

Herald of the Covenant

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The HERALD OF THE COVENANT is a publication of the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith. Its title is derived from the unique and peerless Covenant bequeathed to the Bahá'í world by the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation—a Covenant designed to shield His Cause from man-made interpretations which in the history of all of the great religions of the past have been such a cause of schism and divisiveness.

The Editors of the HERALD OF THE COVENANT hope that this publication will bring to both the Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í reader a fuller comprehension and a deeper appreciation of the meaning, significance and implications of the mighty Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and the divinely conceived System for the regulation of men's affairs on this earth to which It gave birth.

This Issue Number 5 is a special edition devoted entirely to an article written by the third Guardian and published by the Editorial Board of the Orthodox Bahá'í Faith in the United States.



**WHAT IS THE MEANING
OF LOYALTY TO THE
COVENANT
OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH
AND
WHO ARE THE PRESENT DAY
COVENANT-BREAKERS ?
by
JOEL BRAY MARANGELLA**

The enquirer who has come in contact with the Bahá'í Faith in the past twenty years has, perhaps, discovered that this Faith, since the passing of Shoghi Effendi, first Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, has become divided into two principal camps: the pro-Guardian (or Orthodox) Bahá'ís who believe in the uninterrupted continuity of the guardianship throughout the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh and the sans-Guardian (or Heterodox) Bahá'ís who believe that "God changed His plan" and the guardianship of the Bahá'í Faith came to an end with the death of the first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. If the enquirer's first contact with the Bahá'í Faith has been through the sans-Guardian Bahá'ís, he undoubtedly has been advised that there is a small group of Bahá'í dissidents or heretics who have refused to accept their conception of loyalty to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and who are supporting a pretender to the guardianship of the Faith. He is warned to avoid all contact with these outcasts whom they have labelled "Covenant-breakers" -- a term which is probably new to him and whose meaning is obscure. In order that the enquirer may be indoctrinated with the same false, perverted, and twisted conception that they now hold of Covenant-breaking and to reinforce their contention that the pro Guardian Bahá'ís are, in fact, heretics, the Heterodox Bahá'ís must soon set about to deceive the enquirer as to the true meaning and implications of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh

On the other hand, if the enquirer's first contact has been with the pro-Guardian or Orthodox Bahá'ís, he will come to perceive the violation of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh that presently pervades the Bahá'í world community in quite a different light from that of the Heterodox Bahá'ís. For he will have been urged to make a comprehensive study of our writings on the subject of the Covenant and particularly those of Shoghi Effendi concerning the divinely-conceived institutions of the Bahá'í Administrative Order as delineated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, a Document which he has described as the Child of that Covenant. The enquirer will then be able to perceive for himself to what extent and by whom the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh has been violated and clearly discern which of the two groups (i.e.the Orthodox or Heterodox Bahá'ís) can rightly lay claim to have remained loyal and faithful to that Covenant. This paper is, therefore, but a poor substitute for the

thorough study which it is hoped every sincere enquirer will make on the subject of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.

Let us begin by identifying the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and outlining its unique promise and assurance for the protection of His Cause against corruption down through the ages to come of His Dispensation. To do this we shall first review certain extracts from His sacred writings in which sole authority for interpretation of His Holy Writ was vested in His eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, after His Ascension. Following this, we shall consider pertinent excerpts from the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the "Center of His Covenant" with His followers, particularly emphasizing some of those contained in His Will and Testament -- the "Charter of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh". Finally, we shall review certain passages taken from Shoghi Effendi's writings concerning the institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, interspersing our discussion of the issues under consideration with quotations from his writings and communications to the Bahá'í world, as well as cite certain historic actions taken by him and announced to the Bahá'í World, for the purpose of clearly demonstrating that the Heterodox Bahá'ís who are the first to proclaim that loyalty to the Covenant is to be equated with unswerving fidelity to the writings and acts of Shoghi Effendi have, immediately upon his passing, blindly, shamelessly, and treacherously completely subverted them.

Has not the enquirer searching for the truth amongst the religions of the past been appalled to find them in every case sorely divided into numerous sects and schisms, each claiming to propound the truth and be the true path to salvation on the basis of their particular interpretation of holy Scripture? It has no doubt occurred to him that this state of affairs would not have come about had the Founders of these religions clearly provided for a successor or line of successors with unchallengeable authority to interpret Holy Writ. As examples, one need only observe what has taken place within Christianity where the followers of Jesus Christ have split into the two major divisions of Catholicism and Protestantism, or within Islam where that Faith has similarly split into the two divisions of Shí'ite and Sunnite. With the passage of time, these major divisions have further split into multiple sects based on various conflicting opinions and interpretations, thus shattering the unity of the adherents of

these religions. In view of this, the enquirer may rightly ask whether the same destiny is in store for the Bahá'í Faith.

The enquirer should, therefore, be pleased and delighted to learn that the distinguishing feature of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is the binding Covenant He made with His followers to turn to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, His eldest son, after His Ascension as his appointed Successor, the sole Interpreter of His Word, the Expounder of His Book, and the Center of His Covenant; that is: the sole Center to whom all Bahá'ís should turn for spiritual guidance and interpretation of His Holy Writ. This Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh was made in a written Will and Testament which was opened on the ninth day following His Ascension in the presence of nine witnesses and read to His followers assembled in His Holy Tomb. Bahá'u'lláh has described this firm Testament as **"The Book of My Covenant"** (Kitáb-i-'Ahd) and **"His Most Great Tablet"**. He has further extolled this mighty Covenant as the **"Conclusive Testimony"**, the **"Universal Balance"**, the **"Magnet of God's grace"**, the **"Upraised Standard"**, the **"Irrefutable Testament"**, the **"almighty Covenant, the like of which the sacred Dispensations of the past have never witnessed"**, and **"one of the distinctive features of this most mighty cycle."** ¹

It will suffice for our purpose to quote the following excerpt from Bahá'u'lláh's Testament as evidence of the uniqueness and strength of His Covenant with His followers:

"It is incumbent upon the Aghsan (His sons) ,The Afván (kindred of the Báb) and My kindred to turn, one and all, their faces toward the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book (Kitáb-i-Aqdas): 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.' The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch ('Abdu'l-Bahá). Thus have we graciously revealed unto you our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious, the All-Powerful". ²

Further corroboration of Bahá'u'lláh's appointment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as His successor is contained in His Most Holy Book wherein He proclaims:

"When the Mystic Dove will have winged its flight from its Sanctuary of Praise and sought its far-off goal, its hidden habitation, refer whatsoever ye understand not in the Book, to Him ('Abdu'l-Bahá) Who hath branched from this mighty Stock.." ³

One also finds this pertinent statement in the Tablet of the Branch (Suríy-i-Ghusn):

"There hath been branched from the Sadratu'l-Muntahá (mystical reference to the Manifestation of God) this sacred and glorious Being, this Branch of Holiness ('Abdu'l Bahá); well is it with him that hath sought His shelter and abideth beneath His shadow. Verily the Limb of the law of God hath sprung forth from this Root which God hath firmly implanted in the Ground of His Will, and Whose Branch hath been so uplifted as to encompass the whole of creation. Magnified be He, therefore, for this sublime, this blessed, this mighty, this exalted Handiwork." ⁴

In an address given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in New York City during His visit to America in 1912 His statements concerning His appointment as the Center of His Father's Covenant included the following:

"As to the most great characteristic of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh -- a specific teaching not given by any of the prophets of the past -- it is the ordination and appointment of the Center of the Covenant. By this appointment and provision He has safeguarded and protected the religion of God against differences and schisms, making it impossible for any one to create a new sect or faction of belief. To insure unity and agreement He has entered into a Covenant with all the people of the world including the interpreter and explainer of His teachings so that no one may interpret or explain the religion of God according to his own view or opinion and thus

create a sect founded upon his individual understanding of the divine words." ⁵

The following similar explanation was given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in a talk in Chicago, Illinois:

"Inasmuch as great differences and divergences of denominational belief had arisen throughout the past, every man with a new idea attributing it to God, His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh desired that there should not be any ground or reason for disagreement among the Bahá'ís. Therefore with His own pen He wrote the Book of His Covenant, addressing His relations and all people of the world saying 'Verily, I have appointed one Who is the Center of My Covenant. All must obey Him; all must turn to Him; He is the expounder of My Book and He is informed of My purpose. All must turn to Him. Whatsoever He says is correct, for verily He knoweth the texts of My Book. Other than He, no one doth know My Book'. The purpose of this statement is that there should never be discord and divergence among the Bahá'ís but that they should always be unified and agreed . . . Beware.' Beware.' lest any one should speak from the authority of his own thoughts or create a new thing out of himself. . . " ⁶

In spite of the firmness and clarity of Bahá'u'lláh's testamentary instructions concerning the appointment and authority of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (accepted by the Heterodox Bahá'ís, too), the enquirer will be surprised to learn that following the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh these instructions were flagrantly violated as 'Abdu'l-Bahá had to contend with betrayal, treachery and infidelity within the ranks of most of those who had been the closest to Bahá'u'lláh. His own half-brother, Mírzá Muhammad 'Alí, upon whom Bahá'u'lláh had bestowed a rank second only to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, motivated by jealousy and ambition for leadership, not only betrayed Him and rebelled against the Covenant but succeeded in ranging against 'Abdu'l-Bahá almost the entire family of Bahá'u'lláh, as well as others who had been closely associated with Bahá'u'lláh, thus becoming the Arch-breaker of His Father's Covenant.⁷ As time went on, however, the faithful rallied to the support of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and it became increasingly clear that only through the providential provisions of Bahá'u'lláh's

Covenant appointing a Center to whom all Bahá'ís could turn following His Ascension and vesting in Him sole authority for interpretation of His Holy Writ had Bahá'u'lláh protected and safeguarded His teachings from corruption -- a protection that could only continue to be vouchsafed to it down through the ages to come of His Dispensation if the same Center provided in His unique Covenant were perpetuated for as long as this Dispensation endured. For as 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated:

“Were it not for the protecting power of the Covenant to guard the impregnable fort of the Cause of God, there would arise among the Bahá'ís, in one day, a thousand different sects as was the case in former ages...” ⁸

The uninterrupted continuity of a Center to whom all Bahá'ís were enjoined to turn following His passing was provided by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in a Will and Testament written in His own hand. This Document did far more than appoint an immediate successor to serve as the Center of the Cause. 'Abdu'l-Bahá established an Institution -- the Institution of the guardianship of the Cause of God in which a "Center of the Cause" and an unchallengeable and continuing source of interpretative authority would be preserved down through the centuries to come of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. His Will and Testament called for the Institution of the guardianship to be occupied by a continuous and unbroken succession of Guardians each of whom would be chosen and appointed by the predecessor-Guardian ***“in his life-time”*** (i.e. not designated by testamentary document). As the first occupant of this supreme Office 'Abdu'l-Bahá appointed His eldest grandson (i.e. a "twig" and not a "Branch" of His Family Tree). More than this 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament delineated the other institutions of the Bahá'í Administrative Order and this momentous Document constituted the Charter of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. The other administrative institutions included in this Charter included the International (or Universal) House of Justice -- the supreme legislative institution of this Order, the institution of the Hands of the Cause and the National and Local House of Justice. All of these institutions were made subordinate to the Guardian of the Cause as 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will included the clear injunction:

"The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God."

Consider the following terms in which Shoghi Effendi has extolled the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in his writings:

- ***"His greatest legacy to posterity."***
- ***"the brightest emanation of His mind."***
- ***"the mightiest instrument forged to insure the continuity of the three ages (Apostolic, Formative, and Golden) which constitute the component parts of His Father's Dispensation."*** ⁹

Shoghi Effendi has further acclaimed this sacred and immortal Document ***"as the inevitable offspring resulting from that mystic intercourse between Him Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose (Baha'u'llah) and the One Who was its vehicle and chosen recipient"*** ('Abdu'l-Bahá) and has emphasized that this Will ***"Being the Child of the Covenant -- the Heir of both the Originator and the Interpreter of the Law of God -- can no more be divorced from Him Who supplied the original and motivating impulse than from the One Who ultimately conceived it."*** ¹⁰ In the light of this significant statement we can understand the following comments of Shoghi Effendi concerning this momentous Document:

"For nothing short of the explicit directions of their Book, and the surprisingly emphatic language with which they have clothed the provisions of their Will, could possibly safeguard the Faith for which they have both so gloriously labored all their lives." ¹¹ (underlinings have been added for emphasis)

Having gained the understanding that the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a result of its joint Authorship is the Child of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, we are better prepared to understand the relationship of this sacred and divinely-conceived Document to the Aqdas--Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Book. In explaining this relationship, Shoghi Effendi has stated that the Will and Testament

of 'Abdu'l-Bahá **"confirms, supplements, and correlates the provisions of the Aqdas"** and that as these two sacred Documents are complementary and **"mutually confirm one another"** they are inseparable parts of one complete unit.¹² An understanding of these two points (i.e. the joint Authorship of the Will and the fact that the Will and Aqdas are parts of one unit -- the **"explicit Holy Text"**) is critical to the realization of the falsity of the heretical doctrines espoused by the Heterodox Bahá'ís. For it is obvious that to change or annul any of the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá or to declare that some of its provisions have become null and void, as, in fact, the Heterodox Bahá'ís have claimed, is to nullify the provisions of the explicit Holy Text and the Purpose of Bahá'u'lláh, Himself. In declaring the sacred Text of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will to be co-equal in status with the Text of the Aqdas, Shoghi Effendi has made it clear that the faithful Bahá'ís can no more tamper with or alter the sacred provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will than they can with the immutable laws of the Aqdas which every faithful Bahá'í believes will endure and remain inviolable as long as the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh endures (promised by Him to last at least a full thousand years). If one accepts the fallacious doctrine that certain provisions of the Will and Testament have become null and void some 36 years after the passing of 'Abdu'l Baha (i.e. with the passing of Shoghi Effendi), as claimed by the Heterodox Bahá'ís, the enquirer may justifiably ask how these Bahá'ís can uphold the immutability and indestructibility of the provisions and laws of the Aqdas and prevent them from suffering, as time goes on, a deformation as severe as that inflicted upon the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at their hands.

