

Birmingham

#1002

LSV
2/19/44

change of address

Myra

1315 South 29th Street
Birmingham 5, Alabama
February 14, 1944

Dear Mr. Holley:

On going through my secretarial notebook I find that I have never reported our new colored believer, Mr. Robert Durr. He is the editor of a colored newspaper here in Birmingham. At our last Feast he was elected to the Assembly to replace Mrs. Myra Brayant who asked to be released.

→ You will note that my address has again been changed. Expect that I will be here for quite some time, at least I hope so! Moving twice in two weeks is almost too much for me. There was a cat at the last address and they give me asthma so I had to move. Was fortunate to find this lovely place and it is only half a block from Martha Fettig and Gertrude Gewertz.

Sincerely and faithfully,

Nina K. Howard
(Miss) Nina K. Howard
Secretary

Birmingham

1182

*LSL
3/25/44*

1315 South 29th Street
Birmingham, 5, Alabama
March 12, 1944

Dear Mr. Holley:

At our last Assembly meeting we welcomed two new members into the Community. Their names and addresses are given below:

Mrs. Robert Durr - 30 Twelfth Avenue, North
Mrs. J. H. Lohner - 1027 Eighth Court, South

Sincerely and faithfully,

Nina K. Howard
Nina K. Howard
Secretary

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS
OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.

We, the undersigned Trustees of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Birmingham, Alabama, all being of full age and citizens of the United States of America, and residents of the State of Alabama, desiring to form a corporation pursuant to the laws of Alabama providing for the incorporation of Churches and Societies contained in Article 3, of Chapter 7, Sections 124 to 130, inclusive, of Title 10, of the Code of Alabama of 1940, do hereby make and sign this Certificate and certify as follows:

FIRST: The purpose and objects for which the corporation is formed is to administer the affairs of the Baha'i Religion, for the benefit of the Baha'is of the City of Birmingham, Alabama, in accordance with the religious teachings and administrative principles of this Faith.

SECOND: The name of the corporation is to be
"THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA."

THIRD: The territory in which its activities are principally to be conducted is the City of Birmingham [and vicinity], and the county in which the corporation is to exercise its functions is Jefferson County, in the State of Alabama.

FOURTH: The number of trustees is to be nine.

FIFTH: The names and places of residence of the trustees elected to serve until the first annual meeting, which is to be held on the 21st day of April, 1945, are as follows:

NAME	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
Martha Fettig	2930 Pawnee Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama.
Verna A. Inglis	3431 Cliff Road, Birmingham, Alabama.
Anne E. Lohner	1027 Eighth Court, South, Birmingham, Alabama
Nina Howard	1315 South 29th Street, Birmingham, Alabama.
Noble Johnson	2117 Fifth Avenue, North, Birmingham, Alabama.
Robert Durr	30 Twelfth Avenue, North, Birmingham, Alabama.
W. R. Brown	47 Ninth Avenue, North, Birmingham, Alabama.
Rose Brown	47 Ninth Avenue, North, Birmingham, Alabama.
John Inglis	3431 Cliff Road, Birmingham, Alabama.

SIXTH: The time for holding its annual meeting is to be on the twenty-first day of April in each year.

SEVENTH: The corporation shall have the power to acquire and hold real property and personal property, to receive property by gift, will or devise, and hold the same in conformity with all lawful conditions, and to exercise such other powers as are incident to private corporations.

EIGHTH: The members of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the City of Birmingham, Alabama, desiring to become

incorporated, at a meeting held on the day of
1944, adopted a resolution signifying such intention, and elected
the nine persons hereinbefore named as trustees to serve until
the next annual meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, We as Trustees of The Spiritual As-
sembly of the Baha'is of Birmingham, Alabama, have made and signed
this certificate, on this the day of 1944.

TRUSTEES.

