

World peace, let it be this generation

By ALICE J. PITRE

This year on campus, a group of students is working toward the establishment of world peace. Three of these: Garshasb Rostami, Flora Safal, and Kam Farahani - are Iranian refugees, who have come to Canada to find "security and a home."

Security is something they could not expect in their home country of Iran. Because their Baha'i faith is an unrecognized religion, they were restricted from employment and from university attendance. Persecution there is extreme, with some Baha'is imprisoned or even put to death. Flora Safal, for instance, fled following the execution of her brother-in-law, while Garshasb Rostami found, on completion of a degree in India, that he was unable to return to Iran.

All three are applying for Canadian citizenship, and have had no regrets following their decisions to come to Canada. Kam Farahani stated that Canada is respected by people the world over, and

that before coming to his country, he had not heard of much prejudice here. He has not been disappointed. However, he expressed concern over the attitude of some people toward immigrants. He does not feel that immigrants are here to change our Canadian culture, or to take jobs away from Canadians. In fact, he insists that immigrants make jobs for the country.

In spite of the hardship they experienced prior to leaving

Iran, these three Baha'is refuse to feel hatred toward their former government. Garshasb Rostami explained instead that they are attempting to promote friendship with people from all countries, especially through participation in multicultural activities. As a Baha'i, he maintains that all nations should work together for world-wide peace, even to the extent of electing one planetary government.

Here on campus, another

aspect of the Baha'i movement for peace is the signing of a banner during Activity Night last week. The banner has been on display at Saint Thomas, and will later be shown in Kings Place. Eventually, the banner will be sent to the Canadian ambassador to the United Nations, or to the federal government. Rostami hoped that the banner signing would become an annual event.

Flora Safal wished in par-

ticular to express that they are seeking supporters for peace, regardless of race or religion. "Signing the banner does not make you Baha'is!" she laughed.

A Baha'i statement on peace reads: "Beyond the initial armistice forced upon the world by the fear of nuclear holocaust, beyond the political peace reluctantly entered into by suspicious rival nations, beyond pragmatic arrangements for security and co-existence, beyond even the many experiments in co-operation...lies the crowning goal: the unification of all the peoples of the world in one universal family."

Baha'is also stress the significance of the following issues: racism, the disparity between rich and poor, unbridled nationalism, religious strife, the emancipation of women, universal education, and the adoption of an international language. They believe that only through change in basic spiritual and moral attitudes can enduring solutions be found.



The Banner reads: "world peace, let it be this generation"

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