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The Greek Orthodox Patriarch, a tall man with an exceptionally thick grey beard and very long hair, received me in his little sitting-room in the Patriarchate. There was something strangely Byzantine about the room, overcrowded with furniture, ikons, photographs of priests and flowers. The Patriarch was outspoken, yet he remained dignified.

He was sceptical about the possibility of a collaboration between the Churches. "Yes," he said we meet in public and at congresses and love each other in front of the others. But all this is sheer hypocrisy. His of other Churches come and visit me and speak of unity and fellowship. But after they have left they go to their missionaries and make them proselytize among the Greek Catholic, even more than before. Their one concern is how to increase their own flock. Universal fellowship interests them only for reasons of propaganda. They don't really have it at heart. I have ceased to believe in the words wit and fellowship when they come from the heads of Churches in Palestine."

I asked Shoghi Effendi whether the Bahá'ís did not try to do something to avert the coming disaster. His answer came without a moment's hesitation: "Nothing whatsoever because we know that t the next war the will of God and is bound to happen. He revealed this to 'Abdu'l-Bahá more than forty years ago"

I was both impressed and irritated by this unshaken faith. It was responsible for what could be regarded as indifference to the problems of the moment. Has anyone the right to a present responsibility, even as that he possesses true knowledge of the future? Even, if many of the prophecies of Shoghi Effendi's two great ancestors have been proved true, were is the certainty that this particular one may not be wrong Was not his answer an expression of doctrinal egotism True religion means action today and not only tomorrow. The events of a life may be predestined, but were we not given die power or free understanding with which to meet them? Have we the right to say, when a house is on fire, "What's the

good of trying to save those inside Anyhow, they are probably predestined to be burnt?" Those who believe in God usually also believe in miracles. Even in the face of certain prophecies they will still hope for a miracle that will make the prophecy untrue.

I had prepared a number of questions, bur, since Shoghi Effendi made himself merely the mouthpiece of the Bahá'í Krishnamurti, Hindu mystic and teacher, whose ideas have perhaps influenced Western thought more than those of any other modern thinker from the East.