So that the enquirer may fully understand the implications of the wreckage that the Heterodox Bahá'ís have made of the Institutions delineated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will, let us review in some detail the divinely-conceived System outlined by the **"master-hand of its perfect Architect"**. As previously outlined, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will established the Guardianship as the Center of the Cause and made the Guardian the sole authorized interpreter of Bahá'í Holy Writ. He established the twin institution of the International House of Justice as the highest legislative organ in this Structure. The importance of the relationship between these two essential organs was stressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His statement that **"the legislative**

must reinforce the executive, the executive must aid and assist the legislative body. . .” ¹³

Representing, as they do, the executive and legislative authorities, it is readily understood why the Guardianship and the International House of Justice respectively, as Shoghi Effendi has pointed out in his writings, are **"essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose."** ¹⁴ It is of paramount importance to understand that these two Institutions under the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will have been inseparably linked as the Guardian alone has been vested with the position of **"sacred head and the distinguished member for life"** of the International House of Justice (this institution, thereby, consisting of two essential and supporting elements: its appointed head and its elected assembly).¹⁵ Although these twin supreme institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh have each been assigned their distinctive role and function, it must be borne in mind that it is the Guardian's unique, essential, and indispensable function as the head or President of this legislative body to insure that the International House of Justice, whose responsibility it is to enact **"all ordinances and regulations not found in the explicit Holy Text"**, does not propose, much less enact, legislation incompatible with or contrary to the letter or spirit of the sacred and immutable laws revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. For, as Shoghi Effendi has written, the Guardian, as the head of this body, **"is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning or depart from the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's revealed utterances.."** ¹⁶ It is readily perceived that as the Guardian is the interpreter of the utterances of Bahá'u'lláh, he alone is endowed with authority to make this determination and to judge the propriety of the legislation proposed by the International House of Justice in the light of these utterances. As the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá specifically enjoins the members of the House of Justice **"to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him"** ¹⁷ it would be a clear violation of this injunction if any member, or members, of the House of Justice were to oppose the Guardian in a ruling as to the propriety of legislation (even though in actual voting he carries but one vote as the other members do). Moreover as Shoghi Effendi has pointed out, **"Without such an institution (the Guardianship) the integrity of**

the Faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. . . and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives (the International House of Justice) would be totally withdrawn." ¹⁸ Another function has been assigned by the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will to the Guardian as the head of this institution, and that is the sole authority to expel any members of this body who "***commit a sin injurious to the common weal***". It should be clear, therefore, from the foregoing that the Guardian, as the "***sacred head***" of the International House of Justice performs an essential and irreplaceable role and, therefore, "***ceases to be the figurehead invariably associated with the prevailing systems of constitutional monarchies.***"¹⁹ It is then obvious to even a superficial observer of the Bahá'í Administrative Order bequeathed to the world by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that the International House of Justice according to His Will can only function as a complete institution and a properly structured organ of this System under the presidency of the living Guardian of the Faith (and certainly not, as believed by some Heterodox Bahá'ís, under the mystic presidency of the deceased first Guardian from the other world). The only exception authorized by 'Abdu'l-Bahá is that "***Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him.***" ²⁰ The above words and phrases have been underlined for reasons that will become clear to the reader in subsequent pages.

Writing on the distinguishing character of the Administrative Order delineated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His immortal Will, Shoghi Effendi has stated:

"No Prophet before Bahá'u'lláh . . . has established authoritatively and in writing anything comparable to the Administrative Order which the authorized Interpreter of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings has instituted, an Order which, by virtue of the administrative principles which its Author has formulated, the institutions which He has established, and the right of interpretation with which He has invested its Guardian must and will, in a manner unparalleled in any previous religion safeguard from schism the Faith from which it has sprung." ²¹

In the light of the foregoing quotations and comments it should be clear to an enquirer endeavoring to determine the meaning of loyalty to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh that such loyalty requires the following from the faithful believer:

- Acceptance of 'Abdul-Bahá as the appointed Center of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, the Expounder of His Book, and the sole infallible Interpreter of Bahá'u'lláh's Holy Writ.
- Acceptance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament as the sacred and immortal Heir of both the Originator and the Interpreter of the Law of God and, as such, the divinely-conceived and perfect "**Child of the Covenant**" and nothing less than the Purpose of Bahá'u'lláh, Himself.
- Acceptance of the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament as complementary to the Kitáb-i Aqdas--the most Holy Book of Bahá'u'lláh-- and, as such, a sacred part of the explicit Holy Text, every clause of which must remain inviolable, im mutable, and incorruptible as long as the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh endures.

Having accepted the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as part of the sacred and unalterable explicit Holy Text, the faithful believer can do no less than the following:

- Believe wholeheartedly in the essentiality, indispensability and irreplaceability of the institution of the Guardianship to the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh and accept no substitute.
- Recognize that the Institution of the Guardianship can suffer no interruption nor termination, however briefly, during the centuries of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh as the incumbent Guardian, and he alone, must appoint his successor-to-be "**in his life-time**" with such appointment taking effect coincident with his passing (i.e. no one can declare himself Guardian of the Faith without the direct and explicit appointment to this Office by the preceding living Guardian during his life-time).

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- Recognize that the Guardian of the Cause of God alone is authorized to perform the following functions:
 - Be the "**Center of the Cause**" (the "**Center of the Faith**" is a term oftentimes confused with "**Center of the Cause**". The term Center of the Faith or World Center was used by Shoghi Effendi frequently to refer to the Seat of the Bahá'í Administrative Institutions in the Holy Land--a physical location).
 - Interpret the Holy Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.
 - Preside over the deliberations of the International House of Justice as its "**sacred head and distinguished member for life**", define its legislative sphere, protect it from enacting laws contrary to Bahá'u'lláh's Holy Writ and expel any members guilty of committing sins injurious to the common weal.
 - Appoint Hands of the Cause who working under his sole direction are required to "**diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things.**"
 - Accept Shoghi Effendi Rabbani as the first appointed Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and accept, without reservation, all of his writings and acts as valid and unchallengeable.

With the above definition of loyalty to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh in mind, let us now consider some of the treacherous acts that have taken place since the passing of Shoghi Effendi and the heretical doctrines that have been espoused by a majority of the Bahá'ís who were considered loyal to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh during his ministry, which can be viewed in no other light but a shameful betrayal of most of the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and an equally perfidious repudiation of the acts and writings of Shoghi Effendi (notwithstanding their patently

transparent pretensions of loyalty to that Will and to the first Guardian of the Faith).

Failing to find, upon Shoghi Effendi's death, as they had expected, a testamentary document appointing his successor, a majority of the Bahá'ís, including all, save one, of the Hands of the Cause, quickly lost faith in the inviolability and indestructibility of every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred and immortal Will and became convinced, as they put it, that "**God had changed His plan**" (or to use the Persian terminology, these provisions had become "**Bada**") and that the Guardianship of the Cause had come to an end. At this point, the enquirer may well ask himself how such a heretical doctrine could be so readily adopted by these Bahá'ís in the light of what they have come to understand about the Covenant even on the basis of the brief excerpts taken from the writings to which they have been exposed above and more particularly the extracts from Shoghi Effendi's writings concerning the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá? The answer lies in the fact that this perfidious heresy found ready ground in the minds of these Bahá'ís because of certain fixed notions and preconceived ideas that had been theirs for many years concerning the manner in which the Guardian of the Faith would appoint his successor and the eligibility requirements of his successor according to their understanding of the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will. Equating this procedure with that which had been followed by Bahá'u'lláh in appointing His successor and 'Abdu'l-Bahá in appointing the first Guardian of the Faith (i.e. through the use of a testamentary document) and being convinced that only a son of the Guardian or, at least, someone of the lineage of Bahá'u'lláh could inherit the guardianship, they failed to re-examine carefully the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and perceive the very evident fact that not only does His Will not require the Guardian to use a testamentary type of document to appoint his successor, but it actually makes it impossible for him to use this method to make this appointment.²² Further, they failed to perceive that the Guardian was not restricted to the eligibility requirements they had determined based on a misinterpretation of the text of the Will.