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THE BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North — Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

February 19, 1945

National Spiritual Assembly of the
Bahais of the United States & Canada
Wilmette, Illinois

Bahai Friends:

For quite some time I have been debating in my mind if I should bring to your attention a matter which I think has merit. At last I decided I should after having consulted with my wife over the matter.

It is this--for fifteen years I have been Editor and Publisher of the Birmingham Weekly Review which is known in this section as a Negro newspaper.

The Negro Press in America is celebrating its 118 Anniversary this week. It seems to me that the way to go forward in the field of journalism is by going forward.

The Negro newspaper exist in the United States because of prejudice, discrimination and exploitation. No Negro Journalist no matter how well trained is given an opportunity to serve and be served on the basis of equitable employment on so-called white newspapers, therefore it seems to me now is the time for my newspaper to begin to become a newspaper and cease being a Negro newspaper and develop a setup which would employ capable people regardless of race or color in all departments--a newspaper whose features and editorials would reflect the thinking of folk of all races and nations with an international outlook. And without saying so in so many words until the time is ripe be guided in its editorial viewpoint by the teachings of the Cause.

I can think of no step which might be taken that would be more meaningful in this our Second Century effort. Along the line of achieving unity, promoting international understanding and goodwill with the Most Great Peace as ultimate goal.

This could be done if each real Bahai in the

THE BIRMINGHAM

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"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North — Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

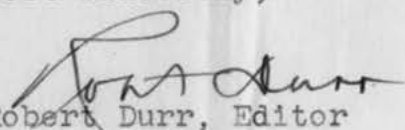
Bahai Friends

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February 19, 1945

West were advised of my desire in this connection coupled with an expression from the National Spiritual Assembly suggesting that each adult Bahai give me a one or two year subscription for the Weekly Review. I would use same to develop in an international newspaper out of my present racial news publication.

Most sincerely,


Robert Durr, Editor

RD/plc

P. S. Subscription rate \$3⁰⁰/₊₊ per year

As a token of our direct interest in your plan and our best wishes for your success, the National Assembly enters a subscription in the name of the Assembly itself, and the members will be very much interested in reading your paper.

March 17, 1945.

Mr. Robert Durr, Editor,
Weekly Review,
1622 Fourth Avenue, N.,
Birmingham, 3, Alabama.

Dear Mr. Durr:

The correspondence we had has been turned over to the National Spiritual Assembly and the members have recorded their gratification of your intention to serve the Baha'i Faith by developing a newspaper free from all racial bias or limitation.

It is an intention which the National Assembly has the utmost respect for and sympathy. We share with you the thought that the great cause of race unity can well be served at this time by the development of a newspaper along such lines.

We ask you now to realize that the National Assembly itself serves the Cause under certain definite limitations of authority and power. However, ever since the institutions described in the Master's Will and Testament were first developed, the National Assembly has refrained from calling upon the body of the believers to contribute to any activity of an individual believer. Every Baha'i who joins our community can do so knowing that his only obligation financially speaking is to the local and national Baha'i Fund and that any other expenses he may incur in connection with the Cause are of his own voluntary choice.

We feel also that particular attention must be given to Shoghi Effendi's statement concerning Baha'i News. This statement made many years ago we feel indicates that the news letter is to develop into a great and representative Baha'i newspaper and in its development it will naturally at all times be entirely free of racial bias and employ the services of representatives of all races represented in the Baha'i community.

We think you will be very much interested in these words of the Guardian, and we quote them as follows: "The News Letter which you have lately initiated fulfills a very vital function and has been started admirably well. I would urge you to enlarge its scope, as much as your resources permit, that in time it may devote a special section to every phase of your activities, administrative, devotional, humanitarian, financial, educational and otherwise."...."It should be made as representative as possible, should be replete with news, up-to-date in its information, and should arouse the keenest interest among believers and admirers alike in every corner of the globe. I cherish great hopes for its immediate future, and I trust you will devote your special attention to its development, and by devising well-conceived and worldwide measures transform this News Letter into what I hope will become the foremost Baha'i Journal of the world."

