

## Eliminate Prejudice—Attract the Sincere A Letter from The Universal House of Justice

To: All National Spiritual Assemblies  
Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The blessings of the Ancient Beauty are being showered upon the followers of the Greatest Name. Our efforts to serve Him and humanity are being crowned with victories throughout the world. As we give thanks for these splendid achievements, as the Cause of God spreads in every land, as our institutions become more perfected, as the number of believers increases over the face of the planet, our individual lives must increasingly mirror forth each day the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and we must so live our lives that all will see in us a different people. The acts we perform, the attitudes we manifest, the very words we speak should be an attraction, a magnet, drawing the sincere to the Divine Teachings.

Bahá'u'lláh tells us that prejudice in its various forms destroys the edifice of humanity. We are adjured by the Divine Messenger to eliminate all forms of prejudices from our lives. Our outer lives must show forth our beliefs. The world must see that, regardless of each passing whim or current fashion of the generality of mankind, the Bahá'í lives his life according to the tenets of his Faith. We must not allow the fear of rejection by our friends and neighbors to deter us from our goal: to live the Bahá'í life. Let us strive to blot out from our lives every last trace of prejudice—racial, re-

ligious, political, economic, national, tribal, class, cultural, and that which is based on differences of education or age. We shall be distinguished from our non-Bahá'í associates if our lives are adorned with this principle.

If we allow prejudice of any kind to manifest itself in us, we shall be guilty before God of causing a setback to the progress and real growth of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. It is incumbent upon every believer to endeavor with a fierce determination to eliminate this defect from his thoughts and acts. It is the duty of the institutions of the Faith to inculcate this principle in the hearts of the friends through every means at their disposal including summer schools, conferences, institutes and study classes.

The fundamental purpose of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh is the realization of the organic unity of the entire human race. Bearing this glorious destiny in mind, and with entire reliance on the promises of the Blessed Beauty, we should follow His exhortation:

“We love to see you at all times consorting in amity and concord within the paradise of My good-pleasure, and to inhale from your acts the fragrance of friendliness and unity, of loving-kindness and fellowship.”

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

—THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

July 13, 1972

## Politics and the Bahá'ís

"Shun politics like the plague, and be obedient to the government in power in the place where we reside! . . ." So Shoghi Effendi sharply advised the American Bahá'ís in a memorable and realistic couplet of instructions. Indeed, he tells us that "to enter the arena of (American) party politics . . . assuredly will be detrimental to the best interests of the Faith and will harm the Cause. Apparently, he assumes that common semantic connotation of politics as the corrupt and dishonest public management which seeks to secure the success of political candidates or parties, rather than its purer first choice dictionary definitions as "the science and art of government," or as "the theory or practice of managing affairs of public policy." Repeating the themes at another time, he states clearly that "the attitude of the Bahá'ís must be twofold: complete obedience to the government of the country they reside in and no interference *whatsoever* in political matters or questions. What the Master's statement (the Will and Testament) really means is obedience to a duly constituted government, whatever that government may be in form. We are not the ones, as individual Bahá'ís, to judge our government as just or unjust—for each believer would be sure to hold a different viewpoint, and within our own Bahá'í fold a hotbed of discussion would spring up and destroy our unity. We must build up our own Bahá'í system, and leave the faulty systems of the world to go their way. We cannot change them through becoming involved in them; on the contrary, they will destroy us."

Therefore, to understand our true position we must know clearly that the Bahá'í world community is profoundly concerned with the science and art of governing Bahá'ís and with the theory and practice of managing the affairs of Bahá'í public policy. The grand conceptions of Bahá'u'lláh, the administrative principles enunciated by the Master, the steady development of the World Order by Shoghi Effendi, and now the strong grasp of The Universal House of Justice

all lead us inevitably to the Bahá'í state of tomorrow. But today "what we Bahá'ís must face is the fact that society is disintegrating so rapidly that moral issues that were clear a half century ago are now hopelessly confused and what is more, thoroughly mixed up with battling political interests. That is why the Bahá'ís must turn all their forces into the channel of building up the Bahá'í Cause and its administration. They can neither change nor help the world in any way at present. If they become involved in the issues the governments of the people are struggling over, they will be lost. But if they build up the Bahá'í pattern, they can offer it as a remedy when all else has failed."