Having thus abandoned so shamefully the Guardianship of the Faith, these faithless Bahá'ís had, in effect, declared the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's immortal Will and Testament null and void with

respect to the guardianship. And, more than this, they had, through abandonment of the guardianship, automatically invalidated those provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's divinely-conceived Charter pertaining to the International House of Justice and the Hands of the Cause, thereby making these provisions of the Will equally null and void. To such a degree, therefore, did they mutilate **"this Divine Masterpiece which the hand of the Master-builder of the world"** had designed **"for the unification and triumph of the world-wide Faith of Bahá'u'lláh"** ²³ that it became unrecognizable and a dead letter.

In their tragic loss of faith and in the attendant, almost frenzied, rush to declare the guardianship ended, these Bahá'ís conspicuously failed to take time to carefully and prayerfully reexamine their preconceived ideas, as cited above, particularly in the light of all that Shoghi Effendi had written concerning the monumental Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá (only brief excerpts of which have been quoted above) and the essentiality of the institution of the guardianship to the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh of which that Will is the framework. And they like wise failed to pause long enough to carefully review and reconsider the implications of certain momentous and historic acts which Shoghi Effendi had taken and announced to the Bahá'í world in the closing years of his ministry at the World Center of the Faith. These signal acts representing the crowning achievement of his unremitting labors to faithfully and befittingly carry out every injunction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will involved the erection of the international institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's Administrative Order. He joyfully announced this culmination of his efforts some five years before the end of his 36-year ministry in a message to the Bahá'í world in which he stated that **"at long last the machinery of its highest institutions has been erected, and around whose most holy shrines the supreme organs of its unfolding Order, are, in their embryonic form, unfolding."** ²⁴

Before reviewing in some detail these momentous acts taken by Shoghi Effendi in the closing years of his ministry, whose import and particular significance, in one instance, the Bahá'ís universally failed to perceive, it would be helpful to the enquirer to first gain some knowledge of the chain of woeful events that occurred in the first few days and weeks following the passing of Shoghi Effendi which tragically set the stage for what was destined to be the most massive

violation of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh in its history (in which, for the first time, the very administrative organs of the Faith which are sworn to defend it have treacherously participated).

The first reaction of the grief-stricken and heart-broken Bahá'í community immediately following the passing of Shoghi Effendi was to turn to his widow and appointed Hand of the Cause, Rúhíyyih Khánum, as though the mantle of leadership had fallen, however temporarily, upon her shoulders during an interregnum in the guardianship which, given their understanding of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, would exist only until Shoghi Effendi's appointed successor had been disclosed in a will and testament which they presumed would be found in his files in Haifa, Israel. Holding such a misconception, it certainly never occurred to the Bahá'ís that the successor they were looking for might be in their very midst and had, in fact, begun his ministry coincident with the very moment of Shoghi Effendi's death, nor did they realize that the sacred provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will permitted no such interregnum, for He provided for an ever-present and continuing Center of the Cause to insure that the Faith was never deprived of its protection for however brief a period .

Believing as they did that Shoghi Effendi's successor would be made known through the instrumentality of a conventional will and testament, the Bahá'ís were understandably shocked and dismayed when they were informed not more than three weeks after his passing in a Proclamation dispatched by the Hands of the Cause assembled in conclave in the vicinity of Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Tomb at Acca in Israel that Shoghi Effendi **"had left no Will and Testament"** and, therefore, as they thought, **"had left no heir"** ²⁵ In the consternation and disorientation with which they were then afflicted and with this complete shattering of their expectations, it is not surprising that the Bahá'ís accepted and supported without thought or question an illicit collegial head of the Faith, as it were, which the Hands established wholly outside the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This body consisting of nine Hands chosen from their number they announced in their Proclamation as having been constituted by them in their capacity as the **"Chief Stewards of the Embryonic World Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh"**, a title which they were quick to seize upon and twist its

meaning to infer that they had been invested with authority by Shoghi Effendi to take over the reins of the Faith. Notwithstanding this pretentious usurpation of rights and prerogatives that were not theirs under the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, they had to admit the temporary and transitory nature of the role that they had arrogated unto themselves, for in this same Proclamation they announced that when the International Bahá'í Council (described by Shoghi Effendi as the embryonic International House of Justice) established in 1951 by Shoghi Effendi had evolved through the successive stages outlined by him culminating **"in the call to election of the Universal House of Justice . . ."** and **"When that divinely-ordained body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause"** ²⁶ The reader's attention is particularly drawn to the phrase **"divinely ordained body"** employed by the Hands in referring to a spurious and headless body that they proposed to establish in the future and which they had the temerity to call the Universal House of Justice, even though it would be without the Guardian presiding as **"its sacred head"** and, therefore, obviously not the divinely ordained body delineated in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament (or had they deluded themselves into thinking so?). It should also be noted that, as guilty as these Hands were of arrogating unto themselves prerogatives and functions which can only rightfully be exercised by the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice they were equally culpable of destroying, under the administrative system that they had fabricated, their own institution of the Hands, an equally divinely ordained institution under the terms of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will, for as the Hands of the Cause who had been appointed by Shoghi Effendi died out one by one, this institution would be no more, and these **"Chief Stewards"** of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth could never be replaced by counterparts performing their assigned role in the fully matured Commonwealth of Bahá'u'lláh of the future. Thus we can see that through their renunciation of the guardianship these Hands had in one fell swoop also destroyed the International House of Justice and their own institution.

These Hands then proceeded, as they had announced they would do in their Proclamation, to call for an election some six years later (i.e.

on the 200th Anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh at Ridván 1963) of a body they called the Universal House of Justice after having relegated, at the very outset of their ill begotten and illegitimate rein, the International Bahá'í Council--"**the first embryonic International Institution**" -- established by Shoghi Effendi some seven years previously (9 Jan 1951) to an obscure, insignificant and subordinate role and treacherously deposed its President whom Shoghi Effendi had appointed, there by superseding the Institution that the Guardian had brought into being with an unauthorized and headless body of their own making.

As incredulous as it may seem, even to a reader of this brief account, the majority of the Bahá'ís, believing as they did in the end of the guardianship of the Faith, deluded themselves into believing that this obviously counterfeit and headless body which had been reared outside the sacred and immutable provisions of 'Abdul'-Bahá's Will and Testament was, in fact, the divinely-conceived Institution delineated in that immortal Charter of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order and, even more, carried this delusion even further by considering and turning to this sans-Guardian body created by them as the ordained "**Center of the Cause**" who, as we know, in accordance with the inviolable provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Masterpiece, can be no other than the living Guardian of the Cause of God (and endeavored to rationalize this glaring anomaly and heretical belief by claiming that Shoghi Effendi had taken the Office of Guardianship with him to the other world and, in some mystical manner, would continue to exercise this Office from there as evidenced by the fact that they still continued to refer to him both verbally and in writing as "**The Guardian**"). Can any greater delusion than this be imagined, and by what stretch of the imagination can these Bahá'ís who participated so ignominiously in the almost total dismantlement of the divinely-conceived and perfect institutions of which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been the Master-Architect be considered as having remained loyal and faithful to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and to the appointed Center of that Covenant, 'Abdu'l-Bahá? Had not these Bahá'ís become, indeed, heterodox in their beliefs?

