the weekend.
- Please note the unusual dates of Convention, particularly that the final sessions take place on the Bank Holiday Monday.
- Further information about the above is available from VLAC representatives: Malcolm Lee or Bob Watkins.
- As it is on a Bank Holiday weekend in some parts of the UK, we recommend early booking of accommodation via:
North Wales Conferences, 1/2 Chapel Street, Llandudno LL30 2SY.
Tel: 01492 574005. Fax 01492 872585 or Email: bed.bookings@conwy.gov.uk