

Regarding the very delicate and complex question of ascertaining the qualifications of a true believer, I cannot in this connection emphasize too strongly the supreme necessity for the exercise of the utmost discretion, Baha'u'llah, will caution and tact, whether it be in deciding Universal House of Justice. This body can never invalidate or modify in the least degree what has already been formulated by Baha'u'llah. Nor has the Guardian any right whatsoever to lessen the binding effect of the provisions of so fundamental and sacred a Book. Already in Egypt, Persia, India and Iraq, Assemblies, both local and national, are availing themselves of the opportunity which the autonomy granted to the True Exemplar of the Baha'i Cause, as set forth in 'Abdu'l-Communities in matters of personal status has offered them, to press Baha's Testament; unreserved acceptance of, by the civil authorities of for the recognition and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of our Beloved's Aqdas which they have even, must uphold and enforce. They sacred Will ; and close association with the under certain circumstances, preferred to suspend their activities and spirit as well as the form of the .present day

dissolve their in-stitutions rather than follow
 Baha'i administration throughout the world those officials who have
 the dictates of those officials who have
 -these I conceive to be the fundamental and tried to induce them
 primary considerations that must be fairly, to violate what has been
 expressly ordained by the Author of their Faith.
 discreetly and thoughtfully ascertained before The Guardian will, when
 reaching such a vital decision. Any attempt lished, elaborate this
 the Aqdas is pub-lished, elaborate this
 at further analysis and elucidation will, I of our Faith. This brief
 fundamental principle is adequate for any reference
 fear, land us in barren discussions and even make regarding this matter in
 reference, he feels, the News
 grave controversies that would prove not Letter.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
 you wish to make regarding this matter in
 only futile but even detrimental to the best DAILY OBLIGATORY
 interests of a growing Cause. I would there- PRAYER
 fore strongly urge those who are called upon The daily obligatory
 to make such a decision to approach this number .. The shortest one
 highly involved and ever-recurring problem consists of a sin-
 with the spirit of humble prayer, and earnest gle verse which has to be
 consultation, and to refrain from drawing every twenty-four hours and
 prayers are three in number .. The shortest one
 rigidly the line of demarcation except on such consists of a sin-
 occasions when the interests of the Cause gle verse which has to be
 recited once in every twenty-four hours and
 absolutely demand it.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. at midday. The
 medium (prayer) which begins with the
 words : "The Lord is witness that there is
 LAWS OF THE AQDAS none other God but He", has to be
 recited three times a day, in the
 In view of the importance of such a state- morning, at noon
 ment he feels it his duty to explain that the and in the evening. The long
 prayer which is the most elaborate of the
 Laws revealed by Baha'u'llah in the Aqdas three has to be
 three has to be recited once in every
 are, whenever practicable and not in direct twenty-four hours, and
 conflict with the Civil Laws of the land, ab- at any time one feels
 inclined to do so. The believer is entirely
 solutely binding on every believer or Baha'i
 free to choose any

<p>institution whether in the East or in the West. Certain laws, such as fasting, obligation of them, and obligatory prayers, the consent of the parents before marriage, avoidance of alcoholic drinks, monogamy, should be regarded by all believers as universally and vitally applicable at the present time. Others have been formulated in anticipation of a state of special potency and significance, and should therefore be accepted as such and be recited by the believers with unquestioned faith and confidence, that through them they may enter into a much closer communion with God, and identify themselves more fully with His laws and precepts. -SHOGHI EFFENDI.</p> <p>the sucking babe weaned from his mother's milk, if ye be of</p> <p>BAHA't PROCEDURE</p> <p>THE ORDINANCE OF FASTING</p> <p>nineteen days starting as a rule from the second of</p> <p>As regards fasting, it constitutes, together with the obligatory prayers, the two pillars that sustain the revealed Law of God. They act as stimulants to the soul, strengthen, revive and purify it, and thus insure its steady development.</p>	<p>one of those three prayers, obligation of reciting either in accordance with any with which they may be</p> <p>These daily obligatory with a few other specific Healing Prayer, the Tablet of been invested by Baha'u'llah</p> <p>SECTION ONE, SHEET 2</p> <p>justice unto all creation.</p> <p>be such as to strike all that are in heaven and is naught but manifest and agitation which the law provoke in men's be likened to the cries of them that perceive ... ,"</p> <p>The fasting period, which lasts</p> <p>March every year and ending tieth of the same month, abstention from food and rise till sunset. It is meditation and prayer, of tion, during which the</p>
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believer must strive
The ordinance of fasting is, as is the case to make the necessary
readjustments in his
with these three prayers,* a spiritual and inner life, and to refresh
and reinvigorate
vital obligation enjoined by Baha'llah upon the spiritual forces
latent in his soul. Its
every believer who has attained the age of significance and purpose
are, therefore, fun-
fifteen. In the Aqdas He thus writes: "We damentally spiritual in
character. Fasting is
have commanded you to pray and fast from symbolic, and a reminder
of abstinence from
the beginning of maturity ; this is ordained selfish and carnal
desires.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

by God, your Lord and the Lord of your fore-
fathers. He has exempted from this those THE BAB AND
who are weak from illness or age, as a BAHA'ULLAH IN DRAMAS
bounty from His Presence, and He is the With reference to your
Forgiving, the Generous." And in another
question whether
passage He says: "We have enjoined upon the figures of the Bab and
Baha'u'llah should
you fasting during a brief period, and at be made to appear as
characters in dramatic
its close have designated for you Naw-Ruz works written by the
believers, Shoghi Ef-
as a feast. . . . The traveler, the ailing, fendi's opinion is that
such an attempt to
those who are with child or giving suck, are dramatize the
Manifestations would be high-
not bound by the fast. . . . Abstain from ly disrespectful, and
hence should be avoided
food and drink, from sunrise to sundown, by the friends, even in
the case of the Mas-
and beware lest desire deprive you of this ter. Besides it would be
practically impos-
sible to carry out such a
-plan faithfully,
Also in the "Questions and Answers" that and in a dignified and
befitting manner.-
form an appendix to the Aqdas, Baha'u'llah SHOGHI EFFENDI.
reveals the following: "Verily, I say that
God has appointed a great station for fast-
ing and prayer. But during good health its
benefit is evident, and when one is ill, it is
not permissible to fulfill them." Concern-

TRANSLATION OF
SYMBOL OF THE

ing the age of maturity, He reveals in the appendix of that same book: "The age of inform you that maturity is in the fifteenth year; women and men are alike in this respect."

Regarding the vital character and importance of the Divine ordinances and laws, and the necessity of complete obedience to translation of the Arabic them by the believers, we thus read in the Baha'u'llah.-

Gleanings, p. 175: "Know verily that the essence of justice and the source thereof are both embodied in the ordinance prescribed by Him Who is the Manifestation of the Self of God amongst men, if ye be of them that recognize this truth. He doth verily incarnate the highest, the infallible standard of literature of the Cause, the Persian words and terms be * The three obligatory daily prayers, any one of which the believer is free to choose. to the correct stand-

BAHA't PROCEDURE and observed by the Guardian. This standard things that were will be found in The Baha'i World, Vol. IV. ibyHim.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. -N.S.A.

SYMBOL OF THE GREATEST NAME

He would also urge you to attach no importance to the stories told about 'Abdu'l- use of this Symbol is now legally protected Him by the for proper Baha'i use under the trade mark regarded in the registration recently made by the National Spiritual Assembly through the U. S. Patent

GREATEST NAME

He also wishes me to

the symbol of the Greatest

an invocation which can be

as "O Glory of Glories" or "O

All--Glorious." The word

connection is a

term "Baba," the name of

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

TRANSLITERATION OF

PERSIAN BAHAI TERMS

The friends are

wish that in all printed

transliterated according

SECTION ONE, SHEET 3

tual words of the Master

not authenticated

STORIES ABOUT

'ABDU'L-BAHA

importance to the stories told

Baha or to those attributed to

friends. These should be

same light as the notes and

visiting pilgrims. They need

not be sup-

Office.

pressed, but they should not

also be given

After careful consideration of the signifi- prominence or official
recognition.-SHOGHI

cance of this sacred Symbol, the Assembly EFFENDI.

has voted that its use should be confined to

books and pamphlets containing the words

of Baha'u'llah.-N. S. A.

CONCERNING LETTERS

FROM HAIFA

DISTINCTION BETWEEN

I wish to add and say that whatever let-

TABLETS AND TALKS

ters are sent in my behalf from

Haifa are

Shoghi Effendi has laid down a principle all read and approved by me before
mailing.

that the Ba:ha'is should not attribute much There is no exception whatever
to this rule.

importance to talks, reported to have been -SHOGHI EFFENDI.

given by the Master, if these have not in

one form or other obtained His sanction.

THE GUARDIAN'S LET-

Baha'u'llah has made it clear enough that

only those things that have been revealed in TERS TO INDIVIDUALS

the form of Tablets have a binding power As regards Shoghi Effendi's

letters to the

individual Baha'is, he is

over the friends. Hearsays may be matters
always very careful

of interest but can in no way claim author- not to contradict himself. He

has also said

ity. This basic teaching of Baha'u'llah was that whenever he has something

of import-

to preserve the Faith from being corrupted ance to say, he invariably

communicates it

like Islam which attributes binding author- to the National Spiritual

Assemblly or in his

ity to all the reported sayings of Muham- general letters. His personal

letters to in-

mad. dividual friends are only for

their personal

This being a basic principle of the Faith benefit and even though he does

not want to

we should not confuse Tablets that were ac- forbid their ,publication, he

does not wish

tually revealed and mere talks attributed to them to be used too much by

the Baha'i

the founders of the Cause. The first have News. Only letters with

special significance

absolute binding authority while the latter should be published there.-SHOGHI EFFENDI- can in no way claim our obedience. The highest thing this can achieve is to influence the activities of the one who has heard the saying in person.

THE GUARDIAN'S RELATION TO INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS

Those talks of the Master that were later reviewed by Him and corrected or in some other form considered authentic by Himself, such as the Some Answered Questions, these you have raised could be considered as Tablets and therefore the nature and fore be given the necessary binding power. must unite in- All the other talks such as are included in Guardian, it Ahmad's diary or the other diaries of pilgrims do not fall under this category and any relationship could be considered only as interesting material to be taken for what they are worth, administrative For this reason Shoghi Effendi has not rather serves to been encouraging the publication of reported unity of the sayings that were not authenticated by the Administrative efficiency Master Himself. Shoghi Effendi is trying to accompanied by prevent the friends from considering as ac- devotion and of

BAHA'f PROCEDURE

spiritual development. Both of them are essential and to attempt to dissociate one from statement to the the other is to deaden the body of the Cause. the oneness of In these days, when the Faith is still in its Baha'i from re- infancy, great care must be taken lest mere to union is in administrative routine stifles the spirit which

As to the important issue in this connection regarding significance of the ties which individual Baha'is with their should be made clear that such ship, though it transcends to an Assembly, is by no means curtail the authority of the bodies of the Cause, that it strengthen and consolidate the Administration. and order should always be an equal degree of love, of

SECTION ONE, SHEET 4

is conditioned upon the full four parents. Also your effect that the principle of mankind prevents any true regarding race itself as a bar complete accord with the

Teachings of the
 must feed the body of the Administration Faith on this point. For both
 Baha'u'llah
 itself. That spirit is its propelling force and 'Abdu'l-Baha never
 disapproved of the
 and the motivating power of its very life. idea of inter-racial
 marriage, nor discour-
 But as already emphasized, both the spirit aged it. The Baha'i Teachings,
 indeed, by
 and the form are essential to the safe and their very nature transcend
 all limitations
 speedy development of the Administration. imposed by race, and as such
 can and should
 To maintain full balance between them is the never be identified with any
 particular school
 main and unique responsibility of the admin- of racial philosophy.-SHOGHI
 EFFENDI.
 istrators of the Cause.
 It is invariably my purpose and constant BAHA't FUNERAL
 effort to uphold and reinforce the adminis-
 trative principles of the Faith, and I trust SERVICE
 that nothing will be allowed to interfere with Regarding the Baha'i
 funeral service: it
 the proper functioning of these administra- is extremely simple, as it
 consists only of a
 tive bodies.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. congregational prayer to be
 read before
 burial. This prayer will be made available
 GUARDIAN REQUESTS to the friends when the Aqdas
 is translated
 BAHA'fS NOT TO OBSERVE and published. In the
 meantime your N.
 S. A. should take great care lest any uniform
 HIS BIRTHDAY procedure or ritual in this matter
 be adopted
 I wish to add a few words in person re- or imposed upon the friends. The
 danger in
 guarding the commemoration of my birthday this, as in some other cases
 regarding Baha'i
 anniversary. I would earnestly request all worship, is that a definite
 system of rigid
 the believers and Assemblies not to observe, rituals and practices be
 developed among the
 under any circumstances, whether officially believers. The utmost
 simplicity and flexi-
 or privately, my birthday anniversary. I bility should be observed,
 and a selection

strongly feel that only anniversaries in connection with the life of the Bab, Baha'u'llah and •Abdu'l-Baha should be celebrated by the rigidly and uniformly believers. It will, I am sure, prove conducive to my own spiritual growth and happiness, and would be in the best interests of our beloved Faith. I trust that you will acquaint all the believers with this insistent request

THE USE OF RINGSTONES
of mine and I feel sure that they will all joyfully respond.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

In regard to the use of ringstones and CONGREGATIONAL prayer at present entirely to the discretion of PRAYER the believers, and has no objection if your

"Regarding the practice of congregational prayer, the Guardian wishes you to know the "Kita'b-i-Aqdas" is published the necessary instructions will be given regarding other circumstances there is no obligation whatever imposed upon the believers. When the Aqdas is published the form of congregational prayer prescribed by Baha'u'llah will be made clear to all the believers.- SHOGHI EFFENDI.

• There is a difference between taxes and NATURE OF BAHAF spiritual offerings. The House of Justice has certain revenues such as inheritance MARRIAGE shares, fees and fines. These are the taxes

In regard to your question concerning the nature and character of Baha'i marriage. As you have rightly stated, such a marriage Master's Will which

from the Baha'i Sacred the present this selection is not adopted on all such FENDI.

AND BURIAL STONES
burial stones, the Guardian leaves

Assembly provides facilities for chase by the friends. When

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

TAXES AND SPIRITUAL OFFERINGS

which, according to the Aqdas, not to the Guardian but to tice. According to the

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

SECTION ONE, SHEET 5

complements the Aqdas, the Huquq goes
Convention held in
only to the Guardian.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
Effendi would

business sessions of the
the Foundation Hall. Shoghi

urge that choir singing by men, women and

IMPORTANCE OF children be encouraged in the

Auditorium

ARCHIVES and that rigidity in the Baha'í service

be

The importance of the institution of scrupulously avoided. Táhe more
universal

Baha'í Archives is not due only to the many and informal the character of
Baha'í wor-

teaching facilities it procures, but is espe- ship in the Temple the

better. Images and

cially to be found in the vast amount of his- pictures, with the exception

of the Greatest

torical data and information it offers both Name, should be strictly

excluded. Prayers

to the present-day administrators of the revealed by Baha'u'llah and

the Master as

Cause, and to the Baha'í historians of the well as the sacred writings

of the Prophets

future. The institution of Baha'í Archives should be read or chanted as

well as hymns

is indeed a most valuable storehouse of in- based upon Baha'í or

non-Baha'í sacred

formation regarding all the aspects of the writings.

Faith, administrative as well as doctrinal. CHANTING IN THE

Future generations of believers will be sure-

ly in a better position than we are to truly TEMPLE

and adequately appreciate the many advan- As regards the chanting of

Tablets in the

tages and facilities which the institution of Temple, Shoghi Effendi wishes

in this con-

the Archives offers to individual believers nection to urge the friends

to avoid all forms

and also to the community at large. of rigidity and uniformity in

matters of

Now that the Cause is rapidly passing worship. There is no objection

to the recital

through so many different phases of its evo- or chanting of prayers in the

Oriental lan-

guation, is the time for the friends to exert guage, but there is also no

obligation what-

their utmost in order to preserve as much soever of adopting such a

form of prayer at
 as they can of the sacred relics and various any devotional service in the
 auditorium of
 other precious objects that are associated the Temple. It should neither
 be required
 with the lives of the Founders of the Faith, nor prohibited. The important
 thing that
 and particularly the Tablets They have re- should always be borne in
 mind is that with
 vealed. the exception of certain

specific obligatory
 Every believer should realize that he has prayers, Baha'u'llah has given
 us no strict
 a definite responsibility to shoulder in this or special ruling in
 matters of worship,
 matter, and to help, to whatever extent he whether in the Temple or
 elsewhere. Pray-
 can, in rendering successful the valuable er is essentially a communion
 between man
 work! which national and local Baha'i Ar- and God, and as such
 transcends all ritual-
 archives committees are so devotedly accom- istic forms and
 formulae.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

plishing for the Faith in America.-SHOGHI
 EFFENDI. DRAMATIC PERFOR-
 PRESERVATION OF MANCES IMPROPER FOR
 RELICS FOUNDATION HALL

Regarding the preservation of relics asso- Shoghi Effendi feels it to be
 inadvisable
 associated with Abdu'l-Baha, the general prin- that the Temple Foundation
 Hall be used for
 ciple should be that any object used by Him dramatic performances. He
 believes that
 in person should be preserved for posterity, only Baha'i meetings, and
 business sessions
 whether in the local or the national archives. of the Convention, can be
 held in it until
 It is the duty and responsibility of the Ba- such time as the erection of
 a special edifice
 ha'i Assemblies to ascertain carefully wheth- for this purpose has been
 undertaken by the
 er such objects are genuine or not, and to American friends.-SHOGHI
 EFFENDI.

exercise the utmost care and caution in the
 matter.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. HOW FUNDS ARE TO BE
 TEMPLE MEETINGS CONTRIBUTED
 As to the character of the meetings in the You asked concerning some

plans whereby

Auditorium of the Temple, he feels that they funds could be gathered for the Temple.

should ,be purely devotional in character, Shoghi Effendi believes that the best and

Baha'i addresses and lectures should be noblest method is to have free donations that

strictly excluded. For the present, he feels are made spontaneously and with the sense

that there would be no objection to having of making some sacrifice in f uthering the

Baha'i meetings including addresses and the . Cause. It is with sacrifice that this Temple

BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 6

is to be built. This is the truly worthy tivities, local, national and international in

method. This principle therefore excludes scope.-N. S. A.

any method whereby the help of non-Baha'is is included.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

PROPER METHOD OF

TEST OF FAITH CONSULTATION

He wishes you particularly to impress the Shoghi Effendi firmly believes that consul-

• believers with the necessity of maintaining tation must be maintained between the N.

the flow of their contributions to the Temple, S. A. and the entire body of the ábelievers, and

and also to stress the importance of the in- that such consultation, while the Convention

stitution of the National Baha'i Fund which, is not in session, can best be maintained

in these early days of the administrative de- through the agency of the local Assemblies,

velopment of the Faith, is the indispensable one of whose essential functions is to act as

medium for the growth and expansion of the intermediaries between the local communi-

Movement. Contributions to this fund consti- ties and their national representatives. The

tute, in addition, a practical and effective main pur,pose of the Nineteen Day Feasts is

way whereby every believer can test the to enable individual believers to offer any

measure and character of his faith, and to suggestion to the local Assembly which in its

prove in deeds the intensity of his devotion turn will pass it to the N. S. A. The local

and attachment to the Cause.-SHOGHI EF- Assembly is, therefore, the

proper medium

FENDI.

through which local Baha'i communities can communicate with the body of the national representatives.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

THE NINETEEN DAY

FEAST

THE TRUE CHARACTER

This institution, established by Baha'u' - llah, has been described by the Guardian as consideration, the National

OF CONSULTATION

After careful

the foundation of the new World Order. The record the view

Spiritual Assembly voted to

National Spiritual Assembly understands communications are

first, that anonymous

that it is incumbent upon every believer, un- with the spirit or the

not in conformity either

less ill or absent from the city, to attend each Teachings, and secondly,

letter of the Baha'i

of these Feasts.

that the general

distribution of any letter,

In a general letter issued to Local Spi- by an in-

whether anonymous or otherwise,

tual Assemblies áseveral years ago, it was members of the Ameri-

dividual believer to

pointed out that the Guardian instructs that improper

can Baha'i communities is an

the Nineteen Day Feast be held according to consultation.-N. S. A.

method of Baha'i

the following program:á the first part, en- tirely spiritual in character, is devoted to (Cablegram) "Urge

Haifa, May 18, 1934,

readings from Baha'i Sacred Writings; the (to) National As-

believers strictly adhere

second part consists of general consultation regarding anonymous

sembly's instructions

on the affairs of the Cause, at which time the Local Spiritual Assembly reports its activi-

letters." (signed) Shoghi.

ties to the comm.unity, asks for suggestions and consultation, and also delivers messages received from the Guardian and the National

BAHA'I ANNIVERSARIES

AND NINETEEN-DAY

FEASTS

Assembly. The third part is the material feast and social meeting of all the friends.

Only voting believers are invited to attend frequently raised whether

The question is

the Nineteen Day Feasts, but young people Anniversary Cele-

Nineteen-Day Feasts and

of less than twenty-one years of age, who

brations noted on the Baha'i

calendar should

are declared believers, especially when mem-
limited to believers

bers of a Baha'i family, can also be present.
guests. The matter

These meetings may be regarded as the
by the Na-

very heart of our Baha'i community life.
Convention, to

When properly conducted, and attended by a
for us all in such

Baha'i community which fully appreciates
wisdom and knowl-

their importance, the Nineteen Day Feasts
placed the de-

serve to renew and deepen our spirit of
least, in the mem-

faith, increase our capacity for united action,
Assembly.

remove misunderstandings and keep us
Assembly record-

fully informed of all important Baha'i ac-
Feasts and Anni-

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

versaries should be regarded as opportuni-
courtesy and

ties for spiritual inspiration and fellowship
among the believers, and occasions to be

kept sacred for the Cause, but in recording
this attitude did not lay it down as a formal

ruling to bind the American friends. Each
local Spiritual Assembly is free to conduct

these meetings in accordance with its own
conditions and needs.

of presenting

It is evident, of course, that a religious
newcomers, Shoghi

community needs certain occasions free from
that the N. S. A.

influence by prevailing customs and opinions,
suitable extracts from

when its collective spirit and will may be
these to all the

confirmed from the one acknowledged source
use, so that there

of guidance 1:1,nd power. All Baha'is are in
circulating the provi-

be regarded as occasions

or open to non-Baha'i

was referred to Shoghi Effendi

tional Assembly before the

have the question answered

a way as to reflect truest

edge. The Guardian's reply

cision, for the present at

bers of the National

After consultation, the

ed its view that Baha'i

SECTION ONE, SHEET 7

he will be treated with every

consideration.-N. S. A.

HOW TO PRESENT THE

**MASTER'S WILL TO NEW
BELIEVERS**

Concerning the best method

the Master's Will to the

Effendi is of the opinion

should first make some

the Testament, and to send

local Assemblies for their

may be full unity in

need of such blessed hours shared with fellow
 new believers.
 low believers, for the development of the in-
 excerpts is left
 ner life within the community which can sur-
 the N. S. A. The
 vive and serve the Cause only as it becomes
 the Guardian, is
 one in Baha'u'llah. that the full station of the
 Bab, Baha'u'llah
 Appreciating the value of the influence and 'Abdu'l-Baha be clearly
 explained, and
 released upon inquirers permitted to attend that the origin, nature and
 working of the
 such Baha'i gatherings, the National Assem- Administrative Order of the
 Faith be clearly
 bly nevertheless believes that the same effect stated. The full implications
 of such a recog-
 can be gained by occasional meetings of a nition are evidently beyond
 the comprehen-
 combined spiritual and social character, held sion of any new ábeliever.
 Such a knowledge
 in addition to those marked upon the calen- can be acquired gradually,
 and only when
 dar of the Cause.-N. S. A. the essentials of the Faith
 have been clearly
 Concerning the nature of the Nineteen recognized and adequately
 understood.-
 Day Feast. In the Aqdas, Baha'u'llah clearly SHOGHI EFFENDI.
 revealed the spiritual and social character of
 this institution. Its administrative sig- MEMBERSHIP IN OTHER
 nificance, however, has :been stressed by the ORGANIZATIONS
 Guardian in direct response .to the growing
 needs of the Baha'i community in this form- Formal affiliation with
 and acceptance of
 ative period of the Baha'i era for better membership in organizations
 whose pro-
 training in the principles and practice of grams or policies are not
 wholly reconcilable
 Baha'i administration.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. with the Teachings is of
 course out of the
 question. In the case of the World Fellow-
 ship of Faiths, however, Shoghi Effendi sees
 THE FEASTS AND no objection if the American
 National As-
 ANNIVERSARIES ssembly decides to appoint one or two
 Baha'i

representatives to address some of the public
 The question has been raised whether the meetings held under their
 auspices. To mere-
 statement made in the July, 1930, issue of ly address such •gatherings
 on one or two oc-
 Baha'i News was intended to convey the casions on a subject which is
 in harmony
 fact that the Guardian's instruction to the with the spirit of the
 Teachings does not
 American National Assembly meant that constitute acceptance by the
 Baha'i speaker
 each Local Assembly is free to decide for of the entire program of the
 Fellowship. We
 itself whether non-believers may be áinvited should welcome and seize
 every opportunity
 to the Nineteen-Day Feasts. that presents itself, however
 modest it may
 The answer is that only the Anniversaries, be, to give a wider publicity to
 the Cause,
 not the Nineteen-Day Feasts, have been left to demonstrate its
 all-inclusiveness and lib-
 to the discretion of the believers. If a Local eral attitude, its
 independence and purity,
 Assemjibly feels that the Cause will be served without committing ourselves,
 whether by
 by inviting non-believers to one of the An- word or deed, to programs or
 policies that
 niversary meetings, it is free to do so, even are not in strict conformity
 with the tenets
 though the National Assembly pointed out of the Faith. Shoghi Effendi
 hopes that this
 the ideal in the statement published last ,principle will guide your
 distinguished As-
 July. The Nineteen-Day FeastB, however, sembly in its dealings with
 various associa-
 are for the recognized believers alone. If tions which will increasingly
 seek, in the
 a non-believer be found present, naturally days to come, the support of
 Baha'i indi-
BAHA't PROCEDURE **SECTION ONE, SHEET 8**
 viduals and Assemblies for the attainment of of the World Order of
 Baha'u'llah.
 their ends.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. This essential principle is
 made clear when
 we turn to Shoghi Effendi's further refer-
CONTACT WITH SOCIAL ence to the subject as
 published in Baha'i

News for October, 1935-words written by

MOVEMENTS

the Guardian's own hand.

It is surely very necessary that the
it seems fully

In the light of these words,

friends should keep in touch with the mod-
approach this in-

evident that the way to

ern social movements, but their main objec-
Faith of Baha'u'l-

struction is in realizing the

tive should be to draw more people to the
organism 1 destined to

lah as an ever-growing

spirit and teachings of the Cause. They
greater than any

become something new and

should learn from the experience of others
the past. Whereas

of the revealed religions of

and not permit themselves to go (off) at a
and illumined

former Faiths inspired hearts

tangent, and finally be so absorbed in other
formal religions

souls, they eventuated in

movements as to forget the Cause of God.-
organization, creeds,

with an ecclesiastical

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

ritua:s and churches, while

the Faith of

Baha'u'llah, likewise renewing man's spiri-
tual life, will gradually produce the institu-

tions of an ordered society,

CONCERNING MEMBER-

fulfilling not

SHIP IN NON-BAHA't RE-

merely the function of the

churches of the

LIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

past but also the function of

the civil state.

By this manifestation of the Divine Will in

The instruction written by Shoghi Effendi
ages, human-

a higher degree than in former

concerning membership in non-Baha'i re-
immature civiliza-

ity will emerge from that

ligious organizations, published in the July,
are separate

tion in which church and state

1935 number of Baha'i News, has brought
and partake of

and competitive institutions,

forth some interesting and important com-
spiritual and so-

a true civilization in which

munications from local Spiritual Assemblies
reconciled as two

cial principles are at last

and also from individual believers, to all of
Truth.

aspects of one and the same

which the National Spiritual Assembly has
successive World

No Baha'i can read the

given careful and sympathetic attention. Order letters sent us by
 Shoghi Effendi with- out perceiving that the Guardian,
 The National Assembly itself, on receiving for many
 that instruction, made it the subject of ex- years, has been preparing us
 to understand and appreciate this
 tensive consultation, feeling exceedingly re- and appreciate this
 fundamental pur:poseand mission of the Revelation of
 sponsible for its own understanding of the Baha'u'llah.
 Guardian's words and anxious to contribute Even when the Master ascended,
 we were for the most part still
 to the understanding of the friends. considering the Baha'i
 In October, 1935, the Assembly sent in re- Faith as though it were only the
 "return of Christ" and failing to
 ply to some of these communications a gen- perceive the entirely
 eral letter embodying its thoughts on the sub- new and larger elements latent
 in the Teach- ings of Baha'u'llah.
 ject, and a copy of that letter was forwarded Thus, in the very first of
 to Shoghi Effendi for his ,approval and com- the World Order
 ment. His references to its contents, made letters, written February
 27th, 1929, Shoghi Effendi said: "Who, I may ask,
 in letters addressed to the National Spiritual when view-
 Assembly on November 29 and December 11, ing the international
 character of the Cause, its far-flung ramifications,
 1935, are appended to this statement. the increasing
 Now that Shoghi Effendi's approval has complexity of its affairs, the
 diversity of its adherents, and the state of
 been received, the National Assembly feels confusion that
 it desirable to publish, for the information assails on every side the
 infant Faith of God, of all the American ,believers, the substance can for a moment question the
 necessity of the October letter. some sort of administrative
 machinery that will insure, amid the storm and
 While so fundamental an instruction is stress of a
 bound to raise different questions corre- struggling civilization, the
 sponding to the different conditions exist- Faith, the preservation of its
 identity, and

ing throughout the Baha'i community, the interests?"

most important consideration is our collective need to grasp the essential principle underlying the new instruction, and our capacity to perceive that the position which the Guardian wishes us to take in regard to church membership is a necessary and inevitable result of the steady development

BAHA't PROCEDURE

The series of World Order letters, however, goes far beyond the point of defending and explaining their validity as an essential element in the Faith of Baha'u'llah-the Guardian's vasty extended the horizon of our understanding by making it clear that the Administrative Order, in its full development, is to be the social structure of the future non-political civilization.

Thus, in that same letter quoted above, he wrote: "Not only will the present-day Spiritual Assemblies be styled differently in future, but will be enabled also to add to their present functions those powers, duties, and prerogatives necessitated by the recognition of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, not merely as one

the protection of its

Although for five years the Administration in frequent letters, in 1927 he apparently felt it some doubts here and there as to the Baha'is in His Will and Testament.

SECTION ONE, SHEET 9

diverse elements which the God Himself has declared to be.

The principle underlying instruction about membership religious bodies has already been emphasized by Shoghi Effendi in another connection-

the instruction about the character of the Faith which he incorporated in his letter entitled "The Golden Age of the Cause of Baha'u'llah." For it, therefore, incumbent upon now that the time is ripe, an instruction which, at the evolution of our Faith, ingly emphasized,

irrespective of its appli-
of the recognized religious systems of the West. And this
world, but as the State Religion of an inde-
that which in-
pendent and Sovereign Power. And as the
by the adher-
Baha'i Faith permeates the masses of the
Baha'u'llah, whether in
peoples of East and West, and its truth is
or collectively as
embraced by the majority of the peoples of a
in any form of
number of the Sovereign States of the world,
interpreted, either di-
will the Universal House of Justice attain
interference in the .
the plenitude of its power, and exercise, as
particular govern-
the supreme organ of the Baha'i Common-
wealth, all the rights, the duties, and re-
was raised as to
sponsibilities incumbent upon the world's fu-
non-Baha'i organiza-
ture super-state."
or political in
This passage stands as the keystone in
"Regarding
the noble structure which Shoghi Effendi has
Fellowship of
raised in his function as interpreter of the
.Societies, Shoghi Effendi
Teachings of Baha'u'llah. The Master de-
elucidate the general
veloped the Cause to the point where this
representatives
social Teaching, always existent in the Tab-
refrain from
lets of Baha'u'llah, could be explained to the
imply a depar-
believers and given its due significance as the
whether spiritual,
fulfilment of Baha'i evolution. As the Guar-
established by
dian expressed it: "That Divine Civilization,
affiliation with and ac-
the establishment of which is the primary

cation to the East or to the
principle is no other than
volves the non-participation
ents of the Faith of
their individual capacities
local or national Assemblies,
activity that might be
rectly or indirectly, as an
political affairs of any
ment."
Again, when the question
membership in certain
tions not directly religious
character, the Guardian replied:
association with the World
Faiths and kindred
wishes to reaffirm and
principle that Baha'i elected
as well as individuals should
any act or word that would
ture from the principles,
social or administrative,
Baha'u'llah. Formal
ceptance of membership in

organizations
 mission of the Baha'i Faith." (World Order whose programs or policies
 are not wholly
 of Baha'u'llah, pages 3 and 4). reconcilable with the
 Teachings is of course
 For us these words mean that a Baha'i is out of the question." (Baha'i
 News, August,
 not merely a member of ,a revealed Religion, 1933.)
 he is also a citizen in a World Order even Thus, not once but
 repeatedly the Guar-
 though that Order today is still in its infan- dian has upheld the vital
 principle underly-
 cy and still obscured by the shadows thrown ing every type of
 relationship between
 by the institutions, habits and attitudes de- Baha'is and other
 organizations, namely,
 rived from the past. But since the aim and that the Cause of Baha'u'llah
 is an ever-
 end has been made known, our devotion and growing organism, and as we
 begin to real-
 loyalty must surely express itself, not in ize its universality our
 responsibility is defi-
 clinging to views and thoughts emanating nitely established to cherish
 and def end that
 from the past, but in pressing forward in universality from all
 compromise, all admix-
 response to the needs of the new creation. ture with worldly elements,
 whether emanat-
 That true devotion, which consists in con- ing from our own habits rooted
 in the past
 scious knowledge of the "primary mission," or from the deliberate
 attacks imposed by
 and unified action to assist in bringing about enemies from without.
 its complete triumph, recognizes that a It will be noted that in
 the instruction pub-
 Baha'i today must have singleness of mind lished in July, 1935, Baha'i
 News, the Guar-
 as of aim, without the division arising when dian made it clear that the
 principle in-
 we stand with one foot in the Cause and one volved is not new and
 unexpected, but
 foot in the world, attempting to reconcile rather an application of an
 established prin-
 BAHAI PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 10
 ciple to a new condition. "Concerning mem- divided loyalty the
 integrity of our Faith
 bership in non-Baha'i religious associations, and demonstrate the

when the friends not only highly desirable but absolutely essential. "The explanatory statement with membership in non-Baha'i organizations is admirably ing and in full conformity with the principles underlying and implied in the unfolding world order of Baha'u'llah." (November 29, 1933.)

turn to their local Assemblies for specific advice under various special circumstances.

To turn now to the Guardian's words published in October Baha'i News : "The separation that has set in between the institutions conceived, convincing of the Baha'i Faith and the Islamic ecclesiastical organizations that oppose it . . . imposes upon every loyal upholder of the Cause (November 29, 1933.)

"The explanatory statement with membership in non-Baha'i organizations is admirably ing and in full conformity with the principles underlying and implied in the unfolding world order of Baha'u'llah." (November 29, 1933.)

"The Guardian has carefully read the copy of the statement you had recently prepared concerning non-membership in non-Baha'i religious organizations, and is pleased to realize that your comments and explanations are in full conformity with 'Abdu'l-Baha's passing, may be said to have signaled the Formative Period of our Faith subject. He hopes that your letter will serve to clarify this issue in the minds of all the believers, and to further convince them of its vital character and importance in the present stage of the evolution of the Cause.

"... In this case*, as preceded it and upholds the spiritual truths also in that of suffering believers, the Assemblies, whether local or national, should act to them all, its institutions, whether administrative or national, should act tactfully, patiently

trative, religious or. humanitarian, must if
 spirit. Knowing
 their distinctive character is to be main-
 is for such be-
 tained and recognized, be increasingly di-
 former allegiances
 vorced from the outworn creeds, the mean-
 try to grad-
 ingless ceremonials and man-made institu-
 wisdom and
 tions with which these religions are at pres-
 and instead of
 ent identified. Our adversaries in the East
 principle, to
 have initiated the struggle. Our future op-
 and out of
 ponents in the West will, in their turn, arise
 Too severe and
 and carry it a stage further. Ours is the
 duty, in anticipation of this inevitable con-
 an aged believer,
 afflicted with illness, for whom severance of church
 test, to uphold unequivocally and with un-
 great a shock.