As a token of our direct interest in your plan and our best wishes for your success, the National Assembly enters a subscription in the name of the Assembly itself, and the members will be very much interested in reading your paper.

With all good wishes,

Mr. Robert Durr, Editor,
Faithfully yours,
1522 Fourth Avenue, N.E.,
Birmingham, 3, Alabama.

Secretary
Durr, Mr. Robert

The correspondence we had has been turned over to the National Spiritual Assembly and the members have recorded their gratification of your intention to serve the Bahá'í Faith by developing a newspaper free from all racial bias or limitation.

It is an intention which the National Assembly has the utmost respect for and sympathy. We share with you the thought that the great cause of race unity can well be served at this time by the development of a newspaper along such lines.

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We feel also that particular attention must be given to Shoghi Effendi's statement concerning Bahá'í News. This statement made many years ago we feel indicates that the new paper is to develop into a great and representative Bahá'í newspaper and in its development it will naturally at all times be entirely free of racial bias and employ the services of representatives of all races represented in the Bahá'í community.

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THE BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE

ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North — Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

May 6, 1945

Dear Mr. Haley:

It was awfully nice of you to stop your work long enough to have me meet members of the NSB during my recent visit in Chicago. The tea was just about the best I have ever had. Whoever made it was or is an expert. May I thank you for I consider it an honor to have the opportunity to meet and chat briefly with you and the others present.

I recently had a very interesting letter from the Guardian and in it he suggested that I talk with the Publishing Committee in regards to some ideas which I have on the matter of doing some personal contact work with editors of so-called

THE BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE!

ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

1622 Fourth Avenue, North — Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

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Negro newspapers and especially the editors, also on distribution of material. While I think my ideas might appear immature and worthless, I thought to talk with you on some while in that area and perhaps later with the committee under whose jurisdiction the phase of the work comes, but there will be another time. And perhaps I should wait another year or so.

Things are moving along well with the group here.

With every good wish, Sam

Most sincerely
Lunt Dunn

Alphabetical



May 11, 1945.

C
O
P
Y

Mr. Robert Durr,
The Birmingham Weekly Review,
1622 Fourth Avenue, North,
Birmingham, 3, Alabama.

Dear Mr. Durr:

The members of the National Spiritual Assembly were very glad indeed to meet you and have even the brief opportunity for conversation.

We know that you will have many important opportunities to serve the Cause and we want you to feel that all possible encouragement and cooperation will always be extended.

As a little souvenir of the visit we are sending you a copy of the Baha'i Centenary book with our sincere compliments.

With every good wish,

Faithfully yours,

Secretary

THE BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE | ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

"COVERS ALABAMA LIKE THE DEW"

505 17th Street, North — Phone 3-1973

BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

July 15, 1947

Mr. Harlan Ober
53 Conant Street
Beverly, Massachusetts

Dear Bahai Brother:

I hope you have gotten rid of your cold by this time.

You may be very sure that whatever you do, if anything, will facilitate the acceleration and prosecution of a long range program. And regardless to what has been your experience with others upon whose requests for assistance you have looked with favor, I assure you that you will be repaid. And I could not spoil such a trust if vested in me. In the event of death, my wife would see to the paying of the debt.

Pray and meditate over the matter. Baha'u'llah will guide you in making the right decision. If it is that you should not look with favor upon my request, I will regard it as the better thing; even though I know you can not possibly know how far reaching assistance in helping me get my house in order, as it were, would be. All Negroes who aspire to do the impossible in this section seek real aid outside the area. It was true with Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver.

A lot of people in this city and state---both white and black, young and old---look to me to lead the way in doing what ought be done as a leader, to the end that we may have improved human relations.

I am Chairman of the Negro Advisory Council to the Birmingham and Jefferson County Community Chest. I was re-elected to this position this year for the eighth consecutive year by a unanimous vote of a cross section representation of Negro life in this district, with its 250,000 Negro population.

