

A STATEMENT BY THE SECOND GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH

In several of my writings I mention a momentary vision, that I had about the year 105 of the Bahá'í Era, in which I saw myself as the Second Guardian of the Faith. At the time, this seemed to me to be an absurdity of my imagination. But after the Beloved Guardian called me to Haifa made me President of the Bahá'í International Council, and made his home in the Holy Land to be my home – these factors, together with other matters that, beyond a doubt in my mind, were preparing me at that time for service I was to do at some future date, I found myself thinking of that momentary vision I had had. However, these thoughts came and went from me. At times I would seemingly forget all about my vision; then it would come to my mind again. These thoughts were vague and fleeting.

Such was my condition of mind – even for some time after the departure of the Beloved guardian and all during my years in his house in the Holy Land. As these years accumulated, my future in the Faith was anything but clear to me. In fact, I did not think much about it. I was busy with the then present-day matters of the Cause.

Such was my state of mind when the Hands of the Faith met In the First BAHJÍ Conclave shortly following Shoghi Effendi's passing. While at that time I thought that I might become the Guardian of the Faith in some way or another, I did not know how. It was all more or less vague, hazy and in definite in my thoughts, and so I succumbed, as did others. to the proposition of the Persian Hands of the Cause and few others, who all together formed a ruling and a united majority. So I accepted the dictum of this unity and signed the Proclamation to the Bahá'í world along with all of the other Hands.

In other words, while I was semi-conscious to what was going on, I was more or less asleep mentally and spiritually. There just did not seem to be any clear solution to the problem before us. All was more or less confused. Thus, the present regime of the Custodian Hands of the Faith came into working order, accepted by all of us, myself included.

But before long my mind began to work, and I saw that those Hands who did not want a renewal of Guardianship were leading us afar and away from the way of the Will and Testament; but, as I then thought to make things pleasant and happy in Haifa, I said nothing. To myself, however, I thought a great deal.

While I was thus just beginning to awaken to the radical departure that Bahá'í affairs were taking in opposition to the Will and Testament, the time came for the Second Bahjí Conclave of the Hands. That was in November, 1958. It was at this conclave that I found myself thoroughly awakened to the violation of the

Hands of the Faith in their NOT WANTING the Guardianship. In this second conclave, the very word "Guardianship" was becoming taboo. It was hinted at when letters and a telegraphic dispatch, bearing hopes for a Second Guardian, were directed to the conclave from the friends in Germany; but while a few of us read these pleas from Germany, asking that the hope for a Guardian of the Faith not be abandoned, none of these communications was read before the conclave. Nor were these communications discussed. They were merely mentioned by some, and only then on the side.

But during these sessions I, myself, was beginning to awaken from the state of Bahá'í apathy that had until then quite dominated me. I began to think that someone ought to make the stand that these Hands of the Faith should at least appear to want a Guardian, even though they did not know how they were going to get one. The underlying fact (never mentioned in so many words, but then quite clear to me) was that as shown in their attitudes, these Hands actually did not want the Guardianship to continue.

Between these first and second Bahá'í conclaves, a few people in America had begun to question the Hands' attitude of no more Guardianship wanted.

Rúhiyyih Khánum, in a large public Bahá'í gathering at Kampala in Africa, had stated definitely that the friends should abandon all hope of any continuation of the Guardianship. And in America, led by Horace Holley, a Manifesto from Chicago was issued that was signed by Holley, Paul Haney, and Mrs. True, entitled "A New Bahá'í Era". It spoke of the Faith, Sans Guardian, and explained that the Guardianship was a closed subject.

This Chicago Manifesto stirred up a good deal of discussion amongst the Hands in the Holy Land, who, although thoroughly in sympathy with the substance of this Manifesto (this they specifically wrote to Holley), called him down for thus making a stand that publicly proclaimed the Sans Guardian doctrine. Thus were these Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land playing a double-faced game; for they, by avoiding the subject were thus conditioning the believers, if it were possible, to forget about the Guardianship. Thus did they intend to reinforce themselves in their own leadership of the Faith and in their plans for creating a House of Justice in 1963 – a House they claimed would be infallible Sans Guardian.

In order to put over onto the Bahá'í world the plans of these Custodian Hands of the Faith, they had decided in the first conclave that all of their actions should be kept a secret from the proletariat of the Cause. In the Chicago Manifesto, those American Hands who signed it broke the pact of secrecy when they consulted with the N.S.A. of the United States. All nine members of this N.S.A. approved; and together with the three American Hands, they signed the Manifesto.

Thoughts on all of these matters were surging through my mind during this second conclave and stirring me greatly. But even then, because of the vague thought of myself as a possible Guardian of the Faith, I felt that if such were ever to be, then someone other than I should, in this conclave, make the stand that the hope for the continuation of the Guardianship should not be abandoned. Reluctant to make this stand myself, I felt that the Hands should at least hold this door open and not close it as they were doing. But I felt that someone other than I should do this, because, as it were, I would be considered as an interested party. Reasoning thus, I waited, hoping that some other person would take this stand. Thus, in this conflict of thoughts, I sat silent most of the time in the conclave. I remained silent up until the last session when I arose, took the floor, and told the members of the conclave that they were violating the Will and Testament of the Master 'Abdu'l-Bahá in their attitude of not wanting a continuation of the Guardianship.

