A CRITIQUE REVEALING ERRONEOUS STATEMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS PERTAINING TO THE CONTINUITY OF THE GUARDIANSHIP IN ADIB TAHERZADEH’S BOOK: “THE COVENANT OF BAḤÁ’U’LLÁH”

The author of this book has devoted thirty-six chapters, 441 pages and three appendices to the subject of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh. While the first thirty-three chapters and 376 pages provide an exhaustive and well-written exposition, with a few exceptions, covering for the most part, the early history of the Faith and the various fruitless attempts to subvert the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh, it will be clearly shown in this critique that the author, particularly in Chapter thirty-four, has, in an effort to prove that the Guardianship of the Faith came to an end with the passing of Shoghi Effendi, and to validate the authenticity of a man-made and sans-Guardian administrative organization that has been substituted for the divinely-conceived Administrative Order delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, has made erroneous interpretations of this sacred and immutable Testament and utterly false statements concerning the Guardianship which will be clearly exposed and which shockingly reveal, his repudiation of the most important provisions of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Moreover, he has also made statements that are at complete variance with the statements and writings of Shoghi Effendi, the first beloved Guardian of the Faith, concerning the continuity of the Guardianship in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh and the essential and irreplaceable role of the Guardian in that “Most Great Order” as the Head of the Faith, the infallible “expounder of the words of God” and the “sacred head and the distinguished member for life of the Universal House of Justice.” For these reasons, and his rejection of the appointed successors of Shoghi Effendi, Adib Taherzadeh sadly has become a flagrant violator and an enemy of the very Covenant of which he has obviously fancied himself a leading authority, champion and defender. While this critique covers only Chapter thirty-four of his book, those readers, who have completed this review will readily perceive the obvious falsity of certain statements appearing in the remaining two chapters of his book.

It soon becomes glaringly apparent as one reads the writings of Taherzadeh in which he maintains that the provisions of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá pertaining to the matter of succession are, in effect, no longer applicable, that he has shamefully repudiated the most important provisions of this sacred Document penned by the “master-hand of its perfect Architect,”—‘Abdu’l-Bahá—and most significantly, in a spiritual sense, actually a jointly authored Document which, as explained by Shoghi Effendi in his work: “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh,” is to be considered “the inevitable offspring resulting from that mystic intercourse between Him Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose and the One Who was its vehicle and chosen recipient,”
thereby becoming the “Child of the Covenant—the Heir of both the Originator and the Interpreter of the Law of God.” Furthermore, the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has been described by Shoghi Effendi, as co-equal in its sacredness with the Most Holy Book of Bahá’u’lláh—the Kitáb-i-Aqdas—stating that these two sacred Documents “are not only complementary but they mutually confirm one another, and are inseparable parts of one complete unit.” In consequence of which, the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is nothing less than a part of the explicit Holy Text. As Shoghi Effendi has further pointed out, these sacred Documents are “the twin repositories of the constituent elements of that Sovereignty” “which the Bahá’í teachings foreshadow.” From the foregoing, it is clear that all of the provisions of the Will and Testament, including those pertaining to the Guardianship will remain applicable and endure unaltered for not less than a full thousand years.

Not only does Taherzadeh reveal his own evident and incomprehensible loss of faith in and repudiation of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá but, tragically enough, that of Rúhíyyih Khánum, the widow of Shoghi Effendi, as well, in quoting her words in the opening pages of chapter thirty-four contained in two cablegrams that were dispatched to the Bahá’í world following Shoghi Effendi’s sudden and unexpected passing in London, England. For these cablegrams reveal the surprising and almost inexplicable fact, although expressed in an indirect way by her, that she, too, believed the Guardianship of the Cause of God had come to a premature end with his passing, an institution which she had so devotedly, steadfastly and consistently supported in deed and acclaimed in word in her writings during his 36 year ministry. Proof that Rúhíyyih Khánum obviously believed that the Guardianship had ended becomes evident when one considers carefully the words of both her initial cable to the Bahá’í world on 4 November 1957 announcing the passing of Shoghi Effendi and the text of the cable that followed, as quoted below:

“Shoghi Effendi beloved of all hearts sacred trust given believers by Master passed away sudden heart attack in sleep following Asiatic flu. Urge believers remain steadfast cling institution Hands lovingly reared recently reinforced emphasized by beloved Guardian. Only oneness heart oneness purpose can befittingly testify loyalty all National Assemblies believers departed Guardian who sacrificed self utterly for service Faith.”

The following additional cable was dispatched by Rúhíyyih Khánum concerning funeral arrangements:

“Beloved all hearts, precious Guardian Cause of God, passed peacefully away yesterday after Asiatic flu. Appeal Hands, National Assemblies, Auxiliary Boards, shelter believers, assist meet heartrending supreme test. Funeral our beloved Guardian, Saturday, London. Hands, Assembly, Board members, invited attend. Any press release should state meeting Hands shortly Haifa will make
The following significant critical and disturbing facts can be gleaned from the wording of the above cables:

The believers are urged in the first cable quoted above to “cling to the institution of the Hands.” There is no mention of the believers rallying around Shoghi Effendi’s successor, even though his identity has not yet been revealed, for the believers had every reason to firmly believe that Shoghi Effendi had appointed his successor in view of the sacred obligation imposed upon him to do so under the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Could there be any doubt on the part of the believers that Shoghi Effendi had discharged this responsibility with the same complete fidelity to that divinely-conceived Document that he had demonstrated throughout his ministry, for this Document delineates the irrereplaceable and essential dual role that is assigned to the Guardian of the Cause of God. Indeed, it was this vital dual role that was first emphasized by the Greatest Holy Leaf, Bahíyyih Khánum, sister of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, following the ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, in her cablegram sent to the Bahá’í world on the 16th of January 1922 in which she announced: “In Will Shoghi Effendi appointed Guardian of Cause and Head of House of Justice.” And when the believers had the opportunity later to read the text of the Will and Testament for themselves they learned that in the Administrative Order outlined therein the Guardian was identified as the “Center of the Cause,” invested with the sole right of Interpreting Bahá’í Holy Writ and designated as “the sacred head for life” of the Universal House of Justice. It was equally clear that this Will made it incumbent upon the Guardian to appoint his successor “in his own life-time” (i.e. not by testamentary document) thus assuring that the institution of the Guardianship would never be deprived of the presence of a living Guardian, even for an instant, throughout the entire Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh and the identity of his successor would never have to await the opening of a will.

The second cable states that the Hands assembled in Haifa “will make arrangements to the Bahá’í world regarding future plans.” The preparation of “future plans” is not a function assigned to the Hands of the Cause under the provisions of the ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament. Such plans would be formulated either by National Spiritual Assemblies for their respective countries or by Shoghi Effendi’s successor in the same manner as Shoghi Effendi had done in his assignment of tasks and goals under the two Seven Year Plans carried out by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and in the Ten-Year Global Crusade that followed in which all of the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá’í world were assigned specific goals in accordance with Shoghi Effendi’s faithful implementation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablets of the Divine Plan. The fact that no mention is made of the next Guardian performing this role further reveals that Rúhíyyih Khánum, although not revealing this belief directly, was already convinced that Shoghi Effendi, as far as she was concerned, had left no successor and, incredibly as it may seem, that she considered the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with respect to the matter of succession null and
void only 36 years after the inception of the Administrative Order which the “master-hand of its perfect Architect” had fashioned.

How are we to account for this obvious abandonment of the Guardianship, by his widow so soon after his passing and before she and her fellow-Hands had, as announced in her cable, gathered in Haifa and determined if Shoghi Effendi had left a will appointing a successor as the believers expected, especially considering the fact that she had written works herself during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi stressing the absolute essentiality of the Guardianship to the Faith as a continuing institution? Was it because she knew there was no son to inherit the Guardianship? For unlike those believers who had speculated over the years that Shoghi Effendi had a son, secretly raised and prepared to be his successor, she was, the only one in the Bahá’í world at the time of Shoghi Effendi’s passing who definitely knew that there was no substance to such rumors and that there was no son to inherit the Guardianship. At the same time, she shared the knowledge with the other believers that there were no male descendants from the blood line of Bahá’u’lláh who had remained loyal to the Covenant and it was they whom most of the believers had been led to believe were the only other individuals eligible to inherit the Guardianship due to the erroneous interpretation placed on the applicable terms of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament, about which more will be discussed later. Or could it have been that she was convinced the Guardianship had ended because she thought that Shoghi Effendi would certainly have confided in her, as his wife, the identity of anyone whom he had chosen as a successor and, as he had not done so, there was no successor? If she had held this belief, she had failed to consider the possibility that there may have been a valid reason why Shoghi Effendi had not revealed to her openly the identity of the one whom he had chosen as his successor which would now become clear after his passing.