The Governor of the State had me form a commission early this year and work out a program for the State, bearing in all that has to do with Negro welfare. He sent me to Philadelphia recently as the State's representative, and at the States expense.

I won one of the Wendell L. Willkie Awards for Negro journalism

Mr. Ober

-2-

July 15, 1947

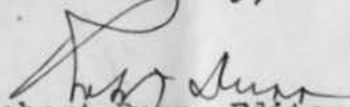
in 1946. The award was received at the hands of the President of the United States, at the National Press Club in Washington on March 1, 1947.

I merely point out these things to show that I am so situated in the hearts of people that I can do more good than perhaps any other member of my race in this area, if I can surmount this crisis.

Being able to secure what I want will insure my being able to serve more effectively. If I were in your position and you were in mine, I would do all I could for you in His Name.

God bless you and keep you.

Most sincerely,


Robert Durr, Editor

bw

P.S. Pray for me.

April 7, 1948

Mrs. Virginia Godfries
164 Broad St.
Red Bank, N. J.

Dear Bahai Friend:

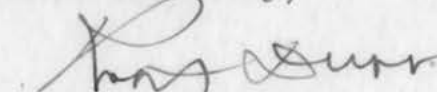
For fifteen years, I have operated a weekly newspaper in this city. Being a Negro, a newspaper publisher and a Bahai makes me susceptible to great pressure by reactionaries, especially in this hour when so much ado is being made in the deep South over the President's Civil Rights Committee's report.

My effort to secure a loan of around \$4,000 for improvements has so far met with failure for the reasons stated, and because I can not bring myself to become the tool of reactionary racists who fear even a weekly newspaper not controlled by them.

My object in writing you is to say that I have been thinking of settling some place in New Jersey, because I have a large family and I thought educational opportunities might be good there, and to say that I should like to know if there is, in your opinion, a community in the state in which I might engage in a profitable newspaper venture.

I am a member of the Birmingham Bahai Community, having served as Vice-Chairman of the LSA for the past two years. At present, I am acting Chairman, also a member of the Alabama Tennessee Regional Teaching Committee.

Most sincerely,



Robert Durr

bw

Robert Durr, Editor
Birmingham Weekly Review
1602 - 6th Ave., N.
Birmingham, Ala.

BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE! ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

1602, 6th Avenue No. — Phone 3-1973
BIRMINGHAM 3, ALABAMA

July 8, 1948

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Mr. Horce Holey, Secretary
National Spiritual Assembly Bahai's
of the United States of America
Wilmette, Illinois

Dear Baha'i Brother:

I believe in this business of (1) getting facts, (2) interpreting same and (3) trying to get done what ought be done in spiritual, social and allied areas. And I am convinced that we have to begin with people on the level where we find them.

Please believe me when I say that I do not want to appear presumptuous or officious in this letter. I fully recognize that as much as I believe, ^{as is so} it is quite possible for me to be entirely wrong, so let us say that in this instance, I am thinking out loud.

If I remember correctly, the Guardian says this is the time to go out for the masses -- time to go out for all the people and build in their hearts the Cause of Baha'u'llah. It follows that he must be convinced that if this is courageously and audaciously done, all the necessary things will be added.

I think it is time for the ~~NSA~~ to be thinking in terms of making plans to acquire the facts dealing with the physical needs of the poor of all groups in the United States, engaging in interpreting these facts, presenting them to key people and trying to get done what ought be done as a means of bringing all men to see the beauty of Baha'u'llah in us and creating a ground-swell of wanting on the part of people to surrender themselves in His service in spirit and deed.

