

THE MOST CHALLENGING ISSUE: TEACHING NEGROES  
A Task Force Paper

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THE MOST CHALLENGING ISSUE: TEACHING NEGROES A. Observation

I) For fifty-five years the American Baha'is have known that teaching Negroes is a special and paramount obligation. Abdu'l-Baha spoke about it repeatedly during his visit here in 1912, stressing the necessity of uniting whites and Negroes as an "assurance of the world's peace." His admonitions about the consequences of neglecting this challenge were unmistakable. The question of the union of the white and the black is very important," He warned, "for if it is not realized ere long great difficulties will arise, and harmful results will follow." And again, "If this matter remaineth without change, enmity will be increased day by day and the final result will be hardship and may end in bloodshed."

As if to underscore the seriousness of the Master's instructions, Shoghi Effendi in a copious letter addressed to the Americans, The Advent of Divine Justice, singled out racial prejudice as the "most vital and challenging issue" confronting the American Baha'i Community. Since then "the most challenging issue" has become the Baha'i euphemism for racial prejudice between whites and blacks. The Guardian's elaborations on the attitude and methods by which this problem should be resolved remain as relevant today as when he undertook to address the races separately and collectively in that long letter 29 years ago. Said he: "The ceaseless exertions which this issue of paramount importance calls for, the sacrifices it must impose, the care and vigilance it demands, the moral courage and fortitude it requires, the tact and sympathy it necessitates, invest this problem, which the American believers are still far from having satisfactorily resolved, with an urgency and importance that cannot be over-estimated ." (ADJ, 28.)

In calling upon both white and Negro to advance toward an eradication of racial prejudice, he urged: "Let neither think that such problem can easily or immediately be resolved. Let neither think that they can wait confidently for the solution of this problem until the initiative has been taken, and the favorable circumstances created, by agencies

that stand outside the orbit of their Faith ." There is no doubt in the honest Baha'i mind that our half-hearted response to these warnings and instructions amounts to hardly more than a long wait.

What then has intervened? What do we observe as we scan the American scene?

2) , At no time in American history have Negroes been promised so much of the American dream! Court decisions and legislation have piled high in favor of Negro advancement. Yet they have reaped little. The traditionalist racist attitudes of an unyielding white majority have continued to impede the effectiveness of legislative and judicial actions. Negro frustration is consequently at its highest and most explosive pitch, endangering the tranquility of megalopoleis in which they have sought refuge from oppression and privation in vain.

The virility of Negro leadership has been undermined by the palliatory devices initiated by the Government. As they are left to grapple with problems that elude the legislative and judicial range, these leaders, causeless, befuddled and frustrated, vainly reach out to headline-grabbing side issues to prop up their ebbing stature.

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The vacuum created by this flagging leadership has given rise to new forces which aggravate and exploit Negro frustration and tend to disturb American society to its very foundation. An idealistic, anarchic, rebellious, non-ideological movement of college students and young adults, professedly motivated by the need for truth and love, gains momentum as society abandons its once sacrosanct standards of morality. This movement is being manned by the alienated who sense a disjunction between the avowed humane purposes and the actual "depersonalized" functions of the established order; by so-called liberals, many of whom lack the proper depth or fortitude to effectuate pain-taking solutions to the real issues at stake; by clergymen tired of denominational apathy and stale, unproductive churchianity; and by perennial joiners who merely like to be where the action is.

A profitable purpose is being served by this movement, though: for it is calling attention to moral issues that beg for treatment. But its existential drift and growing disregard for law and order confuse its purpose in the public mind . One of the paradoxes of this movement is that it can simultaneously be appealing to the conscience by calling for an examination of the moral plight of our society and yet be antipathetic toward God, religion or ideology.

If it has any standards at all, they are to be found in a convenient cross-fertilization of existential philosophy and socialist aspirations. With such a shapeless movement, it is difficult to separate black from white, to condemn totally or accept totally. There is no clearer example in all the world of mass confusion among idealistic, well-intentioned people who have lost their spiritual bearings. It requires impeccable fair-mindedness and divinely-inspired insight to judge it aright. One could summarize it as a revolt triggered by the unprecedented rampage of materialism, racism, and establishmentarianism, fueled

by the heightened anxieties of the down-trodden and the aroused conscience of the affluent, and made magnetic by the vigorous commitment of its youthful supporters.