There was a very good reason why Shoghi Effendi could not have confided in Rúhíyyih Khánum the identity of the one whom he had chosen as his successor, for had he done so, he would have clearly revealed to her, albeit in an indirect way, that his ministry and life was destined to soon come to an end as the one whom he had appointed to succeed him “in his own life-time” some six years before his passing was a man already approaching his eighties and therefore his accession to the Guardianship at a very advanced age would of necessity have to take place in the near future (as, in fact, it did). Shoghi Effendi knew that Rúhíyyih Khánum would never be able to sustain the foreknowledge of his passing which would be imminent had he made known to her the identity of his successor nor, for that matter, would the believers throughout the world have been able to cope with this knowledge, as the prospect of his early death, if they had actually believed it was impending, would have completely paralyzed them in their work for the Faith from that time onward. Rúhíyyih Khánum, herself, confirmed this when she stated in her book titled: “The Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith” published in 1988: “I could never have survived the slightest foreknowledge of the Guardian’s death.”
It should be mentioned, however, that in making this statement Rúhíyyih Khánum had surprisingly forgotten that when this writer was in Haifa on pilgrimage in 1952 Shoghi Effendi had alluded so clearly at the dinner table one evening in her presence that his passing was near at hand and had stated the reason therefore so clearly, that she jumped up from the table and in tears rushed out of the room. From the foregoing, it may be seen that Shoghi Effendi was faced with the problem of appointing his successor “in his own life-time” under the terms of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Will in such a way that, although it had to be done openly, yet the appointment had to remain concealed from the believers in order to spare them the shock, trauma and consternation that would inevitably ensue if they were to realize that the one whom he had chosen as his successor clearly indicated that his passing was imminent. As his ministry drew to a close Shoghi Effendi resolved this problem so ingeniously that not only did the appointment of his successor, even though it had been made openly, remain undiscovered during the few concluding years of his ministry but unfortunately remained unperceived by all of the believers after his passing until his successor disclosed the manner in which his appointment had been effected in a Proclamation issued to the Bahá’í world some two and a half years after Shoghi Effendi’s passing.

Most importantly, it should be borne in mind, that the believers could not point to a single word in Shoghi Effendi’s writings that indicated anything but a continuation of the Guardianship down through the centuries to come of the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh. This is very evident, for example, when one reads “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” which has been referred to as his testament as well as his other works and notably his historic messages to the Bahá’í world especially during the period 1950 - 1957 in which, for example, he mentioned in his message of 27 November 1954 “the construction in the course of successive epochs of the Formative Age of the seats of such divinely appointed institutions as the Guardianship . . .”. Additionally, there were the Haifa pilgrim notes of the outstandingly successful pioneer in Latin America, Gayle Woolson, in which she records that Shoghi Effendi had stated when asked by a fellow-pilgrim about a son: “Everything that is written in the Will and Testament will be fulfilled. The Bahá’ís must not be anxious about this.”

Whatever the beliefs held by the believers throughout the world, all of us at the time of Shoghi Effendi’s passing, without exception, had unquestionably forgotten or were ignorant of the provisions of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá which clearly and definitely precluded the use of a will and testament not only by Shoghi Effendi but the use of such an instrument by all future Guardians, as well, in naming their successor. For the explicit terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá state: “It is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing.” (the phrase “in his own life-time” being, of course, redundant if a written will, to be opened after a Guardian’s passing, had been intended by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a will obviously can only be written in one’s life-time). A student of the Will and Testament will also note other clauses which conclusively prove that the Guardian must appoint his
successor while still living in a similar manner to that employed by the ancient Kings of Israel such as King David when he publicly appointed Solomon as his successor while he was still reigning.

Forgetful or ignorant, as the case may have been, of the above provision in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament, the Bahá’í world unfortunately universally anticipated that the question of succession would be clarified by Shoghi Effendi in a will and testament, the contents of which they expected would be ‘revealed when the then 27 Hands of the Cause assembled in Haifa, as announced by Rúhíyyih Khánum in the cable quoted above. The Hands as well as all of the Bahá’ís also completely ignored the fact that the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá do not call for the convening of an assemblage of the Hands of the Cause, following the passing of a Guardian, for the purpose of opening a will left by him identifying the one whom he has appointed as his successor. The fact that no such assemblage or conclave, as they later labelled it, is called for under the terms of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament should have alerted the Hands to the fact that the reason why ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had never provided for such a conclave in His Will and Testament was that there was no need for such a gathering following the death of a Guardian as every Guardian-to-be under its provisions would invariably be appointed and be made known prior to the passing of his predecessor. Had this realization dawned upon them they may have decided to re-examine the provisions of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament and discovered that they had overlooked the clear provision in that Document which requires the Guardian to appoint his successor in his own lifetime, and reached the inevitable conclusion that if Shoghi Effendi had appointed his successor during his ministry as required, and that he had obviously done so in such an indirect and veiled manner that both Rúhíyyih Khánum and the Hands, as well as all of the believers throughout the world had failed, at the time, to perceive the manner in which this appointment had been effected and the identity of his successor. Sadly, however, it is obvious that this re-examination never took place and the Hands and all of the believers continued to hold to their false belief that a will and testament penned by Shoghi Effendi would be found. The falsity of this belief, however, should have become obvious following the results of the first conclave held by the Hands in ‘Akká only nine days following his interment when they announced to the Bahá’í world that their search for a will left by Shoghi Effendi had been fruitless. The persistent failure of the believers to perceive that a will would never have been the instrument used by Shoghi Effendi to appoint his successor is confirmed in Mr. Taherzadeh’s book wherein he states: “Almost the entire Bahá’í community expected that the Will and Testament of Shoghi Effendi would announce the appointment of a successor to himself, as the Wills of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had done” And he goes on to say that: “the Bahá’ís of the world waited anxiously for news of this from the beloved and trusted Hands of the Cause, but when the news finally came, it was that the Guardian had left no Will”

In view of the false belief held by the entire Bahá’í world that Shoghi Effendi would leave a will appointing his successor it was then a shocking revelation that
no will and testament had been left by Shoghi Effendi. Should the Hands and
the rest of the believers have then immediately concluded that the Guardianship
had come to a premature end? Did not such a hasty conclusion constitute a
incomprehensible loss of faith in the sacredness, immortality and immutability of
the sacred and divinely-conceived Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and result
not only in their repudiation of this Document but of the writings of Shoghi
Effendi, as well, who had extolled this Document as “the Charter of the New
World Order” of Bahá’u’lláh and “His greatest legacy to posterity”? And more
than this, had he not acclaimed it as the very “Child of the Covenant” and, as
such, a divinely-conceived Document that should be considered, as discussed
earlier, not only the Will of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá but that of Bahá’u’lláh, as well, and
complementary to and inseparable from Bahá’u’lláh’s Most Holy Book—the
Kitáb-i-Aqdas—and consequently a part of the explicit Holy Text? In the light of
this knowledge, how could they have concluded that the joint Authors, in a
spiritual sense, of this mighty Instrument Who, Themselves, had suffered such
treachery, perfidy and infidelity at the hands of Their closest relatives, would in
framing this sacred Document under divine guidance so completely ignore this
past history of disloyalty as to include in Their Will a provision that would be so
restrictive on the matter of succession that it would doom to certain extinction
the highest institutions of the future World Order of Bahá’u’lláh? Would not the
inclusion of such a restriction pertaining to the appointment of the Guardian’s
successor in the Will and Testament make the continued existence of these
highest institutions of “this Most Great Order” in the future centuries that lay
ahead contingent upon the highly uncertain prospect that there would always be
either a spiritually qualified son of the incumbent Guardian of the Faith or a
descendent from the blood line of Bahá’u’lláh, who was a declared believer loyal
to the Covenant and endowed with the requisite qualifications set forth in the
Will, available for appointment as his successor?

Certainly, the believers could point to no evidence in the writings and cablegrams
of Shoghi Effendi to indicate that he had interpreted the Will and Testament to
impose such a restriction as the Hands of the Cause had placed on the
appointment of his successor. Quite the contrary was the case. Knowing that
there were no longer any relatives of the blood line of Bahá’u’lláh who had
remained loyal to the Covenant, Shoghi Effendi’s writings and cablegrams still
emphatically and repeatedly projected the existence of the institution of the
Guardianship as an essential and irreplaceable institution and one of the “twin
pillars” delineated in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Will that supported the “mighty
Administrative Structure” of the Faith for as long as the Dispensation of
Bahá’u’lláh endured. Could the Hands now continue to completely ignore all
that Shoghi Effendi had written concerning the immutability and immortality of
the Will and Testament and the future of the Guardianship or should it not have
been apparent to them that their interpretation of the term “another branch” as
used in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not limit the Guardian’s
choice of a successor, in the absence of a qualified son, to a descendant of
Bahá’u’lláh, at all, but had to have another meaning which could only be a spiritual one?

Indeed, could not the Hands (with a single exception) have also perceived that to cling to the fallacious belief that Shoghi Effendi had been unable to appoint a successor, would have made him a party to the complete destruction of the very institutions he had so laboriously and faithfully reared during his ministry in conformity with the sacred Mandate of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and would have placed him in the position of refuting such announcements as the one in which he had hailed the historic achievement that had taken place “at the World Center of the Faith, where, at long last the machinery of its highest institutions has been erected, and around whose most holy shrines the supreme organs of its unfolding Order, are, in their embryonic form unfolding”? (30 June 52 cable to the Bahá’í world)

If an alternative scenario had unrolled in which the Hands had realized that they had been wrong in their belief that only a descendant of Bahá’u’lláh could inherit the Guardianship and had opened their minds to the possibility that Shoghi Effendi had been able to appoint as his successor someone during his ministry, other than a descendant of Bahá’u’lláh, who had obviously remained unrecognized, a different outcome may have resulted. They then would certainly have undertaken a careful, unbiased and thorough review of the significant acts taken and announcements made by Shoghi Effendi during his ministry with the keen anticipation of ascertaining the manner in which Shoghi Effendi had appointed his successor prior to his passing in such a way that his identity, in spite of being openly announced, as required, had been so obscured as to remain unperceived, both at the time of his appointment as well as after his death, and of hopefully discovering in this review the identity of the second Guardian. At the culmination of this review they may have surprisingly discovered that the second Guardian was actually one of their own number and in their very midst. Had they been successful in this endeavor and joyously welcomed the second Guardian, the Bahá’í Administrative Order would have remained intact as delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and a substitute provisional body would never have been illicitly established to take the place of the Guardianship, a body which they formed completely outside the provisions of the Will and Testament, comprising nine of their number, whom they would label “The Custodians of the Faith” and to which they would assign direction of the affairs of the Faith pending the election of a sans-Guardian and, therefore, headless Universal House of Justice at Ridván 1963.