So much for a review of the origin, cause, and consequences of the great violation of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh that still holds the

vast majority of the Bahá'ís in its satanic grip. What should now prove helpful to the enquirer would be to outline what might have been the turn of events had the Bahá'ís as a whole and the Hands of the Cause in particular (one Hand of the Cause being exempted from this indictment whose identity will soon become clear), following the passing of Shoghi Effendi, remained steadfast and unwavering in their faith in the indestructibility and inviolability of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and its Child, the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. For this purpose we shall return in time to that period but a few days after Shoghi Effendi's earthly remains had been laid to rest, when the Hands of the Cause were assembled in the vicinity of Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Tomb in Acca. More specifically, we shall place the time of our scene at the first tragic hours following the disclosure that Shoghi Effendi, contrary to their expectations, had left no will and testament appointing a successor.

Admittedly, the Hands had been under a formidable handicap, suffering as they did from the same misconceptions concerning the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will on the matter of succession as the believers as a whole. Certainly, the widow of Shoghi Effendi, and particularly the Persian Hands who had been well known for their excessive adoration of the person of Shoghi Effendi, and who, for this reason, had made little distinction in their minds between his person and the Institution of the guardianship, were ill-disposed to accepting anyone as a worthy occupant of the Office he had vacated and particularly one who did not conform to their preconceived standards and qualifications.²⁷

Let us assume, however, that, notwithstanding this obscuring veil that interposed itself threateningly between the Hands and their recognition of the second Guardian, they had, in that period of consternation following the disclosure of no will, through a supreme act of faith not renounced their faith in the inviolability of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, made the effort to put aside their misconceptions, and opened their minds to alternatives. Certainly it would have occurred to them that Shoghi Effendi, who had labored so assiduously during his ministry to faithfully perform every mandate of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and whose extensive writings on the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh had repeatedly included references to the continuity of the guardianship and to the future guardians of the

Faith, could have done nothing less than to carry out to the last letter the most important provision of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá under which it had been made incumbent upon him to appoint a successor. With this assurance, they would have, then, set about to carefully reexamine and restudy, as the first step, the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament.²⁸

Approaching their task with an open and unbiased mind, the Hands would have perceived those provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will on the matter of succession in a new light and discovered the fact that, contrary to their previously held opinion, these provisions actually precluded the Guardian from using a testamentary document to appoint his successor, as evidenced from the following quoted provisions:

- ***"It is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing..."***²⁹
- ***"The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished"*** (i.e. secret ballot).³⁰

Perceiving the extent to which they had previously erred in misinterpreting the provisions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will, these Hands would have then been prepared and eager to carefully and diligently review the acts and writings of Shoghi Effendi to determine the identity of the one whom he had appointed to a potential position of supreme authority, or had other wise identified, by express appointment and who, by reason thereof, was the one they sought--the second Guardian of the Faith.

Deciding, therefore, to undertake a thorough and careful review of Shoghi Effendi's writings and communications, the attention of the Hands would inevitably have been drawn to a series of historic cablegrams that he had addressed to the Bahá'í World during the last seven years of his ministry in which he had announced and extolled the final erection of the international institutions of the Faith at the World Center. The erection of these institutions had been a fitting consummation to his long, arduous, and faithful labors to establish, in embryonic form, all of the institutions of Bahá'u'lláh's Administrative Order, in accordance with 'Abdu'l-Bahá's mandate before his ministry came to a close. In going over these cablegrams again, the Hands would have made the surprising discovery that one of these communications contained the single Proclamation that had been issued by Shoghi Effendi during his entire ministry. This Proclamation issued on 9 January 1951 had been issued at the very inception of the seven year period mentioned above and announced an **"epoch-making decision"** that had been long deferred awaiting the fulfilment of certain prophecies of both Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá concerning the Holy Land as well as developments within the Faith with respect to the Administrative Order. Apparently this Proclamation had been overlooked by the Bahá'ís, as such, because it had been included in a cablegram. What would have been more surprising to the Hands would have been their realization that not only the Bahá'ís, as a whole, but they as well, had lost sight of its full import and that it had been all but forgotten in the flurry of swiftly unfolding historic events at both the World Center of the Faith and throughout the Bahá'í World that had taken place so closely following its issuance. For, it would have taken but little reflection on the text of this Proclamation for them to have grasped the tremendous import and significance of the **"epoch-making decision"** proclaimed in it by Shoghi Effendi. The few extracts from this Proclamation quoted below should suffice to provide the enquirer with an appreciation of its import:³¹

- **"Proclaim (to) National Assemblies of East and West weighty epoch-making decision of formation of first International Bahá'í Council, forerunner of supreme administrative institution . . ."**³²

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- **"... the present adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning national administrative institutions throughout (the) Bahá'í World, combine to induce me to arrive at this historic decision marking (the) most significant milestone in (the) evolution of (the) Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in (the) course of (the) last thirty years." (i.e. since the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá' ³³**
 - **"Nascent Institution now created . . ." ³⁴**
 - **"Hail with thankful, joyous heart, at long last, the constitution of International Council which history will acclaim as the greatest event shedding lustre upon (the) second epoch of (the) Formative Age of (the) Bahá'í Dispensation, potentially unsurpassed by any enterprise undertaken since (the) inception of (the) Administrative Order of (the) Faith on (the) morrow of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Ascension, ranking second only to the glorious immortal events associated with the Three Central Figures of (the) Faith in (the) course of (the) First Age of (the) most glorious Dispensation of the five thousand century Bahá'í Cycle." ³⁵**

Realizing, for the first time, that the Proclamation of Shoghi Effendi had, in fact, proclaimed the formation of the Universal House of Justice (albeit in embryonic form) the Hands would have been puzzled by a few remaining questions, namely:

- Why had Shoghi Effendi not activated the International Council or convened it into a functioning body under its appointed President during his ministry but had assigned specific tasks only to individual members and, even then, only through the Intermediary of his chosen **"liaison"** with the Council, Rúhíyyih Khánum (thereby further precluding any direct relationship with the Council in the matter of assignments)? For, they would have recalled that some four years prior to the formation of the Council Shoghi Effendi had addressed a particularly pertinent statement bearing on this question to the United Nations Special Committee (July, 1947) in which he had stated that the foundations of the Bahá'í Administrative Order were **"being laid by the national and local councils . . . paving the way for the constitution of the World Council"** which would in conjunction with him **"as its appointed Head and the authorized interpreter of the Bahá'í teachings . . .**

coordinate and direct the affairs of the Bahá'í community". Unquestionably, the fact that Shoghi Effendi had not assumed the presidency of this International Council as he had outlined in the foregoing statement had certainly served to obscure the supreme rank of the Council in the minds of the believers notwithstanding the superlative terms used by Shoghi Effendi in describing and hailing its establishment in his Proclamation as the forerunner of the supreme administrative Institution of the Faith.

