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Assyrian Foundation of America

1920 SAN PABLO AVENUE

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94702

Nineveh West....

** COMING TO YOU FROM THE ASSYRIAN CULTURAL CENTER, BERKELEY **

AUGUST 1977

EDITORS: JULIUS N. SHABBAS
JOEL J. ELIAS

NEXT MEETING - SEPTEMBER 11, 7:00 P.M.

This is to remind the members that the General Membership Meeting will be held on the above date in the Foundation's Cultural Center. Since no further reminders will be sent, we request that you keep this date in mind, and circle it on your calendar. Thank you.

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THE CENTER'S RENOVATIONS....

Work towards this matter is proceeding quite well. We are very hopeful that by September 11, when you walk in the Center, you will notice considerable change.

PROMOTION....

Joel J. Elias, President of the Assyrian Foundation of America, was promoted to the rank of full professor at the University of California Medical School, San Francisco. For many years, Joel has been teaching in the Department of Anatomy and has been doing research work on breast cancer. Congratulations from all of us! (Ed. J. N. S.)

RECENT ARRIVALS & VISITORS

Welcome to San Francisco Bay Area:

- a) His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV, the Patriarch of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, who flew directly from Australia. NINEVEH WEST editors were among the several people who welcomed him at the San Francisco Airport. A special section was assigned by the Airport authorities where his Holiness rested and talked with those who met him.
- b) His Grace Bishop Mar Aprim Khamis, Head of the Church of the East Diocese of the U. S. and Canada flew in from Chicago to meet the Patriarch, Mar Dinkha IV.
- c) Mr. Homer Ashurian of Tehran, Iran, Assyrian Representative in the Iranian Parliament. On Monday, the 15th, he arrived at the San Francisco Airport, accompanied by his wife and children and Mr. Youtam Nasserli (Nathan Nasserli's brother - Foundation member).
- d) Catherine Osepoff of Tehran, Iran visiting her brother and his family, Polous Baba of Turlock. Catherine is Freida Badal's (Foundation member) and Hilda Amirkhas' aunt. She is presently staying in Sunnyvale, CA with the Badal's and Amirkhases.

VACATIONING IN THE MIDWEST,...

- a) Mariana Shabbas (Foundation member) and her friend, Diana George, left California by car on August 13 to visit Diana's sisters in Detroit where they will be staying for a couple of weeks, and then on to Chicago for a week to attend the 44th Annual Convention of the Assyrian American National Federation.
- b) Janet Yonan (Foundation member) of Hercules is flying to Chicago to attend the 44th Annual Convention of the Assyrian American National Federation.

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HONORING HIS HOLINESS,...

Dinner reception for Mar Dinkha IV, Catholicos Patriarch of the Church of the East, accompanied by his Grace Bishop, Mar Aprim Khamis, was held at Mar Narsai Parish Hall on August 6. This was followed by an address by the Patriarch on the status of the Church.

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HONORING MR. HOMER ASHURIAN,...

The Assyrian Organizations of California are hosting a banquet reception in honor of Mr. Homer Ashurian, the Assyrian Representative in the Iranian Parliament. The reception will be held at the Hyatt on Union Square, San Francisco, on Saturday, August 20.

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BRILLIANT ASSYRIAN ARCHITECT,...

According to IRAQ TODAY magazine, the design of the Iraqi Cultural Center in London was carried out by Dr. Dinkha Latchin, a brilliant young Iraqi architect who, while giving the interior a predominantly Iraqi theme, has taken pains to ensure that the background should be subdued so that it will not detract from the artistic works on display. Thus, plaster relief work, with a palm-tree motif, on walls and ceilings, has no colour on it. The ceramic tiles, on the floor of the exhibition hall, which were

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specially designed for the Center, are turquoise and blue and bear, in Arabic, the name of the Center. A beautifully designed central dome and curved archways give the hall a uniquely Iraqi atmosphere while a mirrored wall facing the entrance enhances the impression of space and brightness.

Ed. Note: Dr. Dinkha Latchin is non-other than Assyrian. Congratulations!