Mr. Taherzadeh does not recognize this tragic failure on the part of the Hands of the Cause, much less that of the other believers in the Bahá’í world, to look for Shoghi Effendi’s successor and surprisingly, as late as 1992 when he wrote his book, still continued to ignore or overlook the clear provision in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Testament requiring the Guardian to appoint his successor “in his own life-time” and still clung to the view that only a descendant of Bahá’u’lláh could inherit the Guardianship. As a result, he attempts to justify the fact that Shoghi Effendi left no will with such explanations as it “was due to the circumstances of his ministry
and of his life,” or that he “did not have any worldly possessions” or, more significantly, in the absence of a son to inherit the Guardianship, he had not been able to appoint a successor as “there was not a single Ghusn [although Shoghi Effendi does not use the word “Ghusn” anywhere in his translation of the text of the Will] who was faithful to the Cause of God” because “every one of the descendants of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had been declared Covenant-breakers.” In this statement, Taherzadeh, reveals his continued misinterpretation of the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá wherein, in the absence of a spiritually qualified son to inherit the Guardianship, the Guardian must “choose another branch to succeed him” contending that the word “branch” (originally translated by Shoghi Effendi with a lower case “b” in the 1944 edition of the Will) limits the Guardian’s choice of a successor solely to a descendant of Bahá’u’lláh and in his misguided effort to support this false argument he changes the word “branch” to “Branch” and cites the singular form of the Persian word for Branch: “Ghusn” (although Shoghi Effendi in his writings uses the term “Aghsan,” the plural form of “Ghusn,” to refer solely to the sons of Bahá’u’lláh and not to His other relatives (as shown on page 239 of his book titled: “God Passes By”). Furthermore, in the text of the Will and Testament Shoghi Effendi translates ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s reference to him as “the chosen branch” and not “The Chosen Branch” as cited by Taherzadeh which further proves that Taherzadeh has attempted to make it appear that only a relative from the blood-line of Bahá’u’lláh is eligible to inherit the Guardianship and thus place an unwarranted restriction on the Guardian’s alternative choice of a successor that is not, in fact, substantiated by the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Mr. Taherzadeh in his attempt to further justify his position that Shoghi Effendi was unable to appoint a successor incredibly points out what he considers to have been a deficiency in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as he states that: “Since the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not indicate the course to be taken should there be no Ghusn (Branch) to succeed Shoghi Effendi, the resolution of this question did not fall within the domain of the Guardianship; it was the prerogative of the Universal House of Justice to find a solution. This is probably the main reason why Shoghi Effendi did not make any statement about his successor.”

In considering the prerogatives of the Universal House of Justice to make a decision concerning the question of the Guardianship it would be well to reiterate that Shoghi Effendi equated the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in its sacredness and immutability with Bahá’u’lláh’s Most Holy Book, the Kitáb-i-Aqdas stating that the Aqdas and the Will and Testament are “not only complementary but they mutually confirm one another and are inseparable parts of one complete unit.” The Will and Testament, therefore, is indisputably a part of the “explicit Holy Text” whose laws and provisions are immutable and destined to endure for not less than a full thousand years—the promised duration of the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh. Incredibly, however, Taherzadeh and those who think like him would have the reader believe that only 36 years after the inception of the Administrative Order formally delineated in this
divinely-conceived Holy Text—the Will and Testament—which Shoghi Effendi has “acclaimed as the inevitable offspring resulting from that mystic intercourse between Him [Bahá’u’lláh] Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose and the One Who was its vehicle and chosen recipient” ['Abdu’l-Bahá]—its major provisions pertaining to the Guardianship has already become null and void and that because “‘Abdu’l-Bahá had not indicated the course to be taken in the event that there was no Ghusn to succeed Shoghi Effendi it was the prerogative of the Universal House of Justice to find a solution.”

It is quite unbelievable that Taherzadeh would state that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not foresee the possibility that there would be no Aghsan to succeed Shoghi Effendi and for this reason had not indicated the course of action to be taken in this event. Instead of questioning a lack of foresight, as he sees it, that is found in the provisions of the Will and Testament, a Document which, as already pointed out Shoghi Effendi has described as a jointly authored Testament reflecting the expressed Will of Bahá’u’lláh as much as that of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and a part of the explicit Holy Text, one would have thought that he would have questioned and reconsidered his own interpretation of the terms of the Will and Testament which he believed restricted the choice of the Guardian’s successor to an Aghsan (a term which it has been shown previously he also has misinterpreted).

As evidence of the complete falsity of Taherzadeh’s statement concerning the prerogative of the Universal House of Justice to resolve the question of the termination of the Guardianship, the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá states that this body “enacteth all ordinances and regulations that are not to be found in the explicit Holy Text”. . . matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book. . . and bear upon daily transactions.” Therefore it is clear that the Universal House of Justice, much less the headless one that has now been established, has no authority to enact any ruling on the matter of succession. It is obvious, too, that once the Guardianship has been terminated, as he believes is now the case, there is no way to re-establish the Guardianship.

After recounting the “furious tempest” of Covenant-breaking that raged throughout the ministry of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in which every believer had been “severely tested” and the similar situation that had existed following the ascension of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in which the “provisions of His Will and Testament were violated” Taherzadeh contends that “after the passing of Shoghi Effendi, however, circumstances were different.” . . . “This is because there was no Will and Testament; Shoghi Effendi had gone and left the believers on their own.” Yet, he goes on to say that “the whole Bahá’í community over the entire surface of the globe remained loyal to the Cause and its institutions.” He does not explain, however, how such loyalty to the three highest institutions of the Bahá’í Administrative Order would be maintained on a continuing basis over the future centuries to come when the Guardianship as an essential institution occupied by a living Guardian as the Head of the Faith and the sole interpreter of Bahá’í holy Writ would no longer be at the head of the Faith and when two of the remaining highest institutions, as delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Testament, would likewise become non-existent as future Hands could only be appointed by a living
Guardian, and the Universal House of Justice would not be able to function as an infallible institution without the Guardian presiding as its “sacred head and the distinguished member for life.” Nor does he recognize the fact that such an institution minus the Guardian as its Head (as has now been established) can be anything more than an illicitly established, deformed, incomplete and fallibly functioning substitute for the divinely-ordained institution delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament.

In order to understand many of the observations and comments that follow, it is essential to quote at least a few passages from the one and only Proclamation that Shoghi Effendi issued during his ministry which at the time was not even recognized as a proclamation (and still has not been by the sans-Guardian Bahá’ís) because it had been sent in cablegram form and even though it had opened with the words: “Proclaim to National Assemblies of East and West weighty epoch-making decision of formation of first International Bahá’í Council, forerunner of supreme administrative institution . . .” [i.e. Universal House of Justice] It was in this momentous Proclamation that the Hands had overlooked in their obvious failure to re-examine the communications from Shoghi Effendi that they would have found the key leading to the discovery of the identity of Shoghi Effendi’s successor. For in this Proclamation they would have noted that, among other things he enumerated, the “present adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning national administrative institutions throughout Bahá’í World, combine to induce me to arrive at this historic decision marking most significant milestone in evolution of Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh in course of last thirty years.” [i.e. since the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá]. To dispel any notion that this International Council was a temporary body but, in fact, the Universal House of Justice, albeit in embryonic form, he stated: “Nascent Institution now created . . . would assume “further functions in course of evolution of this first embryonic International Institution, marking its development into officially recognized [International]Bahá’í Court, its transformation into duly elected body, its efflorescence into Universal House of Justice . . .” and he had significantly addressed this Proclamation to the subordinate institutions of this supreme body—the National Spiritual Assemblies—throughout the world and not to the Bahá’í world at large as he did in many of his communications. To further stress the significance of this historic decision, a decision whose tremendous significance was, strangely enough, overlooked, not only by the Hands but by the entire body of the believers during the remaining seven years of his ministry and following his passing, Shoghi Effendi went on in this cable to express in superlative terms the importance of this decision in the following words: “Hail with thankful, joyous heart at long last the constitution of International Council which history will, acclaim as the greatest event shedding lustre upon the second epoch of Formative Age of Bahá’í Dispensation potentially unsurpassed by any enterprise undertaken since inception of Administrative Order of Faith on morrow of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Ascension, ranking second only to glorious immortal events associated with Ministries of Three Central Figures of Faith . . .” In the very next cable to the
Bahá’í world that Shoghi dispatched on 2 March 1951 as a follow-up to this Proclamation he stated: “Welcome assistance of the newly-formed International Council, particularly its President, Mason Remey, and its Vice-President, Amelia Collins . . .” (emphasis added).