3) In the face of such turmoil, the importance of teaching Negroes the Baha'i Faith becomes increasingly urgent. This urgency becomes more obvious as "other agencies that stand outside the orbit" of the Baha'i Faith flounder in their attempts to manipulate the loyalty, anxieties and frustrations" of America's largest minority. But a large percentage of the Baha'is are uninformed about minorities and therefore are dangerously naive on the Negro question. This naiveté should be supplanted, if we are to assert ourselves effectively, with all the knowledge and insights that can be provided through books, planned experiences, and Baha'i conferences and institutes.

While the non-Baha'i society breaks at the seams, the Baha'i Community remains largely introverted, scarcely taking advantage of the priceless opportunities which lie in the wake of this social turmoil, notwithstanding Shoghi Effendi's long-standing and apt directive:

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The opportunities which the turmoil of the present age presents, with all the sorrows which it evokes, the fears which it excites, the disillusionment which it produces, the perplexities which it creates, the indignation which it arouses, the revolt which it provokes, the grievances it engenders, the spirit of restless search which it awakens, must . . . be exploited for the purpose of spreading far and wide the knowledge of the redemptive Faith of Baha'u'llah, and for enlisting fresh recruits in the ever- swelling army of His followers. (ADJ, 40)

To exploit these conditions, Baha'is need to see the Faith as more than a "personal" religious experience in the Christian sense of the term, and to recognize its significance as a force for reshaping society. The Faith must be made relevant. As long as Baha'is remain introverted, the Faith will seem irrelevant and impotent to modern society, when in fact the whole world is hankering after the solutions the Baha'is have to offer.

Too many Baha'is are afraid that mass conversion among Negroes would create a racial imbalance in the Baha'i Community and so do nothing about teaching Negroes and sometimes even discourage it. Too many Baha'is are not honest enough to admit to themselves that they have racial prejudice and therefore do nothing to eliminate it from their lives; indeed, they often allow themselves to think that by declaring belief in Baha'u'llah they are automatically relieved of race prejudice.

Too many Baha'is fail to realize that the great stress upon Negro teaching stems from the immeasurable influence that Negro-white unity can exert on breaking down prejudice toward and among other ethnic groups, inasmuch as racial prejudice is more sharply directed toward Negroes than to any other racial group. Emphasis on Negro teaching is therefore both practical and tactical.

Steadily, as Negroes become more successful in their struggle for equality and consequently more cynical about God and religion, teaching them will become more difficult. The Baha'is should therefore make a firm resolution to accept fully the

challenge they have evaded for too many years.

How could we begin to approach this challenge?

## B .Approach

1) Our approach to teaching Negroes will have to be motivated by more than a general commitment to teaching the Faith. The specific practical advantages of teaching Negroes needs to be explained so that Baha'is will appreciate fully the far-reaching impact that this engagement is intended to exert on the world at large. Let three points suffice as examples:

a) There is a direct connection between the promotion of white-Negro unity in the United States and the ultimate achievement of world peace . When Abdu'l-Baha said as much in His Howard University speech 55 years ago, it seemed a far-fetched notion; now it is an obvious probability to any serious

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observer of the world scene. Moreover, that propitious speech can truly be regarded as an historic landmark for Negro Americans and Africans, for it foreshadowed the emergence of African, and even Asian, states as a direct consequence of the gradual rise of the Negro American, and sounded the basic notes of negritude, the philosophy which underlies much of the independence movement in Africa. Just last year, in a speech at Howard University, Senegal's President Leopold S. Senghor, the leading exponent of negritude and a world-renowned poet, repeated the essence of what Abdu'l-Baha had said on that same campus more than half a century before. It can safely be said that any success we Baha'is achieve with the Negro in this country will redound to the expansion of independence in Africa, and thus in one way bring us closer to world peace.

