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

May 20, 1987

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

This letter is in response to a number of questions that have arisen as a result of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Some who have been associating with congregations desire to take advantage of the amnesty program in order to establish their legal residency. In this letter we will answer questions that have come up on this matter.

As an organization we have always encouraged individuals to act in harmony with Romans 13 in these matters. It is left to each one to decide whether or not he wants to take advantage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

One of the provisions of the law is that if one can document that he has been in the United States continuously since before January 1, 1982, he may qualify for legal residency. Questions have arisen as to what extent the congregation may assist in supplying documentation. The statute specifies that documents proving residency should be employment related if possible. Non-employment related documentation, such as, utility bills, school records, hospital or medical records, could also be used.

If brothers making application under this law ask the body of elders for an affidavit because they are not able to prove through other means their presence in the country since before January 1, 1982, then it is permissible for the elders to provide an affidavit, but this should be done only as a last resort. Attached is a sample of an affidavit that the elders could provide. You will not want to say any more than what is included in this sample affidavit.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has authorized certain voluntary agencies and other non-profit groups as Qualified Designated Entities to help undocumented persons to gain legalization. Some of these are religious organizations. Some have asked whether a Christian could go to one of these religious organizations that has been authorized by the INS. Of course, it would be preferable if the brothers who want to take advantage of this law would go to volunteer agencies that are not religious. However, if the only agency authorized in their community is a religious organization, and

they decide to go to such for assistance with their application, then the fees that would be paid would be viewed as paying for services rendered rather than as contributing to a false religious organization.

We hope the foregoing information assists you to answer questions of any associated with your congregation who may desire to take advantage of this amnesty program. Please accept herewith an expression of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B.T.S. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.