Teherzadeh quotes the first letter dispatched by the Hands to the Bahá’í world following their first conclave in ‘Akká in which is found the following excerpt: “Shoghi Effendi has laid the foundations of the world order of Bahá’u’lláh through the appointment of Hands of the Cause and likewise the appointment of the International Bahá’í Council, the institution destined to evolve into the Universal House of Justice.” In the paragraph that follows this quotation, however, these Hands proceed to completely ignore the establishment of the International Council and its tremendous significance, as proclaimed by Shoghi Effendi, in announcing that they “have constituted a body of nine Hands to serve at the Bahá’í World Center,” a body not called for in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to which they give the name “Custodian Hands of the Faith” and to which they arrogate authority for directing the affairs of the Faith, an authority that the Will and Testament confers solely upon the Guardian of the Faith, justifying this assumption of authority on the basis that Shoghi Effendi had referred to them in the last cablegram that he had dispatched to the Bahá’í world one month before his passing as the “Chief Stewards of Bahá’u’lláh’s embryonic World Commonwealth.” They failed to consider, however, that the Institution of the Hands of the Cause, now additionally identified by Shoghi Effendi as the Chief Stewards of Bahá’u’lláh’s World Commonwealth, would in the absence of a future Guardian to appoint future Hands, faced certain extinction as the present Hands died out, and there would no longer be Hands to fulfill the role as “Chief Stewards” of Bahá’u’lláh’s future World Commonwealth following its emergence from its embryonic state as had been obviously envisaged by Shoghi Effendi. This cablegram also provided further proof indirectly that Shoghi Effendi did not interpret the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to limit his appointment of a successor to a male descendant of Bahá’u’lláh, as contended both by the Hands at the time and Teherzadeh in this book, as it had been known not only by Shoghi Effendi but it had been common knowledge that these descendants had long since been found wanting in their loyalty to the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh.

Significantly, too, the Hands had overlooked the fact that, in this cablegram which Shoghi Effendi had addressed to the Bahá’í world one month before his passing, he had referred to the five Hands, [Rúhíyyih Khánum, Mason Remey, Leroy Ioas, Amelia Collins, Ugo Giachery] who in their capacity as members of the International Bahá’í Council, are closely associated with the rise and development of the institutions of the Faith at its World Center. . . .” Why, one may well ask, did the Hands not realize it was now the International Bahá’í Council which had the right to exercise authority over its subordinate National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world? For, had not Shoghi Effendi acclaimed the formation of this Council as “the most significant milestone in the evolution of the Administrative Order of the Faith” and stated as one of the
reasons for making his historic decision to “at long last” establish this Institution had been “the present adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning national administrative institutions.”? Therefore, the International Bahá’í Council—this “Nascent Institution”—was unquestionably the supreme legislative Institution in the Bahá’í Administrative Order, albeit in embryonic form, as, indeed, were the National Spiritual Assemblies, themselves (ultimately to be designated National Houses of Justice) and it was this International Council and not their man-made body—the so-called Custodian Hands—that the Hands had created outside the provisions of the Will and Testament that should have been permitted to exercise administrative authority over these national institutions. And this authority they had assumed in spite of the fact that the “obligations” of the Hands according to that Testament are clearly not administrative at all but are “to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things.”

Had the Hands permitted the International Bahá’í Council, as the embryonic Universal House of Justice to emerge from the inactive embryonic state in which it had been carefully maintained by Shoghi Effendi during his ministry and assume an active function as the supreme legislative institution of the Bahá’í Administrative Order the following results may have taken place:

It may have dawned on them that as the Head of the Universal House of Justice can only be the Guardian of the Faith and as Shoghi Effendi had appointed Mason Remey as the embryonic head of this embryonic Institution he was Shoghi Effendi’s appointed successor.

They would have found further confirmation of this fact in remembering the following words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “the embryo possesses from the first all perfections . . . all the powers—but they are not visible, and become so only by degrees.”

They would have further taken note of the fact that Shoghi Effendi had never activated this Council as a functioning body during the remaining seven years of his ministry, as Rúhíyyih Khánum confirms in stating that “its members received their instructions from him individually” (cited on p. 323) And additionally he had appointed Rúhíyyih Khánum as the “chosen liaison” between himself and the Council (message of 8 March 1952) thus further precluding any semblance of the assumption of the Presidency, himself.

With the foregoing in mind, they would have come to the inescapable conclusion that Mason Remey had been the embryonic second Guardian of the Faith awaiting birth, as it were, into active life upon Shoghi Effendi’s passing.

They would then have certainly marvelled at how ingeniously Shoghi Effendi had appointed his successor “in his own life-time” as required under the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in such an unanticipated manner and so contrary to their preconceived ideas that, although this appointment had actually been announced openly, it had been purposely obscured by Shoghi Effendi to
preclude the consternation and turmoil that would have certainly ensued if they had realized that Shoghi Effendi’s successor was to be a man more than twenty years his senior with the frightful, unthinkable, and unbelievable implications that were to be drawn from this fact.

Shoghi Effendi’s appointment of a successor had, therefore, remained unrecognized by all of the believers, during the concluding years of Shoghi Effendi’s ministry including even Mason Remey, himself, who alone, as the newborn Guardian of the Faith, finally came to this realization more than two years following the passing of Shoghi Effendi. It was only then, for the first time, that he perceived the connection between his appointment as President of the International Bahá’í Council and the Guardianship and realized that Shoghi Effendi had used this means to appoint him as his successor and, for this reason, only then proclaimed it to the Bahá’í world at Ridván 1960.

In the remaining pages of this review, statements made by Adib Teherzadeh will be quoted under the heading of “A.T. STATEMENT:” followed by “COMMENT” on the part of this writer.

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**A.T. STATEMENT:** “All the believers turned to the Hands of the Cause of God, and every national and local Spiritual Assembly declared their loyalty to that body.”

**COMMENT:** Keeping in mind that the Bahá’í Administrative bodies throughout the world had been informed by the Hands following their first conclave in ‘Akká that “no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him”, it is understandable that these Assemblies certainly considered that they had no other place to turn and consequently, prior to the receipt of the proclamation of the second Guardian at Ridván 1960, the above statement is true with the single notable exception of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Lucknow, India, which in a statement dispatched to Haifa, dated 18 November 1958, comprising seven remarkable paragraphs declared its unshakeable faith in the essentiality, “unique power” and the “supreme authority” of the Guardian of the Faith and “resolved that the activities of this LSA be suspended til the appointment of the next Guardian of the Faith.” And in a final paragraph reiterated: “L.S.A. Lucknow in animated suspense til the consecration of the Guardian on His vacant throne.”

However, Taherzadeh’s statement is not true following the receipt of Mason Remey’s Proclamation at Ridván 1960, a copy of which the National Spiritual Assembly of France was fortunate enough to directly receive. This writer can attest to the reaction of this National Assembly upon its receipt, having been President of that body at the time. As a result of considering the completely rational and valid statements presented in Mason Remey’s momentous Proclamation, and undertaking a careful restudy of pertinent writings, followed
by prayer and due consultation, that Assembly, ignoring an edict that had been dispatched by the so-called Custodian Hands in Haifa to all NSA’s to reject him out of hand, voted to recognize Mason Remey as Shoghi Effendi’s rightfully appointed successor. As for the other NSA’s throughout the world, it is not known whether any of them received a copy of the Proclamation directly but Mason Remey had addressed his Proclamation to the National Bahá’í Convention convened in Wilmette, Illinois at Ridván 1960 in anticipation that the newly elected National Spiritual Assembly of the United States would distribute his Proclamation (written, of course, in English) to all of the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world which would then, when necessary to do so, translate it in the language of their respective countries and make distribution in turn to their Local Spiritual Assemblies. As this Proclamation was never distributed by the NSA of the United States or by the so-called Custodian Hands to other NSA’s due to their rejection of Mason Remey as the second Guardian of the Faith, the Bahá’ís at large throughout the world, with but a very few exceptions, never became apprized of the contents of Mason Remey’s Proclamation and therefore remained in complete ignorance of the explanations provided therein that completely validated his accession to the Guardianship. This situation has largely remained the same to this day, only changing recently to the extent that those comparatively few believers residing in countries where the personal ownership and use of computers has been possible and who have established links to the internet are able to read Mason Remey’s Proclamation for the first time and gain access to extensive information about the true facts concerning the continuation of the Guardianship from “Home Pages” posted on the internet in the name of the “Orthodox Bahá’í Faith.

A.T. STATEMENT: The greatest achievement of the Hands in this period [1957 - 1963] is that they did not deviate a hair’s breath from the teachings and guidance of Shoghi Effendi” and that “they handed over the Cause of God, pure and unabulterated, to the elected body of the Universal House of Justice in 1963 . . .