BAHA't PROCEDURE

11

immediate action in such cases is not only
 Peace to governments
 fruitless but actually harmful. It alienates
 them that they are
 people instead of winning them to the Cause.
 Peace and Justice
 "The other point concerns the advisability
 forever the dire ca-
 of contributing to a church. In this case also
 war.
 the friends must realize that contributions
 Revelation, a most agonizing
 to a church, especially when not regular, do
 conflict raged in Europe
 not necessarily entail affiliation. The be-
 since that war many oth-
 lievers can make such offerings, occasionally,
 have dyed the earth,
 and provided they are certain that while do-
 heaven of human hope
 ing so they are not connected as members of

and in a friendly and kindly
 how painful and dapperous it
 lievers to repudiate their
 and friendships, they should
 ually persuade them of the
 necessity of such an action,
 thrusting upon them a new
 make them accept it inwardly,
 pure conviction and desire.

* A special case involving

relations might have been too

SECTION ONE, SHEET

tends the divine law of
 and rulers, declaring to
 called upon to establish
 upon earth, and uproot
 lamity of international
 Despite His
 and excruciating
 for four years, and
 er wars and revolutions
 while at present the
 is black with the

approach of a final world-
 any church. There should be no confusion
 between the terms affiliation and association.
 faithful Baha'is, abhor-
 While affiliation with ecclesiastical organiza-
 insane repudiation
 tions is not permissible, association with
 destroyer of life and ruin
 them should not only be tolerated but even
 now, in these fateful
 encouraged. There is no better way to dem-
 may save their loved
 onstrate the universality of the Cause than
 of the battlefield, and
 this. Baha'u'llah, indeed, urges His follow-
 their utmost to any
 ers to consort with all religions and nations
 at the attainment of
 with utmost friendliness and love. This con-
 stitutes the very spirit of His message to
 •heart-stirrings, and
 mankind." (December 11, 1935.)
 responsibility toward all
 The National Spiritual Assembly trusts
 particularly that
 that the subject will receive the attention of
 would first of all be
 local Assemblies and communities, and that
 of a declaration of
 in the light of the foregoing explanations
 the National Spiri-
 the friends will find unity and agreement in
 express it.s view
 applying the instruction to whatever situa-
 hope that the result
 tions may arise. In teaching n~w believers
 Teachings and of the
 let us lay a proper foundation so that their
 will assist in bring-
 obedience will be voluntary and assured from
 and a clarification of
 the beginning of their enrollment as Baha'is.
 friends.
 In our attitude toward the older believers
 of Baha'is to their
 who are affected by the instructioná let us act
 these words, written

shaking catastrophe.
 What wonder that
 ing and detesting war as
 of divine law, as
 of civilization, should
 days, ponder how they
 ones from the calamity
 how they may contribute
 and every effort aimed
 universal Peace?
 Conscious of these
 mindful of its
 American believers, and
 radiant youth which
 sacrificed in the event
 war by the government,
 tual Assembly wishes to
 upon the matter, in the
 of its study of the
 Guardian's explanations
 ing a unity of opinion
 thought among the
 Concerning the duty
 government, we have

with the patience and kindness the Guardian has urged.-N. S. A. January 1, 1929 (see page 152) : "To all these (i.e., restrictive measures of the Soviet regime) the followers of the Faith of BAHAI'S AND WAR* of burning agony and heroic fortitude unanimously and One of the chief responsibilities of Baha'is ever mindful of the in this transitional era is to grasp the principle upon which rests their loyalty to the administrative activities of Baha'u'llah in relation to their duty toward their civil government. This problem arises in its most difficult form in connection with our individual and collective attitude toward war. Nothing could be more powerful than the judgment and authority of Baha'i teachings on the subject of Peace. Not only does Baha'u'llah confirm the teachings of all former Manifestations which uphold amity and fellowship between individuals human beings, and the supremacy of love as the end and aim of mutual intercourse and association, but He likewise exhortation of their faith and repudiation of their innermost beliefs. * "The Guardian has carefully read the N. S. A.'s statement on the Baha'i attitude toward war, and vindicate by their life-blood approves of its circulation among the believers."-

by Shoghi Effendi on "Baha'i Administration," ha'u'llah . have with feelings unreservedly submitted, guiding principle of connection with their ties, no matter how with them might affect tension of the Movement, of which does not parture from the Faith, the considered tative decrees issued by ers must, if they be and 'Abdu'l-Baha's thoroughly respected and matters, however, that tegrity and honor of the and are tantamount to a lief, they are convinced, ing prepared to

Shoghi Effendi, through his secretary, Haifa, January 10, 1936. the sincerity of their conviction, that no power on earth, neither the arts of the most BAHA'f PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 12 insidious adversary nor the bloody weapons duly enrolled Baha'is. The only justifiable of the most tyrannical oppressor, can ever reason for joining this Faith is because one succeed in extorting from them a word or realizes that it is a divine Cause and is ready deed that might tend to stifle the voice of and willing to accept whatever may befall their conscience or tarnish the purity of a believer on the path of devotion. The their faith." persecutions which have been inflicted upon In view of the fact that early Christians Baha'is so frequently make it clear that the were persecuted because they refused to ren- path of devotion is one of sacrifice and not der military service, the question might be of ease or special privilege. Another question raised whether the above statement means encountered here and that the Guardian includes refusal to bear there among believers is what can Baha'is do to work for Peace? Outside arms as one of those matters which "vitally the Cause we see many organizations with affect the integrity and honor of the Faith peace programs, and believers occasionally ... and are tantamount to a recantation of feel that it is their duty to join such movements their faith and repudiation of their inner- and thereby work for a vital Baha'i and thereby most belief"-a question the more important principle. It is the view of the in that the early Christians preferred perse- National Spiritual Assembly that activity in and cution to military service. for the Cause itself is the supreme service to world peace. The answer to this question is that the The Baha'i community of the Guardian instructs us that the obligation to world is the true example of Peace. The render military duty áplaced by governments Baha'i princi-

upon their citizens is a form of loyalty to which Peace can
 one's government which the Baha'i must accept. Therefore, by striving to
 cept, but that the believers can, through their declared believers,
 National Assembly, seek exemption from Teachings of Baha'u'l-
 active army duty provided their government to rid human-
 recognizes the right of members of religious Of what use to
 bodies making peace a matter of conscience incomplete hu-
 to serve in some non-combatant service rather than as part of the armed force.
 the universal program of the Manifestation of God? The
 The National Spiritual Assembly has investigated carefully this aspect of the situa-
 active devotion tion, and has found that, whereas the govern-
 ment of the United States did, in the needs-economic justice,
 last war, provide exemption from military etc. Let non-
 duty on religious grounds, nevertheless this disarmament and cir-
 exemption was part of the Statutes bearing and that pacifist
 directly upon that war, and with the cessation of hostilities the exemption lapsed. In
 activities upon the other words, there is today no basis on which
 Baha'u'llah, waH~the path any Baha'i may ,be exempted from military
 His days, and heed duty in a possible future conflict. The Na-
 Guardian has given tional Assembly, consequently, cannot at
 the public teach- present make any petition for exemption of
 Baha'is from war service, for such petitions must be filed with reference to some specific

ples are the only ones upon which Peace can be established.
 enlarge the number of and broadcasting the
 and broadcasting the lah, we are doing the utmost
 ity of the scourge of war. spend time and money upon
 man programs when we have
 firm union of the Baha'is in to the advancement of their
 is our service to Peace, as all other human
 race amity, religious unity, believers agitate for
 culate petitions for this aim-a Baha'i truly alive in
 surely prefer to base his foundation laid by
 which the Master trod all the appeals which the
 us to initiate a new era in ing of the Message.-N. S. A.

Act or Statute under which exemption can be granted. The Assembly understands that, in the event of war, there will be some kind of provision for exemption enacted, but as followers of Baha'u'llah far as Baha'is are concerned, no steps can be taken until this government declares it- governments when- self in a state of war.

participants in any

This explanation, it is hoped, will satisfy those who for some years have been urging (This instruc-

that protection be secured for American letter inquiring

Baha'i youth.

should feel a

On the other hand it must be pointed out military service

that it is no part of our teaching program obligation to the

to attract young people to the Cause merely participated with

in order to take advantage of any exemption military action initiat-

that may later on be officially obtained for BAHAI PROCEDURE

insidious adversary nor the bloody weapons only justifiable

of the most tyrannical oppressor, can ever is because one

succeed in extorting from them a word or Cause and is ready

deed that might tend to stifle the voice of whatever may befall

their conscience or tarnish the purity of devotion. The

their faith."

inflicted upon

In view of the fact that early Christians clear that the

were persecuted because they refused to ren- sacrifice and not

der military service, the question might be raised whether the above statement means

COLLECTIVE ACTION BY LEAGUE OF NATIONS

He feels that the

are under the obligation of

orders of their respective

ever these are acting as

collective action directed by

N ations.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

tion came in answer to a

whether a Canadian believer

moral obligation to accept

in the event that, under its

League, his government

other governments in

ed by the League).

SECTION ONE, SHEET 12

duly enrolled Baha'is. The

reason for joining this Faith

realizes that it is a divine

and willing to accept

a believer on the path of

persecutions which have been

Baha'is so frequently make it

path of devotion is one of

of ease or special privilege.

Another question

encountered here and
 that the Guardian includes refusal to bear arms as one of those matters which "vitality affect the integrity and honor of the Faith peace programs, ... and are tantamount to a recantation of feel that it is their their faith and repudiation of their inner- and thereby most belief"-a: question the more important principle.
 in that the early Christians preferred persecution to military service. National Spiritual and for the Cause
 The answer to this question is that the world peace.
 Guardian instructs us that the obligation to render military duty replaced by governments upon their citizens is a form of loyalty to one's government which the Baha'i must accept, but that the believers can, through their declared believers, National Assembly, seek exemption from Teachings of Baha'u'l- active army duty provided their government to rid human- recognizes the right of members of religious Of what use to bodies making peace a matter of conscience incomplete human to serve in some non-combatant service rather than as part of the armed force. of God? The
 The National Spiritual Assembly has investigated carefully this aspect of the situation, and has found that, whereas the government is our service to
 there among believers is what to work for Peace? Outside see many organizations with and believers occasionally duty to join such movements work for a vital Baha'i
 It is the view of the Assembly that activity in itself is the supreme service to The Baha'i community of the true example of Peace. The principles are the only ones upon which Peace can be established.
 enlarge the number of and broadcasting the lah, we are doing the utmost ity of the scourge of war. spend time and money upon man programs when we have program of the Manifestation firm union of the Baha'is in to the advancement of their is our service to Peace, as

ernment of the United States did, in the all other human
 needs-economic justice, race amity, religious unity,
 last war, provide exemption from military etc. Let non-
 duty on religious grounds, nevertheless this believers agitate for
 disarmament and cir- culate petitions for this
 exemption was part of the Statutes bearing and that pacifist
 directly upon that war, and with the cessa- aim-a Baha'i truly alive in
 this Faith will surely prefer to base his
 tion of hostilities the exemption lapsed. In activities upon the
 other words, there is today no basis on which foundation laid by
 Baha'u'llah, walk the path which the Master trod all
 any Baha'i may •be exempted from military His days, and heed
 duty in a possible future conflict. The Na- the appeals which the
 Guardian has given us to initiate a new era in
 tional Assembly, consequently, cannot at the public teach-
 present make any petition for exemption of ing of the Message.-N. S. A.
 Baha'is from war service, for such petitions COLLECTIVE ACTION BY
 must be filed with reference to some specific • LEAGUE OF NATIONS
 Act or Statute under which exemption can He feels that the
 be granted. The Assembly understands that, in the event of war, there will be some kind
 of provision for exemption enacted, but as followers of Baha'u'llah
 far as Baha'is are concerned, no steps can are under the obligation of
 obeying the orders of their respective
 be taken until this government declares it- governments when-
 self in a state of war. ever these are acting as
 participants in any collective action directed by
 This explanation, it is hoped, will satisfy the League of
 those who for some years have been urging N ations.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
 (This instruc- tion came in answer to a
 that protection be secured for American whether a Canadian
 letter inquiring Baha'i youth.
 Baha'i youth. whether a Canadian
 •believer should feel a moral obligation to accept
 On the other hand it must be pointed out military service
 that it is no part of our teaching program in the event that, under its
 obligation to the League, his government
 to attract young people to the Cause merely

participated with other governments in
in order to take advantage of any exemption military action initiated by the League).
that may later on be officially obtained for SECTION ONE, SHEET 14
BAHA't PROCEDURE PRESERVING THE
In a letter dated March 16, 1933, the Guardian sent these further details : ORGANIC UNITY
"As regards the non-political character of The believers, and
the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi Effendi feels that particularly those who
participated with other governments in
there is no contradiction whatsoever between have not had sufficient
experience in teaching, should be very careful
the Tablet (to Thornton Chase, referred to in the way they
above) and the reservations to which he has present the teachings of the
Cause. Sincerity, devotion and faith are
referred. The Master surely never desired not the sole con-
ditions of successful
the friends to use their influence towards the teaching. Tactfulness,
realization and promotion of policies con- extreme caution and wisdom
are equally im-
portant. We should not be in
trary to any of the principles of the Faith. a hurry when
The friends may vote, if they can do it, with- we announce the message to
out identifying themselves with one party or we should be careful to
present the teach-
ings in their entirety and
another. To enter the arena of party politics is surely detrimental to the best inter- for the sake of others.
Allegiance to the
Faith cannot be partial and
ests of the Faith and will harm the Cause. half-hearted.
It remains for the individuals to so use their Either we should accept the
Cause without
any qualification whatever,
right to vote as to keep aloof from party politics, and always bear in mind that they are ourselves Baha'is. The new
believers should
be made to realize that it is
voting on the merits of the individual, rather than because he belongs to one party or an- them to accept some aspects
of the teachings
and reject those which cannot
other. The matter must be made perfectly
suit their mental-
clear to the individuals, who will be left free tality in order to become

fully recognized

to exercise their discretion and judgment. and active followers of the Faith. In this

But if a certain person does enter into party way all sorts of misunderstandings will van-

politics and labors for the ascendancy of one ish and the organic unity of the Cause will

party over another, and continues to do it be preserved.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

against the expressed appeals and warnings THE VOTING RIGHT of the Assembly, then the Assembly has the

right to refuse him the right to vote in Baha'i elections."-N. S. A. I feel I must reaffirm the vital importance

and necessity of the right of voting-a sacred

ON CORRESPONDENCE responsibility of which no adult recognized

believer should be deprived, unless he is as-

WITH INDIVIDUAL sociated with a community that has not as

BELIEVERS yet been in a position to establish a local

At the meeting held on November 12 and Assembly. This distinguishing right which

13, 1932, the National Spiritual Assembly the believer possesses, however, does not

voted to adopt the policy that general Baha'i carry with it nor does it imply an obligation

matters must first be presented by individual to cast his vote, if he feels that the circum-

stances under which he lives believers to their Local Spiritual Assembly, do not justify

and the National Assembly will respond to or allow him to exercise that right intelli-

all such matters presented to it by a Local gently and with understanding. This is a

Assembly, it being understood that communi- matter which should be left to the individual

cations received from individual believers on to decide himself according to his own con-

personal matters will be answered direct. It science and discretion.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

was the sense of the meeting that this ac- tion should be brought to the attention of all believers in Baha'i News.

REGISTRATION OF

The purpose of this vote is to discourage ISOLATED BELIEVERS individual believers from undertaking cor-

A general letter has

recently been issued

response with the National Assembly on listed as "iso- matters related to the Cause in general and requested all not confined to the individual's personal affairs. In the case of such believers Cause as a whole, if individuals wish to seek the Baha'i Faith information or make suggestions, they are requested to do so through their Local Assembly. In the case of personal affairs, the other commu- National Assembly will be happy to carry sent only to those on correspondence with individual believers register themselves to the extent of its capacity.-N. S. A.

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

Any isolated believer who fails to receive a registration card is requested to notify the National Office.-N. S. A.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY GROUP CORRESPONDENT

avoid misunder- All local groups are requested to elect a you and the Correspondent once a year, and preferably (the National As- on April 21. The function of the Corres- will obtain full pondent is to receive Baha'i News and other question to them. general communications intended for all in this is not members of the group, and also to serve as to facilitate mat- link between the group and the Teaching misunderstandings. In all Committee, Publishing Committee, etc.- should first ap- N. S.A.

National Assem- bly and only in case they can obtain no sat-

RELATION OF INDIVID-

to an Baha'is who have been lated believers." This letter such believers to fill out tration card; thus permitting to record their adherence to and giving the National correct mailing list. Copies of Baha'i News and nications will in future ibe isolated believers who with the National Assembly.

SECTION ONE, SHEET 15

FIRST APPROACH THE LOCAL, THEN THE

To facilitate matters and standings he prefers to refer individual friends to them sembly). He is sure that you satisfaction by putting the The purpose of the Guardian to avoid the issue but only ters and eliminate such matters the friends

approach the Local, then the isfaction should they approach

the Guardian

on these matters. This way many difficulties will be avoided.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

I fully approve and whole-heartedly and unreservedly uphold the principle to which you refer that personalities should not be made centers around which the community may revolve but that they should be subordinated under all conditions and however great their merits to the properly constituted Assemblies. You and your co-workers can never overestimate or overemphasize this cardinal principle of Baha'i Administration. Shoghi Effendi would

-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

known to all the friends. For although it is essential for the believers to maintain always ASSEMBLIES, NOT INDIVIDUALS, CONSTITUTE functions, yet they should be careful not to be led to think that THE BEDROCK are mutually

Regarding the principle that the Cause nature, and as such

must not be allowed to center around any and the same per-

Baha'i personality, the Guardian wishes to friends should

make it clear that it was never intended that both the teaching

well qualified individual teachers should not of Baha'i ser-

receive from local Assemblies every encouragement and facilities to address the public. What the Guardian meant was that

one of these two

seem more desirable

the personality and popularity of such a their efforts in

ties will be avoided.-SHOGHI

TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATION

Regarding the statement

Guardian in his letter . . .

fact that believers can serve and administrators.

approve your Assembly making

this fact

a clear distinction between

ministrative duties and

these two types of Baha'i activity

tually exclusive in their

cannot be exercised by one

son. As a matter of fact, the

be encouraged to serve in

and the administrative fields

vice. But as there are always

more specially gifted along

lines of activity it would

that they should concentrate

speaker should never be allowed to eclipse for that type of the authority, or detract from the influence suited by nature of the body of the elected representatives in has the advantage of saving time, and of every local community. Such an individual leading to. greater efficiency, particularly should not only seek the approval, advice and assistance of the body that represents the danger, however, Cause in his locality, but should strive to do the friends may attribute any credit, he may obtain to the collective wisdom and capacity of the Assembly contrary to, both the under whose jurisdiction he performs his of the Faith. . It services. Assemblies and not individuals overcome such a danger constitute the bedrock on which the Administration is built. Everything else must be encouraged to subordinate to, and be made to serve and both the teaching advance the best interests of, these elected spheres of Bahá'í custodians and promoters of the Laws of Baha'u'llah.

acquiring the full training work for which they are best suited. Such a specialization of our development. The great danger, however, lies in that by so tend to develop a sort of which is fundamentally spirit and actual teachings is precisely in order to ger that the Guardian thinks that the friends should be serve from time to time in and the administrative work, but only whenever they so.

SHOGHI EFFENDI. SECTION ONE, SHEET 16
 BAHÁ'Í PROCEDURE ly when it is done
 STATUS OF TRAVELING
 spontaneously, can cause TEACHERS provided it is done with care and only when circumstances make it necessary, no harm to the Cause. Such an action, constitutes no violation of the principle already referred to. give new emphasis to the administrative The danger in all activities of this nature is to give the impression that principle under which a traveling teacher is the teaching of

not only subject to the jurisdiction of the local Assembly in each city, but is expected to be concerned only with teaching activities and not to intervene in local problems undoubtedly, be less specifically requested by the local Assembly to assist in some local situation where help which some the believer may render good service, under the Assembly's direction.-N. S. A.

the Cause is an institution, support of paid teachers. ingly and with utmost promote the Cause should, helped in every way. But whatever on the financial friends may freely choose to

-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO EXPRESS HIS OWN VIEWS

CONCERNING INDIVIDUAL TEACHING
Concerning individual teaching,

Shoghi

As regards the statement of our own views who feels and explanations of the teachings : Shoghi Effendi believes that we should not restrict keep in close touch the liberty of the individual to express his Assembly of the local own views so long as he makes it clear that working. The Local these views are his own. In fact, such explaining for it- planations are often helpful and are conducive to a better understanding of the teachings. God has given man a rational power teachers and to be used and not killed. whatever facilities they This does not, however, mean that the absolute authority does not remain in the revealed Words. We should try and keep as near to the authority as we can and show

Effendi would urge every Baha'i the urge to exercise his officially the Cause, to with the Local Spirituality in which he is Spiritual Assembly, while self the right to control the part of individual utmost to encourage such put at their disposal would need in such any differences arise, the Assembly would naturally and adjust matters.-SHOGHI

EFFENDI.

that we are faithful to it by quoting from the Words of Baha'u'llah in establishing our points. To discard the authority of the revealed Words is heretic and to suppress completely individual interpretation of those few years to see Words is also bad. We should try to strike Baha'u'llah will a happy medium between these two extremes.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

Baha'is are attempting, are only faint rays that precede CHIEF DUTY OF EVERY glorious morn. We

BAHA't Cause is destined to play in the life of society. We

Concerning the abolition of the institution of paid national teachers, the Guardian and unworthy, but wishes to reaffirm his former statements on the Cause of this matter, and to stress once more that great care be taken to avoid the difficulties and the misunderstandings which in former days had caused so much trouble among the friends. The main point to be emphasized in this connection is that of making the teachings of the Cause not the work of a limited group but the chief duty and responsibility of every Baha'i. This is why -no salaried teachers should any longer exist. approved by the Re-

But occasionally to defray the expenses of a recorded sanctioning of a certain Baha'i, particularly A.

BAHA'I PROCEDURE CREDENTIALS FOR the government. In the case of municipal officials,

TEACHING THROUGH

DRAMA AND ART

We have to wait only a how the spirit breathed by find expression in the work

What you and some other

the effulgent light of a

cannot yet estimate the part the

have to give it time. The

~as ~o mould is too crude

It will at last give way and

Baha'u'llah will reveal

dor.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

TEACHING MATERIAL TO BE APPROVED

All literature, charts

used in Baha'i teaching

to that which has been

viewing Committee or has the

tion of the N. S. A.-N. S.

SECTION ONE, SHEET 17

volving the Cause with officers of

TRAVELING TEACHERS

through the Lo-

Teachers visiting new areas should always have a proper letter of credentials showing that the teacher has authority to hold Baha'i meetings.-N. S. A.

contact should be made only

cal Assembly.-N. S. A.

SETTLEMENT OF CIVIL

DISPUTES

REFERENCE TO

the im-

POLITICAL FIGURES

civil courts

of cases of dispute between believers, even

The Guardian wishes me to draw the attention of the friends through you that they settle amicably such should be very careful in their public addresses not to mention any political figures-Cause, and to ac-

either side with them or denounce them. This experience for foe ex-

is the first thing to bear in mind. Otherwise the future.-

they will involve the friends in political matters, which is infinitely dangerous to the Cause.-SHOGHI EFFENDI

FORM OF BEQáUEST

The following form has been prepared by

PUBLIC CONTACTS

believers

To approach such well-known and important persons is always an extremely delicate matter, since it requires a good deal of wisdom, courage and ability. But those friends adapted to meet

who really feel the urge to do so, and possess the laws of

the necessary qualifications, should cultivate

such friendships which, if properly done, can be of an immense benefit to the Cause. In

to the National Spiritual

The Guardian wishes to emphasize

importance of avoiding reference to

in non-Baha'i issues. It is the

function to endeavor to

disputes, both in order to

name and prestige of the

quire the necessary

tension of its functions in

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

the Legal Committee for the use of

who plan to include a bequest or

their Will. It is recommended

consult an attorney in using

assured that it should be

the needs and requirements of

the State in whkh they

I hereby give and devise

\$.

any case, however, the assistance and help of either the local or the National Assembly to the several is not only useful but necessary, if important contacts of this sort are to be fruitful and shall constitute the principle of consultation, Assembly of the which constitutes one of the basic laws of and Canada according to the Administration, should be applied to all regulations Baha'i activities which affect the collective interests of the Faith, for it is through co-operation and continued exchange of thoughts and views that the Cause can best safeguard and foster its interests. Individual initiative, personal ability and resourcefulness, though indispensable are, unless supported and enriched by the collective experience and wisdom of the group, utterly incapable of achieving such a tremendous task.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

To make this comment clearer it should be explained that the believer who received the Guardian's letter had written a personal non-public teaching letter to a well known scientist, enclosing Baha'i literature. activities outside In connection with the Guardian's emphasis on consultation, it is reported to the American believers that the National Spiritual Assembly has voted that Baha'is should

Assembly of the Baha'is of and Canada, that is to say, persons who at the time of my death, and from time to time thereafter, shall constitute the National Spiritual Baha'is of the United States according to the government and of said Religious Body as time of my death and from thereafter amended, to be accordance with the functions of the National Assembly for the furtherance of Baha'u'llah.-N.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TEACHING

The National Assembly makes a distinction between public and non-public teaching activities, attempting no jurisdiction over non-public teaching the jurisdiction of local Assemblies, but in the case of public teaching activities, the National Spiritual Assembly controlling regulations that

in any area out-
 seek to make contact with Federal and State side the jurisdiction of
 local Assemblies,
 officials only through the Na.tional Assem- teachers are not to hold
 public Baha'i meet- ings involving the name of
 bly, and refrain from personal activities in-
 the Cause with-
 BAHA'I PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 18
 out the recognition and approval of the Re- made by the Publishing
 Committee, that
 gional Committee, or of the National Teach- when books are financed by a
 Baha'i author
 ing Committee, depending upon the area of with the idea that the
 Publishing Committee
 jurisdiction, and all such public meetings are shall distribute the book,
 the author is to
 to be held under the sponsorship of the turn over to the Publishing
 Committee the
 proper Teaching Committee.-N. S. A. cost of printing the work, so
 that the Com-
 mittee can supervise the printing. This rul-
 USE OF THE TERM ing does not mean that a Baha'i
 author can-
 not publish approved Baha'i literature
 "BAHA't" through a recognized general publisher.
 Its
 aim is to prevent confusion between authors
 Use of the term "Baha'i" as applied to and the Publishing Committee,
 and enable
 music, painting, poetry and other art forms. the Committee to maintain
 proper standards
 At the present time, there exists no stand- of printing and binding, and
 assure accuravy
 ard by which music, painting, poetry and in the text.-N. S. A.
 other art forms can be described as "Baha'i",
 as distinguished from other forms of art.
 Such art forms may deal with Baha'i sub- APPLICATION OF
 jects, but their excellence as art can be ECONOMIC TEACHINGS
 judged only by existing standards which can
 in no sense of the word be described as With regard to your wish
 for reorganiz-
 "Baha'i". It, therefore, at present seems ing your business along
 Baha'i lines, Shoghi
 wise that music, paintings, poetry and other Effendi deeply appreciates
 the spirit that has
 art products should not be described as Ba- permitted you to make such a
 suggestion.

ha'i music, Baha'i poetry, etc. Hymns, for But he feels nevertheless
that the time has
instance, should not be published as "Baha'i not yet come for any believer
to bring about
Hymns", but should, perhaps, be described as such a fundamental change in
the economic
"Hymns-for use in Baha'i meetings." structure of our society,
however restricted
may be the field for such an experiment. The
It is, of course, desirable that any art economic teachings of the Cause,
though well
products which deal with Baha'i subjects and known in their main outline,
have not as yet
which are published or exhibited to the gen- been sufficiently elaborated
and systematized
eral public, shall not be of so low a standard to allow anyone to make an
emct and thor-
of artistic merit as to reflect discredit, or ough application of them even
on a restrict-
bring ridicule, upon the Baha'i Cause.-N. ed scale.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
S. A.

TO DISCRIMINATE IN THE
USE OF THE TERM

GENERAL INTERESTS
TAKE PRECEDENCE

"BAHA't" As to material sacrifices toward
the wel-
fare of the Cause, he wishes you to under-
The following ruling has been adopted by stand that the general interests
of the Cause
the N. S. A.: That the collective activities of take precedence over the
interests of the par-
Baha'is, with which the name Baha'i is asso- ticular individuals. For
instance, contribu-
ciated, ought not to be extended to activities tions to the welfare of
individuals are second-
of non-Baha'is which cannot be controlled by ary to contributions to the
National and Lo-
the believers through their institutions and cal Funds and that of the
Temple.-SHOGHI
under the recognized principles of Baha'i ad- EFFENDI.
ministration; and further that the public so-
licitation of funds under Baha'i auspices, ir- THE IMPORTANCE OF
respective of the worthiness of the object, BAHA't CREDENTIALS
may give a wrong impression of the nature The N. S. A. regrets to
of the Cause. When believers wish to show
report that one of
a special respect to any non-believer or non- the American believers has

been grossly de-
Baha'i organization, they should do so as received by a person who
represented himself
individuals without involving the name of as having a reference from a
Baha'i in an-
the Cause.-N. S. A. other city.

As was pointed out several years ago, such
BOOKS FINANCED BY cases will increase in future, as
the Baha'i
THE AUTHOR community grows in strength and
resources,

unless the believers uphold the rule that all
Voted to approve the recommendation travelers claiming to be
Baha'is must have

BAHA'i PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 19
proper credentials, in writing, from their ment of debts comes before
contributions to

local Assembly. Traveling Baha'is not mem- the Cause) for upon this
principle does the
bers of a local community, but recorded as foundation of our economic
life rest.-

isolated believers, can obtain ,a letter from SHOGHI EFFENDI.
the N. S. A.

Another principle given. us for our protec- CLASSIFICATION OF MA-
tion is that application for financial assist-
ance made in the name of the Cause by indi- TERIALS FOR PRESERV A-
viduals personally unknown can be referred TION IN NATIONAL ANO
to the Spiritual Assembly for consultation

before the assistance is given.--N. S. A. LOCAL BAHA'i ARCHIVES

Note: This dassification has been made
ASSOCIATION WITH in order to clarify the nature of
the material

to be preserved in the Archives, w,ith a suit-
ORIENTALS able distinction between that which
should

I wish ,to add a few lines and remind you be sent to the National Archives
and that

of the necessity of refusing to admit to your which should enter into the
Archives estab-

Assembly, or associate with, any Oriental who lished by a local Spiritual
Assembly.

does not have proper credentials from a rec- I. Tablets and relics of
Baha'u'llah and

the Bab, whether original Tablets or repro-
ognized Spiritual Assembly. No excuse what-
ductions. This material is essentially Na-
ever is acceptable. I am sure that a few

tional in character.

are trying to cause mischief and bring about

II. Tablets and relics of 'Abdu'l-Baha. The
a split in the ranks of the believers in these
Tablets -should be original, signed Tablets, or

days of stress, and the utmost caution should

authentic reproductions such as photostat

be exercised, lest these mischief-makers suc-

ceed in undermining the foundations of the copies. Tablets should be

accompanied by

Cause.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

original translation if

possible. All original

Tablets should be preserved in the National

Archives. Photostats of Tablets revealed to

CONSULTATION ON

the Spiritual Assembly, or to

individual be-

PERSONAL DIFFICULTIES

lievers, might well be placed

in the local

Archives. As regards ,the nature of relics,

He (Shogh:i Effendi) was very sorry to the Guardian has given the

following ex-

learn that you are passing through difficult planation: "The general

principle should be

times, but such seems to be the fate of every that any object used by Him in

person should

single person on the surface of the earth at be preserved for posterity,

whether ,in the

the present time. When such a crisis sweeps local or National Archives. It

is the duty

over the world no person should hope to re- and responsibility of the

Baha'i Assemblies

main intact. We belong to an organic unit to ascertain carefully whether

such objects

and when one part of the organismá suffers are genuine or not, and to

exercise the ut-

all the rest of the body will feel its conse- most care and caution in the

matter."

quences. This is in fact the reason why

III. Letters of Shoghi

Effendi. These are

Baha'u'llah calls our attention to the unity of three different

classes-those written to

of mankind. But as Baha'is we should not the N. S. A. and the entire

American Baha'i

let such hardships weaken our hope in the Community; those written to

local Assem-

future. Read the last general letter of blies; and those written to

individual believ-

Shoghi Effendi ("The Golden Age of the preserving Cause of Bahi'u'llah") and see the description of the future which he has tried to put contain matters before our eyes. We may be suffering at N. S. A. plans present but that will soon cease and glorious Guardian's letters, at days will dawn. which time all originals can be gone over In all such matters as you mention in with a view .to their preservation in the Na- your letter, Shoghi Effendi wishes the friends letters to local As- to take the Assemblies into their confidence not confiden- and discuss it with them. Being on the spot the National they can judge better and take into áconsid- the local Ar- eration all the different aspects of the prob- believers can lem. We should always trust the Assemblies Archives and photo- and go to them for advice. Our debts, how- recipient and for the ever, should be considered as sacred and take precedence over any other thing (i. e., pay- activities. Such

BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION ONE, SHEET 20

events as 'Abdu'l-Baha's American journey, the Cause is the founding of the Temple, early historical most difficult records of Star of the West, Baha'i Publish- that the friends ing Committee, Green Acre, Geyserville and the necessary Louhelen Ranch and other activities of more Administration.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

than local importance constitute an impres- sive aspect of Baha'i history, and all original documents and records should be turned over to the N. S. A., if not already done, for its examination and subsequent deposit in the

ers. The National Assembly is the national letters of the larly as they occasionally confidential to that body. The to photostat all the which time all originals can be sent to the National stats obtained for the local Archives. IV. National events and

original Archives. Original Assemblies are for the most part tial and can be preserved in Archives, with photostats in chives. Letters to individual be sent to the National stats obtained for the local Archives. IV. National events and

SECTION ONE, SHEET 20

the Faith. It is now, when passing through some of the stages of its development, should equip themselves with knowledge of the

NOT AN ECONOMIC SYSTEM

National Archives. There are practically no technical teachings on economics in the Cause, V. Local records and activities. Records such as and documents pertaining to such activities and others. The Cause is not an economic system, nor can its founders be considered as are of two classes: the Minutes and correspondence of the Spiritual Assembly, which nical economists. The having been technical economists. The are preserved by the Assembly itself, and Faith to this subject is contribution of the as it consists of the non-administrative material of historical essentially indirect, principles to our present-day economic system. Baha'u'llah has given us Cards, etc. It is recommended that each a few basic principles which should guide Spiritual Assembly also provide a bound book in which its Archives Committee can economists in establishing such institutions as will adjust the economic relationships and also deaths or removals from the community. of the world.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

VI. Baha'i publications. A complete file of all publications, such as books, pamphlets, magazines, news letters, etc., of official Baha'i character is being developed in the TEMPLE MODELS TO BE APPROVED The following rulings have been adopted by the Temple Trustees, and National Archives, and the cooperation of the friends is requested, to make this complete. Out of print Baha'i books and pamphlets will be appreciated. Any model or reproduction of the Temple must be submitted to the Temple Trustees, and the Trustees will then families in possession of the papers belonging to determine whether the model or reproduction is acceptable, and also will determine the "America and the Most Great Peace" will ap-

conditions under which it can be sold. Local Assemblies, or other Baha'i bodies, or individual believers, are not to purchase or exhibit any Temple model except through the Temple Trustees. -N.S.A.

PURPOSE OF SUMMER SCHOOLS

PUBLICATION OF BAHAI COMPILATIONS

The basic purpose of all Baha'i Summer Schools, whether in East or West, is to give the believers the opportunity to acquaint themselves, not only by mere study but through whole-hearted and active collaboration in various Baha'i activities, with the essentials of the Administration and in this way enable them to become efficient and able promoters of the Cause. The teaching of the Administration is, therefore, an indispensable feature of every Baha'i Summer School and its special significance can be better understood if we realize the great need of every believer today for a more adequate understanding of the social principles and laws of

1. A compilation is subject to review by the Reviewing Committee in order as are other Baha'i compilations must include the translation of each excerpt, each excerpt must be of the book makes it source at the end of each printed work, the source must be noted in the manuscript supplied to the Reviewing Committee.