b) There is a direct link between fully integrating Negroes into a rapidly expanding Baha'i Community and the hoped-for recession of racism in the world at large. A careful analysis of social conditions reveals that race prejudice is more sharply directed toward black people than any other people on earth. A receding of this prejudice against blacks would mean an almost immediate and automatic dissolution of prejudice against other groups. Through no fault of their own, Negroes carry a sign with them at all times: the color of their skin. This feature makes it much more difficult for them to dissolve into a basically light-skinned melting pot than for, say, the Jew, Japanese, Latin American, or Indian. It is easy to see, then, how a highly integrated Baha'i Community, functioning strictly on the principles of unity in diversity, could exert a wholesome influence an American and world societies.

c) The Negroes' dilemma is further complicated by their diffused historical roots. Most groups of people turn, rightly or wrongly, to their ancestral roots for morale and identity. But the rootlessness of Negroes produces a powerful rationale for acts of discrimination against them and for their own misconceived notions of worthlessness. Judaism provides Jews, often mistakenly classified as a "race," with a point of identity. But although Negro Americans are most[ly] adherents of Christianity, the Christian religion is generally

regarded as the Faith of the Western white man. So even here, Negroes are not sure of their ground. The Baha'i Faith, in its pristine universality, must therefore provide the Negro, as well as other uprooted peoples, with the only really important point of identity. This is one reason why we Baha'is must teach Negroes in terms relevant to their needs and background. They must be made to understand that Baha'u'llah came to restore dignity and identity to down-trodden peoples.

2) The Baha'i who wishes to change this intolerable racial situation must be determined to equip himself properly for the task. He must take Baha'u'llah's instructions seriously: "Whoso ariseth among you to teach the Cause of His Lord, let him, above all else, teach his own self . . ." Added to this knowledge of the Baha'i Message must be a decent understanding of what it takes to teach Negroes successfully in this society. There can be no greater stumbling block to teaching successfully than *naiveté*, especially in a highly sophisticated, [c]ynical and immoral society. Yet, *naiveté* remains a persistent quality of American Baha'is.

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3) For instance: one of the most dangerous illusions among American Baha'is is an illogical persistence in the notion that the less we Baha'is discuss the most challenging issue, the freer and more unified the Baha'is will be. True, this subject can be an embarrassing one to broach, but the notion is nonetheless a rejection of the principle of frank and loving consultation, and robs us of an invaluable mutual growth experience. We Baha'is believe in facing facts of whatever dimension, and in getting to the root of problems that afflict both our small inner society and the outside world. One often hears the question among alert believers: "What are the Baha'is going to do about prejudice in themselves?"

a) One way is to recognize that prejudice is no respecter of persons, no matter how liberal one's background may have been. Shoghi Effendi speaks of a "subconscious sense of superiority" among whites. There is also a subconscious sense of inferiority among Negroes. Perhaps, if some Baha'is realized that because of this "subconscious sense" they innocently hurt their friends, they would be more careful and willing to look at themselves consciously. Perhaps, too, if we really began to regard this problem as a social disease, the beginning of which we are not wholly responsible for but the eradication of which has become a primary responsibility of the Baha'is, collectively and individually, it would be easier for us to face it without a sense of guilt, incrimination, or embarrassment.

b) another way would be to encourage more social functions in which both races could intermingle with the utmost freedom. "Casting away once and for all the fallacious doctrine of racial superiority, with all its attendant evils, confusion and miseries, and welcoming and encouraging the intermixture of races, and tearing down the barriers that now divide them, they should each endeavor, day and night, to fulfill their particular responsibilities in the common task which so urgently faces them." (ADJ, 33.) These functions could perhaps start off as social experiments sponsored by the Baha'i Community. But it would be more effective if individual Baha'is held parties, dinners, picnics, and other social affairs, where they could learn in an informal way more and

more about their fellow Baha'is --about their backgrounds, their habits, their trades or professions, their aspirations, their needs. Such functions could be most effective in consolidating communities, while at the same time giving Baha'is some recreational outlet. Understandably, for some, job requirements and social awkwardness would make such an undertaking difficult to achieve; hence, a deliberate effort would be required.

