



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

CABLE WATCHTOWER

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201, U.S.A.

PHONE (718) 625-3600

October 1, 1988

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

Re: Citizenship

In the past, when publishers approached you for information regarding United States citizenship, you were directed to refer to the Society's memorandum of May 22, 1980, regarding citizenship inquiries.

At this time we are writing to inform you that the Society's memorandum on citizenship is no longer up to date and is not to be referred to in connection with questions regarding United States citizenship. Henceforth, if a dedicated publisher requests your assistance in obtaining citizenship, you should inform the publisher that citizenship is an entirely personal matter which neither the Society nor the local congregation will become involved with. You may help the publisher inquiring to realize that it is not necessary to be a citizen in order to become baptized or to preach the good news of the Kingdom. He could be helped to see that regardless of the nation of which Jehovah's Witnesses are citizens or the part of the earth in which they happen to live, Jehovah is capable of protecting all of those who serve him.

At times, members of the congregation who are pursuing citizenship will be asked by the authorities to have their local congregation provide the authorities with certain facts. First, the authorities may ask the individual to obtain a certificate from the local congregation stating that the individual is a member in good standing of the local congregation. Whether a body of elders will provide such a letter is left to the discretion of each body of elders handling the matter. Each body will want to consider seriously whether providing such a letter is appropriate in light of the individual's standing in the congregation. While such a person is considered a bona fide member of the congregation from a theocratic viewpoint, the authorities may view such an identification letter as deceptive if the individual's association with the congregation is sporadic. Inasmuch as the local body of elders is in the best position to determine whether such a letter should be provided, the Society will not involve itself in determinations of this nature.

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The brief letter is the only information that should be provided concerning a publisher's standing in the congregation. For your use as a possible response, we enclose the attached sample as an example of what may be provided.

In addition to the above, the local authorities may also ask the applicant to obtain a written declaration on congregation letterhead setting forth the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses and/or the local congregation respecting the bearing of arms. Please do not comment on that subject. It remains a personal matter of individual conscience.

Because citizenship matters are inherently personal and have nothing to do with the advancement of Kingdom interests, neither a local body of elders nor the Society will become involved in these matters beyond what is mentioned above. If your local body of elders is in need of further information, they may write to the Society's Legal Department.

We trust the above information clarifies and simplifies this matter. Please receive a warm expression of Christian love and appreciation for the work you are accomplishing in behalf of our brothers.

Your brothers and fellow servants,

Watchtower B. V. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.

Enclosure

REVISED

(CONGREGATION LETTERHEAD)

(current date)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Re: (name of publisher)

This letter is to inform you that (name of publisher) is a member of the (name of congregation) of Jehovah's Witnesses and has been associated with this congregation since (date). According to our records, (name of publisher) was baptized on (date).

Sincerely yours,

Presiding Overseer

STATE OF (NAME)

COUNTY OF (NAME)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this (date) day of (month), 198

AFFIDAVIT

I, (full name), after being duly sworn, depose and say:

1. I am over 21 years of age and reside at (full address).
2. I am the Presiding Overseer of the (congregation name) Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, (City), (State).
3. As the Presiding Overseer I have access to and am familiar with the records and reports of the (congregation name) Congregation.
4. Based on the records of the (congregation name), (alien's name) has been known to the (congregation name) Congregation and regularly associated with the (congregation name) Congregation since (date).
5. (Alien's name) continues to be associated with the (congregation name) Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and is in good standing as of the date of this affidavit.

Respectfully submitted,

 (Name)
 Presiding Overseer

STATE OF (NAME))
) ss.:
 COUNTY OF (NAME))

Subscribed and sworn to before me this (date) day of (month), 198 .