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

SECTION ONE, SHEET 21

publish the compilation outside the Cause, Untold blessings the proposed arrangement is to be submitted

2. The compiler should not arrangement with a non-Baha'i until the compilation has proved. If the compiler surely, be over-estimated. shall no doubt crown every

effort directed to
to the National Spiritual Assembly through its Publishing Committee for approval. that end.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

3. In giving its approval for such printing or publication, the National Spiritual Assembly, in consultation with its Reviewing and Publishing Committee, will consider not question of the par-merely the question of accuracy in the text, people in Nine- but ,also the general question of policy in- following principle has
involved in allowing Baha'i literature to be children of believers published outside the established Baha'i fa- Day Feasts and cilities. other intimate gatherings and Baha'i meet-

4. In giving its approval, the National Spiritual Assembly will in each case here- should request after request the compiler to assign to the declaration of their Baha'i Publishing Committee any copyright their intention to taken out on publication of the book or pamphlet. Otherwise, the control of Baha'i literature would pass outside the Cause. Baha'is, can also attend The purpose of this statement is to assure Baha'i meet- proper protection of the interests of the of sixteen years Baha'i Faith, while providing sufficient free- declaration to the local dom of action to individual believers under all circumstances.-N. S. A.

COOPERATION WITH BAHA'f AUTHORS

When a Baha'i author wishes to obtain believer who orders from Assemblies and believers for a with unusual care

BAHA'f YOUTH AT NINE- TEEN DAY FEASTS

With respect to the participation of Baha'i young teen Day Feasts, the been adopted: that the á can attend the Nineteen other intimate gatherings ings, but when they reach the years, the local Assembly from such young people a interest in the Cause and become voting members when age of twenty-one; and that ple, not children of Nineteen Day Feasts and other ings after reaching the age by making a similar Assembly.-N. S. A.

THE QUESTION OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

It has been pointed out by a has studied the teachings

book published by a non-Baha'i firm, the author is to make arrangements satisfactory to the practice of "charity" in the narrower meaning of that word. The Publishing Committee, not the author, is to report the matter to the National Spiritual Assembly. The House of Justice, from its resources derived not only from voluntary contributions but also from certain specified taxes, will cooperate with a Baha'i author only when the Reviewing Committee has specifically recommended that relief will not be as "charity" but as a normal right arising from the very nature of a community based upon oneness and able, by the application of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, to abolish poverty at its source.

NATIONAL FUND But that era has not yet been established.

The believers today find themselves in a community whose spiritual laws are known but whose material powers and capacities are limited. The result is that as the activities of the American Baha'i community expand, and its worldwide presence correspondingly increases, the institutions arise which Spiritual Assemblies find themselves apparently powerless to remedy. They are grievously as they feel themselves torn between the claims of true importance, and should be increasingly supported by the entire body of the believers, both of concentrating their available means upon such vital objects as the in their individual capacities, and through

Temple.

their collective efforts, whether organized as
understands that

groups or as local Assemblies. The supply
the view that

of funds, in support of the National Treas-
local_ Assembly

ury, constitutes, at the present time, the
of urgent distress

life~blood of these nascent institutions you
have it relieved by

are laboring to erect. Its importance cannot,
own family, and

BAHA't PROCEDURE

second, to exercise the rights of all citizens
through commercial

to employ all civil instruments of help and
in the name of

assistance. In many instances loving consul-
Baha'i adminis-

tation will serve to remove certain obstacles
Assembly felt it neces-

which, perhaps unconsciously, have been the
Minutes the fact that it

cause of the distress.

approve any such

Most difficult and grievous of all are those
was felt inad-

cases which concern believers not members
commercial aictivities of

of an organized local community. The Na-
the interest and

tional Spiritual Assembly does not vote from
from the vital spirit-

the National Fund any appropriations for
especially in view

personal relief, for its resources are impera-
of sacrifice as the

tively demanded for direct Baha'i purposes
success in building the

the fulfilment of which brings us all grad-
consideration was the fact

ually nearer the blessed day when the Faith
be donated to

of Baha'u'llah shall prevail, and existing
of sales made

causes of suffering be removed. Institutions

The National Assembly

the Guardian has expressed

under present conditions a

which has before it a case

should endeavor, first, to

members of the believer's

SECTION ONE, SHEET 22

of raising Baha'i funds

activities carried on either

the Cause or making use of

trative facilities, the

sary to record in its

could not recognize nor

commercial undertaking. It

visable to sanction

a nature tending to divert

attention of the friends

ual objects of the Cause,

of the Guardian's standard

basis of our collective

Temple. Another

that the amounts which might

the Baha'i Fund from profits

to believers would at best

represent only a comparatively small fraction
 described in the teachings will in the future of the money
 be maintained in all communities for those spent in the transaction. On
 the other hand,
 who need home and care. the National Assembly
 encourages all possi-
 The subject is one which the National As- ble enterprise on the part of
 individual be-
 sembly brings forward at this time in a ten- lievers in increasing their
 earnings through
 tative form, in the hope that suggestions legitimate business and
 professional activi-
 emanating from local consultation will be ties, for the purpose of
 contributing more to
 made. The spirit of the Cause is such that the Fund.-N. S. A.
 some way must and will be found to remedy I feel that only such
 goods as are owned
 a general situation which may become even by believers, whether made
 by Baha'is or
 more serious before it is solved by the de- non-Baha'is, may be sold in
 the interests of
 velopment of the World Order of Baha'u'llah. the Temple or any other
 Baha'i institution,
 There may be individual believers in a posi- thus maintaining the general
 principle that
 tion to offer a home to some believer whose non-believers are not,
 whether directly or
 difficulties are known to the National Assem- indirectly, expected to
 contribute to the sup..
 -bly. Any and all advice and constructive port of institutions that
 are of a strictly
 suggestions will be deeply appreciated.- Baha'i character. As to the
 manner of the
 N. S. A. disposal of Baha'i property
 for such pur-
 poses, and the channel through which the
 ásale may be effected, I feel that no rigid rule
 ON COMMERCIAL should be imposed. Individual
 Baha'is are
 free to seek the help of private individuals
 ARRANGEMENTS FOR or of Spiritual Assemblies to
 act as inter-
 THE CAUSE mediary for such transactions.
 We should
 avoid confusion on one hand and maintain
 In view of the fact that the National As- efficiency on the other, and

lay no unnecessary restrictions that
assembly had before it several proposals from sary restrictions that
would fetter individual initiative and
individual believers which involved methods enterprise.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
BAHA'í PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 1
THE INSTITUTION OF THE cial, regular, and frequent
correspondence
with the various Baha'í centers throughout
LOCAL SPIRITUAL the world, report to them their
activities,
ASSEMBLY and share the glad-tidings they
receive with
all their fellow-workers in the Cause.
And, now, that this all-important Work They must encourage and
stimulate by every means at their
may suffer no neglect, but rather function
command, through sub- scription, reports and
vigorously and continuously in every part of
articles, the develop- ment of the various Baha'í
the Baha'í world; ,that the unity of the Cause
magazines, such as the "Star of the West"
of Baha'u'llah may remain secure and in-
and the "Magazine of the Children of the
violate, it is of the utmost importance that
Kingdom" in the Unit- ed States of America, the
in accordance with the explicit text of the
"Baha'í News" of India, the "Sun of the East"
Kitab-ul-Aqdas, the Most Holy Book, in every
(Khurshid-i Khavar) in Turkestan, the
locality, be it city or hamlet, where the num-
"Star of the East" in Japan, the "Sun of
ber of adult (21 years and above) declared
Truth" in Germany. They must undertake the
believers exceeds nine, a local "Spiritual As-
arrangement of the regular meetings of the
sembly" be forthwith established. To it all
friends, the feasts and the
local matters pertaining to the Cause must be
anniversaries, as well as the special gatherings designed
directly and immediately referred for full
to serve and pro- mote the social,
consultation and decision. The importance,
intellectual and spiritual in- terests of their fellow-men.
nay the absolute necessity of these local As-
semblies is manifest when we realize that in
these days when They must supervise in

the days to come they will evolve into the infancy all Baha'i local House of Justice, and at present pro-translations, and provide in- vide the firm foundation on which the struc- accurate presen- ture of the Master's Will is to be reared in literature and its dis- future. tribution to the general public.

The matter of Teaching, its direction, its outstanding ways and means, its extension, its consolida- of every Spiritual tion, essential as they are to the interests of locality the Cause the Cause, constitute by no means the only and in order to in- issue which should receive the full attention confusion, each of of these Assemblies. A careful study of will have to be re- Baha'u'llah's and 'Abdu'l-Baha's Tablets will Committee, responsible reveal that other duties, no less vital to the it from among interests of the Cause, devolve upon the locality, and upon whose elected representatives of the friends in ev- to exercise con- ery locality. stant and general supervision.

It is incumbent upon them to be vigilant Assemblies will have and cautious, discreet and watchful, and pro- the friends, and ev- tect at all times the Temple of the Cause years ,and above, from the dart of the mischief-maker and the assuming an in- onslaught of the enemy. different or independent attitude, should re-

They must endeavor to promote amity and part conscien- concord amongst the friends, efface every the election, the con- lingering trace of distrust, coolness and es- solidation and the

the Cause is still in its publications and general for a dignified and tation of all Baha'i These rank among the most obligations of the members Assembly. In whatsoever has sufficiently expanded, sure efficiency and avoid these manifold functions f erred to a special to that Assembly, elected by the friends in that work the Assembly will have These local Spiritual to be elected directly by ery declared believer of 21 far from standing aloof and gard it his sacred duty to take tiously and diligently, in solidation and the

efficient' working of his
 trangement from every heart, and secure in
 its stead an active and whole-hearted co-
 establishment, and to insure
 operation for the service of the Cause. uniformity throughout the
 East and through-
 They must do their utmost to extend at all out the West, all local
 Assemblies will have
 times the helping hand to the poor, the sick, to ,be re-elected once a
 year, during the first
 the disabled, the orphan, the widow, irrespec- day of Ridvan, and the
 result of polling, if
 tive of color, caste and creed. possible, be declared on
 that day.
 They must promote by every means in In order to avoid division
 and disruption,
 their power the material as well as the spirit- that the Cause may not fall
 a prey to con-
 flicting interpretations,
 flicting interpretations,
 and lose thereby its
 the education of children, institute, when- purity and pristine vigor,
 that its affairs may
 ever possible, Baha'i educational institutions, be conducted with
 efficiency and promptness,
 organize and supervise ,their work and pro- it is necessary that every
 one should con-
 scientiously take an active
 vide the best means for their progress and
 part in the elec-
 tion of these Assemblies,
 development. abide by their deci-
 sion, enforce their decree, and
 abide by their deci-
 sion, enforce their decree, and
 They must make an effort to maintain offi-
 cooperate with
 BAHA'1 PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 2
 them wholeheartedly in their task of stimu-
 cient and dignified
 presentation of the Cause
 of God. They should never be
 lating the growth of the Movement through-
 led to suppose
 out all regions. The members of these As-
 ornaments of the
 that they are the central
 semblies, on their part, must disregard utter- body of the Cause,
 body of the Cause,
 intrinsically superior to
 ly their own likes and dislikes, their personal others in capacity or merit,
 and sole pro-
 moters of its teachings and
 interests and inclinations, and concentrate
 principles. They
 should approach their task
 their minds upon those measures that will
 with extreme hu-

conduce to the welfare and happiness of the Baha'i Community and promote the common justice and duty, weal. their candor, their modesty, their entire devotion to the welfare and interests of the national, constitute today the bedrock upon the humanity, to win, not strength of which the Universal House is in genuine support future to be firmly established and raised. Not until these function vigorously and harmoniously can the hope for the termination of this period of transition be realized. It devolves upon us whose dearest wish is to see the Cause enter upon that ,promised era of universal recognition and world achievements, to do all in our power to consolidate the foundations of these Assemblies, promoting at the same time a fuller understanding of their ,purpose and more harmonious cooperation for their maintenance and success. And, when they Let us also remember that at the very root of the Cause lies the principle of the undispionate, an-doubted right of the individual to self-expression, his freedom to declare his earnestness and conviction and set forth his views. If certain instructions of the Master are today par-

mility, and endeavor, by ness, their high sense of only the confidence and the and respect of those whom also their esteem and real must, at all time, avoid the clusiveness, the atmosphere free themselves from a tude, and banish all forms of and passion from their should, within the limits of take the friends into their quaint them with their plans, them their problems and their advice and counsel. are called upon to arrive at a sion, they should, after xious and cordial in prayer, and with tion and courage record their by the voice of the majority,

which we are particularly emphasized and scrupulously advised to, let us be sure that they are but always to be provisional measures designed to guard and protect the Cause in its present state of infancy and growth until the day when this insure the tender and precious plant shall have sufficiently grown to be able to withstand the unwisdom of its friends and the attacks of its enemies.

told by our Master to be the never to be challenged, and whole-heartedly enforced. To friends must heartily it as the only means that can tecton and advancement of the Cause.-

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

THE BASIS OF THE

Let us also bear in mind that the keynote of the Cause of God is not dictatorial authority but humble fellowship, not arbitrary power, but the spirit of frank and loving consultation. Nothing short of the spirit of a true Baha'i can hope to reconcile the principles of mercy and justice, of freedom and submission, of the sanctity of the right of the individual and of self-surrender, of vigilance, and the wronged discretion and prudence on the one hand, and fellowship, candor, and courage on the other.

COMMUNITY
We must speak of things of performance in this world. many theories and high ideas but they are not practicable we must speak of things that For example, if some one jures, and wrongs another, man retaliates, this is censurable. . . .

But the community has the

right of defence and of self-protection; moreover, the community has no hatred nor animosity for the murderer: it imprisons or punishes him merely for the protection and security of others. It is not for the chosen them. Their function is not to dic- purpose of taking

tate, but to consult, •and consult not only vengeance upon the murderer, but for the purpose of inflicting a punishment by which the community will be protected

among themselves, but as much as possible the community will be protected

with the friends whom they represent. They must regard themselves in no other light but As forgiveness is one of the attributes of the Merciful One, so also that of chosen instruments for a more effi- justice is one of the

BAHA'I PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 3

attributes of the Lord. The tent of existence person will act independently and after his own judgment, will follow is upheld upon the pillar of justice, and not his own desire, and do harm to the ácause.

upon forgiveness. The continuance of man- "The prime requisites for kind depends upon justice and not upon for- them that take counsel together are purity giveness. So if, at present, the law of par- of motive, radi- ance of spirit, detachment don were practised in all countries, in a short time the world would be disordered, and the God, attraction to His Divine Fragrance, hu- mility and lowliness amongst foundations of human life would crumble. His loved ones, servitude to His exalted patience and long-suffering in difficulties and To recapitulate: the constitution of the Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to communities depends upon justice, not upon acquire these at- tributes, victory from the forgiveness. Then what Christ meant by unseen Kingdom of Baha shall be vouchsafed forgiveness and pardon is not that, when to them. In this day, Assemblies of nations attack you, burn your homes, plunder the greatest importance and consultation are of sity. Obedience unto them is your goods, assault your wives, children, and a vital neces- sity. Obedience unto them is relatives, and violate your honor, you should essential and obligatory. The members be submissive in the presence of these tyran- thereof must take counsel together in such nical foes, and •allow them to perform all wise that no occa- sion for illfeeling or their cruelties ,and oppressions. No, the discord may arise. This

words of Christ refer to the conduct of two member ex-
 individuals towards each other: if one per-
 freedom his own opin-
 son assaults another, the injured one should
 argument. Should
 forgive him. But the communities must pro-
 no account feel
 tect the rights of man.-'ABDU'L-BAHA.
 are fully dis-
 cussed can the right way be revealed. The
 A PROCEDURE FOR THE
 cometh forth only
 after the clash of differing opinions. If,
 CONDUCT OF THE LOCAL
 be carried unani-
 SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
 the Lord for-
 bid, differences of opinion should arise, a
 INTRODUCTION
 ...
 "A perusal of some of the words of Ba-
 absolute love and
 ha'u'llah and áAbdu'l-Baha on the duties and
 of the As-
 functions of the Spiritual Assemblies in ev-
 free from es-
 ery land (later to be designated as the local
 in themselves
 Houses of Justice), emphatically reveals the
 are the waves of
 sacredness of their nature, the wide scope of
 river, the stars
 their activity, and the grave responsibility
 one sun, the trees
 which rests upon them."-SHOGHI EFFENDI,
 of one garden.
 March 5, 1922.
 and absolute
 "The Lord hath ordained that in every city
 gathering shall
 a House of Justice be established wherein
 Assembly be brought
 shall gather counsellors to the number of
 condition :-They
 Baha It hehooveth them to be the trusted
 turn their faces

can be attained when every
 presseth with absolute
 ion and setteth forth his
 any one oppose, he must on
 hurt for not until matters
 shining sparkl of truth
 after discussion, a decision
 mously, well and good; hut if,
 majority of voices must prevail.
 "The first condition is
 harmony amongst the members
 sembly. They must be wholly
 trangement and must manifest
 the Unity of God, for they
 one sea, the drops of one
 of one heaven, the rays of
 of one orchard, the flowers
 Should harmony of thought
 unity be non-exi~tent, that
 be dispersed and that
 to naught. The second
 must when coming together

ones of the Merciful among men and to re-ask aid from
 guard themselves as the guardians appointed then proceed
 of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incourtesy, dignity,
 cumbent upon them to take counsel together express their views.
 and to have regard for the interests of the search out the
 servants of God, for His sake, even as they their own opinion,
 regard their own interests, and to choose persistence in one's
 that which is meet and seemly. Thus hath to discord and
 the Lord your God commanded you. Beware remain hidden.
 lest ye put away that which is clearly reall freedom
 vealed in His Tablet. Fear God, O ye that and it is in no
 perceive."-BAHA'U'LLAH. belittle the
 "It is incumbent upon every one not to with mod-
 take any step without consulting the Spirit- and should dif-
 ual Assembly, and they must assuredly obey ferences of opinion arise a
 majority of voices must ,prevail, and all must
 with heart and soul its bidaing •and he sub- obey áand submit
 missive unto it, that things may ibe properly to the majority. It is again
 not permitted that any one of the honored
 ordered and well arranged. Otherwise every members object
 BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 4
 to or censure, whether in or out of the meet- reservedly and with
 cheerfulness."-SHOGHI
 ing, any decision arrived at previously, EFFENDI,February 23, 1924.
 though that decision be not right, for such
 criticism would prevent any decision from
 being enforced. In short, whatsoever thing
 is arranged in harmony and with love and
 purity of motive, its result is light, and
 should the least trace of estrangement ,pre-
 the local Spiritual

to the Kingdom on High and
 the Realm of Glory. They must
 with the utmost devotion,
 care and moderation to
 They must in every matter
 truth and not insist upon
 for stubbornness and
 views will lead ultimately
 wrangling and the truth will
 The honored members must with
 express their own thoughts,
 wise permissible for one to
 thought of another, nay, he must
 eration set forth the truth,
 ferences of opinion arise a
 must ,prevail, and all must
 to the majority. It is again
 that any one of the honored
 SECTION TWO, SHEET 4
 reservedly and with
 EFFENDI,February 23, 1924.
 I. FUNCTIONS OF THE
 LOCAL SPIRITUAL
 ASSEMBLY
 The various functions of

vail the result shall be darkness upon dark- Assembly, and its nature as
 a constitutional body, are duly set forth in
 ness If this be so regarded, that Assem- body, are duly set forth in
 Artide VII of the By-Laws of the National
 bly shall be of God, but otherwise it shall lead Spiritual Assembly,
 to coolness and alienation that proceed from and are more definitely
 defined in the By- Laws of a local Spiritual
 the Evil One. Discussions must all be con- Assembly approved
 fined to spiritual matters that pertain to the by the National Spiritual
 Assembly and rec- ommended by the Guardian.
 training of souls, the instruction of children, Each local
 the relief of the poor, the help of the feeble Spiritual Assembly, and all
 members of the local Baha'i community,
 throughout all classes in the world, kindness shall be guided and
 shall be guided and controlled by the provisions
 to all peoples, the diffusion of the fragrances of those By-
 of God and the exaltation of His Holy Word. Laws.
 Should they endeavor to fulfil these condi- II. MEETINGS OF THE
 tions the Grace of the Holy Spirit shall be LOCAL SPIRITUAL
 vouchsafed unto them, and that Assembly ASSEMBLY
 shall become the center of the Divine bless- In addition to its
 ings, the hosts of Divine confirmation shall eral functions vested in the
 come to their aid and they shall day by day observance of the gen-
 receive a new effusion of Spirit."-'ABDU'L- institution of a Spiritual Assembly, each
 BAHA. Spiritual Assembly
 Spiritual Assembly has need of a procedure for the conduct of
 "The importance, nay the absolute neces- its meetings. The following
 items represent the outline of the
 sity of these local Assemblies is manifest the outline of the
 parliamentary rules of pro- cedure which the National
 when we realize that in the days to come they Spiritual Assem-
 bly has adopted and
 will evolve into the local House of Justice, recommends to each and
 and at present provide the firm foundation every local Spiritual
 Assembly throughout the United States and
 on which the structure of the Master's Will Canada.
 is to be reared in future.
 "In order to avoid division and disruption, Calling of Meetings

that the Cause may not fall a prey to conflicting interpretations, and lose thereby its Spiritual Assembly is

purity and pristine vigor, that its affairs may duly called, that

,be conducted with efficiency and promptness, member has ábeen

it is necessary that every one (i. e., every place. The gen-

member of the Baha' community) should Assembly to decide

conscientiously take an active part in the place for its

election of these Assemblies, abide by their Baha'i year, and

decision, enforce their decree, and cooperate in the Minutes

with them whole-heartedly in their task of members. When

stimulating the growth of the Movement be followed, or

throughout all regions. The members of these special meeting, the

Assemblies, on their part, must disregard chairman or

utterly their own likes and dislikes, their Spiritual Assem-

personal interests and inclinations, and con- to all the mem-

centrate their minds upon those measures that will conduce to the welfare and happi-

ness of the Baha'i community and promote or Recording Sec-

the common weal."-SHOGHI EFFENDI, Prayer.

March 12, 1923.

"Let us recall His explicit and often-re- of previous

peated assurance that every Assembly elected in that rarified atmosphere of selflessness

Corresponding Sec-

and detachment is, in truth, atppointed of ,presentation of letters

God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that since its last

one and all should submit to its decision un- all recommenda-

BAHA't PROCEDURE

A meeting of the

valid only when it has been

is, when each and every

informed of the time and

eral practice is for the

upon some regular time and

meetings throughout the

this decision when recorded

is sufficient notice to the

the regular schedule cannot

the need arises for a

secretary, on request by the

any three members of the

bly, should send due notice

bers.

Order of Business

Roll call by the Secretary (

retary).

Reading and approval of Minutes

meeting.

Report of Secretary (or

retary), including

received by the Assembly

meeting, and of any and

SECTION TWO, SHEET 5

tions duly adopted by the community at members, whether present or absent from the last Nineteen Day Feast. the meeting at which the action was taken.

Report of Treasurer. Individual views and opinions must be sub-ordinated to the will of the Report of Committees. Assembly when a Unfinished business. decision has been made. A Spiritual Assem- bly is an administrative unit, New business, including conferences with as it is a spir- itual unit, and therefore no members of the community and with ap- distinction be- tween "majority" and "minority" plicants for enrollment as members of the groups or community. • factions can be recognized.

Each member Closing Prayer. must give undivided loyalty to the institu- tion to which he or she has been elected.

Conduct of Business Any action taken by the Assembly can be reconsidered at a later meeting, on motion

A Spiritual Assembly, in maintaining its duly made, seconded and carried. This re- threefold function of a body given (within consideration, according to the result of the the limits of its jurisdiction) an executive, consultation, may lead to a revision or the annulment of the prior action. a legislative and a judicial capacity, is If a major- charged with responsibility for imitating ac- ity is unwilling to reconsider the prior ac- tion and making decisions. Its meetings, tion, further discussion of the matter by any member is improper. therefore, revolve around various definite The Assembly has a matters which require deliberation ,and col- responsibility in fill- lective decision, and it is incumbent upon ing a vacancy caused by the inability of any member to attend the meetings. the members, one and all, to address them- "It is only selves to the subject under discussion and too obvious that unless a member can attend regularly the meetings of his not engage in general speeches of an irrele- local Assembly,

vant character. it would be impossible for him
to discharge
Every subject or problem ,before an As- the duties incumbent upon him, and
to fulfil
sembly is most efficiently handled when the his responsibilities as a
representative of
following process is observed: first, ascer- the community. Membership in a
local Spir-
tainment and agreement upon the facts; itual Assembly carries with it,
indeed, the
second, agreement upon the spiritual or ad- obligation and capacity to
remain in close
ministrative Teachings which the question touch with local Baha'i
activities, and ability
involves; third, full and frank discussion of to attend regularly the
sessions of the As-
the matter, leading up to the offering of a ssembly."-SHOGHI EFFENDI,
January 27,
resolution; and fourth, voting upon the reso- 1935.

lution. The Spiritual Assembly, as
a permanent
A resolution, or motion, is not subject to body, is responsible for
maintaining all its
discussion or vote until duly made and sec- records, including Minutes of
meetings, cor-
onded. It is pref era:ble to have each reso- response and financial
records, through-
lution clear and complete in itself, but when out its existence as a Baha'i
institution. Each
an amendment is duly made and seconded, officer, therefore, on
completing his or her
the Chairman shall call for a vote on the term of office, shall turn
over to the Assem-
amendment first áand then on the original bly all records pertaining to
the business of
motion. An amendment must be relevant the Assembly.
to, and not contravene, the subject matter
of the motion.

III. CONSULTATION WITH

The Chairman, or other •presiding officer,
has the same power and responsibility for THE COMMUNITY
discussion and voting upon motions as other A. The institution of the
Nineteen Day Feast
members of the Assembly. provides the recognized and
regular occa-
Discussion of any matter before the As- sion for general consultation on
the part of
sembly may be terminated by a motion duly the community, and for

consultation between
made, seconded and voted calling upon the members of
Chairman to put the matter to a vote or to the period
proceed to the next matter on the agenda. Feasts is a
The purpose of this procedure is to prevent Spiritual Assembly.
any member or members from prolonging
•Abdu'l-Baha, "The Nine-
the discussion beyond the point at which full by the Bab
opportunity has been given all members to in His Holy Book,
express their views.
gather to-
When the Assembly has taken action upon fellowship and
any matter, the action is binding upon all mysteries may be dis-
BAHA't PROCEDURE
closed. The object is concord, that through personal affairs so
this fellowship hearts may become perfectly the Baha'i cal-
united, and reciprocity •and mutual helpfulness be established. Because the members
of the world of humanity are unable to exist without being banded together, cooperation and helpfulness is the basis of human society. Without the realization of these
appointed representative of the Spiritual Assembly presides
pressed forward." (London, England, December 29, 1912. Quoted in Baha'i News reports to the
No. 33.) •
communications have
The Nineteen Day Feast has been described by the Guardian as the foundation of and provides
the World Order of Baha'u'llah. It is to be discussion.

the Spiritual Assembly and the
the community. The conduct of
of consultation at Nineten Day
vital function of each
From Words of
teen Day Feast was inaugurated
and ratified by Baha'u'llah,
the Aqdas, so that people may
gether and outwardly show
love, that the Divine
SECTION TWO, SHEET 6
pected to arrange their
as to enable them to observe
endar.
Order of Business for the
Consultation Period
The chairman or other
representative of the Spiritual
during the period of
The Spiritual Assembly
community whatever
been received from the Guardian
National Spiritual Assembly,
opportunity for general

conducted according to the following pro- The Assembly likewise reports its own ac- tivities and plans, including gram : the first part, entirely spiritual in committee ap- pointments that may have been character, is devoted to readings from Baha'i made since Sacred Writings; the second part consists of the last Feast, the financial report, arrange- ments made for ,public general consultation on the affairs of the meetings, and in gen- eral share with the community Cause. The third part is the material feast all matters that concern the Faith. These and social meeting of all the believers, and reports are should maintain the spiritual nature of the to be followed by general consultation.

Feast. , A matter of vital importance at this meet- ing is consideration of national Baha'is should regard this Feast as the ing is consideration of national and interna- tional :3aha'i affairs, to very heart of their spiritual activity, their tional :3aha'i affairs, to strengthen the capac- ity of the community to participation in the mystery of the Holy Ut- ity of the community to cooperate in promo- tion of the larger Baha'i terance, their steadfast unity one with an- tion of the larger Baha'i interests and to deepen the understanding of other in a universality raised high above the all believers limitations of race, class, nationality, sect, concerning the relation of the local commu- nity to the Baha'i World and personality, and their privilege of con- nity to the Baha'i World Community. Individual Baha'is are to tributing to the power of the Cause in the find in the Nine- realm of collective action. teen Day Feast the channel through which to make suggestions and recommendations to Calendar of the Nineteen Day the National Spiritual Assembly. These recommendations are offered first to the lo- cal community, and when adopted by the Feast community come before the March 21 July 13 November 23 local Assembly, which then may in its April 9 August 1 December 12 discretion forward the April 28 August 20 December 31 recommendation to the National Spiritual

May 17	September 8	January 19	Assembly accompanied by its own considered
June 5	September 27	February 7	view.
June 24	October 16	March 2	Provision is to be made for reports from
November 4			committees, with discussion of each report.
The Spiritual Assembly is responsible for			Finally, the meeting is to be open for sug-
the holding of the Nineteen Day Feast. If			gestions and recommendations
from indi-			
the Baha'i calendar for some adequate rea-			vidual believers on any matter
affecting the			
son cannot be observed, the Assembly may			Cause.
arrange to hold a Feast at the nearest pos-			The local Baha'i community
may adopt			
sible date.			by majority vote any
resolution which it			
Only members of the Baha'i community,			wishes ácollectively to record
as its advice and			
and visiting Baha'is from other communities,			recommendation to the
Spiritual Assembly.			
may attend these meetings, but young people			Upon each member of the
community lies			
of less than twenty--One years of age, who			the obligation to make his or
her utmost con-			
have studied the Teachings and declared			tribution to the consultation,
the ideal being			
their intention of joining the community on			a gathering of Baha'is
inspired with one			
reaching the age of twenty-one, may also			spirit and concentrating upon
the one aim to			
attend.			further the interests of the
Faith.			
Regular attendance at the Nineteen Day			The Secretary of the Assembly
records			
Feast is incumbent upon every Baha'i, ill-			each resolution adopted by the
community,			
nesás or absence from the city being the only			as well as the various
suggestions advanced			
justification for absence. 'Believers are ex-			during the meeting, in order
to report these			
BAHA't PROCEDURE			SECTION TWO, SHEET 7
to the Spiritual Assembly for its considera-			When confronted with
evidences of un-			
ation. Whatever action the Assembly takes			happiness, whether directed
against the As-			
is to be reported at a later Nineteen Day			sembly or against members of

the commu-
 Feast. nity, the Spiritual Assembly
 should realize
 Matters of a personal nature should be that its relationship to the
 believers is not
 brought to the Spiritual Assembly and not merely that of a formal
 constitutional body
 to the community at the Nineteen Day Feast. but also that of a spiritual
 institution called
 Concerning the attitude with which believers upon to manifest the
 attributes of courtesy,
 should come to these Feasts, the Master has patience and loving insight.
 Many condi-
 said, "You must free yourselves from every- tions are not to be remedied
 by the exercise
 thing that is in your hearts, before you en- of power and authority but
 rather by a sym-
 ter." (Baha'i News Letter of the N. S. A. of pathetic understanding of the
 sources of the
 Germany and Austria, December, 1934.) difficulty in the hearts of
 the friends. As
 B. The annual Meeting on April 21, called 'Abdu'l-Baha has explained,
 some of the
 for the election of the Spiritual Assembly, people are children and must
 be trained,
 provides the occasion for the presentation of some are ignorant and must be
 educated,
 annual reports by the Assembly and by all some are sick and must be
 healed. Where,
 its Committees. however, the problem is not
 of this order but
 The Chairman of the outgoing Assembly represents flagrant disobedience
 and disloy-
 alty to the Cause itself, in
 presides at this meeting. that case the As-
 The Order of Business includes: Reading ssembly should consult with the
 National
 of the call of the meeting, reading of ap- Spiritual Assembly concerning
 the necessity
 appropriate Baha'i passages bearing upon the for disciplinary action.
 subject of the election, appointment of tel- Members of the Baha'i
 community, for
 lers, distribution of ballots, prayers for the their part, should do their
 utmost by prayer
 spiritual guidance of the voters, the election, and meditation to remain
 always in a posi-
 presentation of annual reports, tellers' re- tive and joyous spiritual

condition, bearing	
port of the election, approval of the tellers' report.	in mind the Tablets which call upon Baha'is to serve the world of
humanity and not waste	
their precious energies in negative com-	
C. The Annual Meeting for the election of Convention delegate (or delegates) is likewise presided over by the Assembly Chairman, and except for the annual reports the Order of Business is similar to that observed at the meeting held each April 21. It is preferable for the Spiritual Assembly to arrange a special meeting for the election of delegates, and not hold this election during the responsibilities, will provide consultation period of a Nineteen Day Feast by the local com-	plaints.
D. In addition to these occasions for general consultation, the Spiritual Assembly is (Declaration of Baha'u'llah) April 21-May 2, 1863.	IV. BAHA'U'LLAH'S ANNIVERSARIES, FESTIVALS AND DAYS OF FASTING
whenever requested.	The Spiritual Assembly,
During such consultation with individual believers, the Assembly should observe the following principles: the impartiality of each of its members with respect to all matters under discussion ; the freedom of the individual Baha'i to express his views, feelings and recommendations on any matter affecting the interests of the Cause, the confidential character of this consultation, and the principle that the Spiritual Assembly does not adopt any resolution, or make any final decision, until the party or parties have with-	ous duties and for the general observance of the following Holy Feast of Ridvan (Baha'u'llah) April 21-May 2, 1863.
	Declaration of the Bab, May 23, 1844.
	Ascension of Baha'u'llah, May 29, 1892.
	Martyrdom of the Bab, July 9, 1850.
	Birth of the Bab, October 20, 1819.
	Birth of Baha'u'llah, November 12, 1817.
	Day of the Covenant, November 26.
	Ascension of Baha'u'llah, November 28, 1921.
	Period of the Fast, beginning March 2.
	Feast of Naw-Ruz (Baha'i New Year) March 21.-N. 8. A.

drawn from the meeting.

Appeals from decisions of a local Spiritual Assembly are provided for in the By-Laws and the procedure fully described in a statement published in Baha'i News, February, 1933, and reprinted in this work.

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET

8

DUTIES AND OBLIGA-

of the Baha'i Faith or

opposed to its best

interests. It shall, on the other hand, have

the authority and right to

TIONS OF A LOCAL

appeal from the

decision of the National

SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Assembly to the

Guardian of the Faith for review and final

decision of any matter

From By-Laws Approved by

related to the Faith

in the City of

the Guardian

Article III-The Spiritual Assembly, in

Article IV-The

Spiritual Assembly, in

administering this

the fulfilment of its obligations and respon-

Corporation, shall ever

bear in mind the ideals

sibilities under this Corporation, shall have

upheld in the Sacred

Writings of the Baha'i

exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all

Faith respecting the

relationships of a

the local activities and affairs of the Baha'i

Spiritual Assembly to its

community of •the City of , includ-

Baha'i community,

respecting the relations

of Baha'is to one

ing paramount authority in the administra-

another in the community,

and the relationships

tion of this Corporation. It shall be respon-

of Baha'is to all non-

Baha'is, without

sible for maintaining the integrity and ac-

prejudice of race, creed,

class or nationality.

curacy of all Baha'i teaching, whether writ-

The Assembly shall

therefore rubove all

ten or oral, undertaken throughout the local

recognize its sacred duty

to maintain full and

community. It shall make available the pub-

complete unity through-

out the Baha'i

lished literature of the Faith. It shall rep-

community, to relieve and

comfort the sick and

resent the community in its relations to the

distressed, to assist the poor and destitute, to
 National Spiritual Assembly, in its relation protect the orphans,
 to the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, to the crippled and the
 aged, to educate the chil- dren of Baha'is
 other local Baha'i communities, and to the dren of Baha'is
 according to the highest re- ligious and
 general public in the City of ' It differences and
 intellectual standards, to compose bers of the community,
 shall be charged with the recognition of all bers of the community,
 disagreements among mem- bers of the community,
 applicants requesting membership in the to promulgate the
 to promulgate the principles of Divine
 local Baha'i community. It shall pass upon Baha'u'llah, and to
 Civilization revealed by sible the Baha'i aim of
 the right of any and all members of the com- kind. It shall
 munity whose membership is in question to hold the general Baha'i
 the oneness of man- kind. It shall
 retain their status as voting members of the hold the general Baha'i
 faithfully and devotedly up- initiated and sustained
 community. It shall call the meetings of the itual Assembly. It shall
 activities and affairs heartedly with other
 community, including the Baha'i Anniver- blies throughout North
 by the National Spir- ters declared by the
 saries and Feasts, the meetings of consulta- ters declared by the
 cooperate whole- sibly to be of general
 tion, the Annual Meeting and the meeting and concern. It shall
 local Spiritual Assem- from any action or
 for the election of delegates to the Annual rect, that savors of
 America in all mat- of a Baha'i body in
 Meeting of the National Spiritual Assembly. tics and civil
 National Spiritual As- age intercourse between
 It shall appoint and supervise all commit- sibly to be of general
 Baha'i importance and concern. It shall
 tees of the Baha'i community. It shall col- from any action or
 rigorously abstain rect, that savors of
 lect and disburse all funds intended for the of a Baha'i body in
 influence, direct or indi- tics and civil
 maintenance of this Corporation. It shall age intercourse between
 intervention on the part of a Baha'i body in
 have full and complete custody of the head- tics and civil
 matters of public poli- age intercourse between
 quarters or meeting place of the Baha'i com- sibly to be of general
 jurisdiction. It shall encourage intercourse between
 munity. It shall report to the National Spirit- sibly to be of general
 the Baha'i com- sibly to be of general

ual Assembly annually, or when requested,
 and other
 the membership roll of the Baha'i commu-
 nities, issuing let-
 ity, for the information and approval of the
 Baha'is traveling from
 national Baha'i body. The Spiritual Assem-
 passing upon letters of intro-
 bly, however, shall recognize the authority
 Baha'i Assemblies.
 and right of the National Spiritual Assem-
 authority as a means of
 bly to declare at any time what activities
 Baha'is and non-Baha'is
 and affairs of the Baha'i community of the
 arbitrary power.
 City of are national in scope and
 sacred right of final de-
 hence subject to the jurisdiction of the na-
 pertaining to the Ba-
 tional Baha'i body. It shall likewise recog-
 Spiritual Assembly shall
 nize the right of any member of the com-
 and consultation of all
 munity to appeal to the National Spiritual
 community, keep the com-
 Assembly for review and decision of any
 its affairs, and invite
 matter in which the previous decision of the
 discussion on the part of the
 local Spiritual Assembly is felt by the mem-
 matters affecting the Faith.
 ber to be contrary to the explicit teachings
 BAHAI PROCEDURE
 THE INSTITUTION OF THE
 certain qualities :
 "unquestioned loyalty, selfless devotion, a
 SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
 ability, ma-
 ture experience." 1 The efficiency and in-
 For a period of more than ten years, a
 Assembly, therefore,
 large portion of our collective effort has been
 which, in every
 devoted to the task of developing the insti-
 believers conscientiously
 tutions described in the Master's Will and

munity of the City of .
 recognized Baha'i
 ters of introduction to
 and
 duction issued by other
 It shall regard its
 rendering service to
 and not as a source of
 While retaining the
 cision in all matters
 ha'i community, the
 ever seek the advice
 members of the
 munity informed of all
 full and free
 community of all
 -N.S.A.
 SECTION TWO, SHEET 9
 to believe are possessed of
 well trained mind, recognized
 tegrity of a Spiritual
 depends upon the degree to
 Baha'i election, the
 meet the Guardian's

standard.