My stand created a stir of indignation in the conclave. I was immediately silenced by several voices under the pretext that I was out of parliamentary order in bringing up a subject that had already been acted upon by the assemblage and was a closed issue. So that was that, and the conclave closed.

However, in this moment so charged with emotion, I was asked why I took this stand in defence of the Guardianship against the united opinion of the conclave. To this my reply was that some one of us Hands should stand for the Administration with the Guardianship; and, as there was no one other to do it, I must alone (against all others) make this stand.

At that time I was then the Guardian of the Faith, as I had so been since the death of Shoghi Effendi; but since I was still asleep spiritually, I was not conscious of my actual status of protector of the Faith as the Guardian. Yet, unconsciously, I was thus moved to stand up against this violation of the Will and Testament; and, although I was not mentally conscious of my status as Guardian of the Faith, somehow or other I felt that I must stand up alone in that conclave and protect the Faith by defending the Guardianship. It was much over a year later before I realized that at that very time I actually was standing guard over the Cause – and standing quite single and alone — against all of the other Hands of the Faith united against me. But at that moment, I had no idea about the why of my doing as I did; I arose only to protect the Faith.

In the conferences of the Custodian Hands in Haifa following this Second BAHJÍ Conclave, I told the Hands repeatedly that they were violating the Will and Testament. Together with them I had made the agreement that strict secrecy be maintained as to all that passed between these Custodians. It had also been agreed that we could and should all speak out openly in our conferences, and this I always did, speaking most frankly. But as I stood alone, no one paid any attention to me. Thus, matters went along for a year until I

refused to sign my name any longer as being "In the Service of the Beloved Guardian of the Faith" (Shoghi Effendi). My contention in refusing to sign was that the Guardianship of the Faith is a function of this world and that with Shoghi Effendi in the Abhá Kingdom, he was no longer our Guardian in the flesh to be obeyed; consequently, we were no longer in his service. Rather, we should then be in the service of the Second Guardian of the Faith. But even then I did not realize that I, Mason Remey, was then the Second Guardian of the Faith.

My refusal to sign the message of the Hands from the Third Bahí Conclave to the Bahá'í world, in November 1959, precipitated matters and eliminated me from the nine Custodians. Therefore, shortly after this, I left Haifa for Washington, where I am now in voluntary exile from my home in Haifa – the home that, publicly and before all of the Bahá'í community in the Holy Land, Shoghi Effendi ordained for me on this earth.

The Custodians did not want me to leave Haifa. They evidently feared that I might not keep their pact of secrecy and that I might let the people in America know what they were up to, for at that time there were many in America who still hoped for a Guardian to lead the Faith. But I chose to leave Haifa, and in the end this was accepted by the Hands.

I left for America via Italy, all under apparently pleasant conditions, I assuring the Hands that I could keep their secrets and not tell any of the believers what they were doing. With me to America I took all of my notes and records of the happenings amongst the Bahá'ís in the Holy Land during my residence there. Then, in America, away from the Custodian Hands in the Holy Land (and even before that in Italy), I started formulating a written argument to the Custodian Hands of the Faith. This argument I prepared in "An Appeal to the Hands of the Faith", "Another Appeal to the Hands of the Faith", and a "Last Appeal to the Hands of the Faith".

These lengthy documents were bound in book form and sent by me to the Hands in Haifa. When I started in upon this last effort to awaken the Hands to their violation, my thoughts, that before this had been disordered, gradually began to arrange themselves in a logical sequence in my mind; and step by step, one thought opened up the way for a more comprehensive thought. Slowly, little by little, one thought led to another until I found myself considering the Beloved Guardian's appointment of me as the President of the International Bahá'í Council (a subject that had never even been mentioned in any of the conclaves or conferences of the Hands of the Faith). Finally, little by little, it was born into my consciousness that I, myself, Mason Remey, was actually then the protector of and the Guardian of the Faith and that I had been in this supreme station of protector –that is, I had been the Guardian of the Faith – ever since the death of the First Guardian.

Thus at last, Ridván 117 B.E., all was clear to me. The great danger to the Cause from the violating Hands of the Faith made it necessary for me to come out with the Proclamation of my Guardianship – first to the Custodian Hands in Haifa then before the Ridván Convention in America. This had to be done in order to save the Faith from the utter destruction that was being perpetrated by the erring violating Hands of the Faith.

I was indeed a very long time in coming to the realisation of mine own command of this entire situation of the Faith. But during this time, while my mind was not at all alert to these conditions in the Cause, I was arising instinctively to defend and to uphold the Guardianship of the Faith. As people read over my notes of my thoughts and the mention of events transpiring in Haifa they will see and understand the complexity of thought that was gradually being straightened out in my mind. At times I was away, far away, from the solution of many of the problems of the Faith, even considering at one time that the Hands of the Faith, in order to protect the Cause, might choose and install a Guardian. Other such ideas were pondered; but out from this maze of thought, I gradually realized that the Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi had actually appointed me the Second Guardian of the Faith and had so announced this to all the world. Until that time, no one, not even I, myself, had realized this. It was thus, in this way, and little by little, that I arrived, until now – as the acknowledged Guardian of the Faith (acknowledged by the few who faithfully follow the admonitions of the Will and Testament, as against the many who are misled by the erring Hands who have renounced the Guardianship) – I am clear upon any and all matters as they come up for me to take action in leading the Faith on to its destined triumph over the powers of mankind and bringing victory to the Kingdom of God upon Earth.

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