c) "Let the white make a supreme effort in their resolve to contribute their share to the solution of this problem, to abandon once and for all their usually inherent and at times subconscious sense of superiority, to correct their tendency towards revealing a patronizing attitude toward the members of the other race, to persuade them through their intimate, spontaneous and informal association with them of the genuineness of their friendship and the sincerity of their intentions, and to master their impatience of any lack of responsiveness on the part of a people who have received, for so long a period, such grievous and slow-healing wounds." (ADJ, 33.)

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d) "Let the Negroes, through a corresponding effort on their part, show, by every means in their power the warmth of their response, their readiness to forget the past and their ability to wipe out every trace of suspicion that may still linger in their hearts and minds." (ADJ,33.)

e) Since most of us are still contaminated by odious theories of race, it would be highly educational to have community workshops or institutes on prejudice and race. Once the Baha'is themselves were armed with spiritual and scientific understanding of the matter, they could become powerful forces of light in a highly biased society. It is not enough for Baha'is to say they believe in the oneness of mankind. They must be able to explain what it means spiritually and socially to a cynical society, otherwise they will appear to be merely a naive group of kind-hearted souls with no real concept of the complexities of racism. Hopefully the Baha'is could become proficient enough in developing these workshops to offer them as a community service to non-Baha'is throughout the country. Conceivable, too, the most challenging issue should be among the list of required studies recommended to newly enrolled "Baha'is. After all, the oneness of man I cnd is our first principle. One need not feel insulted by this recommendation once it has been established that we are intent on emancipating ourselves from one of the most damaging and tenacious features of our Western background.

4) How do we reach the Negro? This question is raised by Baha'is and non-Baha'is alike. It is made difficult for many because of the traditional lack of normal communications between the races which has continued for over 400 years. This abnormalcy has contributed to fear and distrust between the races. Abdu'l-Baha instructs us thusly: "If you meet those of a different race and color from yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness."

Moreover, the Master's social behavior in the United States provides us with a practical method of approach Which the Guardian entreated us to follow: "Let them (Baha'is) revive and perpetuate the memory of those unforgettable and historic episodes and

occasions on Which He so strikingly demonstrated His keen sense of justice. His spontaneous sympathy. for the down-trodden. His ever- abiding sense of the oneness of the human race, His overflowing love for its members. and His displeasure with those Who dared to flout His wishes, to deride His methods, to challenge His principles. or to nullify His acts." (ADJ, 29.)

Clearly, if we are to eliminate these qualities and attitudes we must develop a keen understanding of the Negro condition. Proclaiming the message is quite easy in this society, teaching with an understanding of the other person's feelings and needs requires a conscious effort and a genuine intention. Therefore, Baha'is, both white and middle-class Negro, who are often out of touch with the tempo of life among their more unfortunate brothers, should teach themselves to understand the Negro situation. How can we empathize with something we know nothing about? Can whites honestly claim to understand the root reasons for the present state of agitation among Negroes?

Baha'is should educate themselves by discussing the Negro situation freely with informed and involved persons, by reading the right books, and, opportunity

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permitting, by attending the right classes. Whites must realize that they cannot impress even an uneducated Negro maid with the sincerity of their commitment to the oneness of mankind if they do not demonstrate an elementary interest in the conditions of the very people they are hoping to attract to the Faith. Both the expansion and consolidation of our communities depend on white empathy with the Negro condition. White indifference is partially responsible for Negro withdrawal from the Faith. Because this indifference is inbred, the effort to overcome it must be constant and deliberate. As soon as whites develop a genuine interest in Negroes as people and not just as representational figures in our enrolment statistics, the Faith will surge in activity and membership.