COMMENT: It should be obvious to anyone who has read the material contained in the previous pages above that nothing could be further from the truth. For it is crystal clear that not only had the Hands (with the exception of one Hand) deviated from Shoghi Effendi’s writings but they actually had repudiated, in effect, everything that he had written about the essentiality of the Guardianship and the future irreplaceable role of the Guardian in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh by their shameful abandonment of this Institution. And by what stretch of the imagination, in the light of this fact, could it be said that “they handed over the Cause of God, pure and unabulterated,” permanently mutilated as it had become, sans-Guardian, with the Institution of the Hands destined to die out and the future prospect of an illicitly established headless, deformed and fallible so-called Universal House of Justice acting as a substitute Head of the Faith?
COMMENT: Of particular note in the above statement is Teherzadeh’s obviously purposeful omission of the fact that Mason Remey had been appointed by Shoghi Effendi not only as a Hand of the Cause (in the first contingent of twelve living Hands appointed on 24 December 1951) but more importantly had been appointed prior to that, in his historic Proclamation of 9 January 1951, as the President of the International Bahá’í Council—the embryonic Universal House of Justice. Although choosing to ignore the tremendous importance of Mason Remey’s appointment as the President of this Council, (not to mention its implications) he displays no appreciation whatsoever of the import of Shoghi Effendi’s Proclamation establishing an Institution acclaimed by him as “the most significant milestone in the evolution of the Administrative Order” of the Faith” as discussed earlier. It should be crystal clear, in view of the forgoing, that it is not Mason Remey, the unrecognized second Guardian of the Faith, who was the Covenant-breaker but ironically enough, Adib Taherzadeh, himself, who by his abandonment of the Guardianship has demonstrated his own lack of Faith in the indestructibility of that mighty Covenant and the immortality of “the Child of the Covenant”—the divinely-conceived Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá—the immutable provisions of which pertaining to the Guardianship, he would have the reader believe, have now become null and void. What is also apparent from his statement is that the Hands and the illicitly formed Universal House of Justice have come up with a perverted definition of Covenant-breaking so as to be able to accuse as Covenant-breakers those who steadfastly support the continuity of the Guardianship in conformity with the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, a Document which makes it very clear that loyalty to the Covenant is defined in no other terms but an undeviating loyalty to the “Center of the Cause” who is none other than the Guardian of the Cause of God. While Shoghi Effendi retained the exclusive right during his ministry of declaring a believer a Covenant-breaker the Hands of the Cause, in addition to the Guardian, will be authorized to exercise this authority in the future, at such time as may be determined to be appropriate by a future Guardian, (e.g. when the world-wide population of Bahá’ís has so greatly increased that it is impracticable for the Guardian alone to identify Covenant-breakers) as the Will and Testament states that: “so soon as they [the Hands] find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the guardian of the Cause of God” they must cast him out from the congregation of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him.”

It is therefore obvious that as the Guardianship of the Faith has come to an end for these sans-Guardian Bahá’ís, the “Center of the Cause” identified by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a term applying solely to the Guardian of the Cause of God is no longer applicable. They then have had to come up with a redefinition of the meaning of Covenant-breaking to accommodate this term to the man-made and disfigured
administrative system they have substituted for the divinely-conceived Administrative Order delineated in the Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Accordingly, they have perverted the meaning given to Covenant-breaking by applying this term to any believer who does not believe in the termination of the Guardianship and does not pledge loyalty to their so-called Universal House of Justice as a substitute Head of the Faith and Center of the Cause, a body which, although illicitly formed, headless and therefore incomplete, as previously pointed out, has also additionally arrogated unto itself the "powers," the "authority," the "rights and prerogatives" vested by the Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá solely in the Guardian of the Faith. In the light of this transgression, consider the following words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as found in His Testament: "what transgression is more grievous than attempting to destroy the Divine Edifice, breaking the Covenant, erring from the Testament, falsifying the Holy Text . . . "

A.T. STATEMENT: At that time [following the passing of Shoghi Effendi] there were some believers who thought that the Faith must always have a Guardian. This belief was partly due to the following statement by Shoghi Effendi in The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh: (Here he quotes a passage beginning on page 55 and ending on page 56 of the Fifth edition of this work printed in the U.S.A in 1947)

COMMENT: To support his position that the Guardianship has ended, Taherzadeh selects excerpts totalling not more than a page out of the more than 14 pages devoted by Shoghi Effendi in the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh to the subject of the "Administrative Order" with the obvious objective of showing that, although Shoghi Effendi's writings, even in this brief excerpt, bear eloquent testimony to the essentiality of the Guardianship, there is a statement made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that Shoghi Effendi quoted which he seems to think bolsters his contention that, if there is no son to inherit the Guardianship, the termination of this Institution had been foreseen as a possibility by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as He has stated in one of His Tablets that the hereditary principle "has been invariably upheld by the Law of God" and "In all the Divine Dispensations the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of Prophethood hath been his birthright."

If, however, the Guardian has no son or one endowed with the requisite qualifications specified in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, consider the following statements made by Shoghi Effendi found on this same page which attest to the essentiality of the Guardianship to the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh and which he certainly would not have made if he shared Taherzadeh's interpretation of the terms of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to so limit the choice of his successor as to consign the institution of the Guardianship to future certain extinction, which, indeed, Taherzadeh and those who think like him believe has already taken place only 36 years after the inception of the Administrative Order. In this same passage of the Dispensation that has been quoted by Taherzadeh one will find the following statements that attest to the essentiality of the Guardianship as stated by Shoghi Effendi:
“. . . these twin institutions [i.e. the Guardianship and Universal House of Justice] of the Administrative Order should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose.”

“Acting in conjunction with each other these two inseparable institutions administer its affairs, co-ordinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions.”

“Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh would be mutilated . . .”

“Without such an institution the integrity of the Faith would be imperilled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be endangered . . . and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn.”

A.T. STATEMENT: When it became clear that Shoghi Effendi had not appointed a successor to himself . . . some Bahá’ís . . . insisted that a second Guardian must be created. Mason Remey, an ambitious individual, became the candidate, and with constant encouragement by a few equally ambitious men he claimed in 1960 that he was the successor of Shoghi Effendi.

COMMENT: There has never been a more unjust statement made about a person than to accuse Mason Remey of being ambitious. Even if he had asked Rúhíyyih Khánum to confirm this accusation who had known him from the time of her youth she would certainly have refuted such a patently false accusation, whatever else she might have said about him. Had Mason Remey been ambitious the very last thing that he would have done is to have issued his Proclamation in 1960 at the advanced age of 86 informing the Bahá’í world of the unconventional manner in which he had inherited the Guardianship with the certain prospect that he would be immediately rejected, vilified and vehemently denounced not only by his fellow-Hands but by a majority of the believers, as well, who by this time had been thoroughly conditioned by the Hands to a sans-Guardian Faith. On the contrary, if he had been ambitious, he certainly would have desired that the organization that had been set up by the Hands following the passing of Shoghi Effendi be maintained in the status quo. He already occupied the highest and most prestigious position in the Faith having been appointed President of the International Baha’i Council, as already pointed out, even though the full significance of this appointment had not been perceived at the time, even by himself, as also previously discussed. Additionally, he had been appointed a Hand of the Cause in the first contingent of twelve Hands appointed by Shoghi Effendi in December 1951 and had, together with them, received world-wide exposure to the believers throughout the world and enjoyed from them unprecedented respect, notoriety and prestige as they had taken a prominent part in and had been appointed as Shoghi Effendi’s representatives at Intercontinental Conferences (a specific Hand being acting in this capacity at a
particular Conference) that had been organized and convened according to the plans of Shoghi Effendi in various countries of the world as a part of the Ten Year Global Crusade inaugurated in 1953. Moreover, upon the passing of Shoghi Effendi his fellow-Hands had chosen him from their number to be one of the nine so-called “Custodians of the Faith” who, according to their plans, as already discussed, they had chosen to direct the affairs of the Faith until the election of a sans-Guardian Universal House of Justice scheduled to take place at Ridván 1963.

It had been while he was a member of the body of this so-called “Custodians of the Faith” in Haifa during a period of some two and a half years that he exhorted them on an almost daily basis not to repudiate the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by abandoning the Guardianship, as recounted in detail in the Diary he maintained titled: “Daily Observations of the Bahá’í Faith Made to The Hands of the Faith in the Holy Land,” He also addressed three wonderfully written appeals to all of his fellow-Hands in which he made the same arguments against the abandonment of the Guardianship and in which he also reminded them of the fruitless verbal appeals he had made of the same nature during their yearly conclaves held in ‘Akká. Excerpts from one of these appeals attesting to this fact are quoted below:

“This appeal to the Hands of the Baha’i Faith I present here in a series of assertions treating of various aspects of my argument for the acceptance of the Guardianship of the Faith . . . The main arguments presented in this appeal I made in our second and third conclaves at Bahji but under the high emotional tension of those conferences I doubt if my thoughts got over.”

“You will remember the plea that I made before you one and all who were assembled in the second Bahji Conclave of the Hands of the Bahá’í Faith in November 1958—my plea that for the safety and for the protection of our Faith that the office of the Guardianship of our Faith be wanted by us Hands of the Faith as much as possible—for the protection of our Faith.

“This suggestion urged by me and by me alone before that conclave was turned down unitedly by the twenty four of the twenty five of us present standing firmly against considering the suggestions that I urged.”

“But rejected as my thoughts were then, nevertheless I feel that I must continue to urge this same stand for your reconsideration and present it again before our next or third Bahji Conclave of the Hands of the Faith. This conviction is so very strongly fixed within my mind and very soul that I can take no other stand although I stand thus singly and alone with the body of Hands against me.”
As they had turned a deaf ear to all of these exhortations and appeals, he knew full well the kind of reception he could expect to his Proclamation from these faithless Hands who had become by this time firmly entrenched in their new found authority and power and stubbornly convinced that the Guardianship of the Faith had forever ended. He was aware, too, of the massive opposition he would inevitably face and the rejection he could anticipate as the result of a campaign that they would surely launch against him to influence, as they in fact did, the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world, the Local Spiritual Assemblies, in turn, and the believers at large to reject his Proclamation out of hand. What conceivable ambition could he then have harbored knowing that as soon as he issued his Proclamation he could expect to face, in the few remaining years left to him, this overwhelming opposition, hostility and rejection on the part of the Hands, the administrative institutions of the Faith and most certainly the vast majority of the believers throughout the world. On the contrary, it took the greatest courage, a sublime devotion to and an unshakeable faith in the indestructible Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh and a supernal fidelity to the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to take this lonely and unaided stand in proclaiming his Guardianship of the Faith, knowing, as he did so, that he would become a victim of the combined, massive and overwhelming forces that would certainly be marshalled and relentlessly arrayed against him.