### The Bahá'í System Is Unique

The Bahá'í system is a unique one. It is evolving rapidly through God's will for today. With all Bahá'í adult citizens eligible and obligated to vote, with no party but only an electorate, with no electioneering and no nominations, with secret ballot, with authority and power vested in Assemblies of the annually elected, with no priesthood and no professional leadership, with consultation channeled into decision by God's methods, and with a community pledged to unity in action . . . the Bahá'í government is certain to be a new dimension in the governing of men. But the times are in embryo, for the Bahá'í Cause is just now emerging from its period of unmitigated obscurity.

However, in this time of our youth as a nascent institution of broad powers-to-be and of a profound destiny, individual Bahá'ís must still live and will inevitably interact with contemporary life. In this American democracy they may contribute as citizens, in limited ways.

"The friends may vote, if they can do it, without identifying themselves with one party or another. It remains for the individuals to so use their right to vote so as to keep aloof from party politics, and always to bear in mind that they are voting on the merits of the individual, rather than because he belongs to one

party or another. The matter must be made perfectly clear to the individuals, who will be left free to exercise their discretion and judgment." In short, they may vote as independents, unaffiliated with any party "as a non-partisan and not as a member of any political party." That they cannot then vote in the primaries is a sometimes unfortunate penalty of the current American political system.

Some limitations are necessarily made. "No Bahá'í vote for an office, no Bahá'í participation in the affairs of the Republic, shall involve acceptance . . . of a program or policy that contravenes any vital principle, spiritual or social, of the Faith." Again: "No vote cast, or office undertaken, by a Bahá'í should necessarily constitute acceptance by the voter or office holder of the entire program of any political party. No Bahá'í can be regarded as either Republican or Democrat, as such. He is above all else the supporter of the principles enunciated by Bahá'u'lláh, with which . . . the program of no political party is completely harmonious."

From time to time it may happen that "a certain person does enter into politics and labors for the ascendancy of one party over another . . ." When he "continues to do so against the express appeals and warnings of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the right to refuse him the right to vote in Bahá'í elections."

Since political conflict and controversy are frequently so virulent and so hazardous to individuals or to the good name of institutions, "the friends . . . should be very careful in their public utterance not to mention any political figures, either to side with or to denounce them . . . Otherwise they will involve the friends in political matters, which is definitely dangerous for the Cause." Such public utterance may be "the publication of articles and pamphlets bearing upon the controversial and political issues of the day." We must be wary, since "any minute and detailed analysis by the friends of subjects that are in the forefront of general discussion would often be misconstrued in certain quarters and give rise to suspicions and misunderstandings that would react unfavorably

upon the Cause." "While refusing to utter the word that would needlessly alienate or estrange any individual, government or people, we should fearlessly and unhesitatingly uphold and assert in their entirety such truths the knowledge of which we believe is vitally and urgently needed for the good and betterment of mankind."

#### Non-Association With Subversive Movements

In addition, there must be "complete non-association with any subversive movements." Bahá'ís are not allowed to accept "any political office by vote of a political party," but may accept non-political public appointments or civil service in governments where partisan commitments are neither implied nor demanded.

"Politics" can mean many things to different persons. Hence the prohibition that "we should have no political connection with any one of the parties and should join no faction of these different and warring sects" can be construed more widely than is proper. It is well to recall that *every* aspect of life meaningful to mankind sooner or later comes or has already come into range of society's regulations and changing disciplines, hence into that society's "politics." It may be health (i.e. public health), sex and morality (regulations re sexual behavior and aberrancies), the status of women (equal rights to hold property, to vote, not to be sold as chattel), the rights to and opportunities for education (public education laws), eating and drinking (food and drug acts, health controls), shelter and housing (real estate laws), and commerce (securities control, tariffs), etc. The concerns of the communities of men are many and complex. Too narrow an interpretation of "politics" would in fact exclude Bahá'ís from contemporary life, from all the professions, and from that healthy interaction with today's world which will ultimately bring the ideas of the Faith to recognition and fruition. One goal of the Bahá'í community is the "development of the relationship between the Bahá'í community and the United Nations." Certainly the present-day UN is "political" and power-oriented; yet we shall work with it in non-partisan ways.