- Why had Shoghi Effendi not assumed the Presidency of the Council? Why had he chosen instead to appoint Charles Mason Remey to be the President of this Institution (and not a temporary representative standing in for him)? Why had he been given this signal honor? His Bahá'í credentials had, indeed, been imposing. He had come into the Faith as a young man during the days of 'Abdu'l-Bahá Who had held him in the highest esteem as evidenced by the terminology He had used in His Tablets to him. He had been chosen by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as a professional architect, to be the architect of the Bahá'í Temple to be built on Mount Carmel in the future. Shoghi Effendi, in turn, had chosen his Temple designs for the Mother Temple to be built in Bahá'u'lláh's native land and Temples in several other countries. He had also been the architect of the International Archives building constructed in close proximity to the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel. His life had been characterized by more than fifty years of continuous and devoted service to the Faith which had taken him to most of the countries of the world. These outstanding services had earned him the rank of a Hand of the Cause which Shoghi Effendi had bestowed upon him when he appointed the first contingent of living Hands of the Cause in 1951 (previous Hands having been named only posthumously). Certainly, the Hands of the Cause would have concluded that if this distinguished, self-effacing, and saintly man who had been a tireless and fearless champion of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and His Covenant since his youth were deemed unworthy to hold the supreme position in the Faith, to which Shoghi Effendi had appointed him, then no man would ever be worthy.
- What was the relationship of the Hands of the Cause to the International Bahá'í Council? The first contingent of the Hands

of the Cause had been appointed by Shoghi Effendi some twelve months following his formation of the Council. In his cablegram to the Bahá'í world announcing the establishment of this **"nascent Institution"** (24 Dec 1951) he had stated significantly that this **"long inevitably deferred step"** had **"paralleled the preliminary measure of the formation of the International Council."** That is, he had found it necessary to take the preliminary measure of forming the International Council -- the embryonic Universal House of Justice -- to which the National and Local Assemblies would be subordinate in the administrative **"chain of command"** -- and this twin Institution of the Guardianship, prior to the appointment of the Hands of the Cause, who as satellites of the Guardian are his immediate subordinates. These Hands of the Cause, therefore had no authority over this International Council in any way. However, as they had been immediately assigned various spiritual tasks which brought them into the limelight throughout the world their activities had increasingly captured the attention and acclaim of the Bahá'í world, as time went on, and especially during the first five years of the Ten Year World Crusade that had been inaugurated by Shoghi Effendi on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh (Ridván 1853). These activities which had focused so much attention on the Hands of the Cause and gained for them so much prestige in the eyes of the believers had come to overshadow and obscure the preeminent position of the Council which had been formed some two years prior to the beginning of the World Crusade and whose activities, primarily at the World Center, had been somewhat less conspicuous although no less essential. In taking stock of this situation the Hands would have realized that the result was that their Institution had assumed in the minds of the believers a superior role to that of the Council and that the Council had been relegated to a relative unimportant and inferior role to their own which, if they were not careful, now that the believers were looking to them, and no will and testament had been found, would influence them to usurp prerogatives that were not theirs according to the sacred provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

- With the passing of Shoghi Effendi how would this effect the status of the International Council? Upon his death did this

embryonic Institution emerge into active life? What if its President were to convene this Institution into a functioning body? How would this effect his role and what would that role be?

In meditating over these questions the answers would inevitably have emerged and they would have suddenly been startled with the truth that faced them as clearly as the midday sun. The constancy and unwavering faith that they had shown in the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and in its divinely-conceived offspring, which was destined to live as long as the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, itself, had been richly rewarded. Acting in strict accordance with the provisions of this Child of the Covenant and immortal Charter, Shoghi Effendi, faithful to the end, had appointed his successor "*in his life-time*" in an unique and completely unforeseen manner (in that the appointment had been open for all to see while at the same time being veiled) which assured that there would be no interregnum in the guardianship (only a possible interregnum in the recognition of its continuity) with the second Guardian emerging to occupy the Office of Guardianship coincident with his passing. Now it became clear to these Hands why Shoghi Effendi had not activated the International Council and convened it into a functioning body, for if he had done so he automatically would have had to assume the presidency of this active Council and depose Charles Mason Remey whom he had but recently appointed to this Office. For as we have learned from our previous discussion of those provisions of the Will and Testament pertaining to the guardianship, the Guardian of the Faith and the Head or President of the Universal House of Justice are one and the same person. Would this not have been equally true of the Guardian and the embryonic Head of this embryonic body except that in this embryonic state he would be the Guardian-to-be. For, to draw an analogy with man, the embryonic head, being an inseparable part of his body, is not removed upon his birth into active life outside the womb in which it has gestated (a gestation, in the case of the Council which had lasted some 7 years, automatically terminating with the passing of Shoghi Effendi).

So, at last, the Hands would have perceived that the second Guardian, Charles Mason Remey, had been awaiting recognition from the very moment of Shoghi Effendi's death and there he was in their very midst at this conclave of the Hands in Acca. How

wonderful it would have been for them to have, then and there, embraced him as the second Guardian and sworn the same allegiance and loyalty to him that they had given Shoghi Effendi during his ministry. The glorious Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh would have remained unviolated, the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá - -that immortal Charter of His World Order--would have remained unsubverted and all of the divinely-conceived Institutions of the Bahá'í Administrative Order would have remained intact and uncorrupted.

But, alas! as we have learned in the earlier pages of this treatise, such was not to be. These Hands with the exception of Charles Mason Remey, had become so blinded by their preconceived ideas and misconceptions of the provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that they lost faith in the immortal and immutable provisions of this sacred Document and led the vast majority of the Bahá'ís who followed them blindly and without question into the greatest violation of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh that the Faith has ever known.

The enquirer may well ask at this point why Charles Mason Remey did not protest the decision that was made so precipitantly and without any serious reexamination of the Writings or the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by the Hands of the Cause on the very first day of their conclave at Acca to end the Institution of the guardianship forever? Why he may further ask did Charles Mason Remey permit himself to be drawn, however temporarily into the illegal organization that they created and established at Haifa? The answers to these questions may be found in great detail in a series of four volumes written by him entitled "**Daily Observations**" which relate the agonizing account of his arguments with his fellow-Hands over a period of better than two years not to abandon the guardianship of the Faith. Always approaching them in his characteristically kind and unbelligerent manner, he pleads with them over and over again not to subvert the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and to reconsider their position. These are a matter of record which can be read by the serious enquirer and, therefore, this treatise will not be unduly lengthened by their recitation. Of note, however, is the appeal that he made to his fellow-Hands on the occasion of their second conclave held a year after the first in which

he asked that they reconsider the decision that they had taken in their first conclave to abandon the guardianship, an appeal which they declared to be out of order and to which they turned a deaf ear. He also explains in these volumes that the Hands did not at the outset announce to the believers at large that they had come to the decision that the guardianship had ended forever. This is evidenced by their first Proclamation issued at the close of their first conclave in which the future of the guardianship remains uncertain even though they had stated that Shoghi Effendi had left no will and testament. They preferred to slowly condition the Bahá'ís over a period of time to a Faith, sans-Guardian, while at the same time consolidating their own authority and preparing the Bahá'ís to accept a counterfeit administrative order of their own making.