For the benefit of those new believers unfamiliar with the meritorious services to the Faith of Mason Remey for half a century, let us consider some of his unsurpassed accomplishments since his acceptance of the Faith as a young man around the turn of the century when a student at the Beaux Arts in Paris. These services included the authorship, publication and distribution to libraries throughout the world of some of the earliest books written about the Faith, teaching endeavors undertaken in many countries of the world during his numerous trips on behalf of the Faith encircling the globe, the preparation of architectural designs of Bahá’í Temples that have been constructed in several countries throughout the world, the preparation of the architectural design for the Temple to be built in the future in Tehran, the preparation of architectural designs for the imposing and magnificent International Archives building erected on Mount Carmel and the Western Pilgrim House in Haifa for the accommodation of Bahá’í pilgrims, the preparation of the architectural design, as the chosen architect by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, of the Bahá’í Temple that is to be built in the future on Mount Carmel and finally his multiple services at the World Center of the Faith after his move to Haifa, where, in addition to being the President of the International Bahá’í Council, he was invariably called upon to be Shoghi Effendi’s representative at official State functions. He was unquestionably the most outstanding living male Hand of the Cause and it was obviously for this reason that Shoghi Effendi had requested Mason Remey to move to Haifa in 1950 from his home in Washington, D.C., informed him that henceforth he was to make Haifa his permanent home and appointed him the President of the International Bahá’í Council in preparation for the future pre-eminent role he would play as Shoghi Effendi’s appointee. Certainly, no believer had been more highly
eulogized by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá than Mason Remey. The following three excerpts chosen from the Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá will alone suffice to prove the blatant falsity of Taherzadeh’s statement as to his alleged ambition and attest to his exalted character:

“Praise be unto God, that the model of the Mashrekel Azkar made by Mr. Bourgeois was approved by his honor, Mr. Remey, and selected by the Convention. His honor, Mr. Remey is, verily of perfect sincerity. He is like unto transparent water, filtered, lucid and without any impurity. He worked earnestly for several years but he did not have any personal motive. He has not attachment to anything except to the Cause of God. This is the spirit of the firm and this is the characteristic of the sincere.” (Star of the West, Vol.11, No.9)

“O thou son of the Kingdom,
Thy letter was received . . . In brief, I am greatly pleased with thy conduct and thy behavior. Praise be to God, thou are freed from these limitations and imaginations, hast no purpose save the diffusion of the divine fragrances and art ever restless and active. Thou art day and night striving to hoist the resplendent banner and to cause the shining morn to illumine all regions. . . . (Star of the West, Vol.11, No. 8)

“O thou who art rejoiced by the Divine Glad Tidings!
“. . . Verily I beseech God to make thee confirmed under all circumstances. Do not become despondent, neither be thou sad. ERE LONG, THY LORD SHALL MAKE THEE A SIGN OF GUIDANCE AMONG MANKIND.” (Caps added) (Star of the West, Vol.V, No.10)

A.T. STATEMENT: ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament extolled Shoghi Effendi as the ‘Sign of God’, the ‘Chosen Branch’, the blest and sacred bough that hath branched out from the Twin Holy Trees’, ‘the most wondrous, unique and priceless pearl that doth gleam from out the Twin surging seas’. Such a being was created by God especially to become the Guardian of the Cause, and his appointment was made by the Centre of the Covenant Himself. He was a descendent both of Bahá’u’lláh and of the family of the Báb. How could a few individuals who looked for leadership and sought power for their own selfish interests raise up a lesser man to the station of the Guardianship.

COMMENT: In the above statement Taherzadeh has chosen disconnected phrases from various paragraphs of the Will and Testament and linked them together in a single paragraph as though they were written this way in the original text of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Taherzadeh has done this in a nefarious effort to support his contention, completely at variance with the intent of the Will and Testament and everything Shoghi Effendi has written on the subject, that the Guardianship was an Institution that had its birth and death with Shoghi Effendi and that no individual other than Shoghi Effendi,
who alone had been chosen by God to occupy this Institution, would ever be endowed in the future with the necessary exalted qualifications to occupy this Institution. Taherzadeh endeavors to further support this argument by changing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s reference to Shoghi Effendi in His Will and Testament as the “sign of God” (“sign” translated with a lower case letter “s” by Shoghi Effendi in the 1944 edition of the Will) to “Sign of God” and, again, the term “the chosen branch” to “the Chosen Branch.”

Much more seriously Taherzadeh shows the same lack of understanding that the great majority of the believers also still have concerning the Will and Testament of ’Abdu’l-Bahá in failing to realize that this Testament is unique and unlike any will that has been penned before. For, it does not refer solely to Shoghi Effendi as the one whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has appointed the first Guardian of the Cause of God and provide measures for the continuity of this Institution in which successive Guardians serve as the “chosen ministers of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh but, as well, in its opening pages refers to the spiritual relationship that binds ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as the appointed “Center of the Covenant” to the “Lord of the Covenant”—Bahá’u’lláh—an appointment which, in turn, endowed Him with the authority to perpetuate this Covenant in his designation of the successive Guardians of the Faith as “the Center of the Cause” unto whom all must turn and from whom all must seek guidance.”. As a result of this lack of understanding, Taherzadeh has quoted a passage in which ’Abdu’l-Bahá actually refers to His own unique Station as “the primal branch” conferred upon Him by Bahá’u’lláh and has incorrectly interpreted this passage as applying to Shoghi Effendi. In doing this, he has failed to recall that in His “Last Tablet to America,” for example, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has likened the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh to a divinely planted Tree in referring to it as the “Tree of the Covenant.” In applying this analogy to the terms found in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, “the root of the Blessed Tree”—“this Ancient Root”—is Bahá’u’lláh, whereas the “primal branch” (i.e. the trunk) of that Tree is none other than ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Himself—the Center of the Covenant—while the first offshoot—“the twig” or the “youthful branch” —grown out from this “primal branch,” is the first Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi, while successive future branches of this “primal branch” are the future Guardians of the Faith nourished (to continue the analogy) by the divine spiritual sap (divine guidance) that flows from this divinely implanted Root through its “primal branch” or Trunk (symbolically, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá) into the successive branches—Guardians of the Faith. Therefore, it should be clear in this analogy that there is a vast difference between the “primal branch”—the single and unique trunk of that Holy Tree—“The Most Great Branch,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who has been uniquely and eternally linked with Bahá’u’lláh in the Station that has been conferred upon Him as the “Center of the Covenant,” and the twigs or youthful branches of that Tree. It is this Station of the Most Great Branch and not its offshoots that Abdu’l-Bahá understandably initially extolls in the opening passages of His Testament, a Branch which Bahá’u’lláh has stated in referring to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the Suriy-i-Ghusn (Tablet of the Branch) “hath branched from this Ancient Root” and is a “shelter for all
mankind.” It is this spiritual link that is then carried forward, between the “Most Great Branch,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and the “sacred and youthful branch,” Shoghi Effendi, whose designation and appointment by Him as the Guardian of the Cause of God appears for the first time in the eleventh page of His Testament and is further perpetuated as long as the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh endures through His provision calling for the appointment by successive future Guardians of their successors.

A.T. STATEMENT: In His Will and Testament ‘Abdu’l-Bahá laid down the conditions that Shoghi Effendi’s successor must be either the ‘first born’ of the Guardian or another Ghusn (male descendent) of Bahá’u’lláh, and that the Hands of the Cause must give their assent to his choice. How could Mason Remey fulfil these conditions?

COMMENT: The erroneous interpretation of the provisions of the Will and Testament in which it is contended that the Guardian is restricted in his choice of a successor, as stated above, has been discussed earlier. Let us, therefore turn our attention to the last part of the above statement in which it is stated that the Hands must give their assent to this choice. In the first place this is a clear misstatement as the Will and Testament does not require all of the Hands to give their assent to the Guardian’s choice of a successor and secondly this provision also does not grant authority to the nine Hands, to which this provision applies, to veto this choice. The Will and Testament states:

“The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by a majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished (i.e. by secret ballot).”

It should be understood that Shoghi Effendi did not find it appropriate or timely to require the Hands to carry out this election of nine from their own number under the terms of the Will and Testament to serve under his direction in Haifa during his ministry. Developments at the World Center had not reached the stage where he needed the assistance of this body of nine Hands and consequently this body had never come into existence during his ministry. This provision of the Will and Testament will safeguard the appointment process in the future when the Guardian wields tremendous power and influence from the malevolent machinations of anyone or a group attempting to foist upon the Bahá’í world a false pretender to the Guardianship. This provision had, therefore, not been applicable when Shoghi Effendi appointed his successor.
through the instrumentality of the creation of the embryonic Universal House of Justice and the appointment of Mason Remey as its head or President. Shoghi Effendi, while not requiring the services of these nine Hands of the Cause at the World Center during his ministry, had required certain specific assistance during the last few years of his ministry and accordingly had requested Hands of the Cause, Mason Remey, Sutherland Maxwell and Leroy Ioas to reside permanently in Haifa to assist him in the important work involving such things as the construction of the superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb, the International Archives building and his relations with the Government of Israel. In any event, this provision of the Will and Testament concerning the assent of the nine Hands to the choice of the Guardian’s successor should not be misunderstood.