"According to the exhortations of the Supreme Pen and the confirmatory explanations of the Covenant of God, Bahá'ís are in no way allowed to enter into political affairs under any pretense or excuse, since such action brings about disastrous results and ends in hurting the Cause of God and its intimate friends." Therefore, "absolute impartiality in the matter of political parties should be shown by words and deeds, and love of the whole of humanity, whether a government or a nation . . . should also be shown by words and deeds . . ." We are men and women of one world. We are building the Bahá'í system. We are following the Divine Plan. The Bahá'í polity will come, and the world will then welcome the bounty of Bahá'u'lláh Whose principles of world order will be seen as the light of truth, the guidance for all.

(Note: Quotations are from various messages of Shoghi Effendi, except as otherwise indicated.)

—U.S. SUPPLEMENT,  
October 1964

## The Bahá'í and Political Campaigns

The National Spiritual Assembly reminds the friends of the principles that should guide their relationship to political campaigns.

1. A Bahá'í may not take out membership in, or associate with, a political party or organization designed to support a political party.

2. It is inappropriate for a Bahá'í to contribute funds or service to political parties or campaigns.

3. However, a Bahá'í is free to exercise his right as an American citizen to vote for political candidates as his conscience dictates.

At the basis of these guidelines is the spirit of unity which animates our Faith. The Master warned us against partisan political activity several times.

Shoghi Effendi explained to us repeatedly the dangers of partisan political involvement. He once wrote to the American believers as follows: "Let them refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or by deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the policies of their governments and the schemes and programs of

parties and factions. In such controversies they should assign no blame, take no side, further no design, and identify themselves with no system prejudicial to the best interests of that worldwide Fellowship which it is their aim to guard and foster." (*World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 64). The beloved Guardian further asked us to beware lest we become the "tools of unscrupulous politicians."

In this political year, it is imperative that the friends guard against any political ensnarement.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY  
—Oct. 1968 NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í REVIEW

## Acquisition of Local Bahá'í Centers

Inquiries have been received concerning the policy governing the acquisition of property for local Bahá'í centers. The goals of the Nine Year Plan do not include the purchase of property by Local Spiritual Assemblies and the creation of funds for this purpose is discouraged in this period when our whole effort must be directed to the winning of the goals given us by The Universal House of Justice. It follows that for the present funds should not be initiated for the purpose of acquiring local property.

It is always the privilege of a Bahá'í to leave his property to the Faith. He may also designate the purpose, but consideration should be given to the foreseeable needs of the Faith and to the responsibilities and costs that are involved in the maintenance of property. If the property or designated funds are left to the Faith for this purpose, an Assembly may accept the property and should notify the National Spiritual Assembly so that advice can be given for its proper use and maintenance.

Should a Local Spiritual Assembly believe that there are urgent circumstances which might justify the acquisition of a center, all of the facts should be presented to the National Spiritual Assembly for its consideration. Ultimately these facts would have to be presented to The Universal House of Justice for its consideration.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

# We Must Reorient Ourselves to Our Bahá'í Work

In this connection it might be well to point out that a great restless forward surge is taking place among the believers the world over. There was a time, not so many years ago, when almost everything new being done in the Bahá'í world was being done by the North American Bahá'ís. Those days have gone forever. On their horizon there now looms keen competition. As the Americans are by nature stimulated by competition, he hopes the American Bahá'ís will be stimulated by this very real competition coming from their fellow-believers, not only in Britain, Australasia and Germany, but from the weak and down-trodden, under-privileged Bahá'í Communities in the East!

Although the Divine Plan was conferred on the North American Community, that does not mean other nations cannot work for its aims, and they are now waking up and doing so with a fiery enthusiasm that should make the Americans open their eyes, and, redouble their efforts; otherwise they risk suddenly discovering that the empty places on the Bahá'í map which they planned, when they got around to it, to colonize, are speckled with determined and self-satisfied Bahá'ís from other countries who got there first!

