

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHAI'S
OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Office of the Secretary
536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

January 30, 1940

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies
of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

Beloved Friends:

On January 15, the National Spiritual Assembly received a cablegram from Shoghi Effendi containing this instruction:-

"Advise warn believers avoid completely association (with) Edna Belmont. Her relationship (with) (New) History Society and (her) mischievous intentions impel me (to) safeguard (the) community."

The local Assemblies are accordingly informed through this letter of the Guardian's warning and are requested to record in their Minutes the text of the Guardian's words. They are requested also to present the matter to the believers at the Nineteen Day Feast.

It will be noted that Shoghi Effendi cites as part of Edna Belmont's offense her association with the New History Society.

Those who are responsible for that Society have recently sought by various means to convey to the public the impression that they are Baha'is and that their activities are Baha'i activities.

The situation was duly reported to the Guardian, the latest report being a cablegram outlining the analysis of the case made by the National Assembly's attorney. Shoghi Effendi has definitely instructed the National Spiritual Assembly to proceed with court action in order to maintain the Baha'i community's exclusive right to the term "Baha'i" and to reveal the motives of those who repudiate the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

Thus, in a cablegram received on January 22, the Guardian said:-

"Approve vigorous action. Praying fervently (for) signal success."

And, in another cablegram received January 23:-

"Praying victory similar (to the) one recently won(over) Covenant-breakers (in) Holy Land be achieved by American believers over insidious adversaries (in) City (of the) Covenant."

The believers will understand that the purpose of the legal action is to maintain the integrity of the Baha'i teachings, the authority of Baha'i institutions in matters pertaining to the Faith of Baha'u'llah, and the sacred unity of the Baha'i community, against these "insidious adversaries" and thus establish an important precedent as a bulwark against any similar attacks in the future.

The National Spiritual Assembly realizes that the matter is of vital importance. Its consequences can be far-reaching in securing legal recognition of the institutions deriving from the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. How significant it is that the American Baha'is have the privilege of following so closely in the footsteps of Shoghi Effendi, whose victory over the Covenant-breakers in Palestine he has so recently achieved!

Moreover, under different conditions but essentially similar in ultimate aim, the National Spiritual Assemblies of Iran, of Egypt and of Iraq have all contributed to the consolidation of the Baha'i institutions by defending the sacred interests of the Cause in the courts or against official attack. From time to time, the Guardian has reported such incidents to us and clearly indicated their significance as milestones upon the path of Baha'i progress.

Consequently we are to glory in the privilege of standing firm and asserting the fundamental truths of the Revelation of Baha'u'llah. His Dispensation has all power to establish and maintain itself on earth. Ours is to realize that the power and the capacity are His, and pray for worthiness and bounty to serve in the hour of need.

This test of our collective strength comes as the Cause has been so reinforced at its World Center by the moving of the sacred remains of the Purest Branch and the Master's Mother to the site. It comes also as the National Assembly has consolidated its forces by celebrating, in the National Office and in the Auditorium of the House of Worship, the conjunction of these two Institutions which the Guardian has emphasized so strongly.

To sum up: the American Baha'is are collectively concentrating their powers through this legal action against certain Covenant-breakers in this country. The status of such enemies has been forever established by Baha'u'llah in His appointment of the Center of His Covenant, and described by 'Abdu'l-Baha in His own Will. We are demonstrating the singleness of spirit that animates the entire body of the Cause in East and West and thus hastening the establishment of the new World Order. We are, finally, taking the occasion to impress upon public attention the nature of the Baha'i Faith and of the Baha'i Community.

The prayers of the Assemblies and communities are urged, that the Guardian's hopes may be fully realized.

Faithfully yours,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

THE BASIS OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

A Statement Concerning the New History Society.

"Therefore, the believers of God throughout all the Republics of America, through the divine power, must become the cause of the promotion of heavenly teachings and the establishment of the oneness of humanity."

--'Abdu'l-Baha.

After the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1921, the Baha'is in all parts of the world were grief-stricken at the loss of their beloved Master and leader, and bewildered by the withdrawal of the One who had served as the basis of their unity as well as their educator and spiritual guide.

'Abdu'l-Baha, however, had prepared a Will and Testament with all necessary instructions to the Baha'is for the era following His ministry as Center of Baha'u'llah's Covenant and Interpreter of His Revelation. In this unique spiritual document, the Master explained the nature of the local, national and international institutions which bind together the Baha'is of all nations and races in one great community. To each of these institutions 'Abdu'l-Baha, applying the laws and teachings revealed by Baha'u'llah, attributed a definite function and a definite degree of authority. The Baha'is of the world found that they had the privilege of being active members in and workers for a worldwide spiritual society universal in character whose aim is to symbolize peace and cooperation through their obedience to divine teachings and laws. This community has no priesthood nor professional clergy, and its worship and its activities are unlike those of the churches and institutions of past religions.