The following statement from Shoghi Effendi, extracted from a letter addressed by him to the NSA of the United States, appearing on the front page of the Bahá’í News of the United States (No. 288, Feb. 1955) clarifies the passage in question:

“The statement in the Will of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá does not imply that the [nine] Hands of the Cause of God have been given the authority to overrule the Guardian. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá could not have provided for a conflict of authority in the Faith. This is obvious in view of His own words, which you will find on page 13 [p. 11 of 1944 edition] of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. ‘The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon . . . the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One,’ etc.”

A.T. STATEMENT: It is interesting to note that, in a Tablet to the Hand of the Cause Mulla ‘Ali- Akbar, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá makes this important statement: (quoted by A.T on page 387 of his book)

. . . for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is in a tempest of dangers and infinitely abhors differences of opinion . . . Praise be to God, there are no grounds for differences.

The Báb, the Exalted One, is the Morn of Truth, the splendour of Whose light shineth through all regions. He is also the Harbinger of the Most Great Light, the Abhá Luminary. The Blessed Beauty is the One promised by the sacred books of the past, the revelation of the Source of light that shone upon Mount Sinai, Whose fire glowed in the midst of the Burning Bush. We are one and all, servants of Their threshold and stand each as a lowly keeper at Their door.

My purpose is this, that ere the expiration of a thousand years, no one has the right to utter a single word, even to claim the station of Guardianship. The most Holy Book is the Book to which all peoples shall refer, and in it the Laws of God have been revealed. Laws not
mentioned in the Book should be referred to the decision of the Universal House of Justice. There will be no grounds for difference.

Beware, beware lest anyone create a rift or stir up sedition.

[underlining added]

**COMMENT:** Taherzadeh has quoted this Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in an obvious effort to discredit Mason Remey’s claim to the Guardianship for it has been quoted immediately following the question he has raised about Mason Remey being able to fulfil the necessary conditions under the terms of the Will of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as he sees them, to be appointed Shoghi Effendi’s successor. Surprisingly, in quoting this Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá which contains the phrase: “ere the expiration of a thousand years, no one has the right to utter a single word, even to claim the station of Guardianship” Taherzadeh becomes guilty of the following:

- Inferring that the term “Guardianship” found in this Tablet, written before the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the contents of His Will and Testament had been revealed, is the same Guardianship referred to in that sacred, immortal and immutable Document which, of course, it clearly is not. The Guardianship referred to in this quoted passage is one of the several stations from which the Manifestation of God makes His utterances and in this instance the term applies to Bahá’u’lláh for as Bahá’u’lláh, Himself, has revealed with reference to the Manifestations of God: “Thus it is that whatsoever be their utterance, whether it pertain to the realm of Divinity, Lordship, Prophethood, Messengership, Guardianship, Apostleship, or Servitude, all is true beyond a shadow of a doubt.” (underlining added)

- Actually placing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the position of ignoring His own injunction by illegitimately incorporating in His Will and Testament the Institution of Guardianship which, according to the interpretation Taherzadeh has placed on the above quoted Tablet, is an Institution which could be legitimately claimed only after the expiration of a thousand years. This fallacious argument used by Taherzadeh even invalidates Shoghi Effendi’s appointment as the first Guardian of the Cause of God as it took effect before the “expiration of a thousand years” and would equally apply to and invalidate appointments of all future Guardians, as well.

- Attempting to prove that because ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in this Tablet states that “Laws not mentioned in the Book should be referred to the decision of the Universal House of Justice” that this institution is able to function without the Guardian as its essential “sacred head and the distinguished member for life” as delineated in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
A.T. STATEMENT: Mason Remey’s efforts to form a following for himself failed miserably . . . The divinely-ordained instruments serving the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh have been so strengthened today that efforts of this group of Covenant-breakers have become null and void, and the power of the Covenant has driven them into oblivion.

COMMENT: The recognition of the validity of Mason Remey’s accession to the Guardianship has not been driven into oblivion. On the contrary, more and more believers in several countries of the world, as they have become informed for the first time of the true facts surrounding his inheritance of the Guardianship, have not only recognized him as the second Guardian of the Faith duly appointed by Shoghi Effendi but have accepted his appointed successor as well. As for the “divinely ordained instruments” which Taherzadeh claims have been strengthened, this is certainly not the case when the “machinery of its highest institutions. . . the supreme organs of its unfolding Order”—[i.e. the Hands of the Cause and Universal House of Justice]—whose erection “at long last” in their embryonic form, which together with the Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi had hailed in his message of 30 June 1952, have all been destroyed under their substituted man-made organization. Once again, Taherzadeh has labelled as Covenant-breakers, applying the perverted meaning he has given to this term, to those believers who have remained loyal to the Guardian of the Faith—the “Center of the Cause”—as enjoined upon all believers under the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

A.T. STATEMENT: Concerning the statement by Shoghi Effendi quoted above: ‘Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship, the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh would be mutilated’, it must be emphasized that although there are no more Guardians after Shoghi Effendi, the institution of the Guardianship will always exist. . . . The institution of the Guardianship will always serve as a pillar supporting the mighty structure of the Administrative Order, regardless of whether the Guardian is living or not. . . . Thus, far from being divorced from the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh, the institution of the Guardianship plays a preponderating role now and for ever, in conjunction with the institution of the Universal House of Justice, in guiding and directing the Bahá’í community towards its ultimate goal . . .”

COMMENT: It may be noted that Taherzadeh changes the phrase written by Shoghi Effendi: “Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship. . . ” to “Divorced from the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh.” How totally at variance are Taherzadeh’s statements with all that Shoghi Effendi has written concerning the role of the Guardian in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh and how transparently false the rationalization that Taherzadeh has employed in an effort to justify the continued existence of the Faith without a Guardian. Any future scholar who studies the Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh written by Shoghi Effendi and his other works in which he defines the essential role of the Guardian in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh will readily perceive that the Guardianship of the Faith, as
delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, is clearly an institution that must be occupied by a living Guardian and without the living Guardian—“the Center of the Cause”—the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh can never become a reality and the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh will have lost all meaning. If one reads the remaining statements of Shoghi Effendi contained in the paragraph of “The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh” from which Taherzadeh has quoted a single sentence they will note that Shoghi Effendi goes on to say that not only will the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh be mutilated without the institution of the Guardianship but that: “Without such an institution, the integrity of the Faith would be imperilled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long and uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives would be totally withdrawn.”

Moreover, without a living Guardian, as previously discussed, the source of the exclusive right of interpretation of the Writings vested solely in the Guardian of the Faith under the terms of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is permanently lost and this distinguishing feature of the Faith which sets it apart from all of the Revelations of the past and which precludes the schisms that have inevitably plagued these Faiths from varying and conflicting interpretations of the revealed Word ceases to exist. Additionally, not only has Shoghi Effendi further emphasized the unique role that the Guardian plays in the Administrative Order by designating him as “the Guardian of the Administrative Order” but it is clear from the above quoted statement of Shoghi Effendi that he has defined the essential, unique and irreplaceable role that the Guardian exercises as the presiding head of the Universal House of Justice, a role that can only be performed by a living Guardian of the Faith. In view of the foregoing, it is crystal clear that no amount of rationalization will prove otherwise and that the Guardianship is not a function taken by Shoghi Effendi to the other world upon his passing or one to be carried on in perpetuity from that world.

**A.T. STATEMENT:** [Quoted from a message that was sent to a believer by the so-called Universal House of Justice on 7 December 1969 which reads as follows:]

“Future Guardians are clearly envisaged and referred to in the Writings but there is nowhere any promise or guarantee that the line of Guardians would endure forever; on the contrary there are clear indications that the line could be broken.”

**COMMENT:** Based on what has already been written earlier the reader by this time will perceive that the above statement made by the so-called Universal House of Justice and quoted by Taherzadeh, in effect, repudiates the sacred, immutable and immortal provisions of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and contradicts everything that Shoghi Effendi has ever written about the Guardianship and its future in the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. If once the line of Guardians were to be broken as the so-called Universal House of Justice claims
has been envisaged in the Writings, there is no way in which the Guardianship can be restored as only a Guardian can appoint his successor under the terms of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá. As they claim that Shoghi Effendi, whose ministry endured for thirty-six years, was the one and only Guardian of the Faith, there has not been a line of Guardians broken. Therefore, what they really should have stated is that once the Guardianship has ended, as they believe has already taken place with the passing of the very first Guardian of the Faith, the Guardianship can never be restored.