Finally, despairing of the efforts that he had made verbally within their presence to persuade the Hands to reconsider their stand and to institute a search to find the second Guardian of the Faith, he left Haifa and returned to the United States in the spring of 1960. From there he addressed a series of **"Three Appeals Made to the Hands of the Faith"**, hoping to accomplish in writing what he had been unable to accomplish verbally. These fervent appeals met with no response. He then realized that, for the sake of the Faith, he had no choice and could remain silent no longer. The time was overdue when the Bahá'ís would have to realize the awful truth of the betrayal of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by these Hands and at the same time learn that this Divine Charter had remained inviolate through his accession to the Guardianship of the Faith coincident with the passing of Shoghi Effendi. He accordingly chose the propitious moment when the Bahá'ís of the United States were assembled at their annual convention in Wilmette, Illinois at Ridván 1960 (the site of the Mother Temple of the West and their national administrative headquarters) to issue his Proclamation through that convention to the Bahá'ís of the World. These convention attendees not only rejected it out of hand but made sure that the Proclamation would be distributed no further. The Hands, to whom the second Guardian had also addressed a copy, immediately initiated a slanderous campaign against him and induced the Bahá'í Administrative Institutions which had by this time been conditioned to accepting the Haifa organization of the Hands as their provisional Center of the Cause to join them in opposition to him. Little wonder, then, that the

great mass of the believers remain completely ignorant of the contents of this historic Proclamation to this day.

In spite of this fierce, blind and concerted opposition there were a small number of independently minded and courageous Bahá'ís who, although as guilty as their fellow-Bahá'ís had been in taking it for granted that Shoghi Effendi would leave a testamentary document appointing his successor, had not wavered in their faith in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and their belief in the essentiality of the Guardianship for the protection and guidance of the Faith. These Bahá'ís had continued to cling to the hope that somehow and in some manner which they could not perceive the Guardianship would be restored. These Bahá'ís made the effort to acquire a copy of the Proclamation (difficult to obtain under the circumstances) and give it the careful attention and study it deserved. This Proclamation opened their eyes and suddenly everything became clear. They found the logical arguments used by Charles Mason Remey to prove his accession to the Guardianship irrefutable and completely convincing. At the same time they perceived how they had been led astray by the Hands of the Cause and how treacherously they had betrayed the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the trust reposed in them by Shoghi Effendi. They joyfully embraced the second Guardian of the Faith.

As the Proclamation of the second Guardian of the Faith-- Charles Mason Remey -- is available in its complete text for the enquirer to read, the following excerpts only are quoted to provide him with an appreciation of its contents:

"I, as the President of the International Council was one of those things that every Bahá'í knows but that just never happened to be talked about nor even mentioned in any of the conclaves or in the conferences of the Hands of the Faith; therefore, as this subject was never mentioned, I, having promised the Hands never to divulge any of their discussions, proceedings or decisions, am not breaking faith with them now by explaining to the believers about this subject of my Presidentship of the International Council, a subject that was never even mentioned nor brought up for discussion by the

Hands of the Faith in any conference that I ever attended or know any thing about. ³⁶

"The first Guardian of the Faith left this world without giving me any orders or instructions whatsoever regarding the International Council. The beloved Guardian gave me no authority to do anything about the Universal Council during his life-time for while he was living he was the Guardian of the Faith and as infallibility then was vested in him and in him only, my position was then only that of I, myself, holding a potential responsibility. But with the death of Shoghi Effendi, he no longer being the Center on earth of infallibility, (that is on matters of inter-pretation of the Writings) I became the acting President of the International Council in my own right as President of this body, thus I came into active command of the Council. Therefore, I am now but assuming the powers that came to me automatically upon the death of Shoghi Effendi and that have been mine exclusively of all others upon earth since the death of the first Guardian of the Faith.

"The Hands of the Faith can only function as protectors of the Faith when they are serving under the direction following the commands of the infallible Guardian of the Faith. They have no authority vested in themselves as Hands of the Faith to act in their own capacity nor in any other capacity, save under the direction of the living Guardian of the Faith.

"I have delayed as long as I dare delay before issuing this command to the Bahá'í world -- I, hoping that the Hands of the Faith would see for themselves that the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was being violated and that they would of themselves abandon their stand, I, standing single and alone against the entire Bahá'í world but confirmed and steadfast in my assurance of ultimately saving the Cause from this calamity ..."

"The line of Guardianship of the Bahá'í Faith is unbroken for I have been the Guardian of the Faith since the death of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi."

Acting in strict conformance with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and employing the same method that Shoghi Effendi had employed in appointing him, Charles Mason Remey, in his life-time, appointed the undersigned the President of the second International Council and, as such, the third Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, thereby assuring, as the first Guardian of the Faith had done and as every Guardian in the future must do, the unbroken continuity of the Guardianship through out the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh.

The position and beliefs of the Orthodox Bahá'ís should now be clear to the enquirer (the prefix "**Orthodox**" being used only temporarily to distinguish them from those who have broken the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh). These Bahá'ís believe in the indestructibility and inviolability of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh and accept 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the appointed Center of that Covenant, the Interpreter of Bahá'u'lláh's Holy Writ, the Exemplar of the Faith, and the Master-Architect of Bahá'u'lláh's Administrative Order. They believe that the Will and Testament written by His unerring and infallible Pen is the divinely-conceived and therefore perfect "**Child of the Covenant**" whose life span is coextensive with the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh and whose every clause, as a part of the explicit Holy Text, is sacred, immutable, and inviolable. They recognize that this monumental and immortal Testament bequeathed to the world by the Architect of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order safeguards the unity of the Faith and protects the Faith from corruption through the Institution of the Guardianship--a continuous and authoritative source of interpretation of Bahá'í Holy Writ and the "**Center of the Cause**" to whom all Bahá'ís should turn. Further, this Divine Charter provides for the uninterrupted continuity of this ordained Center down through the ages to come of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. Faithful to this Will and Testament, they recognized, rallied to the support of, and pledged their fealty to the second Guardian of the Faith and, in turn, to his appointed successor.

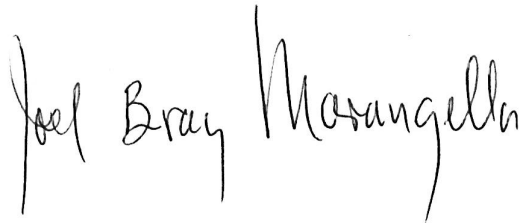
Altering the sacred provisions of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, declaring that certain of its provisions have become null and void and deforming the divinely-conceived Institutions delineated therein are considered by the Orthodox Bahá'ís to be nothing less than a sacrilege and a heinous desecration of that Divine Masterpiece. For them that immortal Charter of Baha'u'llah's

World Order and the divinely-conceived Institutions established therein must forever remain undefiled by mortal hands.

In the light of all that the enquirer has now learned, let us now ask him the question with complete confidence in his reply: who are the violators of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh?

Are they the Orthodox Bahá'ís who have steadfastly adhered to every clause of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, believed in the immortality of that "Child of the Covenant" and remained faithful to the "**Center of the Cause**" appointed therein -- the living Guardian of the Faith?

Or, are they the Heterodox Bahá'ís who renounced their faith in the immortality of this "**Child of the Covenant**" and subverted essential provisions of this Testament bequeathed to us by the "**Center of the Covenant**" by declaring them null and void and establishing a substitute administrative order of their own making?