The supreme head and central figure of this world-wide Baha'i community is the Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, in whom 'Abdu'l-Baha's Testament vested the power of interpretation, capacity and authority for directing the development of the community, and the office of chairman of the international Baha'i body when established.

The Baha'is have thus had a continuity of the principle of unity and guidance from Baha'u'llah, first as expressed in and through 'Abdu'l-Baha and then as expressed in and through the Guardian and the institutions (local and National Spiritual Assemblies) developed under his direction since 1921.

This continuing principle of unity is the unique life with which Baha'u'llah endowed His world Faith. Previous religions have fallen under control of human ideas and motives after the Founder had left this earth. The glory and power of the Baha'i religion is that its sustaining life and inspiration, its direction and guidance, have been made constant and continuous for the duration of the cycle lasting until the coming of another Manifestation of God.

In this great body of living faith the individual believer is like a leaf on the tree. The life of the leaf is given it by the tree, but the leaf has a function which contributes to the tree. It lives in this dependence on the larger organism, and if the leaf becomes severed from the tree it falls into decay.

The spiritual life of a Baha'i is not in isolation, selfishness, independence, but in his unity with the whole body of Baha'is throughout the world. Outside this principle of unity, which derives from the authority of Baha'u'llah Himself, there is no way whatever in which human beings can attain permanent spiritual relationship

one with another or with the rest of mankind. Baha'u'llah has laid the bridge of truth and assurance from the dead world of the past to the new living age of the future. Those who try any other path or try to build their own bridge are doomed to failure, for the distinctive mission of the troubles and calamities now engulfing the world is to destroy whatever prevents mankind from attaining the blessing of obedience to God.

In the light of these Baha'i teachings, there is little need to point out the complete absence of truth in the position assumed by the leaders of the New History Society. These persons were formerly members of the Baha'i community and were well informed concerning the basic Baha'i teachings, including the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Less than a dozen Baha'is left the Faith in order to join the New History Society. Their arguments have carried weight only with persons uninformed of the Baha'i teachings.

These New History leaders, who refused to heed the Master's explicit instructions concerning unity with the Baha'is and acceptance of the Guardian's function and authority, founded their own organization through which to express their personal and incomplete conception of the Baha'i Faith. In claiming to serve the Baha'i Faith, in purporting to represent its aims and ideals, and in pretending to convey its teachings, the leaders of the New History Society contravene the most sacred and vital ordinance of the Faith and their attitude is one which the writings of Baha'u'llah, the instructions of 'Abdu'l-Baha and the decisions of the Guardian flatly condemn. The passages from Baha'i writings quoted below are more than sufficient to show how such persons betray themselves in claiming any allegiance to the Revelation of Baha'u'llah.

The situation presents no problem or issue to Baha'is familiar with the teachings and the history of their Faith. It is self-evident that only the Founder of a religion can lay down the qualifications of faith and of membership in the spiritual community He creates. A Baha'i is one who meets the qualifications of this universal religion. Outside these definite qualifications a person is free to choose his own religion or sect and worship in whatever manner he may desire. The Baha'is have no concern with those who prefer acceptance of other standards of truth. They do, however, have the great privilege of clarifying any issue forced upon them which in any way belclouds or twists or suppresses fundamental Baha'i teachings in the mind of the public.

One brief word with reference to a legal action taken by the National Spiritual Assembly against the founders of the New History Society in order to prevent their public misuse of the term "Baha'is".

In taking this action, the Assembly found that the courts in the United States are not authorized to decide religious questions or to determine what are the true Baha'i teachings or true application of the teachings. The Assembly was therefore compelled to limit the action to other questions relating to use of the Baha'i name by the founders of the New History Society in conducting a book shop and collecting contributions. By this action, although limited, the Assembly hoped to prevent the founders of the New History Society from creating the false impression that they are authorized to represent the Baha'i cause.

The court took the view, however, that the case involved the right to use the name of a religion and therefore involved a religious question which could not be decided by the court. This result prevented the Assembly from attaining its aim through legal means, but in no wise affected the essential spiritual question of obedience to the basic laws and principles of the Baha'i Faith.

When, therefore, the New History Society claims legal victory or vindication from this court action, there is no basis for the claim except the refusal of the court to try the case. There was no decision on the merits of the case. The only question in dispute was whether a religious question was involved. The court's lack of authority to decide a religious question is in accordance with the doctrine of freedom of worship and was not disputed.

For the Bahá'í Faith is not any intellectual doctrine or philosophy which can be made an end in itself, but a relationship to the Body of fellow-believers throughout the world based on newly-revealed spiritual, ethical and social truth. He upholds the principle of the Bahá'í community because only in the community can these truths have vital life and application.

