

# Bahá'ís Prepare for Supernatural World Leader

By Jamie Brendan

## “World government is their spiritual mandate.”

It's a radical statement, but there is a specific religious entity that is literally seeking to create a “new world order” – both spiritually and politically. Granted, it's a bold mandate, but this “independent religion” firmly believes that it has the capability to usher in such a system. Yet, as tightly woven as this group is within the United Nations, it has largely gone unnoticed by political commentators and researchers alike. In fact, if it hadn't been for my attendance at one particular UN event, I too would have completely overlooked this major player.

In the spring of 2000, I had the opportunity of participating in the United Nations Millennium Forum. It was during this event that I realized I had been negligent in recognizing this important spiritual-political force, and the only reason that I noticed it was that this group was one of the most visibly active at the conference – providing media and communications outreach, database management, and direct administrative support to the Forum's Executive Committee.

At first I thought it was rather odd that a relatively insignificant religious group would be so active at such an important event. I could understand why the Franciscans International, a Roman Catholic organization, would hold the key positions it did – including having one of its members fill the role of Executive Secretary. But the Bahá'ís?

It dawned on me when Techeste Ahderom, the principle represen-

tative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations, gave his opening speech as the Millennium Forum's Co-chair; that I had seen the Bahá'ís in action before – at World Federalist events, various interfaith gatherings, and at a pro-UN education conference. But why?

In order to understand the “why,” it is essential to know the context of the Bahá'í religion.

The official website of the Bahá'í Faith states, “We are Bahá'ís – members of the Bahá'í Faith, the second most widespread of the world's independent religions, established in 235 countries and territories throughout the world. We come from over 2,100 ethnic, racial, and tribal groups and number some 5 million worldwide.”

It's a relatively young faith, emanating from the teaching of its founder, Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892). Started in



Iran, the “religious matrix of the Bahá'í Faith was Islam,” and most of its early supporters stemmed from Muslim society, with a smaller mix of Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

Like the monotheistic faiths, Bahá'ís believe that “God is one.” However, the Bahá'í faith claims that God “manifests His will to humanity” through a series of messengers. Accordingly, “Bahá'ís believe that

Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Krishna, Jesus, and Muhammad are all equally authentic messengers of one God.” Furthermore, each of these religious figures and their various messages are viewed as legitimate paths to salvation and are part of a larger plan to “advance civilization.”

This idea of advancing civilization is integral to the Bahá'í faith. According to their official website, the Bahá'ís “central theme is that humanity is one single race and that the day has come for its unification in one global society.” This message of unification is clearly stated throughout Bahá'í writings.

One such text, *Bahá'í Teachings For The New World Order*, released by the U.S. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís, lists some of their key principles,

- “The oneness of mankind,”
- “Universal peace upheld by a world government,”
- “The common foundation of all religions,”
- “Universal compulsory education,” and
- “A spiritual solution to economic problems.”

John Ferraby, author of the Bahá'í reference text *All Things Made New*, stakes some equally significant claims:

“The unity which exists among Bahá'ís resembles, but is stronger than, that of the early Christians and the early Muslims; for the elements united are more diverse. We live in a peerless age when, for the first time in the history of the human race, mankind can be recognized as one. According to Bahá'u'lláh, the Divine

Plan of Creation requires the process of unification to culminate at this stage in human history; all that has gone before has been leading to the present age, in which the oneness of mankind is to be realized in world unity... We have entered a new era, in which the unification of mankind can be adequately organized only by a world state... Accordingly, the spirit of unity released by Bahá'u'lláh is more intense than any released in former ages. Its first fruits are visible in the Bahá'í Community today; tomorrow its spiritual power will overwhelm mankind."

This explains why Bahá'í representatives can be found participating in so many major United Nations, interfaith, and global governance events; world unification, indeed, world government, is their spiritual mandate.

Obviously, the Bahá'í Community has been active in this endeavor far beyond what I had witnessed at the UN Millennium Forum. In 1945, Bahá'í representatives were at the official founding of the United Nations in San Francisco, and in 1947 they were formally recognized by the UN Department of Public Information. Since then, they have been given special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Children's Fund, and now have tight ties with other leading UN agencies and sub-groups.

More recently, the Bahá'í International Community – the official political arm of the Bahá'í Faith – participated at the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Millennium World Peace Summit, the UN World Conference Against Racism, the UN Special Session on Children, and at the World Summit on the Information Society. And in Turin, Italy, the home of the United Nations International Labour Organization, a special relationship has developed between the ILO and

the European Bahá'í Business Forum (EBBF). The purpose: to apply "spiritual principles to economic problems." Not surprisingly, the European Commission is also partnering with EBBF, and in 2002 EBBF member Giuseppe Robiati was awarded the Chair for a New World Order at the University of Bari, Italy.

But it is in Israel where the Bahá'í International Community has its sights. At Mount Carmel in Haifa, the location where the prophet Elijah had his showdown with the prophets of Baal (I Kings 18), an elaborate 19 step succession of terraced gardens forms a nearly one kilometer swath up the north side of the Mount. In the center of this lavish setting sits the Shrine of the Báb – a golden domed mausoleum structure containing the remains of the Báb, the spiritual forerunner to Bahá'u'lláh.

But why Haifa? A year before his death, Bahá'u'lláh traveled to Mount Carmel where he revealed a tablet "designating Mount Carmel as the site of the Faith's spiritual and administrative center" (*One Country*, July/September 2000). Hence, since the mid-1950s, Haifa has become the principle location for the Bahá'ís global unification work.

Currently, the Mount Carmel location houses a number of massive Bahá'í administrative structures, including the International Archives building and the International Teaching Center. Also at this location is the Center for the Study of the Texts, an institution for Bahá'í scholars and sacred documents. All of these institutions work hand-in-glove with the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, the "supreme institution" and governance body of the Bahá'í


community. But make no mistake, the House of Justice and its supporting institutions are concerned about more than just the Bahá'í Faith.

In an article in *One Country* (July 2000), the official publication of the Bahá'í International Community, Douglas Samimi-Moore, director of the organization's Office of Public Information, explained the deeper significance behind this Mount Carmel complex:

"Our scriptures tell us that the very construction of these facilities for housing these institutions will coincide with several other processes in the world. One of these processes is the maturation of local and national Bahá'í institutions. The other is the establishment of processes leading to political peace for humanity..."

Emphasizing this global unification of politics and religion, Samimi-Moore restated this central theme by adding that the "Bahá'ís have gone about building these structures from a spiritual motivation... They believe these new structures will contribute to the unification of the planet."

Interesting; a spiritual mandate to create a world government, a lavish international headquarters complex – including a Universal House of Justice – at Mount Carmel, special ties to the United Nations, and an interfaith agenda centered on global unification. But why? John Ferraby makes this clear:

"Before the appearance of the next Manifestation of God, His New World Order will be formed." It's the final act, the final step, in the Bahá'ís international mandate – the emergence of a supernaturally charged world leader. 



*Jamie Brendan is author of the new book, The Power Puzzle. See page 21 for details.*