Testament and the subject matter of most of the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws

the general communications issued by the Guardian of the Faith. afford a procedure controlling to a certain extent the methods which should be carried out by members of a Spiritual Assembly in performing their duties at meetings. It is clear, for example, that widespread understanding of the institution decisions are made by unanimous vote, but of a Spiritual Assembly as it affects its own unanimity lacking, by vote of the majority. members-as it calls for a new and unique 'Abdu'l-Baha re-loyalty on the part of its nine members to the Guardian 2 in vealed a Tablet, quoted by the Assembly itself. one of his earliest general letters, emphatical-

The National Spiritual Assembly there-ly commanding every member of an Assem- bly to abide by its fore takes the occasion to offer a few re- decisions. The teachings_ recognize no minority marks on this phase of the subject, in the rights whatsoever within the body of an hope that they will clarify this important Assembly. Every de- cision made by a Spiritual matter and assist the believers to appreciate cision made by a Spiritual Assem:bly is bind- ing upon each and all its the firm basis on which every local and Na- ing upon each and all its members alike, whatever their personal tional Assembly must rest if it is to fulfil views, prior to the its responsibility to the Cause. final vote, may have been.

It is necessary to bear in mind the fact Two observations should be made in con- nection with the process of that the Spiritual Assembly is not a body nection with the process of consultation lead- ing up to the decision. created by the believers, even though ibly their ing up to the decision. First, that during the consultation it is not votes at elections they determine its member- the consultation it is not merely the right but the sacred duty of each ship. The institution itself was created by but the sacred duty of each member to ex- press his or her opinion

Baha'u'llah. Unlike the institutions set up press his or her opinion

fully and freely,
 ,by a democracy, whose functions and powers for only through a true
 consensus of opinion
 are strictly defined by the people, with a defi- can all aspects of a
 question be thoroughly
 nite reservation of certain rights to the body explored. Secondly, that
 the termination of
 of the citizens-including the right to annul the period of consultation
 and the taking of
 the constitution and adopt an entirely new the vote, is a matter which
 the majority can
 political charter-a Spiritual Assembly rests decide. The right to
 express one's view fully
 upon sanctions higher than that of the vot- and freely does not imply
 the power to pro-
 ing community. Its functions and powers are long the consultation
 indefinitely and to the
 unalterable. The responsibility of its mem- point of stubbornness. The
 majority can di-
 bers is not to the electorate but to the higher rect the chairman to bring
 the matter to vote
 authority resident in the Cause. whenever it is
 conscientiously felt that all
 This general principle has brought into views have been presented and
 further dis-
 being the necessity for a definite loyalty on cussion would be useless
 repetition or one-
 the part of all Assembly members to the in- sided argument.
 Without this clear right
 stitution which collectively they compose. vested in the majority, the
 capacity of a
 They are trustees of its duties, responsibili- Spiritual Assembly to
 transact the business
 ties, rights and powers, and not merely rep- before it would be fatally
 limited.
 resentatives of the community nor of any The opinion is sometimes
 expressed that
 party or faction thereof. In meeting this Spiritual Assemblies are
 too prone to main-
 obligation to the Assembly itself, the mem- tain an attitude of secrecy
 and aloofness, in
 bers can have utmost confidence that they violation of the sacred
 unity of the Cause.
 are rendering the fullest and truest service
 to the body of the believers concerned. 1
 See "Baha'i Administration," page 79.
 It is important to note that upon the Ba- • "If after discussion, a

decision be carried unani-
mously, well and good; but if, the Lord forbid,
ha'i electors themselves there rests a special differences of opinion
should arise, a majority of
responsibility in relation to the election. Thus, voices must prevail

It is again not permitted
that any one of the honored members object to or
in describing the functions of Convention censure, whether in or out
of the meeting, any de-
legates, Shoghi Effendi declared that they cision arrived at
previously, though that decision
should cast their ballots for none save those be not right, for such
criticism would prevent any
decision from being enforced." See "Baha'i Ad-
whom prayer and meditation inspire them ministration," pages 21,
22, 23.

BAHA' t PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 10

This opinion requires clear analysis, if which Assembly business is t.o
be reported

Assemblies are to avoid going from one ex- outside the meeting, are
obvious requisites to
treme attitude to the other, in each case fail- the proper functioning of
the institution.

ing to attain the true balance. Shoghi Effendi has
written that the admin-

What is and must he preserved inviolate istrative order of the Faith is
still in a con-
dition of infancy.

from mere gossip and rumor are the per-
sonal views expressed by the members on
recognized and admitted, This may be fully

any matter before the vote is taken. If any but the condition of infancy

is not intended
member of an Assembly leaves a meeting to be perpetual. Great

blessings will, we are
and expresses criticism of the attitude ex- assured, be released when

the Baha'i institu-
pressed by any other member in the period tions develop t.o the point

of internal unity
of full and free consultation, this is destruc- and of harmonious relations

to the commun-
ity. The privilege of

itive of the spirit of mutual confidence and
contributing to the
trust which must ,be maintained by every steady evolution of those

institutions which
Assembly, and can but lead to disunity and a are the "pattern and

nucleus" of the World
weakening of .its capacity for service to the Order of Baha'u'llah is

granted to every be-
Cause. So long as a member who had ex- liever, but more especially
to those to whom
pressed one opinion is willing to abide by the have been given positions of
responsibility
result of unanimous or majority vote, there and trust. If members of
Spiritual Assem-
is no ground of criticism in that his opinion, blies will attain
trustworthiness, and exhibit
prior to the vote, was different from that an individual and collective
attitude showing
established by the vote. forth both knowledge of the
Teachings and
A Spiritual Assembly is an institution and scrupulous obedience to them,
the long-await-
not merely nine believers who happen to hold ed and long prayed-for
renaissance of public
office. The great obligations and duties laid teaching, and vital growth
in the Cause, will
upon that institution are superior to any surely follow, as day
follows night.
rights assumed by some of its members. The fact that a Spiritual
Assembly is an
Within its sphere of jurisdiction, as the institution independent of
the will of the
Guardian has said, a Spiritual Assembly has electoral body does not in
any way sanction
undivided authority. the spirit of aloofness and
separation from
The difference between secrecy and trust- the community. On the contrary,
it means
worthiness is again exemplified when we con- that the Assembly is left
entirely free to
sider the important subject of conferences seek divine guidance for all
its deliberations
held by a Spiritual Assembly with individual and decisions, and has been
given a truly
members of the community. If the believers Providential opportunity to
serve the com-
find by experience that they cannot bring munity as a whole. An
Assembly, it must
personal matters to an Assembly without be repeated again and again,
is not the crea-
having rumor and gossip immediately circu- ture or servant of any
limited group or fac-
late throughout the community, such a con- tion. Quite irrespective of
how the various

dition is a serious charge for which that As- members of the community
 might have cast their ballots for members of
 ssembly cannot escape responsibility. As the
 the Assembly, the Assembly once elected has
 Cause develops, each Assembly will increas-
 an impartial relationship of service to
 ingly be called upon to deal with certain mat-
 the welfare of the Cause in its city or nation.
 ters of a personal and confidential nature,
 No institution in human history has ever
 and the time has surely come when a firm
 rested upon a foundation so impregnable to
 f oundatori of trustworthiness should be laid.
 the assaults of ambition, pride, self-interest,
 Matters of a general nature coming before
 envy and mal- ice, whether from without or
 a Spiritual Assembly should ibe reported to
 within. A Spiritual Assembly,
 the community at each Nineteen Day Feast.
 raised above per- sonal emotion and touched
 It should be readily possible for an Assembly
 with a vision of divine justice, becomes an
 to determine what matters are confidential,
 indestructible link in the chain of peace,
 and of the nature of a trust, and what mat-
 economic stability and progress which the Supreme
 ters concern the Cause and are of interest
 Manifestation has forged for the
 and importance to the entire Baha'i com-
 protection of mankind. Much has been offered to,
 munity. When a matter is recorded as con-
 much will be re- quired from, all who are
 fidential each member should scrupulously
 elected to member- ship in such an
 preserve it as such. When a matter is re-
 institution.-N. S. A.
 corded otherwise, it should be reported in
 the form recorded in the minutes and by
 whatever officer is designated to make the
 "THE SACRED BASIC PRIN-
 report. Fran\ki discussion of these points, and CIPLES OF BAHA'U'LLAH"
 full agreement as to the conditions under
 confirmed in the "/ f thou desirest to be
 BAHAt PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 11
 service of the Kingdom of God, live in accord others.
 with the teachings of Baha'u'llah, and that It is manifest,
 therefore, that neither one

is: real love for the world of humanity, and principles is sufficient unto the utmost kindness for the believers of God. This real love, like unto the magnetic power, supplementary to the attracts the Divine confirmations."-(AB-DU'L-BAHA.)

of these two great itself but must be combined unity, each perfectly other and neither permitted rigid barriers to the

We realize the vital importance in these early days when the concept of the Baha'i is the true di-

World Order is gradually penetrating into the spirit, when in the thought and knowledge of all types and lesser parts of the or-

classes of world thinkers-of preserving in-harmony through-

tact the sacred basic principles of Baha'u'llah, fortifying them against compromise, and parts. The com-

demonstrating to the world that there are spirit are obeyed truly divine remedies for the spiritual and turn in its ac-

mental diseases of the body politic. Among identifies and determines these great principles, two stand out pre-

impulses shall eminently at this time as essential to the suc-

unity-and this law cessful establishment of the Baha'i Cause in every created

the West. Each of these two principles is full application supplementary to the other, and the failure organism made up of

or weakening of one can seriously, if not dan-

has been estab-

gerously, affect the application of the other. of God.

These two principles are like unto the body emphasize, it be-

and soul itself, neither of which is capable Assemblies and all be-

the other.

In the body of man, which

vine example or parallel,

ideal control of all the

ganism, finds the utmost

out the whole body-each

reciprocity with the other

mands and impulses of the

by the body and the body in

tions and function

the expression the spiritual

take. This is divine

being universal and found in

object in the universe, has

to the universal Baha'i

believers everywhere, which

lished by the Manifestation

Therefore, we would

hooves all of us-all

of performing its true function without the
would render the
ever-present assistance of the other.
Cause in our
(1) The administrative order (one of the
but to apply
two principles referred to), is the indispensa-
most perfect co-
ble instrumentality through which the glor-
of these two great
ious spirit of the Baha'i Cause finds expres-
contact, whether
sion. This spirit, in turn, is the second prin-
consultation or in our mu-
ciple referred to. Should we build up the
other.
administrative world order to a point of ab-
said that the
solute perfection but at the same time allow
the system of
it to be hampered or disconnected from the
an individualism
channels within, through which channels the
for them to take
Holy Spirit of the Cause pours forth, we
by the results
would have nothing more than a perfected
interruptions of govern-
body out of touch with and cut off from the
necessities of
finer promptings of the soul or spirit. If, on
criticisms by mem-
the other hand, the influxes and goings forth
other party, had
of the spirit are scattered, diffused and sub-
true consultation
jected wholly to the more or less imperfect
know that the
guidance and interpretation of individual be-
too true.
lievers, lacking both the wisdom secured
administration is a most
through consultation and also the lights of
the elimina-
• real unity which shine through cons\ltative
The National Spirit-
action and obedience thereto-a

lievers generally-if we
highest service to the Divine
Cause in our
generation, not only to realize
in our Baha'i service the
ordination and unification
principles in every Baha'i
in the :processes of
tual dealings with each
(2) áAbdu'l-Baha once
American people because of
partisan politics developed
which made it very difficult
counsel together and abide
of that counsel. The
mental process through the
elections and destructive
bers of one party of the
created a condition wherein
was well-nigh unknown. We
Master's criticism was only
(3) The Baha'i
advanced step forward toward
tion of this condition.
ual Assembly stands

squarely behind every
and disorganized activity would be witnessed, essential element of Baha'i
administration,
which would but dimly reflect the divine pur- but while no relaxation
should be suffered in
pose for this age, which is no less than the the application of the
administrative princi-
establishment of the reign of divine love, ples at any time, we deem it
to be doubly im-
justice and wisdom in the world, under and portant, in these days when
this divine meth-
in conformity to the Divine Law. od of dealing with
religious problems is be-
In short, such conditions would create coming rooted in American
institutions, that
countless individual interpretations and, in those coordinate elements
which have been
the end, multitudinous sects and denomina- so emphasized by our
Guardian in connection
tions, such as have been witnessed in the with the administration
should be most con-
former religions, each daiming to possess a scientiously applied. We
would refer for a
greater truth or guidance than any of the moment to the need of
having ever in mind

BAHA'í PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 12

the in--dwelling spirit of the administration, must be maintained, which we
referred to
which is the real life and purpose of Ba- in the opening paragraphs of
this letter, our
ha'u'llah's revelation, and is, in reality, the Guardian on Page 54 tells
us-
effulgence of the Holy Spirit, itself. Without "At the very root of the
Cause lies the
this Spirit, reflected in every administrative principle of the undoubted
right of the indi-
act, the body of the administration becomes vidual to self-expression,
his freed om to de-
rigid, opaque and lifeless, for the Sun of Di- clare his conscience and set
forth his views."
vine Love finds no responsive mirror upon And again-
which to reflect its life-giving rays. This "Let us also bear in mind
that the keynote
Holy Spirit is the greatest bestowal of God of the Cause of God is not
dictatorial author-
in this age, and for this, the Founders of the ity but humble fellowship,
not arbitrary

Cause, and the martyred believers, endured power, but the spirit of frank and loving con- sultation. Nothing short of countless afflictions at the hands of a world true Baha'i can hope to the spirit of a reconcile the prin- ciples of mercy and justice, that knew not this holy potency. In every administrative act, this Spirit should illumine submission, of the sanctity of freedom and of the right of the individual and of and warm the believers who are affected. On Page 19 of Baha'i Administration, Shoghi Effendi says we are expected "to obliterate ance, discretion and prudence on rthe one hand, and fellowship, candor as much as possible all traces of censure, of on the other." and courage conflicting discussion, of cooling remarks, of petty unnecessary observations that impede And as to the duties of elected representa- tives, he says, on Page 55- the onward march of the Cause, that damp "They should approach the zeal of the firm believer and detract from their task with ex- tremely humility, and endeavor, the sublimity of the Baha'i Cause in the eyes by their open- mindedness, their high sense of justice and duty, their candor, their the words of 'Abdu'l-Baha, our Guardian tire devotion to the welfare and interests of the friends, the Cause, and to members of Assemblies- humanity-to win, not only the confidence and "They must in every matter search out the the genuine support and respect of those truth and not insist upon their own opinion, whom they serve, but also their esteem for stubbo-nness and persistence in one's and real aff ec- tion. They must, at all views will lead rultimately to discord and times, avoid the spirit of exclusiveness, the wrangling and the truth will remain hidden. atmosphere of secrecy, free themselves from a The honored members must with all freedom and banish all forms of domineering attitude, and banish all forms of prejudice and passion from their deliberations. wise permissible for one to belittle the

They should, with-
thought of another. Should the least trace in the limits of wise
discretion, take the
of estrangement prevail, the result shall be friends into their
confidence, acquaint them
darkness upon darkness." with their plans, share with
them their prob-
Again on Page 30, quoting from 'Abdu'l- lems and anxieties, and seek
their advice and
Baha, it is stated- counsel."
"It behooveth the loved ones of God to be We are quoting these several
references
enamored of one another and to sacrifice as a reminder and aid to all
established As-
themselves for their fellow-workers in the semblies, since various
problems are found
Cause. They should yearn towards one an- to a greater or lesser degree
in various cen-
other even as the sore athirst yearneth for ters. These injunctions and
their observance
the Water of Life, and the lover burneth to constitute the divine remedy
as applied to
meet his heart's desire." the internal affairs •Of
our administrative
On Page 33, our Guardian says, in speak- processes, and we are assured
that their due
ing of .Spir.itual Assemblies- application will open the
paths of harmony,
"They must endeavor to promote amity happiness and the successful
advance of the
and concord amongst the friends, efface ev- Cause in the western world.
ery lingering trace of distrust, coolness and (4) Our Guardian's
letters on adminis-
estrangement from every heart, and secure tration are replete with
clear and unmistak-
in its stead an active and wholehearted co- able references to the
authority and juris-
operation for the service of the Cause." diction which rests in every
local Assembly
On Page 36, he warns us against extreme over the affairs of the Cause in
its vicinity.
orthodoxy on one hand, and irresponsible Every believer who is a
member of a local
freedom on the other, lest these cause it ("the Baha'i community is under a
paramount
Cause") to deviate from the Straight Path spiritual duty to cooperate
in his or her Ba-

which alone can lead it to success. ha'i activities with the duly expressed deci, sions of a Spiritual Assembly.

As bearing upon this delicate balance that The para- SECTION TWO, SHEET 13

BAHA't PROCEDURE (6) Any failure of

mount obligation of every individual believer either of the two ,prin-

is to maintain unity. It is the obligation of ciples first alluded to,

whether firmness in the administration or a

a believer in a community to •bring any mat- lack of the spirit of

lack of the spirit of Baha'i love, fellowship and

ters of complaint or misunderstanding first happiness in

• to his Local Assembly. The believers on carrying out the

measures of the administra- tion, can only serve to

their part will realize that the law of God prolong and confuse

tion, can only serve to the solution of such a

is a just law, and that in this day, it has ex- the solution of such a

problem as we have encountered. The true

tended its provisions to every important mat- balance between

balance between these two principles must

ter. Thus, not only is every individual be- ;be invariably found

these two principles must before such a ,problem or,

liever entitled to the right of electoral fran- for that matter,

any other problem can be

chise in the choice of his local Spiritual As- promptly settled. Otherwise,

efficiently and justice finds

promptly settled. Otherwise, defeat, and needless

sembly but also in cases where he feels ag- grieved at the decision of a body, a right of

defeat, and needless appeal to the National Spiritual Assembly is

It is certain that this experience has had

its value in a better

provided. Through these means, ultimate understanding of all fac-

tors which must be

justice is assured. The whole fabric of Ba- considered in dealing

with the greater problems

ha'i administration rests upon the acceptance that will confront

the Cause in the future. It

by the friends of the considered decisions of is doubtless too

much to expect that any

their Local Assemblies, and this is the very Assembly, whether

National or Local, in this

essence and root of the law of consultation early dawn of the

establishment of the Baha'i

which Baha'u'llah has called us to obey. It World Order,

follows from this that there can be no such necessity of educating and informing the thing as non-cooperation with an elected local Assembly inasmuch as such a procedure utterly defeats the central purpose of consultation. Any cause or causes, which might otherwise tend to create an attitude of non-union, fellowship and cooperation on the part of a believer, should be at once placed before the Local Assembly, in our common spirit of Baha'i frankness and trust- National Spiritual As- meanwhile preserving full cooperation, and the local representative bodies in the west awaiting the just decision of the Assembly. Grievances when made a matter of appeal to the National Assembly, following an adverse decision of a Local Assembly, should have a substantial basis, affecting the welfare of the Cause, and should be frankly and definitely stated in writing, and sent to the National Secretary. Let us take home to our hearts, anew, this following picture of reality our Guardian (5) These matters, now being defined, and assuring you that the National Spiritual Assembly will defend and safeguard to every necessary extent these vital requisites of Baha'i life- we would point out to Assemblies Him to a mere shadow. Our Guardian says:-

with the added factor of the
cating and informing the
lievers, could hope to solve
with the utmost simplicity
(7) It is our ardent
hour, the bonds of true
an ever-increasing harmony
will be consciously realized
problems, and that the
sembly, together with all
tative bodies in the west
of believers in every
words of our Guardian "form
front and combat wisely and
force that might darken the
Movement, cause division in
narrow it by dogmatic and
Let us take home to our
following picture of reality our
Guardian has given us, which affirms
God in the Kingdom He is
a world that has labored
Him to a mere shadow.
Our Guardian says:-

during periods of confusion and unrest, such as the present, is to win the confidence and ways of man? Is not loyalty of every declared believer. We would urge you this year* especially to make it allegiance, uncompromising your paramount obligation, individually and we believe is collectively, to show an attitude of love, compassion and of happiness and harmony first appear, how-toward the beloved of God, without exception. We feel that Baha'i administration in crude theories, the no sense affords any excuse to confuse the fashionable conceptions element of loyalty to the representative troublesome age? If we are dies with irritating discourtesies or an over-our love for Him bearing disposition, or a negative, cold and keep us within slighting attitude, under any circumstances, Divine and emphatic

- on the part of the Assembly itself. can we any more cherish for healing the ills and sicknesses of this world?"

BAHA'1 PROCEDURE

We cannot close this statement without appealing to all the beloved of God to renew, the Assembly by in this critical period of humanity's history, election on the altar flame of Divine love in each individual heart; to cleanse the chamber of the soul for His indwelling; to ever remember local Assemblies that God is concerned with the redemption advise any departure of the wandering and straying sheep, and to

"Are we to doubt that are not necessarily the faith but another word for ence, whole-hearted ing adherence to that which the revealed and expressed ever áperplexing it might ever at variance with the impotent doctrines, the idle imaginings, the of a transient and to falter or hesitate, if should fail to direct us and His path, if we desert principles, what hope

SECTION TWO, SHEET 14

vided by the N. S. A. for that having more than nine elect secret ballot, and report the form issued to all Assemblies 21.-N. S. A. Regarding the formation of blies, the Guardian does not parture from the principle

that every civil
show forth to all such the wondrous power
independent
of His Love and Generosity; holding fast
to the divine principles without compromise
whether, in the
or deviation, but making our service a bene-
membership of
diction and a blessing to every inquirer and
two or more
needy one, and demonstrating the security
of our faith by the evidences of happiness,
serenity and the bestowals of the Holy Spir-
it. This is the hour for a new and unprece-
dented delivery of the Great Message. Let
us fortify our efforts by now realigning our
to give to the
nucleus, rank upon rank, in the bonds of the
some legal stand-
Divine Unity, each to each.-N. S. A.
progresses and its ad-
herents increase, they will be confronted
OBLIGATION TO FORM A
imagine at pres-
ent. Not only will they have to make con-
SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
their meeting
Shoghi Effendi feels that in any locality
obliged to create
where the number of adult believers reaches
their sick, poor
nine, a Local Assembly should be established.
before long
He feels this to be an obligation rather than
to) afford to
a purely voluntary act. Only in exceptional
provide the children
cases has the National Spiritual Assembly
education as
the right to postpone the formation of an
Baha'u'llah and
Assembly if it feels that the situation does
not warrant such a formation. This right,
naturally devolve
however, should be exercised if the situation
Assemblies there
absolutely demands it. As to the principle

community should have its own
Assembly.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
(In answer to the question
case of a new Assembly, the
the community could reside in
adjoining civil communities.)
INCORPORATION OF
LOCAL ASSEMBLY
It is surely very important
Local Spiritual Assemblies
ing, for as the Cause
with duties they cannot even
tracts for acquiring halls for
place, but also they will be
new institutions to care for
and aged people. We hope that
the Bahais will even (be able
have schools that would
the intellectual and spiritual
prescribed in the writings of
the Master.
For such duties that will
upon the Local Spiritual
will be an increasing need for

a legal stand-
according to which the area of the jurisdic- ing. They will have to be
considered as a
tion of a Local Assembly is to be determined, legal person with the power of
making ibind-
he feels this to lbe the function of the Na- ing contracts.
tional Spiritual Assembly; whatever princi- In small centers where the
friends are
ple they uphold should be fairly applied to still few, the taking of such
steps is rather
all localities without any distinction what- premature and may add to the
complexity of
ever.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. Baha'i administration.-SHOGHI
EFFENDI.
For the future, the election of new Spirit- The National Spiritual
Assembly has voted
ual Assemblies by members of local groups to publish in Baha'i News the
statement that
which contain nine or more recognized be- local Assemblies are advised
to engage ex-
lievers is to be conducted in the light of the pert legal assistance in
adapting the local
following procedure adopted by the National By-Laws to the Religious
Statutes of their
Spiritual Assembly. particular State; and also
that meanwhile
"It was moved, seconded and voted to the National Assembly feels it
advisable and
adopt and record the following ruling in necessary for all local
Assemblies without
order to prevent confusion on the part of new exception to abide by the set
of By-Laws
Baha'i communities, that hereafter applica- approved by the Guardian.
tions from Baha'i groups for election of a Local Assemblies are to
submit to the Na-
Spiritual Assembly must be made directly to tional Assembly for final
approval their plans
the National Assembly not later than Febru- for local incorporation before
the legal action
ary first of any year, in order to allow time is consummated.
for this body to discharge its responsibility The Legal Committee of the
National
in preparing the group." Spiritual Assembly, in passing
upon the suffi-
Groups having exactly nine declared be- ciency of the incorporation
papers of a local
lievers establish a Spiritual Assembly by Spiritual Assembly, desires to

impress upon
joint declaration, using a special form pro- all local Assemblies
contemplating local in-
BAHA'I PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 15
corporation that a copy of the State statute turn to service, the Assembly
should recog-
under which the corporation is being set nize the vacancy and arrange
a meeting of
up, should be, in all cases, forwarded to the the community to elect a new
member.-
National Spiritual Assembly with the pro- N. S. A.
posed incorporation papers. He believes that your
Assembly was well
Consideration and approval of any local advised in adopting such a
ruling. For it
incorporation papers cannot be completed is only too obvious that
unless a member can
without such copies of the State law.-N. S. attend regularly the meetings
of his local
A. Assembly, it would be
impossible for him to
ANNUAL ELECTION discharge the duties incumbent
upon him,
Until further notice, the annual meeting and to fulfill his
responsibilities, as a repre-
called on April 21 for the election of the sentative of the community.
Membership
local Spiritual Assembly is to be conducted in a local Spiritual Assembly
carries with it,
by the officers of the outgoing Assembly and indeed, an obligation and
capacity to remain
not by officers elected by those present at in close touch with local
Baha'i activities,
this meeting. and ability to attend
regularly the session of
It has also been voted to record the deci- the Assembly.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.
sion that in the election of the National and
local Assemblies, when the result of the VOTING LIST
ballot is that eight members are elected but Hereafter the annual
voting list furnished
two or more believers are tied for the ninth by local Assemblies to the N.
S. A. should be
membership, the second ballot taken to elimi- accompanied by a separate
list of all believers
nate the tie vote must be limited to voting transferred to and from each
Assembly.
for one of the two or more names who hap- It was moved, seconded and

voted to rec-
 pen to have received a tie vote for the ninth ord in these Minutes as the
 consensus of opin-
 place. ion of the National Assembly,
 that the re-
 Members of a local community have the moval of voting members by local
 Assem-
 right to the local membership list at local blies should be made
 conditional upon prior
 elections. The list can be prepared alpha- report to and recommendation
 by this body,
 betically, and copies handed out for use only and that the removal of any
 believer from the
 during the period of balloting. voting list does not involve
 passing upon
 When a believer is admitted into member- such person's spiritual status
 but only af-
 ship in a Baha'i community, he thereby re- fects his local relationship
 to the administra-
 ceives all the rights, privileges and duties tive order of the Cause and
 that in the Guar-
 of Baha'i membership, and it is for the Spir- dian alone is vested the
 right to pass upon
 itual Assembly to postpone the admission of an individual's spiritual
 condition.-N. S. A.
 applicants until they have familiarized each
 applicant with the members of the commun-
 ity. In other words, it is part of the teach- ADMITTANCE OF NEW
 ing responsibility of a local Assembly to BELIEVERS
 make applicants acquainted with their fellow
 believers. Otherwise a new 1believer is un- As regards the admittance
 of new members
 able to use his voting right intelligently.- into the different groups as
 declared Baha'is,
 N. S.A. and the expulsion of any from
 the commun-
 Concerning the institution of new Assem- ity, Shoghi Effendi believes
 that the Assem-
 blies, Shoghi Effendi believes that the pres- blies should not act
 hurriedly. They should
 ent form of the By-laws which considers be wise and most considerate,
 otherwise they
 April 21 as the only date on any year, though can do much harm to the body
 of the Cause.
 it has some disadvantages, yet as a whole is They should see to it that
 the new-comer is
 better than otherwise. One year of experi- truly conversant with the

teachings, and
 ence will better enable it to participate in when he expresses his belief
 in the revelation
 the important national (Baha'i) affairs. of Baha'u'llah, knows what he
 is saying and
 Then there will be a sort of uniformity what are the duties he
 undertakes.
 throughout the Baha'i world.-SHOGHI EF- On the other hand when any
 person is ex-
 FENDI. pelled, the Assembly should
 not act hurried-
 ly. There is a great spiritual responsibility
 ASSEMBLY MEMBERS TO attached to the act. The
 Assemblies do not
 have only rights against the individuals, they
 ATTEND MEETINGS have great duties also. They
 should act like
 When a member or officer of a local Spirit- the good shepherd whom Christ
 mentions in
 ual Assembly cannot function for an indefi- His well-known parable. We
 also have the
 nite period, ai:ld there is no certainty of re- example of the Master before
 us. The indi-
 BAHAI PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 16
 vidual Baha'is were organic parts of His would only venture to state
 very briefly and
 spiritual being. What befell the least one of as adequately as present
 circumstances per-
 the friends brought deep affliction and sor- mit the principal factors
 that must be taken
 row to him also. If by chance one of them into consideration before
 deciding whether a
 erred he counselled him and increased His person may be regarded as a
 true believer
 love and affection, if the Master saw that or not. Full recognition of
 the station of the
 that friend is still stubbornly refusing to re- Forerunner, the Author, and
 the True Ex-
 form his ways, and that his living among the emplar of the Baha'i Cause,
 as set forth in
 other Baha'is endangered the spiritual life 'Abdu'l-Baha's Testament;
 unreserved accep-
 of the rest, then He would expel him from tance of, and submission to,
 whatsoever has
 the group. This should lbethe attitude of the been revealed by their Pen ;
 loyal and stead-
 Assemblies toward the individuals. 'Thebest fast adherence to every

clause of our Be-
criterion whereby you can measure the spirit- loved's sacred Will; and
close association
ual attainment of an Assembly is the extent with the spirit as well as
the form of the pre-
its members feel themselves responsible for sent day Baha'i
administration throughout
the welfare of the group. And perchance the world-these I conceive to
be the funda-
they feel forced to deprive a person from his mental and primary
considerations that must
vote it should be only to safeguard the rest be fairly, discreetly and
thoughtfully ascer-
and not merely to inflict punishment.- tained before reaching such a
vital decision.

SHOGHI EFFENDI. Any attempt at further
analysis and elucidation will, I fear, land us in barren discus-
RESIDENTIAL REQUIRE- sions and even grave
controversies that
would prove not only futile but even detri-
MENT FOR NEW mental to the best interests of a
growing

ASSEMBLIES Cause. I would therefore strongly
urge those
who are called upon to make such a decision
When a Spiritual Assembly is dissolved by
to approach this highly involved and ever- recurring problem with the
reason of decrease in the membership of the
spirit of humble
community, the same requirements shall prayer, and earnest
consultation, and to re-
come into operation before an Assembly can
frain from drawing rigidly the line of de-
again be elected, namely that the community
marcation except on such occasions when
must consist of at least nine members resi- the interests of the Cause
dent within the civil limits of the city, town
absolutely demand
or village; that the provision in the By-laws it."

With the adoption of the Declaration of
allowing believers residing in out-lying dis-
Trust, which required some clear definition
tracts to apply for membership in a local Ba-
whereby the National Assembly might estab-
ha'i community pending the formation of an
lish the status of voting members of the local

Assembly in their own locality does not apply to communities, the problem of applying the standard at the time when a Baha'i community convenes for the election of a Spiritual Assembly. The Guardian's standard became one of the most important duties of a Spiritual Assembly.

for the first time.-N. S. A.

That this problem is being

considered very

seriously is evident from the number of in-

QUALIFICATIONS OF

quiries which have come to the

National

MEMBERSHIP IN A BAHAI

Assembly for specific

instructions on method

COMMUNITY

and procedure.

It is evident that if the Guardian's stan-

On October 24, 1925, in response to a re-

dard is too rigidly applied, a

community will

request for information on how Local Spiritual

be choked and stifled, while

if it is too

Assemblies should determine the qualifica-

loosely applied, the result

will be to make

tions of those to be enrolled as voting mem-

a Baha'i community lose its

distinctive char-

acters of a Baha'i community, the Guardian

acter, its spiritual

integrity, its very reason

(Baha'i Administration, page 81) gave the

for existence.

following explanation : "Regarding the very

For some months the

members of the Na-

delicate and complex question of ascertaining

tional Assembly have given

special thought

the qualifications of a true believer, I cannot

to this subject, in the hope

that it might be

in this connection emphasize too strongly the

found possible to lay before

all Local As-

semblies some statement in

the form of sug-

gestions and recommendations

that will

it is in deciding for ourselves as to who may

,prove useful to their

members in meeting

be regarded as a true believer or in disclos-

what the Guardian has termed

a "very deli-

cate and complex question."

ing to the outside world such considerations

as may serve as a basis for such a decision. I

•First of all, we feel,

should be emphasized

BAHAI PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 17

the fact that the enrollment of new voting members is the function of a Spiritual Assembly as a whole. Such a matter cannot be left to one or more members, or be met extract from the by passively accepting the endorsement of procedure has a teacher, no matter how well-informed and loyal the teacher may be. The essence of the matter seems to be that

of new voting members. new members to the National Local Assembly Secretaries submit, in each case, an minutes proving that this been followed. The essence of the matter each Assembly is called upon faithfully to stand as witness that the spirit of the person seeking membership has turned consultation, the distinctive attribute of a to Baha'u'-llah and become quickened for Spiritual Assembly, followed by decision Cause. Quality, and not life in His must ever determine the power representing unanimous or at least majority community. Therefore we are not numerical quantity, ers on the one hand nor a vote. The members of an Assembly asstHrle welcome on the other. The of a Baha'i not imply that the applicant no higher responsibility than in determining personally, nor satisfy our the character of their community by con- to whom we would like to board of examin- Baha'i service. The trolling its new growth. In admitting a new from the Manifestation mere committee of gree that we are ourselves voting member, they recognize and affirm can determine who else is qualifications do not imply that the applicant his or her right to be eligible to every office personally, nor satisfy our must please us to whom we would like to in the Cause. Since those elected delegates Baha'i service. The human ideas as from the Manifestation to the Convention elect the members of the gree that we are ourselves associate with in can determine who else is National Assembly, and since later on the personally, nor satisfy our qualifications have come to whom we would like to National Assembly will be one of the elec- Baha'i service. The Himself: to the de- from the Manifestation toral bodies constituting the International gree that we are ourselves true Baha'is, we can determine who else is House of Justice (see Article I, By-Laws of likewise a true

the National Spiritual Assembly), the degree of this responsibility is manifest. The National Assembly has been vested with the responsibility of passing upon local membership rolls, and thus in a Spiritual Assembly may not most effectively meet this responsibility by having the Local Assembly has clearly been in error in enrolling a member, the applicant sign an application blank which mistake can be corrected and the matter sets forth the exact qualifications of membership transferred to a Baha'i body not affected by exclusively local conditions.