Spiritual authority, in this cycle, is vested in the Assemblies elected democratically by all the believers, men and women alike. Aside from the Guardian appointed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Testament, there are no Bahá'í "leaders". The Spiritual Assembly alone has power to represent the community, and the Assembly is composed of nine persons who act under the principle of consultation and majority decision.

Nothing on earth is more reassuring of the future welfare and peace of humanity than these Bahá'í Assemblies whose membership reconciles different races, classes and creeds. More than six hundred of these elected Assemblies now exist in East and West. In North America, the Bahá'ís have established nearly one hundred Assemblies these being coordinated by an elected National Spiritual Assembly; and besides these institutions the American Bahá'ís are completing the House of Worship (which 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself dedicated in 1912) and have organized a large Publishing Committee and four Summer Schools where throngs of young people and those of mature age ardently perfect their knowledge of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Excerpts from Bahá'í Writings

"When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed, and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces towards Him (i. e., 'Abdu'l-Bahá) Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root."

"It is incumbent upon.....my kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch."

"Render thanks unto God, O people, for His appearance; for verily He is the most great Favor unto you, the most perfect bounty upon you; and through Him every moldering bone is quickened. Whoso turneth towards Him hath turned towards God, and whoso turneth away from Him hath turned away from God, and whoso turneth away from Him hath turned away from My Beauty, hath repudiated My Proof, and transgressed against Me. He is the truth of God amongst you, His charge within you, His manifestation unto you and His appearance among His favored servants....They who deprive themselves of the shadow of the Branch, are lost in the wilderness of error, are consumed by the heat of worldly desires and are of those who will assuredly perish."

--Bahá'u'lláh.

"In former cycles no distinct Covenant was made in writing by the Supreme Pen; no distinct personage was appointed to be the Standard differentiating falsehood from truth, so that whatever he said was to stand as truth and that which he repudiated was to be known as falsehood...."

"But in this Dispensation of the Blessed Beauty (i.e. Bahá'u'lláh) among its distinctions is that He did not leave people in perplexity. He entered into a

Covenant and Testament with the people. He appointed a Center of the Covenant. He wrote with His own pen and revealed it in the Kitab-i-Aqdas, the Book of Laws, and Kitab-i-'Ahd, the Book of the Covenant, appointed Him (i.e., 'Abdu'l-Baha) the Expounder of the Book. You must ask Him ('Abdu'l-Baha) regarding the meanings of the texts of the verses. Whatsoever He says is correct."

"One of the enemies of the Cause is he who endeavors to interpret the Words of Baha'u'llah and thereby colors the meaning according to his capacity, and collects around him a following, forming a different sect, promoting his own station and making division in the Cause."

"In the contingent world there are many collective centers which are conducive to association and unity between the children of men. For example, patriotism is a collective center; Nationalism is a collective center; political alliance is a collective center; identity of interests is a collective center; the union of ideals is a collective center, and the prosperity of the world of humanity is dependent upon the organization and promotion of the collective center. Nevertheless, all the above institutions are, in reality, the matter and not the substance, accidental and not eternal -- temporary and not everlasting. With the appearance of great revolutions and upheavals, all these collective centers are swept away. But the Collective Center of the Kingdom, embodying the Institutes and Divine Teachings, is the eternal Collective Center. It establishes relationship between the East and the West, organizes the oneness of the world of humanity, and destroys the foundation of differences. It overcomes and includes all the other collective centers....the real Collective Center is the body of the Divine teachings...."

"O ye beloved of the Lord! The greatest of all things is the protection of the True Faith of God, the preservation of His Law, the safeguarding of His Cause and service unto His Word. Ten thousand souls have shed streams of their sacred blood in this path, their precious lives they offered in sacrifice unto Him, hastened wrapt in holy ecstasy unto the glorious field of martyrdom, upraised the Standard of God's Faith and writ with their life-blood upon the Tablet of the world the verses of His Divine Unity....

"O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Afghan (Branches), the Afghan (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-Tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abha Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi..... as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Afghans, the Afghans, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the expounder of the words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of his lineal descendants....The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God.... He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His word and will become a manifestation of the Center of Sedition....."

--'Abdu'l-Baha.

"In the Most Holy Book (i.e., the Kitab-i-Aqdas) is revealed: - 'The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counsellors to the number of Baha'i (i.e., nine), and should it exceed this number it does not matter. It behooveth them to be the trusted ones of the Merciful amongst men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly...."

"Furthermore, 'Abdu'l-Baha reveals the following: - 'It is incumbent upon every-one not to take any step without consulting the Spiritual Assembly, and they must assuredly obey with heart and soul its bidding and be submissive unto it, that things may be properly ordered and well arranged. (Otherwise every person will act independently and after his own judgment, will follow his own desire, and do harm to the Cause.'

