

Tablet of The Desired One: Wilmette Institute faculty not

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Universal House of Justice

From: Research Department

Date: 1 May 2001

Lawh-i-Maqsúd 1

The Research Department has studied the questions about the Lawh-i-Maqsúd raised by Mr. ... in his email message of 7 February 2001 to the Universal House of Justice. Specifically, he enquires about the date of the revelation of the Tablet of Maqsúd and he seeks information about the "Two great powers"² referred to in this Tablet. We provide the following response.

Date of Revelation of the Tablet

The Lawh-i-Maqsúd was revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in the prison-city of 'Akká on the 29th of Safar 1299 A.H. (January 20 1882).

"Two great powers"

Mr. ... requests information about the "Two great powers", mentioned in the following passage from the Tablet of Maqsúd, that appears on page 170 of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

Two great powers who regard themselves as the founders and leaders of civilization and the framers of constitutions have risen up against the followers of the Faith associated with Him who conversed with God.³

The Research Department has not, to date, been able to locate any references in the Bahá'í Writings that explain the identity of the two countries that arose against the followers of Moses. However, from a perusal of European history in the second part of the 19th century, it is suggested that the two powers referred to by Bahá'u'lláh in the Lawh-i-Maqsúd as being persecutors of the Jews would appear to be France and Russia. The world powers of the 1880s were Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. The Encyclopedia Judaica indicates that the Jews were officially emancipated in Germany during the latter half of the 19th century, and although there was some anti-semitic activity in Austria, it was officially opposed by the government. In France, however, between 1881 and 1894, there was a rise of anti-Jewish publicity and agitation, the founding of the National Anti-Semitic League in 1889, and the demand in 1891 by 32 French deputies (members of parliament) that Jews be expelled from France, culminated in the infamous Dreyfus Affair of 1894. In Russia, the assassination of Alexander II led to pogroms, leading to the so-called "May laws" of 1882 which prohibited Jews from living in villages and

in 1886 to the limitation of the number of Jews allowed into University. Discrimination was continued officially until 1918. There was no official anti-semitism in Britain.

Notes:

1 Published in Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1997), pages 159-178.

2 Ibid., page 170.

3 Moses

Universal House of Justice

— Tablet of The Desired One: Wilmette Institute faculty notes (Used by permission of the curator)