

Washington, D. C.
February 23, 1927.

To the National Spiritual Assembly
and the
Local Spiritual Assemblies of the
Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

ABHA Greetings and Love.

The promotion of inter-racial unity and accord is a well known principle of the Revelation of His Highness Baha'u'llah. It was one in which the Master 'Abdu'l-Baha was intensely active during the days of His exalted ministry, and in it He ever sees a great service to be rendered humanity. Many of His principal addresses during the year 1912 when He toured America were in meetings attended by both races. On such occasions He always manifested the greatest happiness. Even prior to this, over a period of many years, He was keenly interested in the welfare and happiness of the colored people. To the many pilgrims of the white race and the few of the colored who sought His Holy Presence, He spoke lovingly and kindly, yet with the weightiest majesty and power, about unity, cooperation and understanding between the two races in America. Likewise during the period following the great war, He dwelt with increasing emphasis and power upon this vital matter indicating that the nation itself would rise or fall as determined by the way it would settle this matter.

The National Spiritual Assembly, mindful of its great responsibility, has now taken action by the appointment of a National Committee on Inter-racial Amity, the purpose of which is to stimulate action among the friends, and to execute the plans revealed and directed by 'Abdu'l-Baha, now and evermore supported by Shoghi Effendi.

'Abdu'l-Baha advised that annually in Washington, D. C. a Convention for Amity between the white and the colored people should be held. Subsequent Tablets made reference to New York and San Francisco. He was greatly pleased with the first Amity Convention and said that from Washington this Amity Convention spirit should spread to other Cities. His special message, which follows, was read to this body and was given wide circulation by the press:

"Say to this Convention that never since the beginning of time has one more important been held. This Convention stands for the oneness of humanity; it will become the cause of the removal of hostilities between races; it will be the cause of the enlightenment of America. It will, if wisely managed and continued, check the deadly struggle between these races which otherwise will inevitably break out."

Jinab-i-Fadil, one of the speakers at this Convention, having returned to Haifa after his famous teaching services of a year in America, reported that the news from this country, as revealed by himself, which most pleased the Master was the report given of the first Amity Convention held at the

National Capital. Since this event four other cities, Springfield, Mass., New York, Philadelphia, and Dayton, Ohio, have held similar conventions, all attended, like the first, with mighty spiritual confirmations and bringing to the friends and workers supreme happiness.

It is therefore of prime importance and is recommended by this committee that the Assemblies of America, under divine guidance and whenever their numbers and resources warrant, should "rise in the mystery of sacrifice" and hold such conventions, depending upon the Supreme Kingdom and its unseen hosts for victory. There can be found in America today no more effective teaching, no stronger magnet to attract souls. As it is the Will and Desire of God, as revealed by His Word, it is signally preferred above all human suggestions, and stands alone and unapproached in this line of service.

Secondarily, and yet as a matter of great importance, this Committee suggests a program by which all may find opportunities to serve in some way, provided we are not yet fully prepared for the method of removing prejudices and hatreds as above recommended by the Master Himself.

1. All the friends who at any time have received Tablets or Instructions from 'Abdu'l-Baha or letters from Shoghi Effendi regarding race relations in America should send well authenticated copies to the Secretary of this Committee, the aim being that this Committee be wisely guided in its deliberations and actions. All such material should be sent in and from it a compilation on inter-racial amity will be prepared. The committee will use its discretion in the selection of things of a general nature and all that it may be wisdom at this time to publish. The manuscript for such a publication must be passed upon by the National Reviewing Committee.

2. The compilation on race relations, when completed, should be read by all the workers in the Cause and given wide circulation.

The plan, programs and addresses of the five Amity Conventions already held, as far as available, should be studied as suggestions for new efforts.

3. The youth of America are a fertile field for the sowing of the seeds of the Kingdom. Already many of them have been filled with the spirit of peace which is the great Light of this century. The Baha'i teachings on the harmony of races have also been favorably received by many college students. Those studying sociology, with their professors, are most readily approached.

4. Inter-racial Committees are already organized among youth, and their elders as well. The Baha'i teachings should be brought to the attention of such committees and organizations if possible. Consultation about race adjustments and how to right specific wrongs is of the utmost importance. Baha'i workers can present a feasible program and also guide the deliberations to the dynamic of the Baha'i teachings.

5. Each Assembly should appoint a local inter-racial amity committee, whose duty it will be to promote the spirit of amity and accord among all races, and especially to arrange, in consultation with the National Committee on Inter-racial Amity, for Amity Conventions and other inter-racial meetings. This Committee will be an adjunct of the National Committee on Inter-racial Amity. It

will consult from time to time with the local Spiritual Assembly and with the full body of Baha'is in its city. In arranging programs it should invite Baha'is and outside speakers also, provided the latter are friendly to the Cause and are willing to speak in accordance with its universal principles. As far as possible the Chairman and at least one speaker at each Amity Convention should be trained in the Baha'i Cause.

6. Inter-racial committees already operating, North and South, should be addressed by Baha'i speakers and informed of the Heavenly Teachings. If interested they should be supplied with literature.

7. This Committee is but trying to serve and it therefore adopts no rigid rules but relies upon the Baha'i spirit of guidance, growth and freedom. Whatever is herein contained should be regarded only in the light of courteous suggestions.

Tact and wisdom should govern every effort, and those who have had experience in race relations, who have special qualifications and great love of this work, which to others may seem difficult, should be encouraged to the utmost and have freedom to act. On the other hand those who prefer other lines of work should not be censured. All in the Divine Cause are fellow-servants and co-workers. All can make an effort. The Lord of Hosts, Baha'u'llah, is pleased with every good work and can in some way use for His exalted purposes every sincere soul.

Please share the contents of this letter with the Spiritual Assembly and all the friends in your Assembly.

Faithfully your co-workers,

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTER-RACIAL AMITY

By Louis G. Gregory

Executive Secretary

2227-20th St., N. W.

Washington, D. C.

National Committee on Inter-racial Amity:

Mrs. A. S. Parsons, Chairman

Mrs. Louise D. Boyle

Mrs. Coralie F. Cook

Mrs. Mariam Haney

Dr. Alain Locke

Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi

Louis G. Gregory.