The question has also been raised as to whether it would not be well to lay down a definite period of time—for example, a year—before an Assembly can act upon an application after it is received. Being charged with this ultimate responsibility, the National Assembly feels great concern that all the Local Assemblies function as wisely as possible in carrying out their share of the Guardian's instructions.

Both these suggestions are admirable; but the National Assembly is not yet prepared to adopt any standardized system. The Cause is too new and inexperienced to justify such uniform methods for the performance of an important step at this time. The chief spiritual task! It is for each Local Spiritual Assembly to take whatever requisite is that each Local Assembly shall possess sufficient insight to discriminate between those who are qualified to serve in the Cause and those not qualified to serve. The Master has warned us that the time will come when hypocrites will seek to enter the world-wide Baha'i community. Before the Master's Testament, and association with Baha'i community. Before the

application

sequently it is the capacity of the Spiritual can he made, there exists the
prior and
Assembly in each case, and not the operation vitally important problem of
how inquirers
of any standardized system of enrollment, are taught. Thus, attempting
to follow the
which stands as the safeguard against such sequence of all the steps
leading to enroll-
invasion. ment of new members, we

realize how urgent

One requirement, however, the National it is for Assemblies to assure
themselves
Assembly does lay down at this time: that that those serving as Baha'i
teachers make
Local Assemblies shall read to applicants the the focal point of all their
efforts the prep-
qualifications of voting membership as de- aration of souls for a service
in the Baha'i
fined in the By-Laws, and record in their community. It is not enough to
promulgate

minutes the full and complete acceptance by the "principles" of the
Cause, most of which
each applicant. This appears to be the irre- have already been adopted by
the liberal pub-
ducible minimum of procedure in the admis- lic unconscious of their
Source-a teaching

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 18

program must include classes in which in- sought to accomplish was to
remind local
quirers are brought into full acceptance of Assemblies that they could
not. leave this
the Faith. matter to any one or more of

their members,
We are dealing with matters of deep mys- or to any teacher, no matter how
well in-
tery, as one perceives on reading the follow- formed and loyal the teacher
might be. It

ing words which Baha'u'llah uttered in the was therefore stated that
"The members of
presence of Nabil (The Dawn-Breakers, an Assembly assume no higher
responsibility

page 586) - than in determining the
character of their

"Be thankful to God for Jwving enabled community by controlling its new
growth

you to recognize His Cause. Whoever has re- ... One requirement, however,

the National
 ceived this blessing must, prior to his ac- Assembly does lay down at
 this time: that
 ceptance, Jwve performed some deed which, Local Assemblies shall read
 to applicants
 though he himself was unaware of its charac- the qualifications of voting
 membership as
 ter, was ordained by Goádas a means where- defined in the By-Laws, and
 record in their
 by he Jws been guided to find and embrace minutes the full and complete
 acceptance by
 the Truth. As to those who Jwve remained each applicant."
 deprived of such a blessing, their acts alone During recent months the
 National Spir-
 Jwve hindered them from recognizing the itual Assembly has been
 receiving requests
 truth of this Revelation. We cherish the for further information on
 one particular
 hope tlwt you, who have attained to this phase of this general question
 : how best to
 light, will exert your utmost to banish the prepare new believers for
 enrollment as vot-
 darkness of superstition and unbelief from ing Baha'is.
 the midst of the people. May your deeds The suggestion has been
 made, in fact,
 proclaim your faith and enable you to lead that it would be well if the
 National Assem-
 the erring into the paths of Eternal salva- bly could make a ruling that a
 certain period
 tion."-N. S. A. of time must elapse before any
 newly en-
 Concerning the qualifications required for rolled believer may exercise the
 voting right.
 voting, Shoghi Effendi has laid down the es- It has been felt, with
 considerable justice,
 sential conditions already in his letters, no that even though a new
 believer may be en- tirely qualified as far as
 further restrictions should he added to them. loyalty and knowl-
 edge of the teachings is
 It is for the Local Assembly to dedde in
 concerned, neverthe-
 this matter. They should exercise this right less the wise use of the
 voting right calls for
 with extreme tact and caution and avoid rig- another essential
 qualification, namely, ac-
 quaintance with the local
 idity and formalism. There is no distinction
 community and

in this respect between new and old believers, nor should contributions to the national or local funds be made a condition for voting.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

complete assimilation into its activities. While recognizing the view, the National Spiritual Assembly must point out that it has no sanction or authority PREPARATION OF NEW BE- different classifica- tions of voting membership. There is only LIEVERS FOR MEMBER- membership in the SHIP IN THE BAHAI' complete mem- bership, with no distinction between the vot- COMMUNITY ing rights of a new and an old and more ex- perience. In the August, 1932 issue of Baha'i News the National Spiritual Assembly published voting right with- an important statement entitled, "Qualifi- cations of Membership in a Baha'i Com- munity." The purpose of that statement, pre- pared in response to many requests for in- formation made by local Assemblies, was to emphasize the importance of the vital func- tion vested in the local Spiritual Assembly, Baha'i communi- of enrolling applicants as voting members of the community. Reference to that statement will make it clear that at that time the need was to deepen the sense of responsibility felt by all communities-and Assemblies in applying the Guardian's defi-

complete assimilation into its activities. While recognizing the view, the National Spiritual Assembly must point out that it has no sanction or authority whatsoever to establish one class or character of Baha'i community-full and complete mem- bership, with no distinction between the vot- ing rights of a new and an old and more ex- perience. As soon as a believer is enrolled, he receives this out the slightest To prepare applicants for of their membership, rollment must be deferred with the community has been question, it is clear, arises in the case of the few large ties than in the case of the smaller ones where personal acquaintance is gained merely by attendance at study classes and public meetings. For the larger every Baha'i community will

nite qualifications of Baha'i membership. its present	membership in comparison with
What the National Spiritual Assembly Spiritual Assembly	voting list-the National
BAHA'i PROCEDURE	SECTION TWO, SHEET 19
now wishes very sincerely and earnestly to institutions are de-	sembly, as the National
offer a few constructive suggestions which and the Univer-	pendent upon the Guardian
it is hoped each local Assembly will take to because of this or-	sal House of Justice. It is
heart for the sake of the highest interests of national By-Laws	ganic dependence that the
the beloved Faith.	make enrollment conditional
upon final ap-	
1. As years of experience have shown, in- Spiritual Assembly.	proval by the National
tellectual acceptance of the formal standards entrance of each	4. In order to assure the
of Baha'i faith alone is not sufficient to con- Baha'i community upon	new •believer into the
stitute a true believer. A true believer will, it is recom-	the soundest basis possible,
in addition, endeavor whole-heartedly to Assemblies, wherever con-	mended that local
abide by the results of Baha'i consultation final step for the	ditions permit, provide a
as maintained by the institutions of the already interested	preparation of applicants
Ca use. A true believer, furthermore, will some teacher's in-	by home study classes or
seek to contribute to the unity of the entire final step consists	dividual instruction. This
community, and find his own development in study class under	in the holding of a special
the growth of the Cause, and not attempt supervision and	the Assembly's own direct
to make the community revolve around his applicants can be trained	control, where the
own personality, nor himself revolve around principles and their	in the Administrative
the human personality of any one believer. teachings carefully	knowledge of the basic
This capacity for spiritual association is not the new believers	reviewed. By this method,
an additional qualification for membership impersonal	will experience the wise and

-it is the real test of the believer's pro- functioning of the
institution, and profit also
foudest spiritual faith. All teachers re- by contact with other
teachers. Later on, when local communities are
sponsible for preparing applicants for mem- larger and their
bership will do well to emphasize this vital collective undertakings more
proficient, per- haps all applicants, before
point, for the aim of Baha'u'llah's Revela- enrollment, will
tion is to establish oneness of spirit and be able to receive this
final, supervised in- struction. At present,
unity of action throughout the world. conditions vary so
2. An applicant who is enrolled as voting much among the communities that
this sug- gestion must be developed in
member of a local Baha'i community is accordance with local circumstances. It
accordance thereby given association not merely in that
would be well, however, for individual
community alone, but by his enrollment be- members of each
comes a Baha'i world citizen-a member of local Assembly to feel a more
positive respon- sibility in following all
the Baha'i Commonwealth maintained by the local teaching activi- ties, visiting each class or
local central institutions of the Guardianship and group as frequently
the Universal House of Justice. If he travels, as possible, in order to
have direct knowl- edge of this vital aspect
the enrolled •believer is given credentials of Assembly respon- sibility. By consultation it
of Assembly respon- sibility. By consultation it
which will be recognized and honored by possible for the Assembly to
would then be group or class conducted by
National and local Spiritual Assemblies with- ers in planning their
assist each out distinction, whether in the East or the
individual teach- up to the central study
West. How important, therefore, in the ssembly itself. Success
subjects so as to lead depends upon the
preparation of applicants for membership, unity of the Assembly and
class held by the As- operation of all teachers,
that they be made eonscious of this supreme
depends upon the
,privilege, this most vital responsiibility as-
the willing co-
sumed by all who voluntarily seek the shade

old and young, in
of the Divine Tree, who would contribute to
Baha'i community
the World Order of Baha'u'llah ! This con-
sideration is likewise a reminder to all of the
discerning
present believers, especially those who are
aspect of Baha'i
members of local Assemblies, how essential
aspect, has so far
it is to avoid merely local and personal is-
undeveloped. As local
sues and situations which might conceal from
and more experi-
an applicant the true universality of the
be able to ar-
Faith of God.
gatherings to sat-
3. The same consideration likewise gives
friendly as-
due emphasis to the fact that no local Spiri-
supplementing the Nineteen
tual Assembly is to be regarded as an in-
Anniversaries which at
dependent, self-sufficient Baha'i institution,
recognizeád Baha'i gath-
but rather as one important link in the series
Assemblies might
of institutions which constitute the World
feasts, in ad-
Order of Baha'u'llah. Local Assemblies are
Baha'i calendar, to
dependent upon the National Spiritual As-
•informal association
BAHA't PROCEDURE
of believers and also to enable applicants to
written to him
become acquainted with the local community.
National Commit-
So far, such informal gatherings have been
were to be sent
arranged mostly by individual believers in
Spiritual Assem-
their own homes, which tends to make the
convinced
social aspect of the community too onesided
this principle will

striving to enlarge the
year by year.
' 5. It has been realized by
Baha'is that one essential
community life, the social
remaining practically
communities become larger
enced, their Assemblies will
range social meetings and
isfy the innate human need of
sociation, thus
Day Feasts and the
present are the only
erings. The larger local
even now arrange occasional
dition to those in the
provide occasions for

SECTION TWO, SHEET 20
structions concerning letters
by local Assemblies and
tees were that such letters
him through the National
bly. The National Assembly is
that full respect paid to

and personal, in distinction to the universal-unity and confidence of the formal Baha'i meetings. The National Assembly regrets deeply that Baha'is are still compelled to develop a social life on the part of either outside or on a basis of restricted intimacy within the Cause. But through social gatherings arranged by the local Spiritual Assembly, the social life of Baha'is will reinforce and strengthen their spiritual and ethical lives, and moreover such gatherings will not only bring the applicants and the older believers together but also demonstrate the vital fact that Baha'u'llah's Faith, in the Guardian's own words, inculcates a standard which "incline it to neither East nor West, neither Jew nor Gentile, neither rich nor poor, neither white nor colored." 6. Last but by no means least in importance is the fact that when new applicants are enrolled, not merely are they to be adjusted to the Baha'i community, but the older believers are also to adjust to the new friends. This consideration, in fact, must receive increasing attention as indications multiply that the era of more rapid growth vested in Spiritual Assemblies cannot invade. While that the spirit of cooperation are due every new

redound to the spirit of throughout the Cause in correspondence with the part of local Assemblies, and Committees appointed by theroduces an element of Baha'i activities which ... pressly forbids.-N. S. A.

**SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES
AND THE RIGHTS OF THE
INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER**

In our collective haste to the fundamental principles of administration, the authority of Assemblies, another important of the individual believer, there to be occasionally To correct this ority at the expense of Spiritual Assembly reminds believers that the Guardian once definitely upheld an rights which the authority tual Assemblies cannot area can not be marked off

with finality,
 Baha'i, without the slightest tincture of like boundaries on a map,
 nevertheless by
 aloofness, separateness or, on the other hand, careful reflection we can at
 least grasp the
 undue favoritism, from those who have essential principle which
 must be applied in
 longer shared the privilege of adherence to all cases where the exercise
 of authority
 the Faith. upon individual believers is
 questioned.
 The National Spiritual Assembly offers Generally speaking, an
 Assembly's auth-
 ority extends throughout the
 these remarks as suggestions deserving of realm of col-
 lective Baha'i activities-the
 thoughtful attention. In no sense are they
 actions under-
 put forth as rulings or commands, because taken by the local Baha'i
 community and
 those actions which express
 formal legislation can not be carried into
 the Cause in the
 eyes of the public. The
 the realm of the heart and the conscience.
 question of author-
 ity can not legitimately be
 In essence, this statement is an appeal, an
 raised in connec-
 tion with the holding of
 urgent call for new and higher spiritual at-
 Nineteen Day
 Feasts, public teaching
 titudes on the part of all members of the
 programs, the raising
 of Baha'i Funds, the approval
 American Baha'i Community.-N. S. A.
 of publicity
 The administrative responsibilities of put forth in the name of the
 Cause, the call-
 ing of Baha'i elections and
 local Spiritual Assemblies enjoins upon them
 all other similar
 matters which concern the
 to maintain their voting lists in full conf or-
 local Baha'i body
 as a whole. Such matters are
 mity with the qualifications of a voting be-
 clearly sub-
 ject to the authority vested
 liever as defined by the Guardian and this
 in the Spiritual
 Assembly.
 function does not involve passing upon the
 spiritual reality of any individual, which
 There is, however, a realm
 which is pri-
 marily personal in
 function is reserved to the Guardian alone.
 character, where the ex-
 -N. S. A. exercise of Assembly

authority has sometimes
 been exceeded. For example, a .Spiritual As-
 CORRESPONDENCE WITH sembly has no authority over
 any individual
 THE GUARDIAN believer's private property,
 neither his in-
 It has been voted that the believers are to come nor his home or business
 establish-
 be reminded that the Guardian's original in- ment. Neither can an
 Assembly hope to ex-
 BAHAI PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 21
 ercise any useful authority over the efforts consultation. Nothing short
 of the spirit of
 of individual believers to spread the Teach- a true Baha'i can hope to
 reconcile the prin- ciples of mercy and justice,
 ings by employing the opportunities which
 of freedom and submission, of the sancity
 arise in the course of daily life. These con- individual and of
 of the right of the
 siderations lead the National Spiritual As- discretion and prudence on
 self-surrender, of vigilance, and fellowship, candor, and
 sembly to feel that each and every believer
 the one hand, other." -N. S. A.
 is free to arrange informal gatherings in his
 courage on the
 own home, for the promotion of the Cause,
 without formal approval or action by the
 Spiritual Assembly. If in such cases a be- THE RESIDENTIAL QUALI-
 liever feels it desirable to invite another be- FICATION OF VOTING
 liever to deliver the Message at a home gath- MEMBERSHIP IN A BAHAI
 ering, the believer's choice of teachers can
 clearly not be restricted arbitrarily by the
 Assembly, for such restriction would invade
 COMMUNITY
 the privacy of the home. In Baha'i News, January,
 1935, the Na-
 As a matter of fact, since the element of tional Spiritual Assembly
 published a state- ment entitled
 personal initiative is an integral and infi-
 "Interpretation of the By- Law on Residential
 nitely precious part of the Faith, the Spiri- Believers" in which •was
 Qualification of Voting
 tual Assembly itself is in duty bound to up- expressed the view
 expressed the view
 hold and protect the rights of individual be- that the requirement of
 residence as one of
 lievers just as it is in duty bound to uphold the qualifications of a

voting believer should
and protect any other organic Baha'i teach- be based upon definite proof
of capacity to
ing or principle. associate with the Baha'i
community.

This is not to sanction a lesser degree of It appears that this
interpretation has led
loyalty to the institution of a Spiritual As- to some confusion in a number
of local com- munities. The National
sembly on the part of any individual believer, munities. The National
Spiritual Assembly
nor should these remarks be taken to imply has therefore given the
subject further con- sideration and now offers the
that "authority" and "rights" are mutually sideration and now offers the
following sup- plementary statement in
exclusive and incompatible realities. Rather plementary statement in
clarification of the January publication. This
is this statement a plea for more mutual con- outcome of consultation
sideration, more encouragement of individ- withá the Guardian
withá the Guardian
uals ,by Assemblies, more respect for Assem- and has been submitted to
and approved by him. It is based upon what
blies by individuals. The inter-relationship him. It is based upon what
he considers "a fundamental principle" of
of an Assembly and members of the local Baha'i Adminis-
Baha'i community can not be mechanical, tration,-that no adult
believer may ibe de- prived of "the sacred right
for it is based upon the fundamental princi- prived of "the sacred right
of participating in Baha'i elections," unless
ple of unity which, if it is to be achieved and in Baha'i elections," unless
he reside in a community not itself
preserved, bids an Assembly deal with all community not itself
qualified for such par- ticipation or has permanently
believers in kindness and forbearance, and ticipation or has permanently
withdrawn or been removed from further
bids every individual Baha'i maintain an at- been removed from further
association with the activities of the Faith.
titude of true respect for an institution the activities of the Faith.
created by Baha'u'llah Himself, and as such 1. The enrollment of
voting members in accordance with the By-Laws
not to be judged iby the personalities of those accordance with the By-Laws
of the National Spiritual Assembly is a
called to administer the institution during Spiritual Assembly is a
responsibility vested in the Local Spiritual
these difficult days of its infancy. in the Local Spiritual

rights but is
Article VII, Section 12, of this instru- actually domiciled
elsewhere and makes
ment." only occasional visits to
the community,
Article VII, Section 12, referred to, pro- insufficient to bring
him within the pro-
vides: vision of paragraph
A above, a question
"The siphere of jurisdiction of a Local of fact arises which
the Local Spiri-
Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residen- tual Assembly may
find it difficult to
tial qualification of membership and voting decide. In such
cases the Local As-
rights of a believer in any Baha'i community, ssembly may take
counsel with the Na-
shall ,be the locality included within the civil tional Assembly
before making a final
limits of the city, town or village; but Baha'is decision.
who reside in adjacent, outlying or suburban E. A Local Spiritual
Assembly confronted
districts and can regularly attend the meet- by any other unusual
situation involv-
ings of the local Baha'i community, may be ing the question of
residence can at any
enrolled on the membership list of the ad- time seek advice from
the National
jacent Spiritual Assembly and enjoy full vot- Spiritual Assembly
before making a
ing rights pending the establishment of a final decision.
Local Spiritual Assembly in their commu- 5. In connection with the
foregoing inter-
nity." pretations, though not
involving the specific
4. Under these provisions of the By-Laws, question of residence
exclusively, the follow-
residential qualification for voting member- ing point has been brought
to the attention
ship in a Baha'i community thus becomes a of the National Spiritual
Assembly by the
• question of fact. In order to assist Local Guardian.
Spiritual Assemblies in determining whether a. A believer who has
,been absent for some
an applicant for such membership comes time from the
community of which he is
within these requirements in any particular a resident, or a new

believer not yet
 case, the National Spiritual Assembly offers sufficiently well
 acquainted with the
 the following interpretation of certain spe- local community, is
 not obliged to vote
 cific situations which experience has shown in a Baha'i election
 when conscienti-
 are likely to arise. ously feeling
 incapable of voting intel-
 A. Where a ibeliever lives sufficiently near lighly.
 a Baha'i community to take an active It is hoped that these
 supplementary ex-
 share in its activities and there is no planations will remove the
 misunderstand-
 organized Spiritual Assembly in his ings which the January statement
 appears
 own community, he should be enrolled to have caused and may be of
 assistance to
 and continued upon the voting list of Local .Spiritual Assemblies in
 dealing with
 that community until a Spiritual As- this important question of
 residence.-N.S.A.
 sembly is established in his own im- The National Spiritual Assembly
 calls the
 mediate neighborhood. attention of the local Assemblies
 and believ-
 B. Where a believer, actually a resident of ers to the Article in the
 By-Laws which de-
 a particular community, is temporarily fines the area of jurisdiction of
 the local
 absent from his community but hon- Spiritual Assembly, which
 definition provides
 estly regards his residence there as con- that believers living in adjacent
 and outlying
 tinueing and fully intends to return to districts can be enrolled as voting
 members
 and resume his activities in that com- of a local Assembly, pending the
 establish-
 munity, he retains his voting rights in ment of a local Assembly in their
 own city.
 the community without interruption. This By-Law clearly makes it
 impossible for
 He may not, however, during his ab- a ,believer living in a city which
 has a local
 sence vote in any other Baha'i com- Spiritual Assembly to hold
 membership in
 munity. any other Baha'i community. In

accordance

C. Where a believer spends practically half with this constitutional provision, the National Spiritual Assembly requests local Assemblies to adjust their voting list at their early convenience. This general instruction does not in any way mean that he must choose which of the two localities does not in any way mean that believers are

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 23

not free to attend a Baha'i meeting in any dates nor rival platforms and policies. The city, but merely controls their voting rights. sole issue is the spiritual problem consisting

-N.S.A. in the obligation of each

believer to uphold those qualities which the Guardian has

THE CHARACTER OF enumerated in the selected

passages quoted

above. If we would meet this obligation faithfully,

BAHA'í ELECTIONS fully, we must eliminate our own

personal

"Let us recall His explicit and often-repeated likes and dislikes and rise to

the station of

pure and selfless vision.

in that rarified atmosphere of selflessness Such vision, as Shoghi

Effendi declares, is

and detachment, is in truth, appointed of inspired by prayer and

reflection. The voter's vision will only be clouded

God, that its verdict is truly inspired, that vision will only be clouded

if he permits any other believer, directly or

indirectly, to influence his choice. If it

reservedly and with cheerfulness . . . The Baha'i standard for any

is contrary to the

elector ... is called upon to vote for none but Baha'i standard for any

believer to attempt

those whom prayer and reflection have inspired to influence the votes of

other believers, it is

inspired him to uphold ... Hence it is incumbent upon the chosen delegates to consider

standard for any

believer to allow himself

bent upon the chosen delegates to consider

to be influenced.

without the least trace of passion and prejudice. The character of Baha'i

elections is such

dice, and irrespective of any material con-
 sideration, the names of only those who can
 maintenance depends
 best combine the necessary qualities of un-
 faithfulness of all ,believers in
 questioned loyalty, of selfless devotion, of a
 than upon the vig-
 well-trained mind, of recognized ability and
 Spiritual Assem-
 mature eXperience ... Nothing short of the
 practices contrary to
 all-encompassing, all-pervading power of His
 can in any locality
 Guidance and Love can enable this newly en-
 the believer ap-
 folded order to gather strength and flourish
 influence and sug-
 amid the storm and stress of a turbulent age,
 in every instance,
 and in the fulness of time vindicate its high
 invasion of his spirit-
 claim to be universally recognized as the one
 also sternly rebuke
 Haven of abiding felicity and peace."-
 the few wrong doers
 Shoghi Effendi. . here and there who can do
 injury to the
 From time to time the question is placed
 passive attitude
 before the National Spiritual Assembly as to
 fellow-believers who fail to as-
 what a Local Assembly should do when it has
 Teachings.
 evidence that some believer has attempted
 its infancy must in-
 to exert influence upon other believers in
 manner of test and
 order to affect their votes in a Baha'i election. eXperience in order to
 become mature and
 In deliberating upon this important mat-
 and fallacy from
 ter, the National Assembly has sought to ar-
 prevent the en-
 rive at and define, in the light of the Guar-
 negative sugges-
 dian's instructions, the true Baha'i attitude

that the National Spiritual
 profoundly that its
 upon the loyal
 the community much more
 ilance and authority of the
 bly alone. Methods and
 the true Baha'i standard
 be quickly extirpated if
 proached with improper
 gestion will immediately,
 not merely reject such
 ual rights and duties but
 the wrong doer. It is not
 Cause, but the negative and
 of his or her
 sert the power of the
 A World Order still in
 evitably pass through all
 strong, able to detect error
 any and every source and
 trance of even the subtlest
 tion. For this reason the

National Spiritual
toward all elections held within the Cause,
whatever evidences
whether they are elections for members of a
locality at present of un-
Local Spiritual Assembly, of Convention
practices, the problem in es-
delegates or of members of the National
the believers to un-
Spiritual Assembly. derstand, appreciate and
uphold the Guar-
The Guardian's words quoted above, all dian's standard rather than of
disciplinary
taken from the volume "Baha'i Administra- action on the part of the
Local or National
tion," clearly create the spiritual standard Assembly.
which each and every voting member of a As the Guardian
recently advised, it is
Baha'i community must endeavor to attain. only when repeated
warnings are unheeded,
Such a standard compels us to leave behind and deliberate disloyalty
has become mani-
many practices to which we have become ac- fest, that the extreme
measure of expulsion
customed through the influence of the politi- should be undertaken. The
test of our collec-
cal society existing throughout the world. tive wisdom now is the
capacity to distin-
Thus, the Baha'i Faith contains no parti- guish between deliberate
disloyalty and the
san factions corresponding to the political errors that proceed from
lack of knowledge,
parties dominating the civil community. The heedlessness or
immaturity.
issue before a Baha'i electoral body is never The National Spiritual
Assembly will
the obligation to choose between rival candi- never fail to assist with
all its power any
BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION TWO, SHEET 24
Local Assembly confronted by conditions "The Qualifications of a
Voting Believer,"
arising from deliberate disloyalty; but the published a few months ago,
the Spiritual
view expressed here is that most misconduct Assembly of the Baha'is of
Chicago have re-
surrounding Baha'i elections can be extir- corded in their minutes the
acceptance of a

pated entirely by wise action on the part of new believer in such a clear
 and comprehen- sive manner that an excerpt
 the believers themselves. from these min-
 The concrete suggestion is however made utes is now published as a model
 that might well be followed by other
 that each Local Spiritual Assembly, immedi- well be followed by other
 Assemblies. "This is to certify that
 ately preceding elections, shall remind the on ... (date), 19 .. ,
 friends of the Guardian's words concerning the Local Spiritual Assembly
 of the Baha'is of met in
 their spiritual character. Indeed, the impor- of met in
 consultation with who had made application for
 tance of developing the World Order of Ba- affiliation with the
 ha'u'llah is so vital that the question of Baha'is, and in
 compliance with sug- gestions made by the National
 whether a Baha'i should or should not vote Spiritual As-
 in political elections is merely secondary.- sembly, the following
 procedure was carried
 N. S.A. out : The Chairman,
 , read to
 the applicant excerpts from Baha'i Adminis-
 REPORTS FROM LOCAL tration, the qualifications for
 voting member- ship in a Baha'i Community as
 ASSEMBLIES outlined in
 outlined in the By-Laws and excerpts from the Will and
 The National Spiritual Assembly requests Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, and
 gave a very interesting and complete
 each local Assembly hereafter to send it a Baha'i organization.
 explanation of "It was ascertained that
 copy of all important notices covering poli- Baha'i organization.
 cies, rules or regulations as well as impor- "It was ascertained that
 Mr had care- fully studied Baha'i
 tant announcements having to do with elec- fully studied Baha'i
 Administration and the Will of 'A.bdu'l-Baha, as well
 tions and organizations under Baha'i admin- Will of 'A.bdu'l-Baha, as well
 as much other Baha'i literature, and
 istration, which the local Assembly may is- Baha'i literature, and
 following the above procedure acknowledged his
 sue to the Baha'i community from time to understanding
 understanding and complete acceptance of the
 time.-N. S. A. and complete acceptance of the
 tenets of

Baha'i Faith. It is thereupon the unanimous
TRANSFER OF BELIEVERS
.... be accepted

vote of those present that Mr

The transfer of believers involved in un- as a voting member of the
. . Baha'i

finished matters proceeding under the local Community."-N. S. A.
Assembly's jurisdiction is to be postponed
pending a report of the circumstances to the RELATION OF THE LOCAL
National Assembly and its approval of the
transfer. TO THE NATIONAL

The ,purpose of the above ruling is to make SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
it possible for a local Spiritual Assembly to
retain jurisdiction of a case until the matter Concerning local Bahai'i
news letters, the Guardian strongly feels that
is concluded. For example, if an Assembly Guardian strongly feels that
they should be primarily devoted to the
is endeavoring to settle some difference be- spread of local news
spread of local news and activities, and should
tween two believers, and knows all the cir- and activities, and should
under no circum- stances contain any statement
cumstances of the case, but before a decision implying criti-
implying criti- cism of or even interference
is made one of the believers moves to another with the :policy of the N. S. A. They may
with the :policy of the N. S. A. They may
city, where the Assembly is naturally unin- occasionally refer
occasionally refer to items of a national scope,
formed of the ,problem, the believer who but this should
to items of a national scope,
moves is not to be given a letter of transfer be done only with the view of
assisting and not hindering the national
by his former Assembly until the National body of the Cause
not hindering the national
Assembly has opportunity to learn the cir- to carry out effectively its
to carry out effectively its
program and de- cisions. There is thus a
cumstances and approve the time when the definite line of de-
cisions. There is thus a
transfer can be made-when, in other words, marcation between
marcation between
correspondence initiated by local and National
by local and National
the Assembly in the city where the believer Assemblies. Local ac-
Assemblies. Local ac-
has taken up his or. her new residence is to tivities should always be
tivities should always be
subordinated to those of a national character
and impor-
exercise jurisdiction over the affairs of that and impor-
and impor-
believer.-N. S. A. •tance. This is intended not
to minimize the
role of the local Assembly in the administra-

HOW TO ENROLL NEW

insure a sane

relationship between that body and the na-

BELIEVERS

E~-

Following the outline supplied by the Na-

tional Spiritual Assembly in its article on

arisen in con-

BAHA't PROCEDURE

nection with the News Letter published and

accuracy of the teachings

circulated by the Assembly, the

its Community

Guardian has already written about it to

This, in a way, cor-

your N. S. A., expressing the view that under

of review. More-

no circumstances should any local Assembly

Assembly alone can

be given the right to criticize and much less

furnished to the press

oppose, the policy duly adopted and approved

Community.

by the N. S. A. It is his hope that henceforth

Spiritual Assembly had

the 'problem of the relationship between the

general policy was the

N. S. A. and the local Assemblies in matters

represented by

of this nature will, in the light of his instruc-

question this pol-

tions, be carefully understood by individuals

whether a Local

and Assemblies alike.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

issue Baha'i litera-

Just as the local Baha'i fund must under

on its own re-

all circumstances be subordinated to the na-

tional fund, so also, every local circular let-

instructions in Balui'i Ad-

ter should be considered as subsidiary to the

that all Baha'i lit-

national report of Baha'i activities in every

character, that is, aside

country. Such a coordination between local

bulletins, are to be re-

and national efforts is indispensable, not only

tive order, but to establish and

tional organism of the Cause.-SHOGHI

FENDI.

As to the problem which has

SECTION TWO, SHEET 25

responsible for the

as presented by members of

or by visiting ,believers.

responds to the function

over, a Local Spiritual

pass upon the material

on behalf of its Baha'i

What the National

in mind in adopting a

more formal publication

pamphlets and books. The

icy attempted to answer is

Spiritual Assembly can

ture of a general character

s,ponsibility.

The Guardian's

minigration make it clear

erature of a general

from programs and

viewed by a committee of

the National Spiritual Assembly. This makes
 because of its economic advantages, but es-
 it evident that, as far as the review
 sentially due to the fact that upon the appli-
 function is concerned, a Local Spiritual Assembly
 cation of the principle underlying this proc-
 (apart from local teaching and
 ess must inevitably depend the effective
 publicity work) is sub- ject to the general
 working of the entire administrative ma-
 jurisdiction of the Na- tional Spiritual Assembly.
 chinery of the Faith. There is order, coor-
 <ination and system in the Cause, and not a
 be considered is Still another point to
 jungle of conflicting interests and of contin-
 Assembly can pub- whether a Local Spiritual
 ually clashing wills.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. lish, as a pamphlet or
 book, any literature
 (such as excerpts from the recognized Writ-
 REVIEW AND PUBLICA- ings) already approved by
 the Reviewing
 Committee of the National Spiritual As-
 TION OF BAHAI LITERA- ssembly.
 TURE BY LOCAL Here the policy adopted by
 the National
 Spiritual Assembly makes a distinction be-
 ASSEMBLIES tween publishing for sale and
 publishing as
 With the development of the Cause, the free literature. According to
 this policy, the
 increased opportunity for teaching arising publishing of Baha'i
 literature for sale is
 .among local Baha'i Communities will from vested solely in the
 Publishing Committee
 time to time bring up the question of whether appointed by the National
 Spiritual Assem- bly, as otherwise it would
 a Local Spiritual Assembly has the right to
 be impossible to de-
 publish Baha'i literature. This question, in velop one well-organized,
 responsible and effi-
 turn, brings up the parallel question of how cient national publishing
 activity.
 far the jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual As- On the other hand, if
 it is a matter of a
 ssembly involves the right of review. Local Spiritual Assembly
 publishing a
 In order to anticipate these and similar pamphlet for free

distribution, as part of its teaching activity, the National Spiritual Assembly feels that this is permitted by Baha'i administrative principles, provided believers. that the material so published has already been approved by the National Reviewing Committee. To sum up the attitude of the National Spiritual Assemblies already issue printed programs and bulletins which contain excerpts from the Assemblies are requested, for the sake of the well being and orderly progress of the Cause in the United States and Canada, to observe this policy. Aside from Assembly has not only the right but also the duty and responsibility of presenting its activities to the Local Spiritual Assembly and to the Baha'i Community and to the public in the most dignified and effective form. it may issue, as free literature, printed leaflets and pamphlets containing material already approved by the National Reviewing Committee and subsequently confirmed by action of the National Spiritual Assembly. The members of the National Spiritual Assembly sincerely hope that this policy will be entirely acceptable to all Baha'i Communities, as a just and reasonable one, and that the Cause can prosper and its message embrace the whole world. It was also

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 26

wonderful to
able attitude based upon the Guardian's in- see the interest shown by the
public in the
structions.-N. S. A. general gatherings that formed
part of the
Convention program.

INSTRUCTION IN WILL Shoghi Effendi hopes that as
the Temple

is gradually completed this interest will in-
AND TESTAMENT crease and they will try to share
in the

Local Assemblies are directed to instruct spirit that motivates the friends
and, accept-

new believers in the meaning of this new ing the Faith of Baha'u'llah,
arise to serve

compilation (i. e., the Will and Testament in it and dedicate their life to
its spread.

the new edition) and furthermore, that local Such gatherings for
collections of funds

Assemblies are to be responsible for provid- are permissible if it is done
with a true spirit

ing new believers with copies.-N. S. A. of sacrifice, not when the
audience is espe-

cially aroused to a frenzy and mob psychol-
ogy is used to induce them to pay.

TO STUDY REPORTS AND Shoghi Effendi has
repeatedly stated that

RECOMMENDATIONS no pressure should be used upon
the friends

and psychological pressure falls under that

In transmitting to the National Spiritual category. But there is much
difference be-

Assembly reports and recommendations tween such gatherings often
used by re-

emanating from the local community, a local religious bodies, and a true
quiet, prayerful

Spiritual Assembly should not be merely a atmosphere when a person is,
of his own ac-

passive medium used by believers to bring cord, aroused to make some
sacrifice. The

matters to the attention of the N. S. A. but distinction is very delicate,
but it is for the

should make its own independent study of Chairman to use his power to
see that one

such reports and recommendations and for- desirable form is not
corrupted into the

ward them with a statement of its own atti- other. All the activities of

the Cause should
tude and comment. Such a procedure will be carried through in a
dignified manner.
not only save the National Assembly much Shoghi Effendi is sure
that the funds gath-
valuable time, but will also enable local As- ered at the last Convention
was not due to
semblies to develop necessary experience and the play of mob psychology but
to the prayer-
capacity.-N. S. A. ful attitude of the friends
and their desire
to make further sacrifice.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

TO APPROVE RADIO

PROGRAMS

CONTACT WITH INTER-

All radio broadcasts of a direct Baha'i ORGANIZATIONAL
character shall be approved by the local As- ACTIVITIES
sembly before delivery.-N. S. A.