"Generated by the propelling and purifying forces of a mysterious Faith, born of delusion or malice, winning a fleeting notoriety derived from the precarious advantages of wealth, fame or fortune, these movements sponsored by deluded, self-seeking adventurers find themselves, sooner or later, enmeshed in the machinations of their authors, are buried in shame, and sink eventually into complete oblivion.

"The schism which their foolish leaders had contrived so sedulously to produce within the Faith, will soon, to their utter amazement, come to be regarded as a process of purification, a cleansing agency, which, far from decimating the ranks of its followers, reinforces its indestructible unity, and proclaims anew to a world, skeptical or indifferent, the cohesive strength of the institutions of that Faith, the incorruptibility of its purposes and principles, and the recuperative powers inherent in its community life."

--Shoghi Effendi.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHA'IS OF THE UNITED STATES & CANADA.

536 Sheridan Road,
Wilmette, Illinois
November, 1941.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

Office of the Secretary
536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

April 5, 1949.

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies.

Beloved Friends:

This is a confidential letter - a communication directed to your nine members alone. Please respect the confidence.

On June 4, 1947 the National Spiritual Assembly prepared a bulletin on enrollment of Orientals. It was approved by the Guardian and circulated to all local Assemblies for reference as needed.

Now we have a cable from the Guardian:

"Feel necessary urge Assembly adhere strictly and vigilantly to the instruction regarding enrollment of Orientals in America"

which strongly re-emphasizes the original policy for this country.

The National Assembly requests you to review your copy of the bulletin and appreciate its importance. If you have no copy, one will be sent on request.

Sincerely,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHA'IS OF THE UNITED STATES
536 Sheridan Road,
Wilmette, Illinois

November 11, 1949.

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies,

Beloved Friends:

The Guardian has renewed his instructions about Orientals, and we call your urgent attention to these two sentences from his letter to the National Spiritual Assembly, dated August 18, 1949:-

"A Persian who claims to be a Baha'i, but has no credentials, must in view of his deliberate disobedience to the Guardian in such a vital matter, be treated as a Covenant-breaker, for that is where he has placed himself by his acts.

"With over a hundred million people to teach in the United States he cannot understand why some of the friends still persist in seeking out the mere handful of Orientals in their midst, who constitute not potential Baha'is but potential danger."

Each Assembly is directed to file this letter with its copy of the National Spiritual Assembly bulletin on the reception and enrollment of Orientals.

The Assemblies, moreover, are urgently reminded of their grave responsibility to make sure that the entire local community is informed about the Guardian's specific instructions concerning Orientals.

No excerpts from the bulletin or from this present letter are to be circulated in writing. You can take it up with the friends through oral consultation.

Faithfully yours,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS
536 Sheridan Road
Wilmette, Illinois

June 16, 1952

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies
and Regional Teaching Committees

Dear Friends:

This letter carries out an important and confidential instruction received from the Guardian of the Faith: "that the message from Ahmad Sohrab, as well as John Snow, be sent at once in a private letter to all local Assemblies and Regional Teaching Committees, to be shared verbally with the friends. However, under no circumstances should it be published by the N. S. A., any local Assembly or committee. No copies should be made either."

Now the facts and circumstances which explain this emphatic instruction.

It appears that in connection with the court case brought by the Covenant-breakers against the Guardian, Ahmad Sohrab joined forces with the Covenant-breakers, and in support of their case sent a cablegram to the Minister of Religion of the State of Israel, as follows:

"Minister of Religion, Jerusalem, May 13, 1952:
Caravan two thousand chapters in forty-six countries,
recognize Bahá'í universal teachings, not under authority Shoghi Effendi. People's movement. No clergy.
(signed) M. A. Sohrab."

A cablegram was also sent by the Caravan of England:

"Minister of Religion, Jerusalem, May 17, 1952.
On behalf members Caravan of England we state adherence to Bahá'í teachings. We do not acknowledge the Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi, nor authority of clergy.
(signed) John Snow, Chairman."

As the Guardian points out, the cable sent by Sohrab clearly and officially reveals the true status of his relation to the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. After maintaining that he was the true disciple and loyal servant of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he has openly joined with the most vicious of the Master's enemies and repudiates His Will and Testament.

The letter from the Guardian states that the court case "has now

To local Spiritual Assemblies
and Regional Teaching Committees

June 16, 1952

been concluded with a stunning blow to the enemies of the Faith."

Our part in this great issue, which is God's way of separating the people of denial from the people of faith, is to recognize the fact that Sohrab stands with the Covenant-breakers who have made every effort to destroy the foundation of the unity of the Bahá'is, and is using his Caravan organization as an instrument to reinforce his efforts to overthrow the Guardianship.