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REFLECTIONS,...

To those who have lived or visited in Iraq, what do you remember or what are your experiences surrounding the following Iraqi summer resorts, i.e.:

- Shaklawa
- Swaratuka
- Galli Ali Beg
- Salahiddin

We will be glad to have your pleasant, happy and enjoyable experiences in these resorts. Did you vacation there? Did you have your honeymoon there? How long did you stay? If we do receive your comments, do not be surprised to see your name on the pages of NINEVEH WEST. If we do not receive your comments in time for the next issue, we will attempt to relate to you something about these beautiful summer resorts.

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HADITHA - TOWN UPPER EUPHRATES,...

For all who were born at Haditha, a visit to the beautiful small town situated on the upper Euphrates within the Iraqi-Syrian borders, is still a dream one longs to enjoy. Surrounded by water, Haditha is but a vast orchard shading the few remaining houses, as most of the original inhabitants found it impractical to live at the other side of the river.

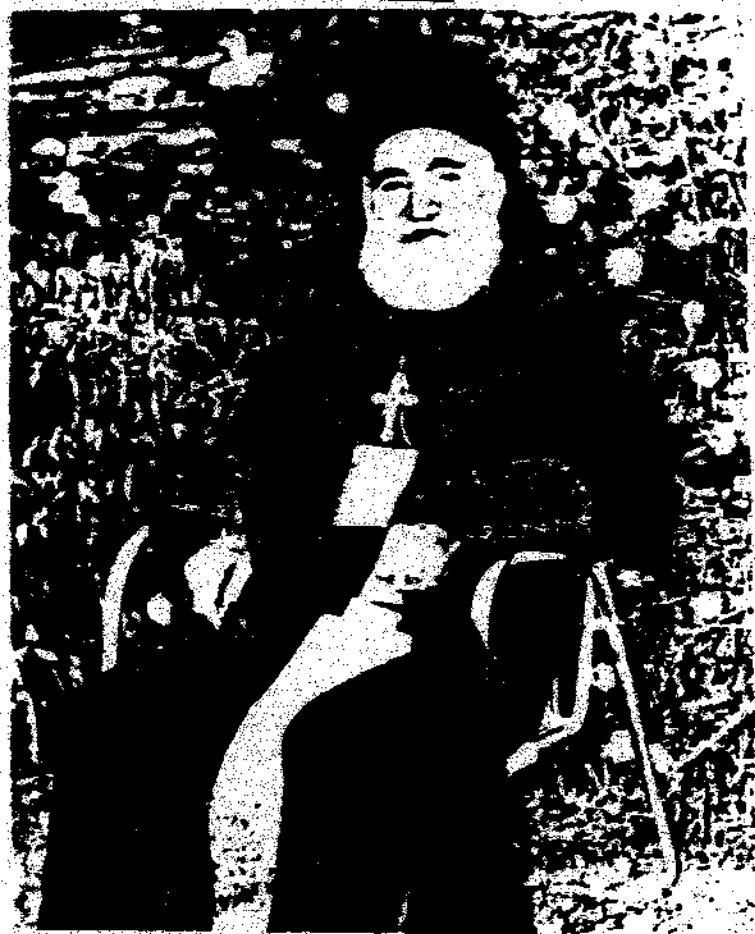
According to an Assyrian legend, Haditha derived its name from an Assyrian word meaning "new," which is almost of the same meaning in Arabic. The legend goes that

when Edessa was captured by the Romans in 608 A.D., a group of Nestorian Assyrians escaped and came to a place where they settled and called the "new" land. They claimed that the "Peshita Bible" was written there.

Saadi Al-Hadithi
Baghdad Observer

Ed. Note:

- a) No research as yet has been attempted by us.
- b) Can we prove that this was not a legend as indicated, but fact.
- c) Can we prove that "Pshita Bible" was written there.
- d) "Nestorian" misnomer: shall be Holy Apostolic & Catholic Church of the East or Church of the East.
- e) We would welcome any comments you may have.