A local Assembly may be represented

ANNUAL MEMORIAL

through a delegate at an

inter-organization

conference, the purpose of which is in full

MEETINGS

harmony with the Baha'i teachings and

prin-

It has been voted to record the attitude of ciples and the organization of
which in no

the N. S. A. that local Assemblies would not way limits the spirit of
freedom of the Ba-

be justified in sanctioning annual memorial ha'i delegate or veils the
identity of the

meetings to commemorate individual believ- Spiritual Assembly
participating.-N. S. A.

ers.-N. S. A.

COLLECTION OF TABLETS

ON COLLECTION OF

Local Spiritual Assemblies are requested

BAHA't FUNDS

to announce the following

recommendation,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge and do their utmost to see that
it is carried

the recei,pt of your letter dated May 8th, into effect :-that individual
believers (and

1932, telling him of some incidents that Assemblies themselves) who
have in their

tr~nspired during the Convention this year, possession original Tablets of

•Abdu'l-Baha,

BAHA't PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 27

with the necessary original translations,

Cause of Baha'u'llah

provides spiritual prin- original letters of Shoghi Effendi, or other administrative institutions ciples and also sacred records and objects, take steps to have for the preservation of the unity of the be- them preserved in the Baha'i Archives. The lievers under all conditions. As the mem- bers of the community, one Guardian has said that the collection and and all, con- publication of Tablets is one of the most scientiously abide by the Teachings such important duties of this generation.- disturbances will result in strengthening our N. S. A. collective capacity and deepening our spirit of faith, but whenever the Teachings are not LOCAL ARCHIVES fully applied, ,perisonal grief and perhaps even injustice may result.

a. Such records as the local Assembly may The members of the Spiritual Assembly wish to make available bearing upon the lo- feel that it will be helpful to summarize cal activities, all records of importance in briefly its understanding of the principles connection with the growth of the Cause lo- which control this important matter of per- cally. sonal differences between believers.

b. Accurate individual records of all In the first place, the spiritual law of the members of the local Baha'i community. Cause, which 'Abdu'l-Baha so frequently ex-

c. Relics, photographs, etc., associated plained, is that whenever two Baha'is have with the experiences of individual Baha'is, any difference, they themselves are in duty unless gifts of the Master or the Guardian.- bound to try and attain true harmony. The N. S.A. Master even said that if two believers are unwilling to be reconciled, both will event- STATUS OF BAHAI' usually leave the Cause. He did not say that they would be removed from the Cause by CENTERS administrative action ; His words meant that

Any public meeting place entirely controlled by the believers should in its function leading eventually be regarded in the light of a Mashriqu'l-Gause by the of- Adhkar and its accessory activities.-N. S. A. The Spiritual Assembly, in the second place, has a great responsibility in all mat- PERMANENT LOCAL ADDRESS. members of the community about another believer, have no permanent headquarters to take a learn the facts and, Post Office Box which can be used as a per- decision. It is clear that an Assembly cannot make a decision in the Box to be made accessible to the duly elected secretary from year to year.-N. S. A. can only insist that the grief or unhappiness should not be allowed to become a cause of CONTACT WITH CIVIL DISUNITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY as a whole. The Assembly also must in these cases point out the Master's interpretation of the spirit- ual law and urge the two Individual believers and also local Assemblies can only make contact with Federal and State officials on Baha'i matters through the National Assembly, in accordance with the other hand, may arise from business or other relations be- tween believers and involve charges of some definite unfairness or injustice committed by

ON MISUNDERSTANDINGS

one believer against another.

When such

charges can be proved, it is surely the duty

AND DIFFERENCES BE-

of the Assembly to remove the

injustice and

TWEEN INDIVIDUAL

place the matter upon a proper

Baha'i basis.

No doubt all of us still need to be reminded

BELIEVERS

of the fact that when a matter has

been re-

In every Baha'i community, misunder-
for decision,

ferred to a Spiritual Assembly

standings and differences between individual
concerned must await

the individual believers

believers arise from time to time, and the
abide by it, un-

the Assembly's decision and

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

SECTION TWO, SHEET 28

less and until that decision is altered on ap-
peal to the National Spiritual Assembly. But
one step farther:

affecting the Cause itself.

To carry the explanation

whether the matter is being handled by the
concerned in a personal

if all the believers

local or by the National Assembly, none of
Assembly, and if

problem have met with the

the believers involved in the trouble should
into the matter

the Assembly, after looking

agitate their case among the friends. Noth-
decision, the believers

from all sides, makes a

ing so disrupts a Baha'i community as per-
accept that decision

are clearly obligated to

sonal agitation. The only solution of this
of course, can

and abide by it. An appeal,

problem is for every faithful believer, when
eventually to the

be made to the N. S. A. and

approached by another believer with com-
Baha'i authority

Guardian, but whatever the

plaints and criticisms, to remind that be-
referred to a

which is invoked, a matter

liever of his or her duty to refer the diffi-
settlement is outside

Baha'i institution for

culty to the Assembly, and not share that be-
and individual

the realm of personal feeling

liever's personal agitation.

conscience. If we do not

trust the Baha'i in-

Nine times out of ten, the spirit of calm
Baha'u'llah, we do not

stitutions created by

and serene faith on the part of other Baha'is

have real faith in

Baha'u'llah Himself. More-
 whom the agitated believer approaches will over, even when an Assembly
 makes a deci-
 allay the feeling of trouble, but when the per- sion in a case of personal
 dispute, the spirit-
 sonal agitation is shared by others, the or- ual law laid upon all Baha'is
 is still operat-
 iginal problem becomes multiplied into an ing, and the believers
 involved in the prob-
 issue which disturbs the whole community. lem should pray for divine
 compassion and
 When a believer brings a problem to the illumination in addition to
 whatever actions
 Assembly, it is not sufficient to make charges they take in relation to
 administrative pro-
 and complaints against another believer,- cedure. We Baha'is live in
 the spiritual
 every charge must be proved before the As- world which Baha'u'llah
 created in His Reve-
 ssembly can act. No Spiritual Assembly lation, and we must do our
 utmost to learn
 could possibly allow itself to be a mere pas- and obey its mysterious laws
 which control
 sive instrument for any one believer to use our destiny.
 as a weapon against another. The Assembly "Every eye, in this Day,
 should seek what
 has the same duty of justice and considera- will best promote the Cause
 of God. He, Who
 tion toward the one against whom the charg- is the Eternal Truth, beareth
 me witness!
 es are made as toward the one who makes the Nothing whatever can, in
 this Day, inflict a
 charges. greater harm upon this Cause
 than dissen-
 In looking into the problem which has been sion and strife, contention,
 estrangement and
 referred to it, the Assembly must call in for apathy, among the loved ones
 of God. Flee
 consultation all the individual Baha'is who them, through the power of
 áGod and His
 may be involved. However deep the feeling sovereign aid, and strive to
 knit together the
 one believer may have against another, and hearts of men, in His Name,
 the Unifier, the
 no matter what may be the reasons for that All-Knowing, the All-Wise."
 (Baha'u'llah.)-
 feeling, no faithful Baha'i will refuse to meet N. S. A.

with the Spiritual Assembly for such consultation, because it is consultation with the Assembly itself and not with the believer
ON SLANDER AND

against whom the complaint is made. Should the one making the complaint refuse to consult with the Assembly, the Assembly in that case must dismiss the complaint, since one "Breathe not the sins of

of the necessary steps leading to eventual sinner. Shouldst justice and unity has been refused by a party command, accursed art

to the dispute ; unless of course the truth of (Hidden Words, the charges is self-evident. If the Baha'i warns that: "Back-

who ma:~es the complaint is willing to come of the heart and for consultation, but the other Baha'i-that the soul." (Glean-

is, the one against whom the complaint is and Testament, made-refuses the Assembly's invitation, "According to the direct

this refusal would be serious, because on the forbidden to utter one hand it would create a strong impression elucidates this

that the believer could not answer the charge-wherein He states: es made against him or her, and on the other especially the

hand it would mean unwillingness to recognize the authority of the Assembly to act in therein. Because the

a matter affecting Baha'is and consequently most great sin

BAHA't PROCEDURE

is backbiting, more especially when it emanates from the tongues of the believers of in all cases,

God. If some means were divine (devised?)

BACKBITING

One of the most important

commandments, specially

ha'i Teachings, is :

others so long as thou art a

thou transgress this

thou and to this I testify."

27.) Baha'u'llah further

biting quencheth the light

extinguisheth the life of

ings, p. 265.) In His Will

'Abdu'l-Baha adds:

command of God, we are

slander." The Master further

vital subject in a Tablet

"How blessed are these aims,

prevention of backbiting. I

may become confirmed

worst human quality and the

SECTION TWO, SHEET ~

ertain or listen to any

hearsay or rumor, but should,

insist that the complainant or

witness speak
so that the doors of backbiting could be shut only of such matters and
present such evi-
eternally and each one of the believers of dence as he or she knows to be
true, of his
God unseaied his tongue in the praise of the or her own knowledge.
other, then the teachings of His Holiness Ba- 6. In the event that a
local Assembly is
ha'u'llah would be spread, the hearts il- unable to stop or prevent the
continued dis-
lumined, the spirits glorified and the human cussion or circulation of
criticisms and un-
world would attain to overlasting felicity." founded rumors after it has
taken juris-
(Tablet to Dr. M. S. C., Washington, D. C. diction of the matter, it is to
report such
Translated August 12, 1913.) cases immediately to the
National Spiritual
In order to distinguish between legitimate Assembly. The National Spiritual
Assem-
reports to a Baha'i administrative body bly, after careful
investigation, will take
which may affect the welfare of a Baha'i vigorous action to remove the
misunder-
community or an individual member thereof standings and misrepretations
that have
and unwarranted rumors, negative and hear- arisen and render full justice
to the indi-
say gossip, slander and backbiting, inten- vidual believer or believers
concerned.
tionally or thoughtlessly circulated, the Na- The new World Order is and
must be held
tional Spiritual Assembly has adopted the sacred and free from this
grave defect in
following rule of action for the guidance of human relationships, which not
only often
the Baha'i Assemblies and communities un- inflicts unmerited injury and
suffering upon
der its jurisdiction. the individual but, more
important, destroys
1. In no case should the friends speak1 to the solidarity of the Baha'i
community. Whis-
their fellow-believers in the community of pering and backbiting is
equivalent to sep-
any matter involving personal dilinquencies, aration among the friends of
God, and, in
alleged or actual, of another member of the the final analysis, is the

will to harm and to
community, nor permit believers to speak to them of such matters. If a complaint is
Assembly feels as-
warranted, it should be brought directly to the friends will
the local Assembly for consideration. make every effort to realize
in their indivi-
2. A local Assembly should assume juris- dual and community lives a
greater love and
diction only when the acts or words of a unity of purpose, and be ever
mindful of
member of the Baha'i community are such Baha'u'llah's injunction:
"Attribute not. to
as to threaten the integrity of the Cause it- any soul that which thou
wouldst not have
self, or to undermine the good name and attributed to thee, and say
not that which
reputation of a believer. thou doest not. This is My
Command to
3. This rule of action also applies for the thee, do thou observe it."
(Hidden Words,
protection of believers, from any discussion 29.)
of their alleged personal shortcomings in Ba- "O my servants! Deprive not
yourselves
ha'i communities other than that in which of the unfading and
resplendent Light that
such believers reside. shineth within the Lamp of
Divine Glory.
4. All such personal matters are strictly Let the flame of the love of God
burn bright-
barred from discussion at the Nineteen Day ly within your radiant hearts.
Feed it with
Feasts. the oil of Divine guidance,
and protect it
5. In applying the law of Baha'u'llah rela- within the shelter of your
constancy. Guard
tive to the bringing of complaints and in- it within the globe of trust
and detachment
formation to a local Assembly concerning from all else but God, so that
the whisperings
the alleged or actual shortcomings of indi- of the ungodly may not
extinguish its light."
vidual believers, the Assembly should not en- (Gleanings, pp. 325-326.)-N.
S. A.

friends in that country
the nine who will be the members of the
OF THE ANNUAL BAHAI
Assembly.
CONVENTION
that if the An-
nual Convention of the friends in America,
Compiled from the Guardian's
Spiritual Assembly,
Letters to Conventions, to the
instruments for the
speedy realization of the Beloved's fondest
General Body of Believers arid
that country, they
to the National Spiritual
foremost to ex-
Assembly
all Ba-
hai's and to the world at large the high ideals
1. You stand at this challenging hour in
which Baha'u'llah
the history of the Cause at the threshold of
repeatedly set before
a new era; the functions you are called upon
admiration, the
to discharge are fraught with immense pos-
the allegiance of their
si;bilities; the responsibilities you shoulder
by their strict re-
are grave and momentous, and the eyes of
the welfare, and the
many people are turned, at this hour, to-
God, by their zeal, their
wards you, expectant to behold the dawning
constancy in the ser-
of a Day that shall witness the fulfilment of
demonstrating,
His Divine Promise.
deeds, the need and
Forgetful of the past and its vicissitudes,
principles which
conscious of the need for renewed and com-
proclaimed to the world.
bined effort, freed from all earthly limita-
appeal to every one
tions and motives, with every lingering trace
only request with all

National Spiritual

3. I am deeply convinced

as well as the National

desire to become potent

hopes for the future of

should endeavor, first and

emplify in an increasing degree, to

of fellowship and service

and the beloved Master

them. They can claim the

support and eventually

fellow-countrymen only

gard for the dignity,

unity of the Cause of

disinterestedness, and

vice of mankind, and by

through their words and

practicability of the lofty

the Movement has

4. Again I earnestly

of you, and renew my

of ill-feeling forever banished from our conviction, to make, before hearts, freshly united and determined, let us Convention, yet an-join in deep and silent communion with the more spontaneous and ever-watchful Spirit of our beloved 'Abdu'l- and endeavor to ap-Baha, and with humility and earnestness sup- election of your dele- plicate for the guidance that will enable us national and local to fulfil the task which is now committed to that purity of spirit our charge.

our Beloved's most
2. It is expressly recorded in 'Abdu'l- recall His explicit Baha's Writings that these National Assem- assurance that every As- blies must be indirectly elected by the rarified atmosphere friends; that is, the friends in every country detachment is, in truth, must elect a certain number of delegates, its verdict is truly who in their turn will elect from among all all should submit to the friends in that country the members of unreservedly and with cheerful- the National Spiritual Assembly. In such countries, therefore, as America, Great to fulfill these conditions, Britain and Germany, a fixed number of sec- in our lives, so that, ondary electors must first be decided upon we may make of this (95 for America, including the Pacific Is- year of abundant lands; 95 for Germany; .and 19 for Great unprecedented achievements. Britain) . The friends then in every locality be fulfilled ! where the number of adult declared believers National Convention has exceeds nine* must directly elect its quota of together for the con-

the ardor of my and during the coming other effort, this time selfless than before, proach your task-the gates, as well as your representatives-with that can alone obtain

cherished desire. Let us and often-repeated ssembly elected in that of selflessness and appointed of God, that inspired, that one and its decision ness. Let us first strive difficult yet essential, contented and assured, new year of activity a blessings, of May this dearest wish
5. Hitherto the been primarily called

secondary electors assigned to it in direct
circumstances at-
proportion to its numerical strength. These
the National Spiritual
secondary electors will then, either through
however, that in view of
correspondence, or preferably by gathering
growing importance
together, and first deliberating upon the af-
sphere of the Cause,
fairs of the Cause throughout their country
and tendencies pre-
(as the delegates to the Convention), elect
friends, and the signs of
* The Guardian's first instruction was that a
among the Na-
Spiritual Assembly should be elected in commu-
Assemblies throughout the
ties having more than nine declared believers; this
instruction was later modified by the statement that
accredited representa-
a group of exactly nine believers may constitute
believers should exer-
themselves a Spiritual Assembly by joint declara-
tion.-EDITOR.
and responsible right
BAHA'f PROCEDURE
of electing the National Assembly, but should
Convention, i. e.,
also fulfill the functions of an enlightened
validity of the
consultative and cooperative body that will
delegates at a given Con-
enrich the experience, enhance the prestige,
outgoing National
support the authority and assist the delibera-
decide who has
tions of the National Spiritual Assembly.
also ultimately placed
It is my firm conviction that it is the bounden
Spiritual As-
duty, in the interest of the Cause we all love
Spiritual Assem-
and serve, of the members of the incoming
being formed in a
National Assembly, once elected by the dele-
differences arise be-

sideration of the various
tending the election of
Assembly. I feel,
the expansion and the
of the administrative
the general sentiments
vailing among the
increasing interdependence
tional Spiritual
world, the assembled
tives of the American
cise not only the vital
SECTION THREE, SHEET 2
seating of delegates to the
the right to decide upon the
credentials of the
vention, is vested in the
Assembly, and the right to
the voting privilege is
in the hands of the National
sembly, either when a local
bly is for the first time
given locality, or when

gates at Convention time, to seek and have already established the utmost regard, individually as well as the Convention collectively, for the advice, the considered accredited delegates opinion and the true sentiments of the assembled delegates. Banishing every vestige of secrecy, of undue reticence, of dictatorial Assembly for the current year, it is of infinite value and a suddenly unfold to the eyes of the delegates, as possible all by whom they are elected, their plans, their decision should hopes, and their cares. They should familiarize the delegates with the various matters after mature deliberation that will have to be considered in the current vital decisions. In the current year, and calmly and conscientiously study and weigh the opinions and judgments of the delegates. The newly elected National Assembly, during the few days when the Convention is in session and after the dispersal of the delegates, should seek ways and means to cultivate understanding, facilitate and maintain the exchange of views, deepen confidence, and vindicate by every tangible evidence their one desire to serve and advance the common weal. Not infrequently, nay oftentimes, the most lowly, untutored and inexperienced between a new applicant and an established local Assembly. While is in session and the have already elected from members throughout the country the National Spiritual year, it is of infinite preme necessity that as far matters requiring immediate be fully and publicly deavor be made to obtain liberation unanimity in deed, it has ever been the of our Master, in their councils, local as should by their candor, pose, their singleness of oughness of their imity in all things. Should cases prove impracticable majority should prevail, to the minority must, under gladly, spontaneously and mit.

e~eried among the friends will, by the
 all--encompassing, all-
 sheer inspiring force of selfless and ardent
 Guidance and Love
 devotion, contribute a distinct and memora-
 newly-enfolded order to
 ble share to a highly involved discussion in
 amid the storm
 any given Assembly. Great must be the re-
 age, and in the ful-
 gard paid by those whom the delegates call
 high claim to be
 upon to serve in high position to this all-
 the one Haven of
 important though inconspicuous manifesta-
 tion of the revealing power of sincere :md
 to be adopted for
 earnest devotion.

the election of the National
 Spiritual Assem-

The National Spiritual Assembly, how-
 of the Beloved's
 ever, in view of the unavoidable limitations
 indication as to the
 imposed upon the convening of frequent and
 Assemblies are to
 long-standing sessions of the Convention,
 earliest Tablets,
 will have to retain in its hands the final de-
 friend in Persia, the
 cision on all matters that affect the interests
 recorded :-
 of the Cause in America, such as the right
 beloved of God
 to decide whether any local Assembly is
 their delegates, and
 functioning in accordance with the principles
 representatives, and
 laid down for the conduct and the advance-
 a body, that body
 ment of the Cause. It is my earnest prayer
 Supreme Baytu'l-
 that they will utilize their highly responsible
 Adl (Universal House of
 Justice)."
 position, not only for the wise and efficient
 indicate that a three-
 conduct of the affairs of the Cause, but also
 provided by 'Abdu'l-

Nothing short of the
 pervading power of His
 can enable this
 gather strength and flourish
 and stress of a turbulent
 ness of time vindicate its
 universally recognized as
 abiding felicity and peace.
 6. Regarding the method

blies, it is clear that the text
 Testament gives us no
 manner in which these
 :be elected. In one of His
 however, addressed to a
 following is expressly
 "At whatever time all the
 in each country appoint
 these in turn elect their
 these representatives' elect
 shall be regarded as the

These words clearly
 stage election has been

for the extension and deepening of the spirit the International	Baha for the formation of
of cordiality and wholehearted and mutual	House of Justice, and as it
is explicitly pro-	
support in their cooperation with the :body of	vided in His Will and
Testament that the	
their co-workers throughout the land. The	"Secondary House of Justice
(i. e., National	
BAHA't PROCEDURE	SECTION THREE, SHEET 3
Assemblies) must elect the members of the	standard of excellence which
should charac-	
Universal One," it is obvious that the mem-	terize the cooperative
efforts of Baha'i Com-	
bers of the National Spiritual Assemblies	munities in every land.
will have to be indirectly elected ,by the body	High aims and pure
motives, however	
of the believers in their respective provinces.	laudable in themselves, will
surely not suffice	
In view of these complementary instructions	if unsupported by measures
that are prac-	
the principle, set forth in my letter of March	ticable and methods that are
sound. Wealth	
12., 1923, has been established requiring the	of sentiment, abundance of
good-will and ef-	
believers (the beloved of God) in every coun-	fort, will prove of little
avail if we should	
try to elect a certain number of delegates	fail to exercise
discrimination and restraint	
who, in turn, will elect their national repre-	and neglect to direct their
flow along the	
sentatives (Secondary House of Justice or	most profitable channels.
The unfettered	
National Spiritual Assembly) whose sacred	freedom of the individual
should be tempered	
obligation and privilege will be to elect in	with mutual consultation and
sacrifice, and	
time God's Universal House of Justice.	the spirit of initiative and
enterprise should	
Should the a,ppointing of the delegates be	be reinforced by a deeper
realization of the	
made a part of the functions of local Spir-	supreme necessity for
concerted action and	
itual Assemblies, who are already elected	a fuller devotion to the
common weal.	
bodies, the principle of a four-stage election	It would be impossible
at this stage to	
would be introduced which would be at var-	ignore the indispensability

or to over-estimate the unique significance of the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly- were the local Spiritual Assemblies, the number of whose members is strictly confined to the American continent. Supreme is their position, grave their responsibility, National Spiritual Assembly- thus manifold and arduous their duties. How great the privilege, how delicate the task of the election- all Baha'i localities, which must necessarily differ in numerical strength, would whose function it is to elect such national representatives as would by then have to share equally in the election of their record of service ennoble and enrich the National Spiritual Assembly- a practice which would be contrary to fairness and justice. Moreover, the central principle of members of Baha'i Assemblies, as enumerated in the Cause has been to make the Baha'i National Spiritual Assemblies as independent as possible in the conduct of such affairs as comforting thought disheartened but for the fall within their province, and to lessen the our part every that if we rise to play nobly hampering influence of any institution with- be more than deficiency in our lives will in their jurisdiction that might, whether directly or indirectly, impair their authority His grace and power. Hence it is incumbent upon the chosen delegates to and prestige. consider with-

7. And now regarding this forthcoming out the least trace of passion and prejudice,

Convention, I feel that the dominating purpose inspiring the assembled friends, delegates and visitors alike, should be a twofold qualities of uniqueness. The first is a challenge to the individual, devotion, of a well-trained mind, of recognized ability and mature experience. The second a collective responsibility. The one seeks to reinforce the motive power of our spiritual activities, the second aims at annual holding raising the standard of administrative efficiency so vitally needed at this advanced representative body stage of our work. We should first and foremost endeavor by every means to revitalize in view of the our precious Cause, rudely shaken by the in promoting har- constant vicissitudes attending the outward removing misunderstanding of a vigilant and gracious Master. the prestige of Our next object should be to seek to approach, through more intimate association, to gather together fuller and more frequent consultation, and representatives of the a closer familiarity with the character, the in some ways mission and the teachings of the Cause, that eminently desirable though not absolutely essential, if the procedure for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly could arrange that the holding of such a Congress should synchronize with the time at which the national elections are renewed, and that both

and irrespective of any tion, the names of only combine the necessary tioned loyalty, of selfless trained mind, of recognized ture experience.
 8. In connection with the of the Baha'i Convention and feel that although such a need not be convened yet it is highly desirable, unique functions it fulfills mony and good-will, in standings and in enhancing the Cause, that the National ssembly should exert itself annually the elected American believers. It would be obviously convenient and settled and uniform tion of the Assemblies of West, leaving them free to methods of procedure which had been instituted and

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

SECTION THREE, SHEET 4

practised during the events should take place, if not on the first life of 'Abdu'l-Baha.	last two decades of the
of Ridvan, at least during the twelve joyous ,prevailing throughout days of what may be justly regarded as the upon the principle foremost Baha'i Festival. Apart from the absolute majority, local elections which universally are to be that have obtained renewed on the 21st day of April, it is en- votes, irrespective of tirely left to the discretion of the National command an absolute Spiritual Assembly to decide, after hav- or not, are auto- ing given due consideration to the above elected. It has been mentioned observations, on whatever time justification, that this me- and place the Baha'i Convention as well disadvantageous in its dis- as the annual elections are to be held. that requires that Were the National Spiritual Assembly to secure a majority decide, after mature deliberation, to omit away on the other the holding of the Baha'i Convention and disadvantage of Congress in a given year, then they could, the elector who, only in such a case, devise ways and means unconstrained by electoral to insure that the annual election of the upon to vote for none but National Spiritual Assembly should be reflection have in- held by mail, provided it can be conducted Moreover, the prac- with sufficient thoroughness, efficiency and detrimental to the at- dispatch. It should, however, be made clear prayerful election, to every elected delegate-who should be inasmuch as it gives	The general practice the East is the one based of plurality rather than whereby those candidates the highest number of the fact whether they majority of the votes cast matically and definitely felt, with no little thod, admittedly regard of the principle each elected member must of the votes cast, does hand with the more serious restricting the freedom of unhampered and necessities, is called those whom prayer and spired him to uphold. tice of nomination, so mosphere of a silent and is viewed with mistrust

continually reminded-that it is a sacred re- the right to the majority
of a body that, in sponsibility and admittedly preferable to at- itself under the present
circumstances, often tend if possible in person the sessions of the constitutes a minority of
all the elected dele- gates, to deny that
Convention, to take an active part in all its God-given right of every
proceedings, and to acquaint his fellow- elector to vote only in
favor of those who he is conscientiously
workers on his return with the accomplish- worthy candidates. Should
convinced are the most tem be provisionally
ments, the decisions and the aspirations of guard the spiritual
this simple sys- tered freedom of the voter,
the assembled representatives of the Ameri- who will thus
adopted, it would safe- preserve intact the
can believers. It would also appear to me first made. It would avoid
principle of the imfet- of securing advance
unobjectionable to enable and even to require sent delegates and the
who will thus sociating them with the
in the last resort such delegates as cannot in the subsequent ballots
sanctity of the choice he quired to meet the
possibly undertake the journey to the seat first made. It would avoid
the inconvenience of securing advance
of the Baha'i Convention to send their votes, sent delegates and the
nominations from ab- sociating them with the
for the election of the National Spiritual As- in the subsequent ballots
impracticality of as- quired to meet the
sembly only, by mail to the National Secre-
assembled electors
tary, as in my view the advantages of such
that are often re-
a ,procedure outweigh the considerations re-
exigencies of majority
ferred to in your letter. vote.
9. In connection with the best and most I would recommend these
observations to your earnest
,practical methods of procedure to be adopted
consideration, and whatever de-
for the election of Baha'i Spiritual Assem-
local Assemblies and cision you arrive at, all
bly, I feel that in view of the fact that defi- individual believers, I am
nite and detailed regulations defining the hold, for their spiritual
privilege is not only
manner and character of Baha'i elections
frequently with the to consult. freely and

have neither been expressly revealed by	National Spiritual
Assembly, but to uphold	
Baha'u'llah nor laid down in the Will and	as well with confidence and
cheerfulness	
Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, it devolves upon	whatever is the considered
verdict of their	
the members of the Universal House of Jus-	national representatives.
tice to formulate and apply such system of	10. The Guardian wishes
the N. S. A. to re-	
laws as would be in conformity with the es-	mind, and make it quite
clear to, the be-	
sententials and requisites expressly recorded by	lievers in that land that
the supreme body	
the Author and Interpreter of the Faith for	in the United States and
Canada, whose priv.,.	
the conduct of Baha'i administration. I have	ilege and function is to
lay down, amend and	
consequently refrained from establishing a	abrogate the administrative
principles of the	
BAHA't PROCEDURE	SECTION THREE, SHEET 5
Faith with the approval of the Guardian, is	on a gathering which is
primarily intended	
not the Convention, however representative	for the accredited delegates
of the Baha'i	
it may be, but the N. S. A. On the other	communities. Bearing this
restriction in	
hand, it is the sacred obligation and the pri-	mind, it is the duty of the
N. S. A. to devise	
mary function of the National Assembly not	ways and means which would
enable them to	
to restrict under any circumstances, the free-	obtain valuable suggestions,
not only from	
dom of the assembled delegates, whose two-	the total number of the
elected delegates,	
fold function is to elect their national repre-	but from as large a body of
their fellow-	
sentatives and to submit to them any recom-	workers as is humanly
possible.	
mendations they may feel inclined to make.	Shoghi Effendi has not
departed from any	
The function of the Convention is purely ad-	established Administrative
principle. He	
visory and though the advice it gives is not	feels he has neither
ácurtailed the legislative	
binding in its effect on those on whom rest	authority of the N. S. A.
nor invested the	
the final decision in purely administrative	Convention with undue powers

enabling it matters, yet, the utmost caution and care to rival or supersede those whom it has to elect. What the Guardian is should be exercised álest anything should aiming at is to remind the friends, more hamper the delegates in the full and free ex- fully than before, of the two cardinal exercise of their function. In discharging this principles of Baha'i Ad- ministration, namely, the sacred function no influence whatever, no supreme and un- challengable authority of the pressure from any quarter, even though it N. S. A. in na- tional affairs working be from the National Assembly, should within the limits im- posed by the Declaration of Trust and By- Laws, and the untrammelled or restrict their freedom. The delegates freedom of the Convention delegates to must be wholly independent of any adminis- advise, deliberate on the actions, and appoint the trative agency, must approach. their task successors of their National Assembly. The with absolute detachment and must concen- Guardian is confident that you will trate their attention on the most important elucidate and give and pressing issues. the widest publicity to these already estab- lished principles, upon which The Guardian believes that the right to the progress, the unity and welfare of elect the chairman and the secretary of the Baha'i administra- tive institutions must Convention should be vested in the as- ultimately depend. The utmost care and sembled delegates, lest any objection be vigilance should be exercised lest any fresh raised that the members of the outgoing Na- misunderstandings arise regarding these tional Assembly are seeking to direct the fundamental issues. The root principle of Baha'i course of the discussion in a manner that Administration is unreservedly maintained. would be conducive to their own personal No departure from its established tenets interests. The National Assembly, however, is contemplated.

must at all times vigilantly uphold, defend, America's su-
 justify and enforce the provisions of the Dec-
 :body has been
 laration of Trust and By-Laws which are
 other hand, the un-
 binding on the Convention no less than on
 individual believers
 themselves. The N. S. A. has the right to lay
 their functions has
 down, enforce and interpret the National
 and strengthened.
 Constitution of the Baha'is in that land. It
 harmonious coopera-
 cannot, if it wishes to remain faithful to
 Baha'i institutions in
 that Constitution, lay down any regulations,
 success of the ad-
 however secondary in character, that would
 'Abdu'l-Baha
 in the least hamper the unrestricted liberty
 next year's
 of the delegates to advise and elect those
 triumph of these
 whom they feel best combine the necessary
 qualifications for membership of so exalted
 status, rights and pre-
 a body.

rogatives of the Annual
 Baha'i Convention,

Non-delegates, however, according to the
 quite clear
 Guardian's considered opinion, should not be
 this annual meeting
 given the right to intervene directly during
 means a continuous
 the sessions of the Convention. Only through
 through the year; that
 an accredited delegate they should be given
 electing the body of
 indirectly the chance to voice their senti-
 Assembly, and of of-
 ments and to participate in the deliberations
 suggestions in re-
 of the Convention. Much confusion and com-
 administration of the
 plications must inevitably result in the days
 definite period; and that

The undisputed authority of
 preme Baha'i administrative
 reaffirmed, while on the
 trammelled freedom of
 and delegates to exercise
 been once again reaffirmed
 On the continuous and
 tion of the two leading
 America, the growth and
 ministration bequeathed by
 must ultimately depend. May
 Convention witness the
 basic principles.
 11. Concerning the
 the Guardian wishes to make it
 to all the believers that
 of the delegates is by no
 consultative body all
 its twofold function of
 the National Spiritual
 fering any constructive
 gard to the general
 Cause is limited to a

to come, if such a restriction be not imposed consequently the opinion current among

BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION THREE, SHEET 6

some of the believers that the delegates are preme responsibility and sole prerogative of

to serve as a consultative body throughout the delegates assembled in Convention.

the year is at variance with the fundamental, . Nothing short of close and constant inter-

though as yet unspecified, principles under- action between these various organs of

lying the Administration.. Shoghi Effendi Baha'i administration can enable it to fulfill

firmly believes that consultation must be its high destiny.

maintained between the N. S. A. and the en- 13. Concerning the status of members of

tire body of the believers, and that such con- the N. S. A. at Convention sessions, the

sultation, while the Convention is not in ses- Guardian feels that the members both of the

sion, can best be maintained through the incoming and the outgoing Assemblies

agency of the local Assemblies, one of whose should be given the .full right to participate

essential functions is to act as intermediaries in the Convention discussions. Those mem-

bers of the N. S. A. who have been elected

tional representatives. The main purpose of delegates will, in addition to the right of par-

the Nineteen Day Feasts is to enable indi- ticipation, be entitled to vidual believers to offer any suggestion to

wishes thereby to render more effective the

the local Assembly which in its turn will deliberations and the recommendations of

pass it to the N. S. A. The local Assembly is, the national representatives. He feels that •

therefore, the -proper medium through which the exercise of such a right by the members

local Baha'i communities can communicate of the N. S. A. will enable them to consult

with the body of the national representatives. more fully with the assembled delegates, to

The Convention should be regarded as a tem- exchange fully and frankly with them their

porary gathering, having certain specific views, and io consider

collectively the inter-
functions to perform, during a limited period ests, needs and requirements
of the Cause.

of time. Its status is thus limited in time to This he believes is one of
the primary func-

the Convention sessions, the function of con- tions of the
Convention.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

sultation at all other times being vested in THE ANNUAL BAHAI'
the entire body of the believers through the CONVENTION
local Spiritual Assemblies.

12. I wish to affirm without the least hesi-
tation or ambiguity, that the annual conven-
Convention has two

tion is not to be regarded as a body entitled unique functions to

to exercise functions similar to those which rent Baha'i matters and the

election of the National Spiritual

an ordinary parliament possesses under a should be free and

democratic form of government. The admin- carried on in that spirit

untrammeled, the election itation in which alone

istrative order which lies embedded in the every delegate can

of prayer and med- American believers have championed and are
Teaching of Baha'u'llah, and which the render obedience to the

every delegate can Guardian's expressed

American believers have championed and are wish. After the Convention

Guardian's expressed the Chairman of the

now estab;lishing, should, under no circum- is convened by
is convened by the Chairman of the

stances, be identified with the principles un- ssembly, and after the roll

National Spiritual As- Secretary of the Assembly,

derlying present-day democracies. Nor is it proceeds to the election of

call is read by the Secretary of the Assembly,
identical with any purely aristocratic or auto- proceeds to the election of

the Convention its chairman and
cratic form of government. The objectionable secretary by secret ballot

its chairman and features inherent in each of these ipolitical
and without ad- vance nomination, according

systems are entirely avoided. It blends, as no set for all Baha'i
to the standard
system of human polity has as yet achieved, set for all Baha'i

elections. those salutary truths.and beneficial elements
not participate in 2. Non-delegates may
which constitute the valuable contributions Convention discussion. All
members of the

which each of these forms of government may participate in the past. Consultation, frank and unfettered, is the bedrock of this unique order. Authority is concentrated in the hands of the elected members of the National Assembly. Power and initiative are primarily vested in the entire body of the believers acting through their local representatives. To generate those forces which must give birth to the body of their national administrators, and to confer sessions, so that the freely and fully and at fixed intervals, with both the incoming and outgoing national Assemblies, are the twofold functions, the subject to discuss any Baha'i matter, in addition to those treated in the annual reports. The Convention is responsible for making its own rules of procedure controlling discussion; for example, concerning any limitations the delegates may find it necessary to impose upon the entire world allotted to or claimed by any one delegate. The National Assembly will maintain the rights of the delegates to confer freely and fully, which peace and free from any restricted pressure, in the exercise of their functions.

