

III. The Supporting Role of the Auxiliary Board Members and Their Assistants

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi

Original English



III. The Supporting Role of the Auxiliary Board Members and Their Assistants

— 10 —

The National Spiritual Assemblies in consultation with the Counsellors should avail themselves of the services of the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, who, together “...with the travelling teachers selected by the Assembly or its Teaching Committees, should be continuously encouraged to conduct deepening courses ... and to make regular visits to Local Spiritual Assemblies...”

The visitors, whether Auxiliary Board members, their assistants or travelling teachers “...should meet on such occasions not only with the Local Assembly but, of course, with the local community members, collectively at general meetings and even, if necessary, individually in their homes.”

The subjects to be discussed at such meetings with the Local Assembly and the friends should include among others the following points:

1. the extent of the spread and stature of the Faith today;
2. the importance of the daily obligatory prayers (at least the short prayer);
3. the need to educate Bahá'í children in the Teachings of the Faith and encourage them to memorize some of the prayers;
4. the stimulation of youth to participate in community life by giving talks, etc. and having their own activities, if possible;
5. the necessity to abide by the laws of marriage, namely, the need to have a Bahá'í ceremony, to obtain the consent of parents, to observe monogamy; faithfulness after marriage; likewise the importance of abstinence from all intoxicating drinks and drugs;
6. the local Fund and the need for the friends to understand that the voluntary act of contributing to the Fund is both a privilege and a spiritual obligation. There should also be discussion of various methods that could be followed by the friends to facilitate their



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

contributions and the ways open to the Local Assembly to utilize its local Fund to serve the interests of its community and the Cause;

7. the importance of the Nineteen Day Feast and the fact that it should be a joyful occasion and rallying point of the entire community;

8. the manner of election with as many workshops as required, including teaching of simple methods of balloting for illiterates, such as having one central home as the place for balloting and arranging for one literate person, if only a child, to be present at that home during the whole day, if necessary;

9. last but not least, the all-important teaching work, both in the locality and its neighbouring centres, as well as the need to continuously deepen the friends in the essentials of the Faith. The friends should be made to realize that in teaching the Faith to others they should not only aim at assisting the seeking soul to join the Faith, but also at making him a teacher of the Faith and its active supporter.

“All the above points should, of course, be stressed within the framework of the importance of the Local Spiritual Assembly, which should be encouraged to vigorously direct its attention to these vital functions and become the very heart of the community life of its own locality, even if its meetings should become burdened with the problems of the community. The local friends should understand the importance of the law of consultation and realize that it is to the Local Spiritual Assembly that they should turn, abide by its decisions, support its projects, co-operate whole-heartedly with it in its task to promote the interests of the Cause, and seek its advice and guidance in the solution of personal problems and the adjudication of disputes, should any arise amongst the members of the community.”

The Universal House of Justice, from a letter 2 February 1966 to all National Spiritual Assemblies Engaged in Mass Teaching Work

— 11 —

“It is at this local level of Bahá'í community life, the very foundation of the administrative structure of the Faith, that we so often find lack of adequate strength and efficiency. It is at this same level that our beloved Guardian urged Auxiliary Board Members to establish contact with Local Spiritual Assemblies, groups, isolated centres and the individual believers, and through periodic and systematic visits to localities as well as by correspondence help in promoting the interests of the Plan, assist in the efficient and prompt execution of the goals, watch over the security of the Faith, stimulate and strengthen the teaching and pioneer work, impress upon the friends the importance of individual effort, initiative and sacrifice, and encourage them to participate in Bahá'í activities and be unified under all circumstances.”

The Universal House of Justice, from a letter 17 November 1971 to the Continental Boards of Counsellors

The aims of the Auxiliary Board members and their assistants, stated previously in relation to the services of the assistants, "...should be to activate and encourage Local Spiritual Assemblies, to call the attention of Local Spiritual Assembly members to the importance of holding regular meetings, to encourage local communities to meet for the Nineteen Day Feasts and Holy Days, to help deepen their fellow-believers' understanding of the Teachings,..."

The Universal House of Justice, from a letter 7 October 1973 to the Bahá'ís of the World

"We are confident that the institution of the Boards of Counsellors will lend its vital support and, through the Counsellors' own contacts with the friends, through their Auxiliary Boards and their assistants, will nourish the roots of each local community, enrich and cultivate the soil of knowledge of the teachings and irrigate it with the living waters of love for Bahá'u'lláh. Thus will the saplings grow into mighty trees, and the trees bear their golden fruit."

The Universal House of Justice, from a letter 25 May 1975 to all National Spiritual Assemblies