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THE LATE MAR YOSIP KHANISHU....

His Grace was the brother of Mrs. Esther D'Mar Shimun of Turlock and Uncle of the late Patriarch of the Church of the East, Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII. Born in the year 1893 in the village of Mar Eshoo, Shamisdin Province, Turkey, he grew up in a deeply religious family and was trained in the faith of his fathers. He was especially influenced by his father's uncle, Kasha Rehana, who taught him Assyrian-Aramaic. At the age of 15 he was ordained a priest, and at 21 was elevated to the order of Episcopal by the Patriarch Mar Benjamin Shimun in the Parish of Mar Shalite at

Kochanes. In 1918 at the age of 25, he was consecrated Metropolitan in Baghdad by the Patriarch Mar Paulus Shimun. During his lifetime, he ordained many ecclesiastics of the Church of the East including two Patriarchs. In addition to his post as Metropolitan of Rustaq, he held the position of Patriarchal Representative in Iraq for several years. His Grace died on Sunday, July 3, 1977 in Baghdad, and was laid to rest at St. Mary's Church in New Baghdad. The funeral service was officiated by Mar Narsai, the Metropolitan of the Church of the East in Lebanon.

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Mar Yosip's life was one of faithful service and dedication to his beloved Holy Apostolic & Catholic Church of the East, and his passing will be a deep loss to all Assyrians.

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INTRODUCTION OF MR. HOMER ASHURIAN BY DR. JOEL J. ELIAS, PRESIDENT
OF THE ASSYRIAN FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, HELD AT THE HYATT ON
UNION SQUARE, SAN FRANCISCO....

We are assembled here today because of a bond that unites us - the bond of the Assyrian identity. This identity is a spiritual experience whose survival depends on our awareness of it, and its growth on an increased consciousness of its power in our lives. This spiritual bond stretches across the world to wherever Assyrians live, uniting their separate destinies into a common one. Because of this the welfare and fortunes of Assyrians in one part of the world are the concern of Assyrians everywhere. And therefore we are here today - to learn about our brothers and sisters in Iran, and to honor their representative in Parliament.

Mr. Homer Ashurian is eminently qualified to hold that position, and he has dedicated his talents to his country and to Assyrians. In his education he was trained as an archeologist, having received the Master's Degree from the University of Teheran in archeology and social sciences, subjects highly suited as a base for understanding Assyrian history and language. He has worked actively in Assyrian associations in Iran for many years, and for the past ten years has been an executive member of the Assyrian Youth Cultural Society ("Seeta Suprata"). Because of his qualifications and experience in serving our people he was elected by them to his present position in Parliament.

Thornton Wilder observed that "every good and excellent thing stands moment by moment on the razor edge of danger." That is, whether one is speaking of a nation, an organization or an individual, one does not gain a position of excellence or skill and then simply retain it without effort. It is a constant fight to preserve it. Our guest of honor has not only been willing to make the efforts required to preserve positions already achieved but, under the enlightened policies of his government, to work with total dedication for the future advances of his people. With leaders such as this we may even, to paraphrase Don Quixote, dream what others might consider an impossible Assyrian dream, to reach for what others might consider an unreachable star.

Finally, I would like to add a personal note. Since his arrival Monday I have met and talked extensively with our guest of honor. Seldom have I met a man that I could respect so much. I can assure you that with his intelligence and knowledge, dedication and sophistication, the interests of our people in Iran are in very, very capable hands.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honor for me to introduce to you the distinguished Assyrian member of the Iranian Parliament - the Honorable Homer Ashurian.

ADDRESS BY HONORABLE HOMER ASHURIAN, ASSYRIAN MEMBER OF THE
IRANIAN PARLIAMENT ON AUGUST 20, 1977,....

At times there are moments in a person's life that are unique and unforgettable. Being among you in this great country, to say without hesitation, is delightful, a pleasure and an honor.

