

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

23 March 2015

Transmitted by email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Further to the email letter dated 1 December 2014 from the Office of Correspondence, regarding your request that Alonzo Twine be designated as a martyr to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh, the Universal House of Justice has considered the matter and has asked us to convey the following.

The House of Justice is well aware that, not only in Iran, but across the world in far flung settings, especially in those periods when the light of the Faith was penetrating new areas, individuals newly enkindled by the fire of love for Bahá'u'lláh faced situations of fanaticism and cruelty, sometimes resulting in laying down their lives for the Cause of God and earning the station of martyrdom. Others have arisen with such detachment and power as to be reckoned among the Faith's heroes and saints. God is aware of all things, and the station of each soul is recognized and safeguarded by Him. This is true also for that noble and illumined soul, Alonzo Twine.

At the present time, however, there is no mechanism for systematically reviewing such cases and no criteria established for gathering adequate information and making a final judgement. The designation of a person as a martyr has historically been done by the head of the Faith at the time of a person's passing and not retrospectively. Without a system that would provide a means for fully and fairly addressing obscure cases in remote regions over nearly a century of the systematic spread of the Cause, the House of Justice is reluctant to make a determination in the few specific instances brought to its attention, all with varying degrees of documentation and evidence.

Your care in bringing this tragic but soul-stirring story to the attention of the House of Justice is warmly appreciated. It will offer heartfelt supplications in the Holy Shrines for the progress of Mr. Twine's soul throughout the worlds of God.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat