



# JOURNAL

*For Files*

Vol. 2 No. 1, March, 1989

THE JOURNAL WISHES ALL ZOROASTRIANS A  
HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS HAZDAYAZNA 1358

\*\*\*\*\*

## LONG TERM GOALS OF FEZANA'S SUBCOMMITTEES (continued)

### FUNDS & FINANCE COMMITTEE (F&FC)

In a brief report to the FEZANA Journal, the Treasurer, Mr. Freddy Patel of New Jersey, describes the present status and the future activities as follows:

FEZANA made a modest beginning during 1987 - the only source of revenue was membership fees from the various member associations. The fee charged is based on a fixed charge and per capita amount. During 1987, an amount of \$3,135.00 was collected from members. As no expenses were recorded, the balance sheet of FEZANA had a surplus of \$3,143.00 which included the interest on the bank deposits. The funds of the Association are deposited with an Illinois Bank. During 1988, most of the member associations have paid their dues and efforts are being made to recover arrears. Each of FEZANA's Committees is provided with an operating budget to meet the expenses of their activities.

A one-time effort is being made to collect from individual Zoroastrians in Canada and the U.S.A. a sum of \$5.00 per family to augment FEZANA's financial base. Needless to say, larger individual contributions would be most welcome. We gratefully acknowledge the generous personal contribution of \$500.00 received from Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jagos of Pittsburgh.

### YOUTH COMMITTEE (Y.C.)

The Committee met with representatives of various participating associations at the Youth Congress held in Chicago, September 3-5, 1988, and Mr. Darius Captain, the Chairperson, reports as follows:

In a discussion regarding the frequency of Youth Congresses, it was suggested that these should alternate in their occurrence with the main Congress. The majority of representatives, however, felt that the momentum generated should be continued every year. It was suggested that various associations discuss this point in their executive meetings, and indicate their preferences regarding the frequency of "Youth Congresses" to FEZANA.

Furthermore, Associations willing to host a Youth Congress in the future should let the committee know of the selected year, so that FEZANA could help to coordinate it. A representative from Houston, Texas, indicated the possi-

bility of holding the next congress there, but this is not definite. The Committee would, however, like to hear from any other Association willing to make a definite commitment to host the next meeting of the Youth.

It was also suggested that presentation of papers at one Congress could alternate with the promotion of youth activities, such as sports and get-togethers, at the next Youth Congress. Any preferences and suggestions from various associations on this point are also welcomed.

While on the topic of sport activities, it was mentioned that the Zoroastrian Youth of Northern and Southern California got together in Los Angeles during the third week of August and organized team sports and matches in basketball, volleyball and ping pong. They are planning to organize this again next year and if Zoroastrian groups from other parts of the country would like to join them or are interested in such activities, they should contact **BiJan Khosraviani** in San Jose, California, at (408) 296-7813. He will be happy to hear from you.

Another important activity of this vital subcommittee, was announced by Mr. Meher Amalsad of California -- the formation of the "Helping Hands Zoroastrian Communication Network." This Network consists of youth representatives from various associations and groups of North America. It is designed to foster cooperation amongst the Zoroastrian youth in North America. Although it will be operating independently and will be controlled by the representatives of the Network, it will work in close collaboration with FEZANA's Youth and Unity and Welfare Committees through which all monetary transactions will be handled via a special account under FEZANA. The objectives of this Network are to aid Zoroastrians in need, to work towards strengthening and preserving Zoroastrianism all over the world, to develop an effective communication network among Zoroastrian youth in North America by helping each other and to utilize it as a channel to strengthen the spirit of unity among them. Representatives of 14 Zoroastrian Associations of North America are included in this Network. They have already compiled a list of about 600 Zoroastrian youth for a "Pen Friendship Directory." Those interested, and for further information on this Network, please contact **Mr. Amalsad at (714) 895-3097; 15842 Villanova Circle, Westminster, CA 92683.**

An attachment to the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario's Newsletter of November 1988 reported the Network's first project to aid a Zoroastrian gentleman in Chicago who has been facing acute health problems for the past two years. His problems are life-threatening and need immediate surgical attention. Because of these problems, he has lost his job, and this has directly affected the members of his family who are now facing an acute problem of food and shelter. The Network's goal is to raise \$4,000.00 and donations in any amount will be appreciated. Please make your cheques payable to the **Zoroastrian Society of Ontario**. All funds collected will be transferred to the "Helping Hands Network" (FEZANA).

A Ski-trip - the Great Zoroastrian Youth Ski Adventure - was also conceived at this meeting: a 5 days-4 nights trip (December 28, 1988, to January 1, 1989) to Lincoln, New Hampshire, with an overnight stay on December 27 with Zoroastrian families in Boston, proved to be an experience to remember. We have a report from Cyrus and Zenobia Rivetna which reads: "Some faced blizzards, some battled rain and sleet, yet others endured long hours of travel, and finally 25 young Zoroastrians from all over the United States and Canada

arrived at Loon Mountain in New Hampshire for a ski trip that one can never forget. Skiing was just an excuse for us to get together; the actual reason for the trip was to meet other Zoroastrians and that we did. Most of us arrived knowing only the persons we travelled with, but all of us left with 24 new and dear friends. We began the week by sitting in a circle and introducing ourselves; we even had an opportunity to discuss personal topics which only other Zoroastrians can truly understand. But we did more than just sit around and talk: we played pictorial, trivial pursuit, charades, swam, shopped, ice-skated (without ice skates), celebrated birthdays, cooked, ate, drank, and of course skied!! On the last day we took our 'victory run,' meeting at the peak of the mountain and raising the Z-Ski Flag, which we had made the night before. It had our very own Z-Ski logo and slogan: 'We came ... We skied ... We left.' It was raised as high as it could go. Then the line began to move, the flag waving in the brisk mountain air, with 25 proud Z-Skiers following it. It was certainly a moment to remember." Natasha Dastoor spoke of the trip as an excellent opportunity to get together in a surrounding new to all of us. "Together we shared and learnt from one another in a way we never expected. We left with a broader outlook on Zoroastrianism and all it has to offer." Jehangir Irani felt the trip was some kind of a dream. "It's frustrating to have had so much fun and then to return to a routine again." He is hoping for another trip soon - to Montreal in March 1989 during FEZANA's meetings. He says he has already "talked to God and He has agreed to give us great skiing weather."

This report would be incomplete without mention and a vote of thanks to the Zoroastrian families in Boston - especially the Dhondhys, Guzders, Modys, and Jungallwallas - for offering the youth their warm hospitality so graciously. Special thanks to Aban and Rohinton Dhondhy for making all the travel arrangements - without their help the trip would never have been possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### EDUCATION, CONFERENCE AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE (ECSC)

The main purpose and objective of this sub-committee, as described by the Chairperson, Dr. Kaikhosrov Irani, is to advance and promote the study of Zoroastrianism, its thought, traditions and history across North America.

The Committee plans to use the following avenues to achieve this:

- 1) To prepare and consolidate educational material on Zoroastrian theology, philosophy, practice and history in general. To classify and prescribe the material for different levels of religious instructions.
- 2) Efforts are also underway to prepare and publish expository material on Zoroastrianism, and to prepare video tapes of religious material and rituals, for use in schools and colleges, and for the general public.
- 3) To arrange conferences on Zoroastrianism and Zoroastrian thought and practice in comparative perspectives.

#### UNITY AND WELFARE COMMITTEE (UWC)

The Committee's Chairperson, Mr. Kaemarz Dotiwalla, reports that since its inception, the Zarathushtee Unity and Welfare Committee has maintained a

a low key approach to solving its problems. It also believes that a house divided against itself cannot stand, that the Zarathushtees need to be united and that this community must be allowed to unite in its diversity.

The first task the committee took up along with the Special Task Committee for Refugees was to try and find a way to emancipate over a hundred Zarathushtee refugees languishing in India and Pakistan. Using the good offices of Mr. Khojeste Mistree, the Committee has been able to communicate our needs to the higher authorities in the State Department of the U.S.A. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Special Task Committee, its Chairperson, Mr. Farshid Salamat, and his very able assistant, Mrs. Shirin Irani, who devoted a lot of time, effort, and personal funds to develop a format that would be agreeable to the State Department. Our thanks also go to FEZANA's President, Rohinton Rivetna, and his executive committee. Through all these combined efforts, we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Mr. Salamat informs the Committee that very soon now FEZANA will be signing a document with the State Department which will allow us to settle these refugees in the United States. Similar efforts are also underway in Canada; in Toronto, Ontario, particularly, the programme has already been in existence and is being ably handled by Mrs. Moti Balsara and her Committee.

The "Helping Hands" Network evolved as a result of the two recently held Youth Congresses and Mr. Meher Amalsad will submit a separate report on its activities. "Helping Hands" is Zoroastrianism in action by our youth. The seed has been sown: we hope to nurture it, but we will allow our youth to give the programme its direction.

These activities have kept us busy, and some of our other projects have had to be placed on a back burner. Our next project is to produce a booklet

on Immigration requirements both in the U.S.A. and Canada for the use of those who might be wanting to emigrate to North America.

We will also support the Youth Committee and the Zarathushtee Youth Group of Houston to co-sponsor the Youth Leadership Camp tentatively scheduled from June 30 to July 4, 1989.

Numerous tasks lie ahead of us and we intend to take them on and, with Ahura's grace, bring them to fruitful conclusions.

\*\*\*\*\*

### THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

The American Academy of Religion is a learned society and a professional association for specialists and generalists in the academic study of religion. It fosters religious teaching, research and scholarship. The Academy holds its annual meeting generally in the month of November of each year. This year's meeting was held in Chicago and the 1989 annual meeting has been scheduled for November 18-21 in Anaheim, California. These meetings embrace a full spectrum of the world's religions through its programme units which include seminars, groups and consultations. For the past year or two the American Academy of Religion has maintained a programme unit "Zoroastrianism and Iranian Religions Seminar" under the chairmanship of Professor Michael Simmons of the Centre for Zoroastrian Research in Bloomington, Indiana, who

is really responsible for its inclusion as a programme unit. The primary purpose of the Seminar is of course to inspire study and research into the subject matter and this it seems to have done quite well as was evident from the quality of the papers presented at this meeting in Chicago. The Seminar was attended by approximately 20 to 25 individuals of which 7 were Zoroastrians. Although this attendance was considered quite adequate, it is hoped that the Seminar in Anaheim in 1989 will inspire greater numbers to attend.

The theme of the Chicago seminar was "Interpretation of the Gathas" and the three topics discussed were "Abstract Levels of Ritual in the Gathas of Zarathushtra," "The Brahman's Cow," and "Observation on the Cosmology of Yasna 44."

Professor Stanley Insler of Yale University spoke on "Abstract Levels of Ritual in the Gathas of Zarathushtra." He noted that one of the fundamental innovations of Zarathushtra's religious system is that good thinking, or knowledge and understanding, is the most important principle of existence. He analyzed Zarathushtra's use of ritual imagery to demonstrate that Zarathushtra introduced into the offerings of the traditional ritual, various abstract levels of worship that corresponded to his total world view. In a detailed and well-reasoned analysis, Dr. Insler explained the abstract meanings ascribed by Zarathushtra to such ritual imagery as milk, butter, and sacrificial bread, and concluded that Zarathushtra used shifting references between abstract and material imagery to convey his understanding that the worlds of mind and matter are part of a single design, one which reveals the relationship between man and God in a new and unique way.

Dr. Gernot L. Windfuhr of the University of Michigan spoke on "Observations on the Cosmology of Yasna 44." He observed that Zoroastrianism is an all-encompassing religion that is both archaic and ultra modern. He traced the interaction between the cosmos of the spiritual world and the cosmos of the physical world as set forth in Yasna 30 and Yasna 44, and came to some interesting conclusions; for example that "Arta [Asha] determines the khshathra of the macrocosm..... while Vohu Manah determines the Khshatra of the microcosm; that the spiritual and material creations are a part are part of a unified whole, created for the purpose of achieving salvation and annihilating evil in a limited time span; that "the end is not predicted, but only predictable...;" that the "end is a potential reality;" and that in so concluding, Zarathushtra "anticipated and ante-dates the genius of Aristotle to whom the conception of potential reality continues to be attributed." After exploring the multifaceted concepts of the Gathas, Dr. Windfuhr explored some post-Gathic cosmology, and ended with the question: "How will the end, and salvation of the world come about?" He concluded that the cosmology of Yasna 30 and Yasna 44 do not seem to contain the answer.

Dr. William Malandra of the University of Minnesota, spoke on "The Brahman's Cow." He discussed the story of the brahman Vasistha's cow, also various references to "the brahman's cow" in two Atharvavedic hymns, and certain stories of conflict between brahman and ksatriyas. He concluded that the "cow is ... only a pretext for the real purpose of the poet which is to state that force of arms is useless against the spiritual power of the brahman, but that the power of the priest, correspondingly, is defined only in the context of service to his client-patron." Proceeding to the Gathas, Dr. Malandra agreed with Insler and Schmitt that Zarathushtra's use of the

word "cow" was metaphorical and that he intended it to mean "religious-poetic vision (daina), just as the Vedic poets used the word 'dhenu' (cow). He concluded that such an interpretation of the word "cow" was consistent with the fact that ownership and care of the cow, in Yasna 29, was given to Zarathushtra, a man whose power was based on good thinking and not on the possession of worldly might.

Following the Seminar, a Seminar Committee meeting was held to discuss the programme for the 1989 meeting in Anaheim. Professor Kaikhosrov Irani and Professor James Boyd of Colorado State University are members of the Committee with Professor Michael Simmons as chairperson. The committee feels that greater participation from Zoroastrians is needed on it. The possibility of FEZANA becoming a member of the American Academy of Research was also explored.

The theme of the 1989 Anaheim meeting will be "Philosophical Issues in Zoroastrianism." Those interested in presenting a paper at the Seminar should contact Professor Michael Simmons at the Centre for Zoroastrian Research, 3270 East Robinson Road, Bloomington, Indiana 47401; telephone (812) 332-3228.

After the Seminar, the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago hosted the delegates to a reception at the Arbab Rustum Guiv Darbe Mehr in Hinsdale. Posters on Zoroastrian doctrine, culture and history, prepared by Roshan and Rohinton Rivetna, and a slide presentation of Zoroastrian doctrine, - Persepolis and Zoroastrian ceremonies and costumes were reviewed by the delegates with great interest. After a welcome address by Kayomars Mehta, President of the Association, presentations were made on "Zoroastrianism in the New World" by Rohinton Rivetna, Dr. Keki Bhote and Professor Kaikhosrov Irani. The presentation was concluded by a talk and demonstration on Zoroastrian ceremonies by Ervad Kersey Antia and a prayer ceremony. The visit was a complete success as evidenced by a note of thanks received from Professor Michael Simmons:

"Thank you for your help in organizing the AAR Excursion to the Darbe Mehr. I thought that you and the other speakers made an excellent presentation of Zoroastrianism as a living faith. From comments made to me after the trip by members of the excursion I know that they found their visit enjoyable, interesting and educational. Several teachers of comparative religion asked for material on Zoroastrianism to use in their courses. Some planned to expand existing segments on Zoroastrianism, while others planned to include the religion for the first time. You and the participating members of ZAC have done more to advance the cause of Zoroastrianism in the New World by your gracious hospitality and clear presentation of the tenets of the religion from within the faith than have I and all of our colleagues in the field. You have certainly made easier our task of presenting the academic study of Zoroastrianism as a subject worthy of the interest and support of the AAR."

\*\*\*\*\*

#### ERRATUM

In the September 1988 issue of the FEZANA Journal mention was made of the "Chair of Learning sponsored by the Bombay Parsi Panchayet at the University of Bombay in memory of the late Dastur Navroze Dinshaw Minochehr-Homji." This announcement was based on information we received from FEZANA's

administration. We have now been informed by the Joint Secretary of the Panchayet that "no such decision has been taken by the Trustees of the Bombay Parsi Panchayet." We regret the error.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### SUPPORT PARSIANA

The publication Parsiana is trying to build up an advertising base outside of India and is looking to us in North America to buy advertisement space in the magazine. Parsiana is the only Zoroastrian link medium at the present time and apart from giving us news of developments in India, it also regularly focusses on Zoroastrians in other parts of the world. We believe that by booking advertisement space and by extending our goodwill to this publication, we will not only benefit ourselves but Zoroastrians all over the world. Like all institutions and organizations rendering service to our community, Parsiana finds itself incurring losses inspite of the present level of advertising and reader support.

For information on advertisement rates, etc. please write directly to Mrs. Veera Patel, Marketing Director, Parsiana, A.L. Rochat & Co., Navsari Chambers, 39 A.K. Nayak Marg, Bombay 400 001, India. If you are unable to advertise, subscribe and support this publication in its efforts to continue its good work.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### A COOK BOOK - WITH A DIFFERENCE

Parsee Culinary Artist - The American Way by Mehroo M. Patel and Jaloo M. Captain is distinctly different. This recipe book is a collection of 62 well-tried dishes cooked in their own homes by Parsee Chicagoans. Yes, there is Languano Custard from Florida and Garlic Chicken Bake from the Garlic festival in California. The book will make an attractive all-occasion gift, and will be an interesting addition to cooking libraries in many homes. Its special feature is that it will allow our American friends to quench their appetites with Parsee food they can cook themselves in their own home!

Proceeds of the sale will be donated to the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, and a suggested donation is \$5.00. Copies of the book are available from the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago, 8615 Meadowbrook Drive, Hinsdale, IL 60521.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### ASSISTANCE SOUGHT

A 22 year old Zoroastrian youth from London, England, with an English Public School education and a British University degree in Psychology, is seeking employment and accommodation for a few months to gain work-experience in the U.S.A. If you can help, please write to Shelley Shirin Gan-Kotwal directly at 121 Strongbridge Close, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 OXP, England.

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE FALI CHOTHIA CHARITABLE TRUST

The Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. has established a charitable trust fund in memory of Mr. Fali Chothia. The fund will provide financial scholarships for worthy young Zoroastrians to attend institutions of higher learning. The trust fund is open to all Zoroastrians - in India, Iran, Pakistan, U.S.A. and elsewhere in the world.

Fali Chothia was born in Bombay and did graduate work at the Universities of Bombay, London, Harvard and Queensland. He was a pioneer in the field of education, and spent nearly twenty years establishing innovative systems in India. He served as a UNESCO field expert in Nigeria and as an ILO field expert in Malaysia. After working for a few years in the United State, he retired in Washington, D.C., where he passed away in September 1987.

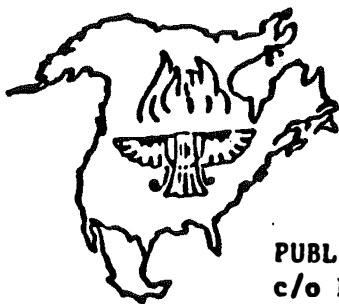
Mr. Chothia believed that education is crucial to the well-being and survival of our community. He was proud to be a Zoroastrian, and was sadly aware of the community's diminishing numbers. He felt that through education the community could maintain its strength. He himself was provided the opportunity to further his education at universities such as London and Harvard with scholarships and what better way to enhance his belief in higher education than the establishment of a Trust Fund that would offer similar chances to young Zoroastrians to realize their ambitions and dreams.

According to the Declaration of Trust, the Trustees (the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington) will hold the funds in trust for the purpose of "providing financial scholarships to worthy young men and women of the Zoroastrian faith for attendance at institutions of higher learning." The overall business of the Trust will be conducted by three persons (the Trust Committee) who shall also be responsible for the selection of recipients of the scholarships. The following criteria has been set out for the selection of the beneficiaries: financial needs of the applicant; a superior educational record; and extra-curricular activities, including involvement in community affairs.

Mr. Soli Choksi, Chairman of the Trust Fund tells us that the Association has so far collected a modest sum of \$7,000.00, and since this Fund appears to be the only one of its kind in North America, the Association would like to make this drive to augment the funds of the Trust a unified effort. He, therefore, appeals to the generosity of all Zoroastrians on the North American continent to give as wholeheartedly as possible to this worthy cause.

Your cheques may be made payable to the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington and mailed to 4639 Bettswood Drive, Olney, Maryland 20832.

\*\*\*\*\*



**Editor:** Jehan Bagli (New Jersey, USA)  
**Associate Editors:** Sabar Balsara (Ontario, Canada)  
Dolly Dastoor (Quebec, Canada)  
Aspy Daboo (Illinois, USA)  
Ali Jafarey (California, USA)  
Roshan Rivetna (Illinois, USA)  
**Committee Member:** Shavak Katrak (New York, USA)  
**Finances:** Gev Karkaria (Quebec, Canada)

**PUBLISHED FOR FEZANA AT:**  
c/o P.O. Box 35, Station Beaconsfield  
Beaconsfield, P.Q. H9W 5T6