National Spiritual Assembly participate in the discussion, but members who have been elected vote on any matter brought up during the proceedings.

3. The outgoing Assembly is responsible for its own activities and of its committees during the annual election is to be held during the Convention incoming Assembly may delegates.

The Convention is free

SECTION .THREE, SHEET 7

effort to assure the of the Convention to fulfill

The path of true freedom lies obeying the general Baha'is for the proper conduct

lective affairs. While the plunges forward to sponsibility of the National

bly to uphold that Order on security solely depends.-N. S. A.

ercise of their function.

5. The Convention as an organic body is limited to -the actual Convention period. It endorses it and has no function to discharge after the close of the sessions except that of electing a member or members to fill any vacancy that might arise in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly during the year.

6. The Convention while in session has no independent legislative, executive or judicial function. Aside from its action in electing the National Spiritual Assembly, its discussions do not represent actions but recommendations which shall, according to the Guardian's instructions, be given conscientious consideration by the National Assembly to the Annual

7. The National Spiritual Assembly is the supreme Baha'i administrative body within the American Baha'i community, and its jurisdiction continues without interruption during the Convention period as during the remainder of the year, and independently of the individuals composing its membership. Any matter requiring action of legislative, executive or judicial nature, whether arising by the National Spiritual Assembly during the Convention period or at any other time, is to be referred to the National Spiritual Assembly. The National Assembly is responsible for upholding the administrative principles applying to the holding of the Annual Convention as it is for upholding all other administrative principles. If, there-

Your statement on the Convention is admirable. The Guardian fully wishes you to send as promptly a copy of it to the Persian National Spiritual Assembly for their instruction and

A PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ANNUAL BAHAI CONVENTION INTRODUCTION

The Guardian's references to the Annual Convention have been compiled and published in two issues of Baha'i News-November, 1933 and February,

I. THE ANNUAL BAHAI CONVENTION

A summary of the Convention has been made by the National Spiritual Assembly and published in the Guardian. It was published in the Baha'i News for April, 1935. Special reference is made to the seven numbered paragraphs in that summary.**

II. CONVENTION CALL

fore, a Convention departs from the ,princi-
ples laid down for Conventions by the Guar-
Assembly deter-
dian, and exceeds the limitations of function
place of the
conferred upon it, in that case, and in that
for such
case alone, the National Spiritual Assembly
the Convention
can and must intervene. It is the National
Spiritual Assembly, and not the Convention,
which is authorized to decide when and why
such intervention is required.

8. The National Spiritual Assembly feels
that it owes a real duty to the delegates, and
Convention,
to the entire body of believers, in presenting
recommendation calling
any and all facts that may be required in
Assembly to sup-
order to clarify matters discussed at the
for the con-
Convention. There can be no true Baha'i
and the pre-
consultation at this important meeting if
prepared to meet the
any incomplete or erroneous view should pre-
recommendation.

vail.
9. The National Assembly in adopting and
likewise been reproduced
in the present work.
issuing this statement, does so in the sincere
the present work.

BAHA'í PROCEDURE
Order of Business
set forth for the Convention is based upon
Prayer and devotional readings, provided
meetings
by the outgoing National Spiritual Assem-
communities. It ac-
bly.
of the Annual
Opening of Convention by Presiding Offi-
under which
cer of the National Spiritual Assembly.
Baha'í activi-

The National Spiritual
mines the date, duration and
Annual Convention and provides
meetings in connection with
as it may feel are desirable.

III. CONVENTION

PROCEDURE

The Twenty-sixth Annual
held in 1934, voted a
upon the National Spiritual
ply a parliamentary procedure
duct of the Annual Convention,
sent material has been

need indicated by that

* This compilation has

** See previous pages in

SECTION THREE, SHEET 8

order. The parliamentary procedure here
the procedure already adopted for
of local Assemblies and
cordingly extends to sessions
Convention the same procedure
the delegates, in their other

Roll call of delegates by the Secretary of ties, are accustomed to conduct discussion the National Spiritual Assembly. and consultation.

Election by secret ballot of Convention Chairman and Secretary. The Convention The purpose of consultation at the Annual

Officers are to be elected by the assembled Convention is threefold: to arrive at full

delegates from among the entire number of and complete knowledge of the current con-

delegates who are present at the Convention. ditions, problems and possibilities of the

Annual Report of National Spiritual As- Faith in America; to give to the incoming

ssembly. National Assembly the

:benefit of the col-

Annual Financial Report of National lective wisdom, águidance and constructive

Spiritual Assembly. suggestions of the assembled delegates; and

Convention message to the Guardian of to contribute to the unity, in spirit and in ac-

the Faith. tion, of the entire American

Baha'i com-

Annual Committee Reports: these areá to m unity.

be considered as part of the Report of the The freedom of each and every delegate

National Spiritual Assembly. They are to take part in discussion and to initiate mo-

whenever possible published in Baha'i News tions is untrammled save as the undue ac-

in advance of the Convention date, for the tivity of one delegate might hamper the

information of the delegates. rights of the other delegates.

Any necessary

Subjects for Consultation. Any delegate limitation to be placed upon individual dis-

may, before the Convention convenes, rec- cussion shall be determined by the Chair-

commend to the National Assembly such top- man in the absence of any specific motion

ics as he deems of sufficient importance to be duly voted by the delegates themselves.

included in the Convention agenda; and the It shall be the duty of the Chairman to

National Spiritual Assembly, from the list encourage general consultation and make

of topics received from delegates, and also possible the active participation of the greatest possible number of delegates suggested by its own knowledge and experience.

ence, is to prepare an agenda or order of The Chairman has the same power and responsibility for discussion and voting upon motions as other delegates.

Members of the outgoing and incoming National Assembly

This agenda may include, as part of the National Assembly's Annual Report, the presentation of special subjects by well qualified members, committee representatives or non-Baha'i experts whose exposition is necessary or desirable for the information of the delegates. A resolution, or motion, is not subject to discussion or vote until duly made and seconded. It is preferable to have each resolution clear and complete in itself, but when an amendment is duly made and seconded, the Chairman shall call for a vote on motion duly made, seconded and voted, on the amendment first and then on the any other subject may be proposed for special consultation. An amendment must be relevant to, and not contravene, the subject matter of the motion.

Annual election. The election of members of the National Spiritual Assembly is to take place approximately midway during the Convention sessions, so as to enable the delegates to consult with both the outgoing and incoming Assemblies, in accordance with the Guardian's expressed desire. The Chairman shall call for votes by oral expression of ayes and nays, but where the result of the vote is doubtful by a show of hands or a rising vote. A majority vote determines.

may be terminated by motion duly made, seconded and voted, calling upon the Chairman to bring Discussion of any matter

Conduct of Business the matter to an immediate vote or proceed

Every deliberate body, to fulfill its functions, must conduct its deliberations in accordance with some established rules of and when certified by the Convention officers shall be given to the National Spiritual Assembly.

BAHA'í PROCEDURE SECTION THREE, SHEET 9
IV. THE CONVENTION

RECORD

The permanent record of each successive Annual Convention shall consist of the following:- (1) Convention Call as issued by the National Spiritual Assembly, including The electors in the Annual Election shall consist of those delegates included in the Roll Call prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly. Messages sent to Ballots and tellers' report forms shall be provided by the National Assembly. The election shall be conducted by the Convention, but delegates unable to attend the Convention shall have the right to vote by mail. The Chairman shall appoint three tellers, chosen from among the assembled delegates. The electoral method shall be as follows : 1. The Convention Secretary shall call the roll of delegates, whereupon each delegate, What the friends in turn, shall place his or her ballot in a lot box ; and as the names are called exchange views, to mix received by mail shall be placed in the

to other business. The transactions of the be recorded by the Secretary, SECTION THREE, SHEET 9 IV. THE CONVENTION list of Participating Baha'í Communities; (2) list of accredited Reports of the National and of its Committees; (4) and received from the Guardian; lutions and other bled delegates; (6) The result Election.-N. S. A. PERSONALITIES I feel that reference to fore the election would give standing and differences. should do is to get with one another, to freely and discuss among

themselves the re-
lot box by the Secretary of the National As- quirements and
qualifications for such a
sembly. membership without reference
or applica-

2. The ballot ,box shall then be handed to tion, however indirect, to
partieular indi-
the tellers, who shall retire from the Con- viduals. We should refrain
from influencing
vention Hall to determine the result of the the opinion of others, of
canvassing for any
election. particular individual, but
should stress the

3. The result of the election is to be re- necessity of getting fully
acquainted with
ported by the tellers, and the tellers' report the qualifications of
membership referred to
is to be approved by the Convention. in our Beloved's Tablets and
of learning

4. The ballots, together with the tellers' more a:bout one another through
direct, per-
report, certified by all the tellers, are to be sonal experience rather than
through the re-
given the National Spiritual Assembly for ports and opinions of our f
riends.-SHOGHI

preservation. EFFENDI.
BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 1
THE INSTITUTION OF THE sideration and d~ision of
the local Assembly,
or whether it should fall under its own prov-
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ince and be regarded as a
matter which
ASSEMBLY ought to receive its special
attention. The

National Spiritual Assembly will also decide
Regarding the establishment of "National upon such matters which in its
opinion
Assemblies," it is of vital importance that . should be referred to the
Holy Land for con-
in every country, where the conditions are sultation and decision.
favorable and the number of friends has With these Assemblies,
local as well as
grown and reached a considerable size, such national, harmoniously,
vigorously, and effi-
as America, Great Britain and Germany, ciently functioning
throughout the Baha'i
that a "National Spiritual Assembly" be im- world, the only means for

the establishment
 immediately established, representative of the of the Supreme House of
 Justice will have
 friends throughout that country. been secured. And when this
 Supreme Body
 Its immediate purpose is to stimulate, will have been properly
 established, it will
 unify and coordinate by frequent personal have to consider afresh the
 whole situation,
 consultations, the manifold activities of the and lay down the principle
 which shall di-
 friends as well as the local Assemblies; and rect, so long as it deems
 advisable, the affairs
 by keeping in close and constant touch with of the Cause.
 the Holy Land, initiate measures, and direct The need for the
 centralization of auth-
 in general the affairs of the Cause in that ority in the National
 Spiritual Assembly,
 Country. and the concentration of
 power in the vari-
 It serves also another purpose, no less es- ous local Assemblies, is made
 manifest when
 essential than the first, as in the course of we reflect that the Cause
 of Baha'u'llah is
 time it shall evolve into the National House still in its age of tender
 growth and in a
 of Justice (referred to in •Abdu'l-Baha's stage of transition ;
 when we remember that
 Will as the "secondary House of Justice"), the full implications and
 the exact signifi-
 which according to the explicit text of the cance of the Master's
 world-wide instruc-
 Testament will have, in conjunction with the tions, as laid down in His
 Will, are as yet
 other National Assemblies throughout the not fully grasped, and the
 whole Movement
 Baha'i world, to elect directly the members has not sufficiently
 crystallized in the eyes
 of the International House of Justice, that of the world.
 Supreme Council that will guide, organize It is primarily upon the
 elected members
 and unify the affairs of the Movement of the National Spiritual
 Asemblies through-
 throughout the world. out the Baha'i world that
 this highly impor-
 This National Spiritual Assembly, which, tant duty devolves, as in
 their hands the di-

pending the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, will have to be re-elected and placed and centralized, and as they once a year, obviously assumes grave responsibilities, for it has to exercise full authority of the people of their country the supreme body in that land that over all the local Assemblies in its province, promotes and safeguards the various interests of the Cause, it is my official representation, and will have to direct the activities of the friends, guard vigilantly the Cause of God, fervent prayer and control and supervise the affairs of the Movement in general. failing guidance of Baha'u'llah and the blessings of our beloved Master Vital issues, affecting the interests of the Cause in that country such as the matter of translation and publication, the Mashriqu'l-Adh-dhar, the Teaching Work, and other similar matters that stand distinct from strictly local affairs, must be under the full jurisdiction of the National Assembly. Should such a representative and responsible body fail to realize this fundamental requisite for all successful achievement, the whole structure is sure to crumble, and the Great Plan of the Future, as unfolded by the Master's Will and Testament, will be rudely disturbed and grievously delayed. The Guardian wishes me to again affirm his view that the authority of the N. S. A.

With it, too, rests the decision whether a certain point at issue is strictly local in its administration of the nature, and should be reserved for the con- States and

is undivided and matters pertaining to the Faith throughout the United

unchallengeable in all mat- ters pertaining to the Faith throughout the United

BAHA'í PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 2

Canada, and that, therefore, the obedience LEGAL CONSTITUTION OF

of individual Baha'is, delegates, groups and NATIONAL AND LOCAL

Assemblies to that authority is imperative, ASSEMBLIES

and should be wholehearted and unqualified. He is convinced that the unreserved accep- tance and complete application of this vital wishes me to inform

In this connection he

provision of the Administration is essential you that at his repeated

directions the Na- tional Assemblies of Egypt,

to the maintenance of the highest degree of 'Iraq and Persia

are adopting the exact text

unity amongst the believers, and is indis- of your Assem- bly's Declaration of Trust

of your Assem- bly's Declaration of Trust

pensible to the effective working of the ad- and By-Laws, as well as the local By-Laws,

ministrative machinery of the Faith in every and are taking the

country. necessary steps for

incorporating their As- sembles as duly recognized

I wish to reaffirm in clear and categori- bodies em- powered to administer the

bodies em- cal language, the principle already enun- national and local

ciated upholding the supreme authority of their respective coun- affairs of the Faith in

the National Assembly in all matters that tries. The Indian N. S. A.,

as well as the affect the interests of the Faith in that Bombay Spiritual Asembly,

have already set the example in this respect,

land. There can be no conflict of author- both in the mat- ter of incorporation, and in

ity, no duality under any form or circum- the adoption of

stances in any sphere of Baha'í jurisdic- the text of the

constitutions of the American Baha'í Assemblies.-SHOGHI

tion whether local, national or international. EFFENDI.

The National Assembly, however, although the sole interpreter of its Declaration of Trust and By-Laws, is directly and moral- CHANGES IN

ly responsible if it allows any body or institution within its jurisdiction to abuse said that the its privileges or to decline in the exercise of its rights and privileges. It is the trusted year. The important guardian and the mainspring of the manifold activities and interests of every national community in the Baha'i world. It constitutes the sole link that binds these communities to the International House of Justice, the supreme administrative body in the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah. Anything whatsoever affecting the interests of the Cause and in which the National Assembly as a body is involved should, if regarded as unsatisfactory by local Assemblies and individual believers, be immediately referred to the National Assembly itself. Neither the general body of the believers, nor any local Assembly, nor even the delegates to the Annual Convention, should be regarded as having any authority to entertain appeals against the decision of the National Assembly. Should the matter be referred to the Guardian it will be his duty to consider it with the utmost care and to decide whether the issues involved justify him to consider it in person, or to leave it entirely for the express

MEMBERSHIP

Shoghi Effendi has never members of the National be renewed partially every tant thing is that they elected. It would be nice if new members elected, for new adds to the energy of the up their spirit. But this upon the will of the in the result of their FENDI.

THE NATIONAL BAHAI FUND

And as the progress and spiritual activities is ditioned upon material lute necessity that tablishment of local as itual Assemblies, a Baha'i lished, to be placed under trol of the Spiritual and contributions should be Treasurer of the Assembly,

to the discretion of the National Assembly. purpose of promoting the interests of the Cause, throughout that locality

This administrative principle which the Guardian is now restating and emphasizing of every conscientious and faithful servant of Baha'u'llah who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund. The members of the Spiritual Assembly will at their own discretion extend any further upon this fundamental Teaching Campaign, to help the needy, to establish educational Baha'i institutions, to extend in every way

BAHA'I PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 3

possible their sphere of service. I cherish the institution of the National Baha'i Fund which, in these early days of the administrative development of the Faith, is the hope that all the friends, realizing the necessity of this measure, will bestir themselves and contribute, however modestly at medium for the growth and expansion of the Movement. Contributions to this fund contribute, in addition, a practical and effective way whereby every believer can test the measure and character of his faith, and to prove in deeds the intensity of his devotion and attachment to the Cause.

it has and is continually being refilled from -Baha'i News, November, 1934.

-Baha'i News, As the activities of the American Baha'i community extend, and its

worldwide pres-
unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth tige correspondingly
increases, the institu-
and all good-this is the secret of right liv- tion of the National Fund,
the bedrock on
ing.-Baha'i News, September, 1926. which all other institutions
must necessarily
With regard to the Baha'i Fund, recently rest and be established,
acquires added im-
established amongst the friends, I trust that portance, and should be
increasingly sup-
the matter now stands clear to everyone ported by the entire body of
the believers,
throughout the country. As I have previ- both in their individual
capacities, and
ously intimated, although individual friends through their collective
efforts, whether or-
and local Assemblies are absolutely free to ganized as groups or as local
Assemblies.
specify the object and ,purpose of their dona- The supply of funds, in
support of the Na-
tions to the National Spiritual Assembly, tional Treasury, constitutes,
at the pi'esent
yet, in my opinion, I regard it of the utmost time, the life-blood of these
nascent institu-
vital importance that individuals, as well as tions you are laboring to
erect. Its impor-
local Assemblies, throughout the land should, tance cannot, surely, be
over-estimated. Un-
in view of the paramount importance of Na- told blessings shall no doubt
crown every
tional Teaching and as an evidence of their effort directed to that
end.-Baha'i News,
absolute confidence in their national repre- October, 1935.--SHOGHI
EFFENDI.
sentatives, endeavor, however small at first,
to contribute freely towards the upkeep and ANONYMOUS CONTRIBU-
the increase of the National Baha'i Fund, TIONS TO THE NATIONAL
so that the members of the National Assem-
bly may at their full discretion expend it for FUND
whatever they deem urgent and necessary. In view of the
Guardian's instruction that
-Baha'i Administration, p. 47. contributions are not to
be accepted from
In connection with the institution of the non-Baha'is for the Temple and
other or-
National Fund and the budgetary system set ganic work of the Cause,

but be used for
 forth in the Minutes of the National Spir-
 difficulty is created
 itual Assembly, I feel urged to remind you
 the Treasurer re-
 of the necessity of ever ábearing in mind the
 from an unknown
 cardinal principle that all contributions to
 the actual donor, the
 the Fund are to be purely and strictly vol-
 regard anonymous
 untary in character. It should be made clear
 from a non-Baha'i.
 and evident to every one that any form of
 recently been ap-
 compulsion, however slight and indirect,
 Committee for m.ak-
 strikes at the very root of the principle un-
 World Order to
 derlying the formation of the Fund ever
 institutions of general
 since its inception. While appeals of a gen-
 eral character, carefully worded and moving
 and dignified in tone are welcome under all
 circumstances, it should be left entirely to
 the discretion of every conscientious believer
 spiritual activities
 to decide upon the nature, the amount, and
 general in that land,
 purpose of his or her contribution for the
 the "Star of the
 propagation of the Cause.-Baha'i Admin-
 which the National
 istration, ,p. 92.

Baha'i organ, the
 He wishes you particularly to impress the
 reprinting Baha'i
 believers with the necessity of maintaining
 distribution among the var-
 the flow of their contributions to. the Temple,
 whereby the
 and also to stress the importance of the in-
 stimulated and
 BAHAt PROCEDURE
 maintained, the work of the Mashriqu'l-
 it is theirs to dis-
 Adhkar, the racial question in relation to the

humanitarian purposes, a
 for the N. S. A. whenever
 ceives a contribution
 source. Unless it knows
 Assembly is compelled to
 contributions as coming
 Such contributions have
 plied to the Publishing
 ing gift subscriptions of
 Public Liibraries and
 welfare.-N. S. A.

COMMITTEES OF THE
 NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Large issues in such
 that affect the Cause in
 such as the management of
 West" and any periodical
 Body may decide to be a
 matter of publication, of
 literature and its
 ious Assemblies, the means
 teaching campaign may be
 SECTION FOUR, SHEET 4
 calling, the functions which
 charge. They should, within

the limits im-

Cause, the matter of receiving Orientals and present-day circum-

association with them, the care and maintenance of the precious film exhibiting a

of over-cen- phase of the Master's sojourn in the United States of America as ,well as the original

of the Baha'i

matrix and the records of His voice, and one hand be en-

various other national spiritual activities, other the perils

far from being under the exclusive jurisdiction of any local Assembly or group of

from the hands

friends, must each be minutely and fully directed by a special board, elected by the Na-

absorption of the

tional Body, constituted as a committee administration by the

thereof, responsible to it and upon which the National Body shall exercise constant and

to efficiency and

general supervision.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. duties, whil_st

the granting of undue discretion to bodies REPORTS OF ACTIVITIES

other light

I shall always await from the members of executive

the National Spiritual Assembly, collective, the very vital

official and comprehensive reports on their the sacred

manifold activities, sent to me at frequent intervals, and bearing upon the inner and

of Justice. I

outward currents of the Movement, the re- and sacrifice

lations of Assemblies to one another, and the

posed upon them by

stances, endeavor to maintain

such a manner that the evils

tralization which clog,

long run depreciate the value

services rendered shall on

tirely avoided, and on the

of utter decentralization

lapse of governing authority

of the national

ers definitely averted. The

petty details of Baha'i

personnel of the National

bly is manifestly injurious

an expert discharge of Baha'i

that should be regarded in no

than that of expert advisers and

assistants would jeopardize

and pervading powers that are

prerogatives of bodies that

into Baha'i National Houses

am fully aware of the strain

which a loyal adherence to

such an essential principle of Baha'i
general standing and the various aspects of administration-a principle that will at once
the progress of the Cause throughout the ennobled and dis- tinguish the Baha'i methods
land. I would welcome more specific reports of administra- tion from the prevailing
of administra- tion from the prevailing
sent to me by the various committees of the National Spiritual Assembly, enclosed in the world-demands from the
systems of the National Assembly's letter, and approved by sentatives of the believers
National Spiritual Assembly, enclosed in the national repre- sentatives of the believers
national repre- sentatives of the believers
National Assembly's letter, and approved by at this early stage of our evolution. Yet I feel
at this early stage of our evolution. Yet I feel
all its members.-SHOGHI EFFENDI. I cannot refrain
I cannot refrain
from stressing the broad lines along which the affairs of the Cause should
RELATIONS OF COM-á be increas-
be increas- ingly conducted, the knowledge of which is
ingly conducted, the knowledge of which is
MITTEES TO ASSEMBLY so essential at this formative
period of Baha'i administrative
Touching the recent decision of the Na- tional Spiritual Assembly to place as much FENDI.
institutions.-SHOGHI EF- FENDI.
tional Spiritual Assembly to place as much The focal point of effort
as possible of the current details of the work on the part of the National Spiritual Assembly
on the part of the National Spiritual Assembly
in the hands of its national committees, I feel I should point out that this raises a fun-
is to encourage greater initiative and
feel I should point out that this raises a fun- activity among all lo-
activity among all lo- cal Baha'i communities.
damental issue of paramount importance, as In the ,gradual
it involves a unique ,prindple in the adminis- application of this princi-
application of this princi- ple, the Assembly has found
tration of the Cause, governing the relations it desirable to
it desirable to make a distinction between
that should be maintained between the cen- the special ser- vices rendered by each
the special ser- vices rendered by each
tral administrative body and its assisting National Committee and the general problem of
National Committee making these ser- vices available throughout
organs of executive and legislative action. the body of the Cause.
making these ser- vices available throughout
As it has been observed already, the role of these committees set up by the National Spir-
the body of the Cause.
itual Assembly, the renewal, the membership It has therefore been
voted to record the fact that the function of
and functions of which should be reconsid-

each Committee is
 ered separately each year by the incoming of an advisory rather than of
 an adminis-
 National Assembly, is chiefly to make thor- trative character. The
 results of Committee
 ough and expert study of the issue entrusted consultation are to be
 referred to the Na-
 to their charge, advise by their reports, and tional Spiritual Assembly for
 approval, and
 assist in the execution of the decisions which then (as far as possible)
 after approval, is-
 in vital matters are to be exclusively and sued to the friends in Baha'i
 News. Thus
 directly rendered by the National Assembly. will be established one
 definite, responsible
 The utmost vigilance, the most strenuous channel of communication
 representing the
 exertion is required by them if they wish to National Assembly and its
 committees as
 fulfill as befits their high and responsible one spiritual unit and
 organism.

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 5

The National Spiritual Assembly assumes sation of Baha'u'llah."
 responsibility for applying Committee rec- "The rise and
 establishment of this Ad-
 ommendations and plans to the conditions of ministrative Order-the
 shell that shields
 local community life, and also for meeting and enshrines so precious a
 gem--constitutes
 any administrative problems that may arise the hall-mark of this second
 and formative
 therefrom. Each Committee is requested to age of the Baha'i era. It will
 come to be
 submit, as far as possible its recommenda- regarded, as it recedes
 farther and farther
 tions and suggestions in a form adapted to from our eyes, as the chief
 agency empow-
 publication in Baha'i News for the inf orma- ered to usher in the
 concluding phase, the
 tion and encouragement of all believers. consummation of this glorious
 Dispensa-
 In explaining this general principle, the tion."
 National Assembly is conscious of the fact Here the Guardian makes it
 clear that the
 that the National Committees are entrusted fundamental aim of the Cause
 at this stage
 with different types of activity. For example, is to establish the Order

which will (page 52
 the three Summer School Committees not of the same communication)
 "assert its
 only make áprograms but carry them out in claim and demonstrate its
 capacity to be
 classes, while the Publishing Committee regarded not only as the
 nucleus but the
 has its own continuous and direct contact very pattern of the New World
 Order des-
 with communities and individual believers tined to embrace in the
 fulness of time the
 through the sale of the literature. The es- whole of ,mankind." What the
 Guardian
 sential principle, however, is clear, and the feels it necessary for Baha'is
 to realize and
 members of the Assembly believe that as appreciate is that this Faith
 is a reality in
 time goes on the result will be a tremendous no wise merely repeating and
 duplicating the
 concentration of our collective spiritual and Revelations of the past. "It
 should be noted
 material resources for the development of (page 53) in this connection
 that this Ad-
 the Cause along the lines laid down by the ministrative Order is
 fundamentally differ-
 Guardian.-N. S. A. ent from anything that any
 Prophet has
 previously established, inasmuch as Baha'u'l-
 THE UNITY OF THE lah has Himself revealed its
 principles, es-
 tablished its institutions, appointed the per-
 BAHAI COMMUNITY son to interpret His Word and
 conferred the
 As we gather our energies in order to necessary authority on the body
 designed to
 strive for a full measure of success in Tem- supplement and apply His
 legislative ordi-
 ple construction and other national Baha'i nances Nowhere in the
 sacred scriptures
 activities, it is highly important to under- of any of the world's
 religious systems, nor
 stand clearly the new attitudes and princi- even in the writings of the
 Inaugurator of
 ples of action which Shoghi Effendi has es- the Ba.bi Dispensation, do we
 find any pro-
 tablished in the communications describing visions establishing a
 covenant or providing

the World Order of Baha'u'llah. for an administrative order
that can com-
Let us begin with these words found on pare in scope and authority with
those that
page 12 of "America and the Most Great lie at the very basis of the
Baha'i Dispen-
Peace" ;-"The remaining ten years (1923- sation."
1933) , distinguished throughout by further Thus it is clear that any
believer who
internal development, as well as by a notable might seek to understand his
relation to the
expansion of the international activities of a Baha'i Faith by reproducing
the attitudes
growing community, witnessed the comple- and principles controlling the
early and most
tion of the superstructure of the Mashriqu'l- faithful Christians, would
fail to base his
Adhkar-the Administration's mighty bul- faith and practice upon the
new foundation.
wark, the symbol of its strength and the sign What we have given us today is
not only the
of its future glory." spiritual Revelation for the
renewal of the
This description of the Temple as the inner life but also the social
Revelation for
"bulwark" of the Administrative Order car- the attainment of citizenship
in the world
ries a profound significance. It can only community.
mean that it is imperative for us to carry A vivid light is thrown
upon the si•gnific-
the construction forward to the first resting ance of the Administrative
Order by this
place-the external decoration of the entire reference which the Guardian
made on page
dome unit, including the clerestory section- 21 of the "America and the
Most Great
in order to create a means of protecting the Peace" :-"In a world writhing
with pain
Faith from the dire onslaughts it is destined and declining into chaos this
community-
to suffer in these coming years. the vanguard of the liberating
fore\$ of
With that quotation let us consider an- Baha'u'llah-succeeded in the
years follow-
other excerpt from page 64 of "The Dispen- ing 'Abdu'l-Baha's passing in
raising high
BAHA'1 PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 6

above the institutions established by its sister communities in East and West what may be no longer sufficient for any Baha'i to say that he "accepts" the authority of his local Assembly. This passive attitude must be transformed into a devoted and sincere effort to assist in carrying out every activity and plan which the local Assembly adopts. The word "authority" perhaps blinds us to the deeper reality, that the Spiritual Assembly is the instrument through which the divine blessings flow to every member of the community from the higher source. There is a much more than the passive acceptance of any articles of creed or than any subjective sense between mere willingness not to disobey and a heartfelt and passionate yearning to help with all our force the Spiritual Assemblies in all its capacity to disseminate the Holy Spirit. "Alone of all the Revelations gone before it," the Guardian declared on page 54 of "The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah," "this Faith has, through the explicit directions, the repeated warnings, the outwardly part of the oneness which Baha'u'llah has created and elaborated in its teachings, succeeded in raising a structure which the bewildered followers of bankrupt and broken creeds might well have regarded as the supreme issue to bless all workers fully conscious of their mission. It is no longer sufficient for any Baha'i to say that he "accepts" the authority of his local Assembly. This passive attitude must be transformed into a devoted and sincere effort to assist in carrying out every activity and plan which the local Assembly adopts. The word "authority" perhaps blinds us to the deeper reality, that the Spiritual Assembly is the instrument through which the divine blessings flow to every member of the community from the higher source. There is a much more than the passive acceptance of any articles of creed or than any subjective sense between mere willingness not to disobey and a heartfelt and passionate yearning to help with all our force the Spiritual Assemblies in all its capacity to disseminate the Holy Spirit. "Alone of all the Revelations gone before it," the Guardian declared on page 54 of "The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah," "this Faith has, through the explicit directions, the repeated warnings, the outwardly part of the oneness which Baha'u'llah has created and elaborated in its teachings, succeeded in raising a structure which the bewildered followers of bankrupt and broken creeds might well have regarded as the supreme issue to bless all workers fully conscious of their mission. It is no longer sufficient for any Baha'i to say that he "accepts" the authority of his local Assembly. This passive attitude must be transformed into a devoted and sincere effort to assist in carrying out every activity and plan which the local Assembly adopts. The word "authority" perhaps blinds us to the deeper reality, that the Spiritual Assembly is the instrument through which the divine blessings flow to every member of the community from the higher source. There is a much more than the passive acceptance of any articles of creed or than any subjective sense between mere willingness not to disobey and a heartfelt and passionate yearning to help with all our force the Spiritual Assemblies in all its capacity to disseminate the Holy Spirit.

confronting every approach and critically examine, and seek, member of the American Baha'i community.

ere it is too late, the invulnerable security Similarly, the local Assembly and its com- munity, to be fully and of its world-embracing shelter." munity, to be fully and completely Baha'i,

In the light of these explanations, every must not simply "accept the authority of

devoted believer might well inquire, how can the National Spiritual Assembly" and re-

the individual Baha'i, conscious of his own refrain from infringing that authority-the

weaknesses' and limitations, reach out to re- local community must make the general

ceive some portion of that Bounty which the plans and activities of the National Assem-

Supreme Manifestation has brought to the bly its first and most vital concern. Only

world? in so doing does it stand in the station of

An indication of the true answer is given receiving the spiritual reinforcements reach-

in the Will and Testament, in those passages ing humanity through the Guardian. A lo-

which establish the Guardianship and in- cal Baha'i community is not an independent

augurate, under his direction, the House of body chartered to maintain activities en-

Justice established by Baha'u'llah. "They tirely distinct from those in other local com-

(members of the House of Justice), and not munities, but every local community is part

the body of those who either directly or in- of one larger body administered by the Na-

directly elect them, have thus been made the tional Spiritual Assembly, which in turn

recipients of the divine guidance which is at possesses no independence but on the con-

once the life-blood and ultimate safeguard trary is engaged in carrying out the Guar-

of this Revelation." (Dispensation, page dian's instructions and advices.

61). Let us recall Shoghi Effendi's words con-

Just as the power of the Holy Spirit in- cerning the relation of local to National

<p>spired those who endeavored faithfully to on page 13 of carry out the Master's instructions in His "However, in view day, and was withdrawn from those who activities should sought to worship Baha'u'llah without recog- national in- nition of the Center of the Covenant, so now requirements of the Faith the confirming spirit is with those who cen- local institutions, ter their lives upon the Guardian's general otherwise, must instructions, and find it possible to unite a considered as spiritual attitude with the outer task of de- organizations, so also veloping the World Order already, though be viewed as so weak and immature, living in the Baha'i compared to the administrative institutions. activities. This What is vitally needed at this time is for be interpreted us all to receive the new and more potent local interests impetus that pours forth from the Guardian as an essen- BAHA't PROCEDURE tial, nay indispensable means whereby the the Holy Spirit administrative system of the Cause can work loyal believer, with efficiency and order." And, "Just as the geographical nearness local Baha'i fund must under all circum- physical edifice. stances be subordinated to the national fund. complete that . . . Such a coordination between local and represents the per- national efforts is indispensable, not only external dec- due to its economic advantages, but essen- This task can only</p>	<p>Spiritual Assembly reported Baha'i News, June, 1934: of the principle that local always be subordinated to the terests, needs and ... " etc. And "Just as all whether administrative or under! all circumstances lbe subsidiary to national local circular letters should secondary in importance national organ of Baha'i principle, however, should not as being detrimental to the of the Baha'i community, but SECTION FOUR, SHEET 7 tracting the confirmation of upon the services of every without distinction of or remoteness from the Now we are called upon to portion of the task which fect crown of the Temple-the oration of the dome unit.</p>
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tially due to the fact that upon the applica- be completed if we become one
 organic na-
 tion of the ,principle underlying this process tional Baha'i community,
 imbued with one
 must inevitably depend the effective working aim and inspired by one
 spirit. Therefore let
 of the entire administrative machinery of us consider afresh the
 relations of the local
 the Faith. There is order, coordination and community to the central
 national body, that
 system in the Cause, and not a jungle of con- the many small lakes may
 become one great
 flicting interests and of continually clashing sea, every drop of which
 moves under the
 wills Local activities should always be one same impulse. Such a
 degree of unity
 subordinated to those of a national charac- will overcome our separate
 weaknesses and
 ter and importance. This is intended not to limitations, and the effect
 will be one of ir-
 minimize the role of the local Assembly in resistible, forward-moving
 power. Many
 the administrative order, but to establish and urgent are the demands
 upon the Na-
 and insure a sane relationship between that tional Assembly to contribute
 to the vrotec-
 body and the national organism of the tion of the Faith in other
 countries, and these
 Cause." demands will increase during
 the years to
 Since the Guardian has given emphasis to come. By meeting the Guardian's
 standard
 this matter, we may be certain that it repre- of achievement now, our
 united capacity for
 sents an important step to be taken in our service to Baha'u'llaáh will
 forge a mighty
 collective attitude toward the Faith of Ba- .instrument for the
 Guardian's use in estab-
 ha'u'llah. Therefore the friends are urged lishing World Order.
 to study carefully the Guardian's list of the "The National Assembly is
 the trusted
 objectives and aims which the National As- guardian and the mainspring
 of the mani-
 ssembly is to adopt at this time, because with- áfold activities and
 interests of every na-
 out a truly united and active national com- tional community in the Baha'i
 world. It

munity the Assembly can have no power to constitute the sole link
 that binds the com- munities to the International
 carry out such important and difficult tasks. House of Jus-
 It is in the development of the National tice, the supreme administrative
 body in the Dispensation of
 Fund that the local communities can render Baha'u'llah."-N. S. A.
 the most direct assistance at this time. For OBLIGATION TO ENFORCE
 as we complete the dome unit ,we create the
 "mighty bulwark" of the administrative or- LAWS OF FAITH
 der, and as we develop and safeguard the ad- With regard to the closing
 ministrative order we contribute to the Schools: the school
 World Order upon which the life of human- forcing the observance of
 authorities have, in en- saries, acted on the advice and
 ity itself depends. direction of
 Baha'i anniver- the Guardian. These Schools,
 There is no intention in this statement to minimize the importance of local Baha'i ac-
 being inde- being inde-
 tivities. The teaching programs now being pendent and official Baha'i
 institutions, could not very well ignore, much
 carried out by many Spiritual Assemblies express provisions and laws
 less violate the of the Aqdas.
 are truly notable and are producing an in- Had they any connection with
 crease in the active membership of the Faith. government
 The major purpose of the National Spiritual institutions, or had their
 ownership and con- trol been shared by
 Assembly, in fact, consists in reinforcing in tion would have been
 non-Baha'is, the situa- tion between institutions
 every possible way the capacity of the local tion between institutions
 different. This distinc- tion between institutions
 Assemblies to serve the Cause. But the fact or partial Baha'i control is
 that are under full importance. Institutions that
 remains that the twigs cannot prosper if the managed by Baha'is are, for
 of a fundamental reasons that
 branch upon which they depend is deprived of any portion of its allotted strength.
 are entirely managed by Baha'is are, for
 of any portion of its allotted strength. managed by Baha'is are, for
 reasons that are only too obvious, under
 Through the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, in its spirit- the obligation of

ual mystery and its outward and visible ordinances of the glory, our combined efforts have in the past observance few years multiplied a hundred fold the pow- conscience. There is er of every teacher to convey the divine Mes- whatever, that sage. The Temple has created a magnet at- and any restric- BAHAI PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 8 tion which the ,government may impose upon and not what we conjecture from their writ- ings. There is great them in this connection would necessarily difference between constitute a violation of the individual's sounding aá great general principle and find- ing its application to actual right to freedom in matters of religious be- prevailing con- ditions. prevailing con- lief. The situation is different when an in- stitution is run partly by Baha'is, or is com- financially in a position to launch itself in pletely owned by the government. In this at present. Such plans need case the believers, while anxious to observe great financial backing to be worked out in a all ,prescribed Baha'i Feasts and Anniver- permanent form. In time, Shoghi Effendi saries, should also take into consideration things will come to pass. For hopes all these the rights and interests of their non-Baha'i the present we have to consolidate our partners and associates, and not to force basic institutions and spread the teachings and these to stop worlcing when they are under spirit of the Faith among the no moral or religious obligation to do so.- public.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

SHOGHI EFFENDI.