It has been my desire for sometime to visit with you, my dear people, in these blessed United States of America, and have a chance to acquaint myself at close hand with your labor and nationalistic aspirations in safe-guarding our sacred heritage. At the same time to have an opportunity to visit your beautiful country to meet with the people that have strived with tireless efforts to create and develop in a span of two hundred years the greatest and most advanced society in the world.

To be in a country which is known to be the champion of freedom, with the Statue of Liberty at the gate of your great society being the symbol of your respect for liberty of man, and the emphasis on the human rights with equality extended from coast to coast and beyond the boundaries of Golden Gate, is admirable, and an experience to remember.

Your labor with endeavors in developing a great society has a special meaning to me, because the great nation of Iran under the wise leadership of His Imperial Majesty, Shah-an-Shah Arya Mehr, is engaged in a path of progress that you have so far accomplished.

Although, Iranian nation is backed by a rich history of over 2,500 years, to elaborate on its contribution to the civilization of man requires a great deal of time and it is not a subject for tonight. However, we have one thing in common, and that is, both of our societies continue on the path of progress with determination to further upgrade the conduct of their societies, and in attaining added prosperity for their people.

We in Iran are blessed with a unique and a united society. All ethnic groups have equal rights, equal opportunities, and freedom of action. This is as a result of special attention, and consideration given by our beloved leader, Shah-an-Shah Arya Mehr, in conjunction with the Government of Iran for all ethnic groups to exercise their talents and to enjoy full privileges in maintaining their language, customs, religion and their heritage. This is particularly true in our case, as we Assyrians of Iran have Assyrian churches in which to worship and practice our christian faith, Assyrian societies to further develop and upgrade our community conduct, Assyrian schools to educate our children for self-realization, Assyrian publications and printing facilities to further develop our language, literature and culture. I am a member of Parliament, elected by the majority votes of the Assyrian people to represent them and their welfare in the Legislative branch of the Iranian Government. So do other minorities, such as Armenians, Jews and Zorastrians. While we have this unique opportunity to represent our own people, similarly we have equal rights to engage in the general conduct of Legislative Government.

You are all aware of our White Revolution, a program of the Shah-an-Shah and our nation. A Revolution that has enhanced and revitalized our society towards progress and prosperity. Particular mention shall be made of the establishment of (Hezb-Rasta-Kheez-Mela Iran), the Nation's Resurrection Party which during the past two years has given added opportunities for people to take effective steps in the destiny of their nation with the Government placing heavy emphasis on mass education, the spread of industrial and agro-industrial projects in all parts of the country. While we Assyrians in Iran benefit equally from these general undertakings yet, special appropriations have been specifically awarded to the Assyrian villages in Rezaieh (Urmia) for projects such as electrification, deep wells of piped water, building new schools and renovation of existing ones. Some of these projects have been completed and others are in progress.

Furthermore, we are planning to build a Community Center in greater Tehran area for which we have ambitious programs. Aid and assistance have been promised by the Government of Iran. My fellow Assyrians, these are just a few facts and are only meant to enlighten you of the prosperity we continue to enjoy in Iran. We have freedom of action to improve our lot, we have freedom of action in our nationalistic aspirations, in our labor for safe-guarding our sacred heritage and in our struggle for survival.

We are indebted to His Imperial Majesty, Shah-an-Shah Arya Mehr and the Government of Iran for the attention and special consideration awarded to me and my people in Iran.

I am in the United States at the official invitation of Mr. Simon Kasha, President of the Assyrian American National Federation. I do greatly appreciate the honor bestowed upon me, and wish to thank you whole heartedly for your cordial hospitality, for this memorable night. Particularly, I thank Supervisor, John Molinari, representative of this beautiful city of San Francisco which we enjoy immensely. I thank Mr. Mostafa Mossavi, my colleague, an official of the Government of Iran; also all my fellow Assyrians who have labored and made this gathering possible.

Being an Iranian Assyrian among my own people, I would like to say a few words in Assyrian language, and I hope my distinguished non-Assyrian friends will bear with me. Thank you.

Ed. Note: Mr. Homer Ashurian then proceeded to deliver the rest of his talk in Assyrian. It was very informative and enlightening.