Sincerely

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

HH/SL

P. S. This letter is to be read to the believers and not copied or distributed in any manner.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES
536 Sheridan Road,
Wilmette, Illinois

April 10, 1959

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies,
Area Teaching Committees,
National Committees
Bahá'í Summer Schools

Dear Friends:

re: Bahá'í Literature and its Distribution

Since there seems to be a general lack of understanding by both local Assemblies and individual believers as to what constitutes "approved Bahá'í literature" and how approved literature is produced and distributed, the National Spiritual Assembly has prepared this bulletin which should be studied by Assemblies, all national committees, librarians and book sales representatives, and shared with individual Bahá'ís. If these points are clearly understood much confusion will be avoided and time-consuming correspondence on the part of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust and the National Spiritual Assembly will be eliminated.

1. The Guardian (and 'Abdu'l-Bahá before him) made the National Spiritual Assembly the central responsible authority for the publication and distribution of Bahá'í literature. In Bahá'í Administration (page 40) Shoghi Effendi states: "all vital issues affecting the interests of the Cause...such as the matter of translation and publication...must be under the full jurisdiction of the National Assembly." Thus, the National Spiritual Assembly determines what literature shall be approved and distributed through Bahá'í channels.

2. In view of the Guardian's directives to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for maintaining authenticity, accuracy and a high degree of quality in all Bahá'í publications, as well as his own exhaustive labors in providing us with accurate translations of the Sacred Writings and his own writings, which he entrusted to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States for their initial publication, we have a special responsibility for applying these directives, regardless of where literature originates.

3. All items approved by the National Spiritual Assembly are made available through Bahá'í channels. In the case of literature it is the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, which was established at the direction of the Guardian. All such items are announced in Bahá'í News or occasionally by direct announcement from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust to communities and schools, or by the National Spiritual Assembly if the item is related to some special program or project inaugurated by the National Assembly.

4. The local Assemblies and the Bahá'í schools have a special privilege and obligation to assist in maintaining the approved standards and channels and to make known to the believers the wide

variety of literature which has been approved for distribution and how it should be used. In this connection one of the functions of the librarian or book sales committee should be to see that the various types of literature are announced and displayed and made available for purchase by the friends.

5. The local Assemblies and the Bahá'í schools should make sure that the friends understand that the primary function of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust is to produce under its own imprint those items that the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States feels are necessary for the work of the Cause in the United States and for meeting its responsibility under the World Crusade. In addition, the Bahá'í Publishing Trust acts for the National Spiritual Assembly as the central distributing agency for all Bahá'í literature distributed in the United States, regardless of its origin. This includes the majority of items produced by the British Publishing Trust, by the Bahá'í publishing committees producing foreign language literature which is useful in this country, and certain items published by private commercial publishers such as George Ronald of England and Avalon Press of the United States, which have been approved for distribution in the United States.

Since questions frequently arise as to why certain publications are not carried in our catalog of Bahá'í literature or are not available through the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, the National Spiritual Assembly wishes to make the following points:

a. Certain administrative materials published in other countries do not apply to the stage of administration in the United States, and therefore their distribution in the United States can create confusion.

b. The Guardian himself discouraged compiling and recompile excerpts from the basic texts and stressed the importance of the Americans studying the complete text itself; therefore, compilations brought out in other countries that have not been able to produce the full texts themselves should not be substituted.

c. The Bahá'í Publishing Trust cannot publish or distribute any work which the National Spiritual Assembly and/or its Reviewing Committee has not found accurate or which cannot be approved in accordance with the foregoing explanation. This includes items that quote from unauthentic translations or from erroneous or unchecked sources.

d. Neither is it permissible to distribute literature prepared for some special use in another country which may not fit in with plans of the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, or which might distract and dissipate the efforts of the friends from activities to which they have been committed.

e. In some instances the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of the United States has been obliged to invest large sums to produce certain works, often according to Shoghi Effendi's own exact specifications (i.e., The Dawn-Breakers, complete without any deletion of photographs, etc.). Therefore the Trust needs the support of the American believers who are given this special bounty of bringing them out in this way.

f. None of the foregoing statements prevents any individual from purchasing any book he wants from any commercial bookstore or publisher, but it does not grant him the right to circularize the Bahá'í community with any announcements, samples, pieces of literature, etc. The matter of distribution lies entirely within the province of Bahá'í administrative channels, that is, the National Spiritual Assemblies, its appointed committees, the local Spiritual Assemblies and groups.

g. No individual Bahá'í, group or local Spiritual Assembly may produce for sale or free distribution any item not properly reviewed and approved.

Please keep this bulletin on file for the information of each succeeding local Spiritual Assembly and the appointed librarian or book sales representative.

Sincerely,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHÁ'Í'S OF THE UNITED STATES
536 Sheridan Road,
Wilmette, Illinois

May 12, 1960

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies
Area Teaching Committees
National Committees

Dear Friends:

By this time, many local Spiritual Assemblies, National Bahá'í Committees and individual believers have received from Mr. Charles Mason Remey what he chooses to call a proclamation of his station as the second Guardian. On April 26th, on receipt of this absurd claim, which clearly reflects the evidences of old age and deteriorating faculties, the National Spiritual Assembly cabled the Hands of the Faith residing in the Holy Land assurance of our prayers and sympathy in this tragic development.