The so-called Universal House of Justice goes on in their letter, in an attempt to justify their ludicrous contention that a break in the line of Guardians had been foreseen, by quoting a passage from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas which states that the decision rests with the Aghsan as to the disposition of “endowments dedicated to charity” and “after them with the House of Justice.” They claim that as no mention has been made of the Guardian in this passage of the Aqdas (i.e. only the Aghsan and the House of Justice have been referred to) it is “One of the most striking passages which envisage the possibility of such a break in the line of Guardians.” Of course, there was no mention of the Guardianship in the Aqdas as this Institution was first formally established by Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, a Document which Shoghi Effendi has stated is “complementary” to the Aqdas and was revealed only after His passing. Therefore, any quotation taken from the Aqdas to support the argument that it envisaged a break in the line of Guardians is clearly senseless and without any foundation whatsoever. In a further effort to support this groundless argument they have erroneously equated contributions made to Huqúqu'lláh (the Right of God) with “endowments dedicated to charity” both of which are mentioned in the Aqdas, the former being “offered through the guardian of the Cause of God” under the terms of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Bahá. In QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, an authoritative supplement to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the following question is posed to Bahá'u'lláh: “May a person in drawing up his will assign some portion of his property —beyond that which is devoted to payment of Huqúqu'lláh and the settlement of debts—to works of charity . . . ?” Bahá'u'lláh provides the following answer: “A person hath full jurisdiction over his property. If he is able to discharge the Huqúqu’lláh and is free of debt, then all that is recorded in his will, and any declaration or avowal it containeth, shall be acceptable.” Bahá'u'lláh's statement reveals the utter falsity of equating endowments dedicated to charity with contributions to Huqúqu’lláh in a nefarious effort to use this substitution to support their obviously fallacious and ridiculous argument that, as no mention had been made of the Guardian of the Faith being a recipient of charitable contributions in the passage quoted from the Aqdas, it was indicative of the possibility of a break in the line of Guardians. (emphasis added)

A.T. STATEMENT: Before Mason Remey’s preposterous claim, the wisdom of the words of Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament that the Hands of the Cause of God ‘must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor’ was not clear to many. But after
Remey’s defection it became clear that this requirement was a means for protection of the Cause of God. If there was to be a successor to Shoghi Effendi, he needed the approval of the Hands, and Mason Remey did not have this.

**COMMENT:** The utter falsity of the above argument has been pointed out previously but it would be well to reiterate that Taherzadeh, in quoting a passage from the Will and Testament, has deliberately omitted that portion of the text of the Will that stipulates that it is only the **nine Hands** “occupied in the important services in the work of the Guardian” at the World Center who have been **elected from their own number** that “must give their assent” to the Guardian’s choice of a successor and **not the entire body of Hands.** Also, as previously pointed out, Shoghi Effendi had not deemed it timely to have the Hands carry out this election during his ministry and therefore this provision of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Will and Testament will only be applicable and be implemented **during the lifetime** of a future Guardian when these nine Hands are resident in Haifa and whose assent, in any case, must of necessity, be given **prior** to his passing and not after his passing. It should be obvious that if such assent by these nine Hands was withheld following the passing of a future Guardian it would mean the end of the Guardianship. This is further evidence that the Guardian must appoint and make known his successor prior to his passing as stipulated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Will and Testament and **not by testamentary document** which was faithfully done by Shoghi Effendi but, for the reasons previously pointed out, made in such a manner that this appointment was not recognized by the Bahá’í world at the time of his passing and subsequent thereto because of preconceived ideas, misinterpretations of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and an immediate shameless loss of faith in the sacredness, immutability and immortality of that “Divine Masterpiece which the hand of the Master-builder of the world has designed for the unification and triumph of the world-wide Faith of Bahá’u’lláh.”

**A.T. STATEMENT:** In 1961 the Hands of the Cause arranged for the election of the International Bahá’í Council, the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice. .. The International Bahá’í Council, whose members had been appointed by the Guardian was now transformed into an elected body.

**COMMENT:** Taherzadeh has completely ignored the Proclamation of Shoghi Effendi of 9 January 1951 in which he had proclaimed the **“formation of the first International Bahá’í Council” as an “historic decision marking the most significant milestone in the evolution of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh”** since the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and makes only a brief passing mention above to its projected transformation into an elected body as he proceeds immediately to quote passages from a message from the Hands of the Cause calling for the election of the Universal House of Justice by National and Regional Assemblies during the first three days of Ridván, 1963 at a convention to be convened in the Holy Land. What has been ignored by Taherzadeh is that Shoghi Effendi’s message of 9 January 1951 (which had not been recognized as a Proclamation, even though its opened with the word: “Proclaim”) had identified
four stages through which the International Bahá’í Council would evolve from its embryonic stage into maturity as the Universal House of Justice. These four stages in the development of “this first embryonic International Institution” following its emergence from its embryonic state, were: “its development into officially recognized Bahá’í Court, its transformation into duly elected body, its efflorescence into Universal House of Justice, and its final fruition through creation of manifold auxiliary institutions constituting the World Administrative Center . . .”

It may be seen from the above, that the decision made by the Hands to hold the election of this body in 1961 (which incidentally Taherzadeh has incorrectly stated on page 324 of his book was the projected second stage in the development of the International Council rather than the third) preceding its evolutionary transformation into an International Bahá’í Court was considerably premature according to the plans of Shoghi Effendi as he had stated in a follow-up message of 25 April 1951 to his Proclamation of 9 January 1951 that the establishment of the “Bahá’í Court” was an “essential prelude to the institution of the Universal House of Justice”. This International Bahá’í Court would then exercise jurisdiction over six National Bahá’í Courts which would be established in six countries, specified by Shoghi Effendi to be accomplished by Ridván 1963 under the goals of the Ten year Global Crusade (1953-1963) where the application of Bahá’í Laws to adherents of the Faith in those countries would be contingent upon official governmental recognition of these National Bahá’í Courts. The transformation of this Court into its third stage as an “elected body” remained a goal to be achieved in the future while the further transformation of this body into its final stage as the Universal House of Justice necessarily remained a goal to be achieved in the more distant future. Its election as the so-called Universal House of Justice as early as 1963 has therefore not permitted the gradual essential evolutionary development of this institution in the manner projected by Shoghi Effendi and its establishment has been premature and obviously contrary to the objectives set forth by Shoghi Effendi in his Proclamation, not to mention that it was established as a headless body (i.e. without the Guardian) and therefore was not the Institution delineated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His Testament.

With reference to the second stage in the evolutionary development of the International Bahá’í Council as the International Bahá’í Court, the development of the International Council was discussed by Shoghi Effendi at the dinner table on the same evening that he alluded to the imminence of his passing, as enumerated earlier. When Shoghi Effendi mentioned the second stage of its evolution as the International Court, my Haifa notes of 30 November 1952 record that he stated:

“THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ’Í COUNCIL WILL THEN BECOME THE JUDGE (THE GUARDIAN IN AN ASIDE TO MASON AND WITH A SMILE ASKED: ‘MASON ARE YOU READY TO BECOME A JUDGE?’)”
Both the statement made by Shoghi Effendi above in the presence of Rúhíyyih Khánum and six other members of the International Bahá’í Council seated at the table that evening and the question he directed to Mason Remey, the President of that Council were of the greatest significance as they revealed the following:

- That Shoghi Effendi intended that **Mason Remey** who was the embryonic head of the embryonic Universal House of Justice would become the active head or Chief Judge of the International Bahá’í Court when the present International Council emerged from its inactive embryonic state as a functioning body, in which it was then maintained and entered the second stage of its development as an actively functioning Court.

- That as the International Bahá’í Court would inevitably be involved in passing judgement upon and determining the legality of such subsidiary laws as might be required to supplement the immutable Laws revealed by Bahá’u’lláh in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, this is a function which would, of necessity, involve interpretation, a function that is the sole prerogative of the Guardian of the Faith and the vital and essential one which he is called upon to perform as the sacred Head of the Universal House of Justice.

- That the Chief Judge of the International Bahá’í Court can be none other than the Guardian of the Faith.

- That as Shoghi Effendi had clearly indicated Mason Remey would be the Chief Judge of the International Bahá’í Court he was informing us, albeit indirectly, that Mason Remey was his appointed successor which, however, did not register in our minds as we failed, including even Mason Remey, himself, to perceive the tremendous significance of his words, a failure which Shoghi Effendi had certainly foreseen and expected, because of our erroneously held belief, of which he was certainly aware, that his successor would be named in a testamentary document.

There can be no more fitting conclusion to this critique than to quote the following excerpt from Shoghi Effendi’s writings found in *The Dispensation of Bahá’u’lláh* in which he has given us such a magnificent description of the divine origin of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and in which he has emphasized so clearly the joint Authorship of this divinely-conceived, immortal and immutable Document whose provisions are to be considered a part of the explicit Holy Text and therefore, similarly to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, destined to endure and be applicable for no less than a full thousand years:

“The creative energies released by the Law of Bahá’u’lláh, permeating and evolving within the mind of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, have, by their very impact and close interaction, given birth to an Instrument which may be viewed as the Charter of the New World Order which is at once the glory and promise of this most great Dispensation. The Will may thus
be acclaimed as the inevitable offspring resulting from that mystic intercourse between Him Who communicated the generating influence of His divine Purpose [Bahá’u’Alláh] and the One Who was its chosen recipient [‘Abdu’l-Bahá]. Being the Child of the Covenant—the Heir of both the Originator and the Interpreter of the Law of God—The Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá can no more be divorced from Him Who supplied the original and motivating impulse than from the One Who ultimately conceived it.”

How is it possible for anyone who is a faithful believer in the Revelation of Bahá’u’Alláh, who claims to believe in the indestructibility of His mighty and resistless Covenant and who professes fidelity to both the Center of His Covenant and to the Guardianship as the “Center of the Cause” be so lacking in faith since the passing of Shoghi Effendi as to believe that the divinely-conceived “Child of the Covenant” has already died an early death, that the glorious “Charter of the New World Order” has become a dead letter and that “the Administrative Order which the master-hand of its perfect Architect has fashioned” in all of its perfection and glory and founded on “God’s immutable Purpose for mankind in this day” will now never become a reality?

Joel Bray Marangella
Third Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith
21 March, 1998

Note: Bold type has been used throughout for emphasis.