Page Two
Mr. Holey
July 8, 1948

A Catholic sister, representative of a group of five who came to Birmingham ten years ago without money, sent me an invitation a couple of weeks ago to attend the ground breaking exercises of a high school and a 200-bed hospital. I attended the hospital exercises, talked with Priests and poor who had been helped in sickness and need by these people, ~~whom~~ assistance was not to their knowledge available elsewhere. And I recalled that the Catholic church is making great gains among Negro and white people in the South, because it does some good. On this basis, they are getting youth.

Could not pioneers make their missions ~~two~~ fold in the future (1) give the cause and (2) try to get done what ought be done for the sick, aged, oppressed, ignorant and otherwise handicapped.

Of course, we can not ask others to assist us ^{financially} in supporting the promulgation of the Cause in the strict sense of the word, but why could we not set up some sort of social service setup to assist in getting for others, in need, the things they do not have the capacity to get for themselves?

Mr. Ober took me up to see Mount Salvat last fall while I was in that area attending the Annual Conference of the National Urban League. And I came away with the feeling that, as a part of the Green Arce Project or on that mountain, we should have a boarding elementary and high school staffed with instructors who are Baha'is.

If we fail to win youth or fail in our children, we fail in everything. And we can get done what we want to get done. People are drawn to things and places where there is action! action! action! on the level of their needs.

You are a busy man with great responsibilities insofar as the administration of the Cause is concern, and I do not want to add one whit to your burden - so just think on these things. You need not bother to comment by letter.

When I am in that section, I will try to get an appointment with you and talk further on the ~~se~~ questions raised in this letter.

Most sincerely,


Robert Durr

ols

P.S. Am using an interne typist today, hence
the corrections

30, 12th Ave., No.
Birmingham, Ala.
Dec. 1, 1952

Mr. Horace Holley, Secty.
National Spiritual Assembly
Bahais of the United States
Wilmette, Illinois

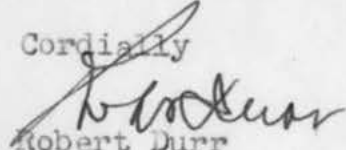
Dear Bahai Friend:

The Guardian has urged and is praying that the Almighty may guide me in finding a way to attend the African National Bahai meet in Kampala, Uganda, Africa.

Will you advise the most direct route to Kampala by air and ship, the date of the meet, length of time to make the round trip and other pertinent details.

As of now my going seems almost impossible, but I thought I might do some further checking on the matter just in case the way should open and I should find it possible to make the trip. I pain to see you and pay you at the Centenary.

Cordially


Robert Durr

THE BIRMINGHAM

WEEKLY REVIEW

CLEAN-CONSERVATIVE-CONSTRUCTIVE! ALABAMA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER

"Covers Alabama Like The Dew"
1602 Sixth Avenue, North — Phone 3-1973
BIRMINGHAM, 3, ALABAMA

January 16, 1953

Mr. Horace Holley, Secretary
National Spiritual Assembly of Bahai's
Wilmette, Illinois

Dear Mr. Holley:

I deeply appreciate letter received from the NSA joining with the Guardian in urging that I attend the conference in Campala.

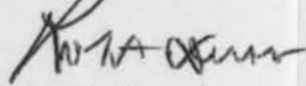
So far as I can see as of now it is impossible for me to make the trip, because it would cost me upwards of a twelve hundred (\$1,200) or more dollars to absence myself from my responsibilities here for the time I would have to be away plus the expenses involved in making such a round trip.

Were it not for the above I would suspend publication of my paper for the month of February and go to Campala and as the guardian suggested do some speaking around the country upon my return.

It is my feeling that there is a terrific struggle going on in Africa for possession of the minds of the real native people of that great country and it is most important that they may have the fullest opportunity possible to be exposed to the Cause and I truly wish for those serving on the African committee and the conference great success.

With kindest personal regards and most sincere best wishes, I am.

Most sincerely,


Robert Durr

RD/mf

Res: #30 12th Ave. N.
Birmingham, Ala.

*920 (cont.)
ack by card
1/23*