On April 28th we received the following cablegram from the Hands of the Faith:-

"DEEPLY REGRET NECESSITY INFORM BAHÁ'Í WORLD HAND CAUSE MASON REMEY NOW ASSERTING HE IS GUARDIAN FAITH. THIS PREPOSTEROUS CLAIM CLEARLY CONTRARY SACRED TEXTS CAN ONLY BE REGARDED AS EVIDENCE CONDITION PROFOUND EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE. CALL UPON BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE JOIN HANDS HOLY LAND COMPLETE REPUDIATION THIS MISGUIDED ACTION. SHARE THIS MESSAGE FRIENDS."

We had already, on April 27th, telegraphed all existing local Spiritual Assemblies as follows:-

"REMEY PROCLAMATION UNAUTHORIZED BY HANDS IN HAIFA AND REPUDIATED BY NSA. SAD SITUATION WILL BE RESOLVED BY CHIEF STEWARDS."

On the first day of the Convention, April 28th, the delegates sent the following cable to the Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land:-

"ASSEMBLED DELEGATES FIFTY SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION PLEDGE ANEW UNDEVIATING LOYALTY INSTITUTION OF HANDS ESPECIALLY STEWARDS LABORING IN HOLY LAND. CONVENTION UNANIMOUSLY REPUDIATES REMEY PROCLAMATION. JOINING PRAYERS WITH YOURS FOR DIVINE HEALING."

To this the Hands of the Faith replied on April 30th:-

"DEEPLY APPRECIATE LATEST EVIDENCE UNSHAKABLE LOYALTY STANDARD BEARERS COVENANT TO DIVINELY ORDAINED INSTITUTIONS. PRAYING HOLY SHRINES DIVINE BLESSINGS HISTORIC CONVENTION."

The National Spiritual Assembly deeply appreciates the letters and telegrams already received from a large number of local Spiritual Assemblies reassuring us of the loyalty and devotion of their communities to the Hands of the Faith and their unswerving determination to carry out the Guardian's divinely inspired World Crusade.

To those who have not yet done so, we recommend that Mr. Remeý's statement be returned to the National Spiritual Assembly, preferably unopened. Beyond informing the community of Mr. Remeý's action and sharing with it the exchange of cablegrams quoted above, there should be no discussion of the matter among the believers or outside.

In the unlikely event that any press release on the subject appears in the local newspapers, or that you are approached by any reporters about it, the local Spiritual Assembly and the believers are not to release any information whatsoever, but are to refer it to the National Spiritual Assembly who will determine whether in these circumstances any release will be necessary, and you will be advised accordingly.

It is one of the mysteries of God that at a time of victory in the Faith there is also a great test or crisis. Never before in the history of the Faith in America have the believers reached such heights of accomplishment as last year. The completion of the goals - and indeed exceeding them - in Latin America in a few short months, the increase in the number of new local Spiritual Assemblies in the United States to the present number of 230, the addition of some 500 believers to our membership roll and excess of contributions over expenditures in our National Bahá'í Fund by several thousand dollars, all bear eloquent testimony to the strength and solidarity of the American Bahá'í community and its dedication to the beloved Guardian's World Crusade.

We feel sure that the empty claim made by Mr. Remeý, whose condition is truly a pathetic one, will serve only to inspire us to greater unity, devotion and service in the accomplishment of the spiritual mission bequeathed to us by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and so gloriously directed by our beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

With warm Bahá'í love,

Sincerely,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
BAHA'IS OF THE UNITED STATES
536 Sheridan Road,
Wilmette, Illinois

May 20, 1960

To: Local Spiritual Assemblies,
Area Teaching Committees,
American National Teaching Committee

Dear Friends:

A communication dated May 10th from the Hands of the Faith residing in the Holy Land reports that by that date messages had been received from most of the National Spiritual Assemblies and/or Annual Conventions reflecting widespread repudication of the baseless claim of Charles Mason Remey and pledging solidarity, steadfastness and loyalty to the divinely-ordained institution of the Hands.

The following paragraphs of the letter are quoted for the information and guidance of all believers:-

"It is clear that by claiming that he is the Guardian, Mr. Remey has abandoned his station as a Hand of the Cause, and therefore cannot receive recognition as a Hand until he renounces the self-conferred title of Guardian. The Hands of the Holy Land will notify the National Assemblies if this occurs.

"For the protection of our beloved Faith we call upon the friends everywhere to have no association with Mr. Remey as long as he continues to press his false claim to the station of Guardianship. We also request the believers to forward to the World Center through their National Assemblies any communications which they may receive from Mr. Remey.