The Guardian is well aware that the American believers are heavily com-

mitted, that they have been doing for years the lion's share of Bahá'í work, that they have achieved brilliant victories for the Faith. However, he sometimes feels that due to the very characteristics so praiseworthy in them, their openness, their sincerity and a certain credulity in their nature, they are more prone to being disturbed by the currents abroad in the world than are older and maturer races. He feels the very disturbing political conditions all around us are troubling them more than they should. He feels they should think about this and reorient themselves on their Bahá'í work. For, after all, the very essence of the reason a person has accepted Bahá'u'lláh is that he has decided this Way alone is the solution to the absolutely hopeless problems facing humanity. A Bahá'í must be wholly a Bahá'í, concentrate on the work of the Cause, and put aside from his mind the distracting influences that scream at him from every newspaper these days. Naturally, this does not mean he must be insular, it means he must concentrate more consciously on doing the work of the Cause.

*(Extract from letter from the Guardian, through his secretary, November 23, 1951)*

—U.S. SUPPLEMENT, Dec. 1964

## IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Eleanor Crane Carter  
Ventura, California  
May 1, 1972

G. Milton Collier  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
June 6, 1972

Mrs. Geraldine Cutaia  
Arlington Heights, Illinois  
June 19, 1972

Jack Vernon Estes  
Pasadena, California  
October 19, 1971

William Finlay  
Denison, Texas  
May 5, 1972

Desiderio Gallegos  
Hesperia, California  
April 21, 1972

Mrs. Annie Bell Gholar  
Monrovia, California  
April 12, 1972

William H. Gordan  
Richburg, South Carolina  
Unknown

Mrs. Vera M. Harper  
Escondido, California  
July 2, 1972

Mrs. Mattie Hatcher  
Detroit, Michigan  
May 15, 1972

Mrs. Ethel Kerns  
Tacoma, Washington  
Unknown

Charlie Joe Maxwell  
Athens, Georgia  
June 12, 1972

Spencer Meadows  
Detroit, Michigan  
July 5, 1972

Mrs. Dorothea C. Phelps  
Fort Hall, Idaho  
May 8, 1972

Mrs. Gertrude Rening  
Bellflower, California  
June 3, 1972

Mrs. Emilie Rott  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
Unknown

Mrs. Elsa Schriever  
Clarence, New York  
March 28, 1972

George Springston  
Oak Park, Michigan  
June 29, 1972

Reuben A. Taylor  
Los Angeles, California  
June 22, 1972

Mrs. Cornelia Thomas  
Detroit, Michigan  
July 6, 1972

Mr. Wayne Wellner  
Manitowac, Wisconsin  
June 8, 1972

## Nineteen Day Feasts are for Bahá'ís Only

Although it is clearly stated over and over again that only members of the Bahá'í community and visiting Bahá'ís from other localities may attend Nineteen Day Feasts, the question is frequently asked whether persons close to the Faith and non-Bahá'í members of Bahá'í families might not be permitted to attend if they leave the room during the consultation period. It is sometimes argued that this privilege will bring these persons closer to the Faith and will dispel any feeling that there are "secrets" in the Faith.

Bahá'ís should realize that the presence of non-Bahá'ís at any portion of the Feast impedes the flow of the spirit that exists between Bahá'u'lláh and His followers and between fellow Bahá'ís throughout the Feast. Furthermore, when visitors are excluded during consultation and are waiting to re-enter the room, the believers, from a sense of courtesy, feel obliged to hurry through the business and cut short the consultation so that their guests may not be kept waiting too long. Thus concentration on the essential aspects of the Feast is dissipated and sociability becomes the dominant factor.

The Universal House of Justice has elaborated upon this matter in a recent letter to the National Spiritual Assembly in which it calls attention to "the essentially domestic, administrative nature of the Nineteen Day Feast." It states:

"With regard to the attendance of non-Bahá'ís at a Nineteen Day Feast, you can explain . . . the essentially domestic, administrative nature of the Nineteen Day Feast. During the period of consultation

the Bahá'ís should be able to enjoy perfect freedom to express their views on the work of the Cause, unembarrassed by the feeling that all they are saying is being heard by someone who has not accepted Bahá'u'lláh and who might thereby gain a very distorted picture of the Faith. It would also be very embarrassing for any sensitive non-Bahá'í to find himself plunged into the midst of a discussion of the detailed affairs of a Bahá'í Community of which he is not a part. The Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf on 21 September, 1946:

"As regards your question concerning Nineteen Day Feasts . . . as to non-Bahá'ís attending, this should by all means be avoided, but if non-believers come to a Nineteen Day Feast, they should not be put out, as this might hurt their feelings.