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Bray Marangella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'M'.

Joel Bray Marangella
Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith

Source of Footnotes

- ¹ Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp. 238-239
- ² Bahá'u'lláh, Kitáb-i-'Ahd, quoted in World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.134
- ³ Ibid
- ⁴ Bahá'u'lláh, Súriy-i-Ghusn, quoted in World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.135
- ⁵ 'Abdu'l-Bahá's addresses, Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.451
- ⁶ 'Abdu'l-Bahá's addresses, Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.317
- ⁷ Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.247
- ⁸ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'í World Faith, pp.357-358
- ⁹ Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.325
- ¹⁰ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.144
- ¹¹ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.22
- ¹² Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Baha'u'llah, p.4
- ¹³ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Will and Testament (1944 edition, U.S.A.), p.15
- ¹⁴ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.148
- ¹⁵ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Will and Testament, p.14
- ¹⁶ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.150
- ¹⁷ 'Abdu'l-Bahá , Will and Testament, p.11
- ¹⁸ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.148
- ¹⁹ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.153
- ²⁰ Abdu'l-Baha, Will and Testament, p.14

²¹ Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p.326

²² 'Abdu'l-Baha, Will and Testament, p.12

²³ Shoghi Effendi, World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p.8

²⁴ Shoghi Effendi, Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950-1957, p.33

²⁵ Proclamation of the Hands, Bahá'í News, Jan 1958, p.1

²⁶ Proclamation of the Hands, Bahá'í News, Jan 1958, p.2

²⁷ The Persian Hands were particularly obsessed with the view that the Will and Testament precluded anyone, other than a son or a descendent of Bahá'u'lláh, from inheriting the guardianship. Shoghi Effendi, as the grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was not a Branch, himself, of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Family Tree but, in the parlance of the Will, a "twig" or "youthful branch" of the "**primal branch** ('Abdu'l-Bahá) of **the Divine and Sacred Lote-Tree**" (Bahá'u'lláh) -- the primal branch being a station reserved for 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of the Covenant and "**The Most Great Branch**" of Bahá'u'lláh -- the "**Ancient Root**". Shoghi Effendi had no son, yet consistently referred to future Guardians in his writings, even in the closing months of his ministry. It is evident that Shoghi Effendi's interpretation of the Will did not accord with that of the Hands, and he did not consider himself bound by the restrictions that they had imposed. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated in his last Tablet to America, "**The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it a branch from another tree.**"

²⁸ One may liken the veil that obscured the Hands, in principle, to the veil that has obscured the adherents of the religions of the past, who, because of their worship of the personality of the Prophet rather than his reality, have failed to recognize, much less accept Him when He appeared in His new Garb and have become His relentless enemies even as did the Babís with Bahá'u'lláh.

²⁹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament, p.12

This provision makes it clear that although the Guardian appoints his successor "**in his life-time**" (this phrase being redundant if the

use of a will were intended) he "**shall become**" the successor-Guardian only after the appointing Guardian's passing. It is also clear that through this wise provision (i.e. appointment during the life-time of the incumbent Guardian) disputes over such matters as authenticity, etc. are precluded.

³⁰ Obviously, the assenting vote of the Hands to the Guardian's appointment of a successor must be taken while the appointing Guardian's still living; otherwise this provision would have no meaning. We also know, as Shoghi Effendi has pointed out, that the intention of this provision was not to provide an opportunity to the Hands to oppose or veto such an appointment as other provisions enjoin complete obedience to the Guardian on the part of the Hands. Therefore, this provision must be considered in the light of a safeguard against future enemies of the Faith (especially when its influence has become tremendous) who for their own reasons might seek to nullify or alter the Guardian's appointment of a successor. Another safeguard stemming from the requirement that the Guardian's appointment of a successor be made and become known during his lifetime is that this effectively blocks those who, either inside or outside the Faith, might be opposed to this appointment from presenting a counterfeit testamentary document or contesting a Will, if such were used as the appointing instrument.

³¹ Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957*, pp. 7-8

³² In announcing that this was the "**first International Bahá'í Council**" Shoghi Effendi indicated that this Council would be succeeded by others in the future and that it was not a temporary body as some claimed. This International Council (a provisional title only) was the forerunner of the International House of Justice (i.e. this body in its embryonic form) in the same manner as the National and Local Spiritual Assemblies (their provisional titles) are the forerunners of National and Local Houses of Justice respectively and are these institutions in embryonic form. As National Spiritual Assemblies were subordinate to this "**supreme administrative institution**" it becomes clear why Shoghi Effendi addressed his Proclamation concerning its formation to these bodies rather than to the believers, as a whole, as he often did, thus emphasizing the

administrative relationship of the International Bahá'í Council to these administrative bodies. With reference to the use of the term "**epoch-making**", Webster defines an "**epoch**" as the beginning of a new and important period in the history of anything". Shoghi Effendi uses it to emphasize the new and important period in the development of the Administrative Order that had been inaugurated through his decision to establish, at long last, the embryonic Universal House of Justice.

³³ Does not the fact that Shoghi Effendi's "**historic decision**" to defer the establishment of the International Bahá'í Council pending the "**adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning**" National Spiritual Assemblies make it clear that in his mind there was a direct administrative relationship between the International Council and the national administrative bodies as its subordinates. As the decision to form the International Council marked the "**most significant milestone in the evolution of the Administrative Order**" since the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the inception of the Guardianship, it is obvious that the Council (a provisional title for House of Justice) was not an Institution provisionally formed outside the Institutions of the Administrative Order delineated in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will but, on the contrary, was an Institution--the International House of Justice -- described therein.

³⁴ This newly born organism of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order now in its earliest state of development (i.e. in its nascent embryonic state) should have been permitted to continue to evolve through the successive stages outlined by Shoghi Effendi in this same Proclamation but was subsequently killed (in 1960) when the Hands of the Cause treacherously expelled the Head or President of this "**Nascent Institution**" appointed by Shoghi Effendi. The Hands would have better understood the permanence of this embryonic institution if they had considered it in the light of embryonic man, as explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá (Bahá'í World Faith, pp.309-310), for as He stated: "**man is from the beginning of the embryonic period a distinct species and in his perfect form and composition**". This same principle applies to the embryonic organism of the International House of Justice--the Council--which was created at its birth by Shoghi Effendi in its perfect form and composition (i.e. composed of two distinct parts: an appointed irremovable Head (or President)

and a body (of believers) whose members would, as the organism developed, be subject to replacement through an elective process.

³⁵ As the formation of the International Bahá'í Council was described by Shoghi Effendi as "**the greatest event shedding lustre upon the second epoch of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation**", can there be any room for doubt that this "**nascent Institution**" created, "**at long last**" by Shoghi Effendi and hailed with such joy was anything less than the Universal House of Justice delineated in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will?

³⁶In this paragraph one perceives the kind indulgence and forbearance which the second Guardian continued to show these treacherous Hands who had so shamefully betrayed the trust that had been reposed in them by Shoghi Effendi. Even under these circumstances he did not divulge their perfidy or reveal those decisions that they had taken with the intent of deceiving the believers. Is it not truly incredulous that these wayward Hands never gave the Proclamation of Shoghi Effendi (9 Jan 51) in which he had proclaimed the formation of the Council in such laudatory terms even a passing thought, much less any consideration in their discussions? This fact alone attests to the superficiality of their efforts to search for the second Guardian.