"Naturally we hope that the emotional disturbance that led to Mr. Remey's regrettable action will prove not to be permanent and that we shall soon be able to inform the friends that he has withdrawn the claim and that communication with him is again permitted.

"Such episodes as this can through firmness, steadfastness and loyalty to the Covenant, prove of great benefit to the Cause of God, and through the consecrated efforts of the friends attract the bounties of Bahá'u'lláh that alone can insure its triumph."

Please notify us promptly should any believer show any evidence of recognizing the claim of Mr. Remey.

We are deeply grateful for the many letters we have already received from our local Spiritual Assemblies pledging their unswerving faithfulness and devotion.

Sincerely,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'Í OF THE UNITED STATES

536 Sheridan Road
Wilmette, Illinois

August 10, 1960

To:

Local Spiritual Assemblies
American National Teaching Committee
Area Teaching Committees
Intercontinental Teaching Committees
Bahá'í Summer Schools

Dear Friends:

The following cable from the Hands of the Faith residing in the Holy Land is to be shared with all believers:

"(The) beloved Guardian's glorious epistle God Passes By clearly states (our) Holy Cause (is) constantly subject (to) crises giving rise (to) greater victories. History (of) defection (of) distinguished believers following ascension (of) Forerunner (of) Faith, (its) Supreme Manifestation (and) Center (of the) Covenant now repeated after ascension (of) precious Shoghi Effendi through Mason Remey's defection (and) his preposterous (and) utterly unfounded claim. Protection (of) believers from activities (of) misguided mischief makers (who have been) given every opportunity (to) repent now requires expulsion (from the) Faith (of) Remey's henchmen: John Carre, Bernard Fillon, Moneer Darakhshan, Joel Marangella, Jacques Soghomonian, Donald Harvey, John Byers in France and Mary Wilkin (in) United States. Henceforth anyone associating (with) these people or supporting Remey claim (will) likewise (be) considered a Covenant-breaker. Confident faithful (and) devoted body (of) believers mindful (of) infinite bounties (and) praises showered (on them by) beloved Guardian will demonstrate through united action (their) impregnable solidarity (and will) arise (to) achieve (the) glorious goals (of the) God-inspired Crusade. Cable message (to) all National Assemblies."

(signed) HANDSFAITH

Haifa, Israel
August 3, 1960

Both this message and the cable quoted in our general letter of July 27, 1960 announcing expulsion of Mason Remey by entire body of Hands of the Cause, will be published in the September issue of Bahá'í News.

It has been reported that believers are being anonymously contacted and offered an invitation to come to Washington, D. C. with all expenses paid to meet with "Bahá'í friends for the good of the Cause." As the above message clearly states, association

with Covenant-breakers is strictly forbidden. Further, any association by believers with them, any diffusion of their writings, any assistance rendered to their evil intentions, is evidence of Covenant-breaking and results in expulsion from the Faith.

Sincerely

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
of the
BAHÁ'ís OF THE UNITED STATES
536 Sheridan Road, Wilmette, Illinois

September 3, 1960

Dear Friends:

The September Bahá'í News will contain information you have already received from us about the action taken by the Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land regarding Charles Mason Remey and certain individuals who have accepted his claim that he is the second Guardian. In light of developments since this issue of Bahá'í News went to press we are sending you the following information to be shared promptly with the members of your community or area.

The voting rights of all persons in the United States who have been engaging in Covenant-breaking activities have been removed and their names have been stricken from the membership list. Any association with them or any personal contact or correspondence with them is forbidden, as their spiritual status is in serious question. They are:

Mrs. Mary Magdalene Wilkin, New York, N. Y.
Charles Behrens, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Grace Behrens, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mr. Charles Gaines, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Lloyd Herman, Jr., Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Charlotte Herman, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mr. Wm. B. Patzer, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Bertha Harman, Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Marion Rhodes, Peoria, Illinois
Mr. Stephen Rhodes, Peoria, Illinois
Mr. Franklin D. Schlatter, Normal, Illinois
Mrs. Carol Schlatter, Normal, Illinois
Mrs. Frances Fales, Washington, D. C.
Mrs. M. Eloyce Gist Slaughter, Charlottesville, Virginia
Mrs. Anna Deuell, Peoria, Illinois

We are sorry that the friends have been subjected to the barrage of compilations and interpretations from some of the above-named individuals. Any and all of the following items received from them should be destroyed:

Proclamation of Mason Remey (and any accompanying material)
Encyclical Letter I from Mason Remey
Encyclical Letter II from Mason Remey
Mimeographed letter of July 9, 1960 from Joel Marangella
Mimeographed document from Mrs. Mary Magdalene Wilkin
Mimeographed document of August 8 from Franklin D. Schlatter
Mimeographed document from Charles Gaines
Miscellaneous letters from any of those named above

Any similar seditious material of a later date or letters from

any of those listed above or from anyone else should be sent to the National Spiritual Assembly.

The National Spiritual Assembly of France has listed the following Americans in France as unfaithful to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh:

Joel Marangella
Mrs. Irene Marangella
Mrs. Margaret Aducat
John Byers
Mrs. Madelaine Byers

John Carré
Mrs. Georgine Carré
Mrs. Inglis Carré
Mrs. Patricia Lilly
Donald Harvey

We are deeply grieved that inadequate understanding of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and of the writings of Shoghi Effendi has misled the several persons named in this letter. At the same time we are assured that the overwhelming number of letters expressing the steadfastness of the believers is indicative of the basically strong faith that animates the American Bahá'í community to carry forward the beloved Guardian's World Crusade without any interruption.

With warm Bahá'í love

Sincerely

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES
830 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

December 24, 1964

TO SPECIAL LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, GROUPS
AND INDIVIDUALS

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

You are all now acquainted, and some of you for many weeks, with the fact that the Covenant-breakers have instituted suit in the Federal Court in Northern Illinois for appropriation of the Bahá'í properties, including the House of Worship, on the pretense that they are the true Bahá'ís. Naturally, this is an absurdity of the first order, but the reality of the suit still exists. The National Spiritual Assembly has quickly moved to answer the complaint, and has also acted to protect itself in other areas.

Inasmuch as we now wish to have a thorough collection of items which would indicate the confusion between the Covenant-breakers, who call themselves Bahá'ís, and the communities of believers, who properly have the right to use the name "Bahá'í," in all its forms, we must now have methodical collection of data in support of our position. May we ask the following of you, therefore:

1. Will you collect carefully all articles, advertisements, notices, and any other public press materials from the Covenant-breakers. For those who live in cities where there has been activity over the last several years, some research in the "morgues" of the newspapers there might be called for in the future.
2. Will you herewith reconstruct and record events which show the confusion between the Covenant-breakers and the Bahá'ís, such as confusing telephone conversations, where people have called the Bahá'ís of your community, thinking that they were calling the Covenant-breakers, or the reverse. These should be documented as carefully as possible: dates, times, and all other items which can be specified. If, at your public affairs, persons have wandered in expecting to encounter a Covenant-breaker meeting, this should be recorded. If letters have been sent to the Bahá'ís of your community which were meant for the Covenant-breakers, or the converse, these also should be recalled and recorded as precisely as possible.
3. All confusing incidents, in which it can clearly be shown that the use of the same name has created confusion in the minds of the public, and where the good name and prestige of the Bahá'í community have been taken advantage of by the Covenant-breakers, all should be recalled and recorded, specifying precise details to the best of memory. These items should then be forwarded to the National Office, for our assembly of this data of confusion and misuse of our names, symbols, etc.

It is very unfortunate that time must be spent away from teaching the Cause in this troublesome affair. However, please consider this to be a pure collection of information which may or may not be

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF THE UNITED STATES
526 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

Special Local Spiritual Assemblies, Groups
and Individuals

December 24, 1964

of use to the National Assembly as it defends the position of the Bahá'is in the United States and abroad, against the assaults of the Covenant-breakers. There is no cause for alarm whatever, but there is every cause for assiduous work on behalf of the Cause against this dissenting and expelled group of Covenant-breakers.

Our loving thanks for your efforts, and our warmest Bahá'í regard, always.

Faithfully yours

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

By: 

David S. Ruhe
Secretary

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
BAHÁ'IS OF THE UNITED STATES
536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS

January 1965

To: All Local Spiritual Assemblies,
All NSA-State Service Representatives

Dear Co-workers in the Nine-Year Plan:

The Covenant-breaker litigation will drag along in Chicago for many months, essentially in silence as far as the believers are concerned. Yet this internal affair of the Cause will surely be resolved to the greater glory of the Faith, we know. Please expand your every teaching effort, without regard for what will surely be a meaningless side event in the growth of Bahá'u'lláh's community.

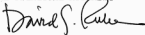
In the meanwhile, do not seek any publicity. Do not take any initiative whatever with the press, but utilize the brief release supplied only if reporters approach you or pressure you for a statement and for additional factual information. You are not to go beyond what is stated in the release, nor should additional information be volunteered. This may on occasion take great self-control. However, this is not a position of weakness, but of strength, since the Covenant-breakers have everything to lose through our silence and refusal to be drawn into contention. We insist that this is an internal affair, to be resolved internally. If in doubt under unusual circumstances, communicate with the National Office.

When real news is available, and real action called for, we shall summon your combined forces to whatever protective measures may be required. Meanwhile, we have proceeded with controlled strength, under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice and the prayers of the friends for the advancement of the Cause in the United States.

Loving Bahá'í Greetings,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

By:



David S. Ruhe,
SECRETARY