"This is why, if a non-Bahá'í does appear at a Nineteen Day Feast he should be made to feel welcome, but a Bahá'í should certainly not invite a non-Bahá'í to attend.

"A non-Bahá'í, who asks to be invited to a Feast, will usually understand if this matter is explained to him."

If it seems essential to expose non-Bahá'í relatives or close contacts to the spirit that should prevail at the Nineteen Day Feast, special meetings can be arranged for such purpose, wherein there will be a beautifully arranged period of devotion followed by sociability, with all members of the community in attendance.

— November, 1970  
— NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í REVIEW

## Membership of Mental Patients and Prisoners

Every religious community must accept some responsibility for those less fortunate persons who require hospitalization for mental difficulties, or who have been committed to institutions for infractions of the law. Bahá'í communities should be aware of their responsibilities, and must know the administrative practices which are followed.

A mental patient or wrong-doer should

receive every support within the framework of scientific knowledge and justice which the community can muster. Each such person is both a test and a reward, for through successful assistance to fellow Bahá'ís one by one the Assemblies come to maturity. When commitment occurs, the person is shut off temporarily from community life; his Bahá'í membership privileges are held in abeyance,

though he may continue to receive whatever communications his community feels will be encouraging and appropriate. Upon release, with medical certification or legal discharge, the community will reinstate his active membership, either upon its own initiative or upon request by the Bahá'í, providing it is satisfied, after investigation and gaining documentation, that he is able to fulfill the requirements of such membership. Again, every support and assistance possible within the resources of the community is to be made available to the person.

When Bahá'í communities grow in numbers, strength and human resources, it is to be expected that ever greater preventive and therapeutic assistance will be extended to needy fellow citizens of the Bahá'í society.

—U.S. SUPPLEMENT,  
March 1965

## All Correspondence Must Be Dated

Many letters come to the National Bahá'í Offices from Local Spiritual Assemblies, from committees and from individuals without any date and sometimes without the address of the senders. It is exceedingly important that *every* letter carry a date so that it can be quickly related to whatever past correspondence, if any, is involved. The friends are free to use the Bahá'í calendar date if they wish, but it is very important also to use the Gregorian calendar date to save the valuable time of the personnel who must handle the correspondence.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Renew your BAHÁ'Í NEWS Subscription  
\$6.00 per year or \$9.00 with WORLD ORDER  
Bahá'í Subscription Service  
415 Linden Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 60091

## CALENDAR

### Feasts

- August 20 — Asmá' (Names)
- September 8 — 'Issat (Might)
- September 27 — Mashíyyat (Will)

### Bahá'í Holy Day on Which Work Should Be Suspended

- October 20 — Anniversary of the birth of the Báb

### Special Events Days

- September 17 — World Peace Day. Suggested topic:  
"World Peace — the First Priority"
- October 24 — United Nations Day. Suggested theme:  
"The Promise of World Peace"

### National Assembly Meetings

- September 22-24
- October 20-22 (South Carolina)

See **Summer School Schedule** in April issue, NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í REVIEW and May issue of THE AMERICAN BAHÁ'Í.

### Conferences and Special Gatherings

#### Continental Counsellors

##### Deepening Institutes

September - October

Definite dates and places will be announced to Assemblies and District

Teaching Committees.

Bahá'ís only.

For long standing Bahá'ís as well as newly enrolled.

To inform, inspire and more deeply confirm believers.

September 2-4, Labor Day weekend, Wind River Reservation Council Fire Proclamation. Sponsors, District Teaching Committee of Wyoming, P.O. Box 2254, Cheyenne, WY 82001

September 8-10, Regional Conference, Trenton, N.J., Trenton Memorial Auditorium. Topic: "Reaching All Strata of Society."

October 6-8, Institute, Green Lake, Wisconsin

October 20-22 — Conference sponsored by Continental Board of Counsellors, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Dedication of Louis G. Gregory Institute, Hemingway, S.C.

To be held during this weekend, Oct. 20-22 — Details to be announced later.

November 23-26, Thanksgiving weekend in Bermuda, Deepening/Teaching

## To All Believers:

In the last issue of the NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í REVIEW we mentioned that we are missing opportunities because we do not have the material resources to take advantage of them. Following are a few specific instances of such opportunities:

Modern Talking Pictures, distributor for several Bahá'í movies, has told the Office of Public Information that demand for "It's Just the Beginning" is double the available supply. Although they have fifty copies to distribute already, they could use fifty more, but we cannot afford to make them.

In addition the new film "Give Me That New Time Religion" is being used to capacity with thirty copies in circulation. Modern Talking Pictures has asked us not to promote the film unless we can supply them with more copies to meet an increased demand, which we cannot now afford to do.

Each month thirty-five to forty high schools see one of these two films or "A New Wind," another Bahá'í film from Modern Talking Pictures. Altogether some six and one-half million people have seen these films at cost to the National Bahá'í Fund of less than three-fourths of a cent per person. Unquestionably this is one of the cheapest and easiest methods available to us of reaching the general public with the good news of Bahá'u'lláh. The tragedy is that with people starving spiritually for lack of this Message, we are unable because of inadequate funds to reach more than a few of them at a time.

Let us think deeply about what Bahá'u'lláh meant when He wrote: "Bestir yourselves, that the brief moments that are still yours may not be dissipated and lost. Even as the swiftness of lightning your days shall pass, and your bodies shall be laid to rest beneath a canopy of dust. What can ye then achieve? How can ye atone for your past failure?" (*Gleanings*, p. 321)

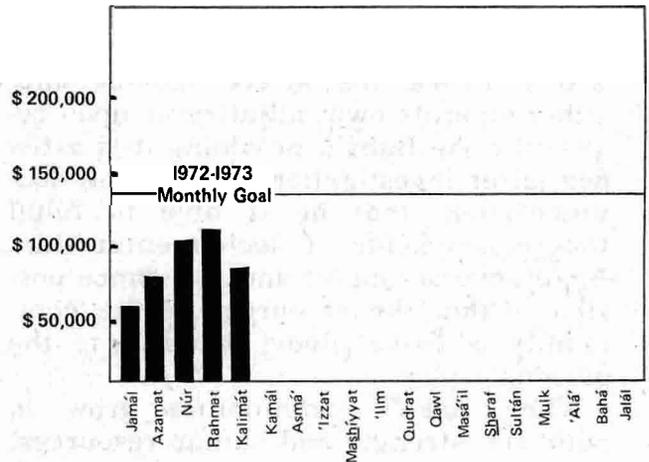
We urgently ask that your prayerful consultation be devoted to ways of increasing participation, not only in the Fund, but in all aspects of Bahá'í activity in your communities.

Loving Bahá'í greetings

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY  
Dorothy W. Nelson, Treasurer

## National Bahá'í Fund

Total Youth and Adult Contributions



	Rahmat (Mercy)	Kalimát (Words)	Fiscal Year to Date
<b>INCOME:</b>			
Regular Contributions	\$ 73,310.18	\$ 77,734.27	\$380,537.15
Special Contributions	4,300.00	3,000.00	20,680.68
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$ 77,610.18</b>	<b>\$ 80,734.27</b>	<b>\$401,217.83</b>
Estates	33,671.72	5,711.84	39,525.10
Other Income	255.05	373.15	1,861.88
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$111,536.95</b>	<b>\$ 86,819.26</b>	<b>\$442,604.82</b>
Budget	\$132,000.00	\$132,000.00	\$660,000.00

Contributions may be addressed to:

**National Bahá'í Fund**  
112 Linden Avenue  
Wilmette, Ill. 60091

## WARNING

The National Spiritual Assembly wishes to warn the believers that they should not provide any hospitality or financial assistance to the following individuals who are on the constant move in the United States:

Ralph Solomon who claims to be a Bahá'í from Alaska but has never been enrolled either in Alaska or in the United States.

John Craddock, most recently in Grand Forks, North Dakota, originally enrolled in Alaska but never transferred to the United States as a Bahá'í in good standing. Any individual or Assembly contacted by Mr. Craddock is requested to notify the National Bahá'í Office immediately. He has been deprived of membership in the United States.