QUALIFICATIONS OF FUTURE TEMPLE CONTRACTS

TEACHERS

Whenever local Assemblies desire the

ser-

He also wishes me to express his approval vices of any Baha'i teacher not under its own jurisdiction the Assembly of your suggestion that as soon as the orna- shall apply for a

mentation work of the clerestory section of the Temple is completed no new contract he signed for the next unit unless the entire sum on such requests required for the contract has already been standard of quali- collected. Economic conditions, both within the teachings, and without the Cause, are nowadays too letters of the unstable to allow us to undertake any exten- administrative sive scheme before insuring its uninterrupted and severance and successful áprosecution.-SHOGHI FENDI.

teacher through the National mittee, and the National mittee in providing teachers is to a,pply the following fications : Full knowledge of including the World Order Guardian; full loyalty to the order of the Cause; sincerity from all local situations

N. S. A.

FUNCTION OF REVIEWING COMMITTEE

The functions of the Reviewing and Editorial Committees have been combined in one committee, which is to carry out the following general áprocedure: -

1. Determine whether a manuscript conforms to the Baha'i teachings.
2. Determine whether the manuscript conforms to adequate standards of literary style and taste.

-SHOGHI

ATTACKS FROM FORMER BELIEVERS

As a principle the Guardian N. S. A. to disregard such which those who have from the Administration feel rect against it. This is a rule not only to a few individuals who reject the Administrative having identified themselves

EFFENDI.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

1. The Publishing Committee from this date is to be regarded as a producer and dis-tributor of Baha'i literature on a wholesale committee of the National Assembly; Shoghi

PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES

date is to be regarded as a producer and dis-tributor of Baha'i literature on a wholesale committee of the National Assembly; Shoghi

retail basis ; retail

Effendi fully sympathizes with the desire of sales being more economically handled

some of the members to see the committee through local Baha'i libraries, general book

find ways and means to put into practice sellers and other sales agencies.

the economic teachings of the Cause, as ex- 2. Literature intended for free distribu-

plained in some of the recorded writings and tion shall be, in the first

instance, recom- mended by the Teaching sayings of Baha'u'llah and the Master. But

Committee, \and upon approval and he believes that the time is not yet ripe for

appropriation by the such activities. First we have to study the N. S. A. printed by the

Publishing Commit- tee. Appropriations for or economic teachings in the light of modern

apportionments of free literature from problems more thoroughly so that we may

editions of works al- ready in áhand or already advocate what the Founders of the Faith say

authorized to be BAHA'f PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 9

printed will be made by the N. S. A. as oc- d. Individual records and relics of any

casation arises. form only when touched by (directly associ-

3. On the larger standard books, recom- ated with) the Bab, Baha'u'llah, the Master,

mendations for reprints or new issues of the Guardian, or the N. S. A. single books may be made by the Publish- The cooperation of local

corresponding ing Committee to the N. S. A. and are sub- secretaries is requested in

the collecting and ject to the approval of that body prior to any forwarding of material which

should be pre- served in the National undertaking or contract being made for

Archives. The atten- tion and active interest of printing. the friends should

4. The Publishing Committee before print- be encouraged in both local and National

ing any new book or pamphlet, or reprinting Archives through consultation in Spiritual

any existing book or pamphlet, shall obtain Assemblies and at Nineteen-Day Feasts.-

from this body a specific and final resolution authorizing its publication, which resolution shall include the record of its adequate and proper review by the Reviewing Committee of this body, and after such authorization has been obtained, no changes nor modifications shall be made in the text or general make-up of any book or pamphlet. each Regional

5. Whenever the National Assembly orders for all decisions involving action, and need not consult the National Teaching Commission with reference to activities within the region. It is also recorded that the Regional Committees have no administrative authority over local Assemblies but are to assist the local Assemblies in every possible way and also make possible a coordination of Publishing Committee the value of such budgets in cash; and whenever the National Inter-Assembly activity.-N. S. A. Assembly finances a book like "The Baha'i World" which the Publishing Committee cannot at present undertake, each of such works shall be handled like "The Dawn-Breakers", namely, as a separate item, with points which Shoghi Effendi would like you to emphasize. In the first place he would strongly urge you to cooperate, heart and soul, with all the various Assemblies, the financing of future books.-N. S. A. groups and committees throughout the Baha'i world, to ask for their assistance and help for the successful discharge of your duties and obligations,

N. S.A.

STATUS OF REGIONAL

COMMITTEES

In order to prevent

functions of the National and committees, it is recorded that

Committee is to be responsible

sions involving action, and

the National Teaching

reference to activities within

also recorded that the

have no administrative

Assemblies but are to assist

blies in every possible way

possible a coordination of

activity.-N. S. A.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

There are two important

Shoghi Effendi would like you

phasize. In the first place he

urge you to cooperate, heart

all the various Assemblies,

ful discharge of your duties and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

a. The "Real Baha'i Archives," i. e., the and in this way to build up an active writings of the Founders of the Cause. These and ready mind among the Baha'i youth would include any original writings of the throughout the world. In other words, you Bab and Baha'u'llah that may come into the should not confine your activities to the national possession of the National Archives; also, tional sphere but you should strive to create photostatic copies and authoritative illumin- under the supervision of your N. S. A. an in- ated copies of Their original writings. Under ternational body of active young Baha'i men this heading may also be classed the Tablets and women who, conscious of their manifold of 'Abdu'l-Baha addressed to American As- and sacred responsibilities, will unanimous- assemblies and believers, and the letters of the ly arise to spread the Holy Word. The sec- Guardian to National and local Assemblies ond :point which the Guardian wishes you to and to individual believers. stress •and to keep always in mind is the

b. Such National Spiritual Assembly rec- necessity for every loyal and active member ords as from time to time may be turned over of your committee to fully concentrate on by that body, and copies of all National Ba- the thorough study and understanding of the ha'i publications. spiritual and administrative principles of

c. Records, objects, and iphotographs of the Faith, as a necessary step for active and particular national interest, as those deal- fruitful teaching. You should first equip ing with the Temple, the work of national yourself with the necessary amount of and international teachers, and The Baha'i knowledge about the Cause, and then, and World. only then, try to

teach.-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

BAHA't PROCEDURE

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 10

RESPONSIBILITY OF

its decisions. It however

permits action to

be taken by majority vote when a quorum

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL

exists in any duly called

meeting. It has re-

ASSEMBLY

views and

record the notes of absent members on all

The institution of National Spiritual As-

order to have

semblies has been established in the Baha'i

matters made by a ma-

teachings for the fulfilment of a number of

membership and not by a

important functions. These functions are

described in the Declaration of Trust and

to carry a decision

By-laws which, after approval by the Guar-

'Abdu'l-Baha, and

dian, became the controlling instrument for

derived the obliga-

the affairs of the Cause in the United States

accept and obey the

and Canada.

distinction between

As set forth in that instrument, the Na-

views is rec-

tional Spiritual Assembly is a body having

has been made.

a continuous and uninterrupted existence

Assembly has taken

and possessing paramount authority within

this principle has

the physical area of its jurisdiction, the ex-

when informed that

ercise of this authority being expressly sub-

dissatisfaction

ject to the higher authority of the Guardian

actions duly taken at

and also of the Universal House of Justice

minutes of the meet-

when that body comes into existence.

13, 1932, for

A summary of the duties and responsibili-

statement:

ties of the Assembly reveals how vitally im-

meeting that mat-

portant it is for its own members to have

of this body do

full mutual understanding and agreement of

Assembly until a

corded its obligation to obtain the

matters of vital importance, in

final decision in such

majority of the entire

majority of a quorum.

The right of a majority

is derived from Tablets of

from the same source is

tion of the minority to

will of the majority. No

majority and minority votes or

ognized after final decision

From time to time the

cognizance of the fact that

not fully been observed,

some member has expressed

to other believers with

various meetings. The

ing held on November 12 and

example, contain the following

"It was the sense of the

ters presented at meetings

not become actions of the

and loyalty to their individual and collective unanimous or majority vote has been cast rights and obligations as trustees under the after which they are actions of all the mem- Declaration of Trust. bers and, therefore, it would destroy the

1. The Assembly has final power over the spiritual power of the National Assembly to voting right and Baha'i membership of discriminate between the individual atti- every believer in the United States and tudes on any question after the question is Canada. settled, or to make public any record of at-

2. The Assembly recognizes the existence titudes held before the vote is takien. In or non-existence of every local Spirit- order to maintain the true character of the ual Assembly. institution of the National Spiritual Assem-

3. The Assembly can take jurisdiction of bly no member is áauthorized to discuss out- any matter affecting two or more be- side of the meeting the individual opinions lievers or two or more local Assemblies. of any of the members. There should be no

4. The Assembly makes final decision on discussion about the activities of the Na- all plans and suggestions advanced by tional Spiritual Assembly except its actions individual believers, local communities, as recorded in votes." local Assemblies and Convention dele- In practice, full liberty has ,been given gates. each member to express his views and ad-

5. The Assembly administers the collec- vance his opinion during the period of dis- tive funds of the Cause in the United cussion preceding the casting of votes, even States and Canada. , to the extent of encroachment upon the

6. The Assembly legislates when ,proce- rights of other members. dures and detailed laws are necessary. The Master, in a Tablet quoted by Shoghi

7. The Assembly is executive as well as Effendi on ipage 21 of "Baha'i Administra- legislative and judicial in ácharacter. tion", referred to the subject of

Assembly

8. The Assembly represents the believers' decisions as follows: "The members ... must and local Spiritual Assemblies in relation to the Guardian, and the Guardian in relation to the believers and member focal Assemblies. take counsel together in such wise that no occasion for ill-feeling or discord may arise. This can be attained when every member expresseth with absolute freedom his own opin-

9. The Assembly is the American electoral body for the election of the Universal House of Justice. ion and setteth forth his argument. Should any one oppose, he must on no account feel hurt for not until matters are fully discussed. In discharging these several functions, the can the right way be revealed. The shining Assembly seeks the ideal of unanimity in all spark of truth cometh forth only after the

BAHA'í PROCEDURE

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 11

clash of differing opinions. If after discussion, a decision be carried unanimously, well ASSEMBLY

and good; but if, the Lord forbid, differences of opinion should arise, a majority of voices followi;ng statement must prevail." was drawn up and :presented and unani-

Experience has made it clear that the As- mously adopted : ssembly can not fulfill any of its duties and 1. Consultation as defined by the Master

responsibilities with more than partial suc- in a passage quoted by cess, and above all can not set an example on page 21 of "Baha'í Administration"

of unity to the body of believers, so long as means the discussion and frank expres- sion of opinion by any member expresses dissatisfaction and Assembly members

objection to its decisions in conversation personally present at a meeting. Con-

with other believers, and so long as any mem- sultation does not mean the exchange of ber by word or attitude conveys directly or views through correspondence.

indirectly, a spirit of criticism of the Assembly or its individual members. The highest obligation of every member of the National Assembly is to the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly itself. No member can justifiably assert any higher loyalty, whether to his local Assembly, his local Community or to personal friends among the believers otherwise provided. It is the understanding of the members now in office that the Cause of Baha'u'llah, unlike political democracies, does not make its elected representatives mere agents of their electors, and unlike political aristocracies contains no institutions of special privilege with the provision whose members' personal or class interests are equally binding upon themselves, while unlike religious hierarchies the Cause of Baha'u'llah recognizes no persons or institutions or offices possessing authority to establish dogma, claim spiritual rights over others or action by request otherwise change and nullify any part of His Revelation. The National Spiritual Assembly exists in order to uphold the Cause, questioned, how promote its interests and safeguard the unity of the National Spiritual Assembly action un-

2. An Assembly meeting is defined in Article VI of the "Five members of the Assembly present at a quorum, and a majority of those present and present shall be sufficient for the transaction of business, except as provided in these By-Laws, and in conformity with the principle of fellowship involved in a Spiritual Assembly."
3. Actions taken by the Assembly in conformity with the provisions of this By-Law binding upon all Assembly members whether present or absent from the meeting at which the action was taken.
4. Any member may ask for the consideration of any Assembly matter by presenting the same to the Secretary to the meeting. The action taken shall stand as an action of the Assembly unless it is rescinded or amended at a subsequent meeting.

of the entire American Baha'i community.
a meeting. The
In order to render this service, its attention
members of
is directed to the Baha'i teachings and to the
Assemblies the
instructions received from the Guardian, and
abandon personal
its responsibility cannot be limited by the
.have been made.

wishes and views of any believer or group
of believers.

from responsibility

The National Spiritual Assembly, having
National
attained definite understanding of the na-
from the collec-
ture of the institution, records its conviction
body.

that the fundamental principle of unity,
meetings of this
manifested in full and complete loyalty on
actions of the As-
the part of its members to the results of de-
unanimous or majority
cisions made by unanimous or majority vote,
after which they are
must be upheld at all costs by every person
members and, there-
holding office as member of this Baha'i
the spiritual
body.

Assembly to dis-

In any case of internal controversy affect-
individual atti-
ing the membership of the National Assem-
after the ques-
bly which cannot be remedied by full and
make public any
frank consultation of all the members, the
held before the vote
matter shall be reported to the Guardian and
maintain the true
his advice sought before final action is taken.
institution of the Na:.

-N.S.A.

Assembly no member

til changed by vote at

Master enjoins upon all

Local and National

solemn obligation to

views after decisions

-N.S.A.

5. There is no immunity

ity for any member of the

Assembly at any time

tive actions of this

6. Matters presented at

body do not become

sembly until a

vote has been cast,

actions of all the

fore, it would destroy

power of the National

criminate between the

tudes on any question

tion is settled, or to

record of attitudes

is taken. In order to

character of the

tional Spiritual

BAHA't PROCEDURE

is authorized to discuss outside of the of the As- meeting the individual opinions of any the of the members. There should be no discussion about the activities of the act to di- National Spiritual Assembly except its the Annual actions as recorded in votes. Trustees and present these Reports to the Assembly

INTERNAL PROCEDURE

consideration. 8. The first meeting shall also take steps (Compiled from Minutes) Annual

I. International Activities guidance of the Assembly in its financial affairs.

This body shall refrain from action on direct the matters having an international Baha'i soon as conven- scope until after consultation with the Guar- list of all Com- dian.

outgoing As- sembly, with the date or dates of ex-

2. Publication of Guardian's respective appoint-

Letters ments, for the information of the As- sembly in making its committee ap-

All communications from the Guardian in- tended for the believers should be issued as also act to adopt quickly as possible for general distribution. conduct of af- .

fairs of the Assembly and the mainten- 3. Calendar of Annual Actions records.

1. Notice of first meeting. Immediately next Annual following the election, the member re- meeting ceiving the nighest number of votes

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 12

may be published for the use

sembly, its Committees, and of

Local Spiritual Assemblies.

7. The first meeting shall also

rect the Treasurer to secure

Financial Reports of the

for its early

toward the preparation of an

Budget to be adopted for the

9. The first meeting shall also

Secretary to submit as

ient a full and complete

mittees appointed by the

piration of their

pointments.

10. The first meeting shall

a National Office for the

ance of its files and

11. The date and ,place of the

meeting shall be selected at a

held at such time during the

Assembly's

shall give notice of the first meeting to the Secretary and the other eight members, by telegraph or telephone if necessary. Members unable to attend the meeting shall have opportunity to cast votes for the election of Officers by telegraph or telephone.

In the event that a tie vote makes a second ballot necessary, the vote cast by the absent members in the first ballot shall be counted by the teller in the second ballot.

Application

2. The principal business to be taken up at the first meeting following the Annual Election shall be the election of representatives.

3. The first meeting shall also act to notify the Trustees of the names of the Trustees who have been elected.

4. The first meeting shall also act to secure all Assembly records in the possession of officers and members of the Local Assembly.

5. The first meeting shall also act to audit the Annual Financial Report and as soon as convenient to issue copies

term of office as shall permit the Secretary to observe the

rule of actions :-

A. Four and one half months prior to the Annual Meeting, an

Application for Participation in the

Convention to be issued to all

Local Spiritual Assemblies, this

Application to be returned within

thirty days, to furnish the

the data necessary for

95 delegates to local Baha'i

communities by proportionate

representation.

B. Notice of the Annual

Meeting to be issued at least sixty days

prior to the Convention date. This

Notice to include the following

One, time and place of the

Convention; Two, request that

Local Assemblies call a meeting for

the election of delegates: Three,

Participating Communities, with

number of delegates assigned to

each;

thereof to the Guardian and to Local Election to be

Spiritual Assemblies.

6. The first meeting shall also act to direct the Secretary to secure a full and complete result of the election of Local Spiritual Assemblies held on the previous twenty-first day of April and report that result to the Assembly for its early consideration, that a Directory published and distributed to delegates in advance of the Convention.

Conven-
tion Agenda, and information
voting to be sent each

blank ballot, a copy of the

tion Agenda, and information

cluding Annual Reports by

tees, in time to be

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 13

made by simply referring to the number of

the item in the weekly letters, and these

E. Appointment of Convention Committee.

agenda hitherto issued before each meeting.

F. Preparation of Convention Agenda,

the principal item of which is the election of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Voted that future records of all votes

12. The Assembly shall direct the Secretary by April first, to issue to Local Spiritual Assemblies and groups a Certificate of Election of Local Spiritual Assemblies, with the request that this Certificate be returned as soon as possible after the election.

8. Recording of Votes
passed by the Assembly, or unanimous, should be simply expressed as

voted, without other

of the vote.

9. Acceptance of Declaration of Trust

13. Temple, Green Acre, Malden, Wilhelm

In connection with the approval of new

election with County Clerk. In connection with the approval of new local Assemblies the Secretary was instructed

to submit in each case a blank form to be filled out by the local community, formally

4. Distribution of Baha'i News recording their acceptance of the Declaration of Trust and By-laws as the legal structure of the Baha'i Cause in the United States and Canada. The Secretary was directed to make it clear that the distribution of Baha'i News should be confined to declared and recognized believers.

10. Report of Individual

5. Pilgrims' Notes Attendance
N. S. A. will not in the future ask for the authentication of any pilgrims' notes nor individual attendance of members of the National Assembly should be reported to the Convention was discussed and it was the sense of the meeting that while the National Assembly is responsible for its collective actions, it is not responsible for making reports of the actions of its individual members.

6. Form of Minutes

Each letter, document, or other item coming before the Assembly and requiring action is to be listed and described in weekly reports from the Secretary, and these items when considered at meetings letters to this body are to carry the descriptive number given to them in the weekly reports without other National Baha'i description or identification. The weekly it was moved, reports therefore are to be considered instruct the Secretary as part of the Minutes. Any numbered individuals items listed in the reports but not referred to, policy that

11. Correspondence with

Individuals

The Secretary requested instruction in dealing with by individual believers who complain about matters of policy. After consideration seconded and voted to fo these cases to inform such that the N. S. A. has adopted

to in the Minutes represent either unfinished these general Baha'i matters must be first
business or subjects not requiring action but d.iscussed with their own
local Spiritual As-
merely mentioned in the reports for pur- ssembly al!_dthe National
Assembly will re-
poses of record. spond to all such matters

presented through
the local Assembly; it being understood that
7. Weekly Reports communications from individual
believers on
personal matters are to be answered direct.

Voted to direct the Secretary to issue to
each member a weeldy letter including a ,brief 12. Consultation with
Believers

financial statement and a report of current
correspondence and other matters before the Voted to record the
following -procedure

Assembly, these weekly letters to refer to in connection with
consultation between the
these items in numbered sequence, so that Assembly and Committees and
individual be'-

reference to any item in the Minutes can be lievers: the committee
representative, or in-

BAHA't PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 14

dividual believer, is to report as fully as land and buildings.

possible, and the Chairman is to represent Voted to empower and
authorize the

the Assembly in aslcing any necessary ques- Treasurer to sell on behalf
of the National

tions. Members of the Assembly desiring to Spiritual Assembly for the
benefit of the Na-

ask further questions are to ref er them to tional Baha'i Fund any and
all such stocks,

the Chairman and not to the group or indi- bonds and other securities
as from time to

vidual present for consultation. time are sent him as
contributions to said
fund.

13. Office of Treasurer A monthly report to be
embodied in the

Minutes, based upon the Annual Budget and
The Treasurer of this :body shall observe recording all sums paid out
under each

the following procedure in making payment budget item. A -list of
checks issued by the

of funds from any fund or funds held in the Treasurer during the month.

Total contributions received since the last meeting and

1. All appropriations included in the Annual Budget duly adopted by the Assembly, payable during the fiscal year, are payable when due by the Treasurer with dates, including out further authority or specific action on the part of the Assembly. Trustees; insurance premiums, wages, personal expense accounts,

2. All extra-budget appropriations duly voted by the Assembly are payable when due and mortgages, taxes, etc.

Specific request by the Treasurer without further authority for vote on all appropriations needed during the current month not or specific action on the part of the Assembly, unless in voting the appropriation the the Annual Budget. Assembly specifically made it payable by the In case of any contribution of funds from Treasurer after approval by some other interested friends who are not members of a local Baha'i community, member, committee, agent or representative, such contributions can be accepted with the in which case the Treasurer is bound to secure the specified approval before making they will be used for the purpose of comforting and aiding people in any payment on such appropriation. distress or for other ing and aiding people in

3. After examining the budget adopted by social welfare work, in accordance with the Guardian's letter of Oct. this body, the Treasurer may request the Assembly to include provision for approval before payment of any item or items in the budget which in the Treasurer's judgment members in connection with their attendance at meetings, and other cannot efficiently be passed upon by the expenses of Assembly Treasurer alone. members are only to be paid

by special vote

In all business arrangements entered into by the N. S. A., where salary or other form of financial allowance is involved over an extended period of time, the Assembly shall be financed directly from the National Assembly term not exceeding one year, and also that without permitting expense accounts contingent upon the holding of office come to an end with the expiration of the term of said office.

principles and methods of Baha'i After consideration of the advantage on administration; and that the one hand of allowing believers to express their devotion by gifts of jewelry and other merchandise, and of the disadvantage on the responsibility shall rest other hand of assuming responsibility for Assembly.

the sale of such articles, for which the National Assembly has no facilities other than be under the direct control of the individual believers who make such donations, it was moved, seconded and voted to direct the Treasurer to accept as contributions to the National Fund only donations made in currency or marketable securities that this latter and to refer to the National Assembly for specific action in each case, all proposals for donations to be made in the form of real

of the National Assembly.

Henceforth if any nance an activity which has but which cannot be the National Fund, the shall accept such an offer any change in the the activity in question in accordance with the

methods of Baha'i believer shall turn such a the National Fund and not direct, so that the upon the National

All payments under contractual relations shall control of the N. S. A. mittee and all contracts body shall be made with Article 2, Sections 1 and of Trust~ It is understood provision will not apply in body had voted a definite committee for an itemized

budget duly re-

estate, whether land or buildings alone or recorded in these Minutes.

BAHA't PROCEDURE

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 15

14. Holding of Real Estate

PALESTINE BRANCH OF

In cases of gifts of land in the future to AMERICAN NATIONAL

the Cause, separate Indentures shall be made ASSEMBLY

in each case.

It would interest you to know that the American National Spiritual Assembly,

15. Application for Leases Palestine Branch, has been

incorporated ac-

Applications from Baha'is for lease of land according to the law in Palestine,

not as a

for building sites on property controlled by foreign corporation or a charitable trust,

Baha'i Trustees will be acted on in the order but as a "religious society"

enjoying all the

received. The form of lease to be given will privileges attaching to

recognized religious

provide for the following factors: Term of institutions in the Holy Land.

Shoghi Ef-

lease, use of site and annual rental; mini-fendi hopes to transfer to the

name of your

minimum and maximum amounts to be spent for Assembly additional plots of

land in the vic-

construction ; provision of water and light; unity of the shrine of

Baha'u'llah at Akka

a fee for reservation of sites with a time and of the Bab at-Mount Carmel

as soon as

limit; maintenance of Baha'i control over the he obtains the necessary

authorization from

ownership and occupancy of homes, with a the authorities, inasmuch as

the right of

predetermined method of valuation in the holding real estate by

religious institutions

event that a cottage is sold or comes under is strictly limited according

to Palestinian

the management of the Trustees through a law. This step which he has

taken, which has

property owner's repudiation of the Faith. necessitated many months of

careful and

delicate negotiations with both the local and

central authorities, our Guardian feels will

16. Tax Exemption on Donations constitute the prelude to the

eventual forma-

tion and recognition, by the Palestine Gov-

A letter was presented from the U. S. ernment, of a properly

constituted International

Treasury Department, dated December first, functioning as an independent religious body in 1927, recognizing the National Assembly as the Holy Land.

a duly organized religious body qualified to receive donations and bequests and granting the usual tax exemption to donations received by the Treasurer of this body.

ON APPEALS FROM LOCAL

17. Changing Date of Meetings

• When the date of the Meeting has been re-
important subject

corded in the Minutes, no individual mem-
bers of local

member shall request, between Meetings, to have
appeal to the

date altered, but every member shall be
for reconsider-

in duty bound to report to the Chairman not
Local Spiritual

later than ten days before the Meeting if he
the informa-

or she is unable to attend; and in the event
United States and

that such reports indicate that a quorum
controlling the

cannot be obtained for the date already fixed,
National Baha'i

the Chairman shall determine the date when
National Spiritual

the Meeting is to be called.

following state-

ment and incorporated it in the minutes of
the Meeting held on December 27 and 28,

18. Correspondence in Matters

Already Clarified

Spiritual

Assembly contain the following references

Letters addressed to the National Assem-
bly on matters which the Assembly has al-

such cases as it con-

sidered already decided by specific vote or on which
entertain ap-

a clear precedent exists in the Assembly
Local Spiritual

records, may be answered by the Secretary

tional Baha'i Assembly,

dependent religious body in

-SHOGHI EFFENDI.

SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES

In order to clarify the

of the right of individual

Baha'i communities to make

National Spiritual Assembly

of actions taken by a

Assembly, and to set forth for

tion of the Baha'is of the

Canada a definite procedure

making of appeals to the

body, the members of the

Assembly have adopted the

1932.

1. The By-Laws of the National

Spiritual

Assembly contain the following references

Letters addressed to the National Assem-
bly on matters which the Assembly has al-

such cases as it con-

sidered already decided by specific vote or on which
entertain ap-

a clear precedent exists in the Assembly
Local Spiritual

records, may be answered by the Secretary

to the subject of appeals.

Article I. "It shall, in

consider suitable and necessary,

appeals from the decisions of

Assemblies and shall have the

right of final
without further Assembly action. In such decision in all cases where
the qualifications
cases the Secretary is to cite the source in of an individual or group for
continued vot-
conveying the Assembly's view on the mat- ing rights and membership in
the Baha'i
t.er. body are in question."

BAHA'I PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 16
Article VII. Section 6. "The Local As- does not mean that a
dissatisfied believer is
sembly shall pass upon and approve the to agitate any matter among
the members of the local Baha'i community
qualifications of each member of the Baha'i the local Baha'i community
apart from the
community before such members shall be Local Spiritual Assembly. The
responsibil-
admitted to voting membership; but where ity for decisions is clearly
placed upon the
an individual is dissatisfied with the ruling Local Spiritual Assemblies and
not upon the
of the Local Spiritual Assembly upon his believers of the community.
Baha'i qualifications, such individual may 5. The National Spiritual
Assembly can
appeal from the ruling to the National As- rightfully entertain only
those appeals which
sembly, which shall thereupon take jurisdic- express dissatisfaction with
actions or de-
tion of and finally decide the case." cisions of a Local
Assembly-it cannot be

Article VII. Section 9. "All questions expected to deal with appeals
which are an
arising between two or more Local Spiritual effort to deny the authority
and power of
Assemblies or between members of differ- the Local Assembly in
general. The author-
ent Baha'i communities, shall be submitted ity and power duly vested in
Local Spiritual
in the first instance to the National Assem- Assemblies will always be
upheld and de-
bly, which shall have original and final jur- f ended by the National
Assembly. But
isdiction in all such matters." where a duly elected Local
Assembly acts

Note: Article VII. Section 9, properly unjustly toward a believer, or
acts in such a
speaking, does not refer to the subject of way as to work some harm upon

the Cause, appeals, since an appeal is from a lower to an appeal to the National Assembly is entirely justified after a higher jurisdiction, and the National Spiritual Consultation with the Local Assembly has proved fruitless. 6. The National Spiritual Assembly is the only Baha'i body having jurisdiction in cases of an Inter-Assembly character. It is quoted here, however, as entertaining an appeal, will deal only with the believer or believers by whom the appeal has been made. The National Assembly will not recognize any believer's right to be repented by another believer nor by a non-Baha'i attorney, advocate or representative. In becoming a voting member of the Baha'i community, every believer is subject to the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly whether the appeal is important enough to be considered or of a trivial nature and therefore not to be entertained. This brings out the vital principle that the National Spiritual Assembly is not a passive body compelled to deal with all matters brought to its attention, but has paramount executive and legislative powers in addition to its function as a judicial body. 3. Since with the lapse of time it becomes difficult to bring together all evidence bearing upon a situation or matter, the National Assembly has voted that all appeals must be

accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly, and that the right of every believer to be a member of the Baha'i community is conditional upon continued faithfulness to the Cause, and that right is lost by setting one's acceptance of

the qualifications

received within sixty days of the date when any way a

the action or decision of the Local Spiritual that may be perma-

Assembly has been made known to the be- permanence of loy-

liiever appealing from that action or deci- Cause.

sion. The period of sixty days is ample in in writing, and

which individual believers can take steps to National Assem-

safeguard their legitimate rights. Assembly to fur-

4. The National Spiritual Assembly will Minutes or other

entertain only such appeals as are made matter in question,

from decisions of a Local Assembly after consultation re-

the individual believer who makes the appeal nature of the

has presented his views to the Local Assem- the Local As-

bly and endeavored sincerely to solve the Assembly be given

problem by local consultation. The members written explanation

of the National Assembly believe that prac- National Assembly

tically every Baha'i problem can be removed the appeal. By

by full and frank consultation on the part of a copy signed by the

the believers directly concerned. But this the Local As-

BAHA'I PROCEDURE

sembly duly chosen by the Local Assembly themselves personally

to furnish the record.

affecting the Cause

8. The National Assembly will announce if there

both to the appellant and to the Local As- Local Assembly has

sembly its decision, which decision is bind-

for membership, and is not in

vested right nor a right

nently claimed without

alty and faithfulness to the

7. Appeals must •be made

on receiving an appeal the

bly will request the Local

nish an attested copy of its

records bearing upon the

including a record of the

quested by the appellant. The

appeal will be made known to

sembly, and the Local

opportunity to furnish a

of the matter, before the

decides whether to entertain

•attested copy" is meant

Secretary or other Officer of

SECTION FOUR, SHEET 17

in matters affecting

but also in larger matters

in their community. For example,

be real evidence that a

not been properly elected,

any Baha'i in that
ing upon the appellant, the Local Assembly community may and in fact
should join with
and the local Baha'i community. In enter- other local Baha'is in
making the matter
taining an appeal, the National Spiritual known to the National
Assembly. In the
Assembly will endeavor to raise the problem same way, if a duly elected
Assembly for any
from the realm of personality to the plane reason is unable or
unwilling to hold regu- lar meetings and function as
of the Teachings and Principles of Adminis- lar meetings and function as
a Local As- sembly, it is incumbent upon
tration, and seek not merely to announce a the Baha'is
the Baha'is
final decision but also to point out wherever of that community to report
the matter to
possible the grounds for true understanding the National Assembly. In
such case the Na- tional Assembly may order a
and reconciliation on the part of the believ- tional Assembly may order a
new election.
ers immediately affected by the problem ap- 12. A Local Assembly
which finds itself
pealed. in dispute with another
Local Assembly may
9. Unless the National Spiritual Assembly refer the matter to the National
Assembly
is entertaining an appeal of a strictly per- if the matter can not be
settled by the two
sonal and private nature, the Local Spiritual Local Assemblies in
accordance with the
Assembly should present the decision of the Teachings and Princi,ples
of the Cause.
National Assembly to the entire local Baha'i In conclusion, the
members of the Nation- al Spiritual Assembly would
community, for the information and guid- al Spiritual Assembly would
emphasize the
ance of the community. vital fact that in the
Baha'i Faith, all rights
10. Local Assemblies are requested to give are hala:hced by the obligation
to maintain
individual believers every opportunity for true unity among the
followers of Baha'u'l- lah. But "Justice is loved
full and frank discussion of matters which
above all," and
seem to cause dissatisfaction, in order to this statement on appeals
has been prepared

prevent local problems coming to the point for every be- of formal appeal to the National Assembly. measure of jus- Local Assemblies should freely receive ap- Local Assembly and to peals for reconsideration of its decisions •A.

from members of the local Baha'i community, and endeavor to turn these into occasions for increasing the spirit of true unity between itself and all members of the community. Believers having a grievance against their Local Spiritual Assembly, or against another ,believer in the community, have a right to present that grievance pri- Spiritual Assem- vately to the Local Assembly. If the Local powers and re- Assembly considers a grievance between two to time required or more members of the community, and of a court in de- cannot remove that grievance, it should re- of Baha'i f er the matter to the National Assemblyáfor actions, misunder- advice and assistance, after securing the ap- among the Baha'is proval of all parties to the grievance that Canada, and the matter be referred to the National body. Spiritual Assem- Any believer unwilling to have the grievance in process of de- referred to the National Assembly must ac- of a House of cept the decision of the Local Assembly in charged with juris- regard to the grievi.ance.But when the griev- personal and com- ance has been referred to the National As- standard of divine sembly with the approval of all the individ- teachings of the ual ábelievers directly affected, all such be- it

in order to make it possible liever to obtain the fullest tice in relation to his his fellow Baha'is.-N. S.

PROCEDURE FOR CON- DUCT OF JURIDICAL SESSIONS

WHEREAS, the National bly, by virtue of its stated sponsibilities, is from time to exercise the jurisdiction termining matters of fact and principle arising from standings áand disputes of the United States and

WHEREAS, the National bly is a Baha'i institution velopment toward the status Justice, which status is diction of all manner of munity matters under the Justice established in the Baha'i Faith, therefore be

lievers are bound to accept the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada, seeking to fulfill its duties and responsibilities in the promotion of that Justice among believers, shall henceforth ob-

11. Individual believers may justifiably serve the following procedure when exercising jurisdiction over appeal to the National Assembly not merely cising jurisdiction over disputes:

BAHA'í PROCEDURE SECTION FOUR, SHEET 18

1. Each case requiring judicial action by the Assembly shall be divided into three successive and distinct stages, viz.; and fully recorded in its Minutes.

A. The determination of all relevant facts. 3. In arriving at its final decision, the Assembly shall endeavor faithfully to rise

B. The determination of what principles or principles in the Baha'í teachings apply to said facts. above a 11 personal either of undue love and affection or undue prejudice against any of the

C. The determination of a final decision of the case based upon (1) a written record of facts duly accepted by the Assembly and (2) a written analysis of the fundamental disputes to manifest the reality of Baha'u'llah's teaching that "Justice is loved above

2. Any and all report or comment on the all."-N. S. A.
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