5) Of course, the best way to learn and teach effectively would be to live in Negro neighborhoods and towns, in the same way that pioneers travel to foreign countries, establish residence, derive some understanding of their hosts, and then teach from experience. It seems to be good common sense to assume that if Americans can leave the comfort of their environment to live in strange, often hostile, societies abroad and have resounding successes, that the same successes could be achieved on the home front with the same dedicated effort. Our home front teaching program should treat Negro neighborhoods in this country as foreign goals, since whites know so little about Negroes. Hopefully, we could send teams of teachers such as the proposed victory corps, to live and teach in these neighborhoods and towns until a breakthrough occurs. Youth and young adults could play a significant role here, since they tend to be more flexible in their attitudes than their elders. A whole program of teaching could be developed in this live-in teaching approach.

### C . Purpose

1) What does the Baha'i gain from Negro teaching? Primarily, the gratification of having

performed the “most meritorious of all deeds”: teaching. The personal benefits are secondary but cannot be overlooked.

Ironically, non-Baha'i whites who volunteered to live in Negro neighborhoods in Mississippi to help the people there achieve their human rights say what it would be expected of Baha'is to say in response to this question. In his book, A Prophetic Minority, Jack Newfield speculates that "...it may be an enduring paradox that all through Mississippi the lives of the White volunteers have been more enriched, and more fundamentally changed, than the lives of the maids and tenant farmers whom they came to help."

One volunteer wrote home to the North: “When I see these simple people living lives of relative inner peace, love, honor, courage and humor, I lose patience with people who sit and ponder their belly buttons..."

Another wrote: “One sees freedom here that is so much more than the ironical fact that enslaved people are, at least relatively, the liberated ones. Some 'white' people ~it at their feet wondering at this sorrow freed and made beautiful . . .”

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2) To a limited but significant extent these volunteers derived rewards that Abdul-Baha promised the Baha'is would have if they would endeavor to unite the races. This is what can be gained;

a) Teaching Negroes can be a unique experience. The Master affirms: "the meeting is blessed when the white and colored races meet together with infinite spiritual love and heavenly harmony. When such meetings are established and the participants associate with each other with perfect love, unity and kindness, the angels of the Kingdom praise them, and the Beauty of Baha'u'llah addresseth them, 'Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye!' Again he asserts: “When a gathering of these two races is brought about that assemblage will become the magnet of the Concourse on high and the confirmation of the Blessed Beauty will surround it."

b) Teaching Negroes can be a unique educational experience. Again Abdu'l-Baha speaks to the point: "Each one ( race) should endeavor to develop and assist the other toward mutual advancement." (ADJ,33) What praiseworthy attributes can each learn from the other? Contemplation of a question like this germinates the seeds of a new civilization.

c) Teaching Negroes can be a unique social experience. Unity in diversity is a Baha'i ideal. The social expression of this ideal is the most sought after goal of Baha'is everywhere. The meaning of this accomplishment in America comes through in a wish addressed to the white race by Abdu'l-Baha: “I hope," He said, "that ye may cause that down-trodden race to become glorious, and to be joined with the White race, to serve the world of man with the utmost sincerity, faithfulness, love and purity." (ADJ, 33) .

The Guardian tells how freedom from prejudice might lead to social unity: “It should be deliberately cultivated through the various and everyday opportunities, no matter how



insignifican,. that present themselves, whether in their homes, their business offices, their schools and colleges, their social parties and recreation grounds, their Baha'i meetings, conferences~ conventions, summer schools and Assemblies.” (ADJ, 30.)

Cultural stimulation can be a most beneficial reward of social unity.

d) Teaching the Negro minority can be a powerful means of attracting the American majority. There is no minority race on which attention is more sharply focused today than the Negro race. Every evidence of motion among Negroes engages the attention of a basically fearful, skeptical and domineering majority. Mass conversion among Negroes to a Faith as socially revolutionary as ours would undoubtedly attract widespread majority attention in the United States. This notwithstanding the unpopularity. derision, and even ostracism that many whites would suffer in the initial stages of their teaching effort. But ostracism has an ironic magnetic quality. Shoghi Effendi made this point as he urged the American believers to launch a DOUBLE CRUSADE, "first to regenerate the inward life of their own community, and next to assail the long- standing evils that have entrenched themselves in the life of their nation.” (ADJ, 34.)

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“Let not, however," he exhorted them, "the invincible army of Baha'u'llah, Who in the West, and at one of its potential storm-centers is to fight, in His name and for His sake, one of its fiercest and most glorious battles, be afraid of any criticism that might be directed against them. Unpopularity but serves to throw into greater relief the contrast between it and its adversaries; while ostracism is itself the magnetic power that must eventually win over to its camp the most vociferous and inveterate amongst its foes ." (ADJ, 35) This is divine strategy.

e) Teaching Negroes can be an assurance of the world's peace. For what greater gain could we labor? Is not world peace the harbinger of the Golden Millenium? Has the Master not excited our hopes in asserting that “. . . the accomplishment of unity between colored and whites will be an assurance of the world's peace”?

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to examine a question that affects our teaching efforts in a most vital way. It must not be inferred that a special case is being made in favor of a special group of people. Far from it. Teaching the Baha'i Faith is a gigantic task; we need constantly to take stock of our approaches, especially when they are not bringing about the successes they should. It is the basic conclusion of this analysis that some of our failures: are caused by a confusion of priorities, not the least of which is the most challenging issue. Shoghi Effendi speaks of a double crusade. Perhaps our major problem is that we have not taken enough time to understand what the term implies.

The best thing to do, perhaps, would be to stop all we are doing, study The Advent of Divine Justice, and with a reestablished national purpose. initiate a new set of teaching plans. But, alas. the world is moving too fast for that. It might be more practical then to institute properly developed summer school studies on this vital book, so that we may

derive a proper sense of the Faith's relevance to the society in which we live. Our inability to teach Negroes, or anybody else for that matter, cannot justifiably be blamed on lack of relevant instructions in the Writings.

The Guardian's lengthy treatment of the subject of teaching Negroes, not to mention the Master's innumerable exhortations on it, leads one to conclude with impartiality that our marginal success in teaching stems from a conspicuous failure to achieve "freedom from prejudice," which he lists as one of the three "spiritual prerequisites of success, which constitute the bedrock on which the security of all teaching plans, Temple projects, and financial schemes, must ultimately rest . . ." (ADJ, 18.)

It is necessary to understand that teaching Negroes is not a special favor that Baha'is do, but a powerful means of restoring the nation's soul. Ther[e] are those who see this purpose as being more properly related to teaching Indian Americans than to teaching Negro Americans. But this befogged perception is an example of our ability to confuse priorities or to escape from harsh realities. And one need not argue this point. A proper reference to

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the two interpreters of our teaching responsibilities can settle the matter easily. It may well be that teaching Negroes will open the flood gates of racial unity to all peoples, which, of course, would make the Indian problem somewhat easier to handle. This point is not at all far-fetched, if one can be permitted the expansion of a significant point raised by Shoghi Effendi in The Advent of Divine Justice. In explaining the fundamental principle underlying the appearance of a Manifestation in a given place, the Guardian wrote (ADJ, 14-16):

How often have the Prophets of God, not excepting Bahá'u'lláh Himself, chosen to appear, and deliver their Message in countries and amidst peoples and races, at a time when they were either fast declining, or had already touched the lowest depths of moral and spiritual degradation . . .

How great, then, must be the challenge to those who, belonging to such races and nations, and having responded to the call which these Prophets have raised, to unreservedly recognize and courageously testify to this indubitable truth, that not by reason of any racial superiority, political capacity, or spiritual virtue which a race or nation might possess, but rather as a direct consequence of its crying needs, its lamentable degeneracy, and irremediable perversity, has the Prophet of God chosen to appear in its midst, and with it as a lever has lifted the entire human race to a higher and nobler plane of life and conduct. For it is precisely under such circumstances, and by such means that the Prophets have, from time immemorial, chosen and were able to demonstrate their redemptive power to raise from the depths of abasement and of misery, the people of their own race and nation, empowering them to transmit in turn to other races and nations the saving grace and the energizing influence of their Revelation.

. . . To a lesser degree this principle must of necessity apply to the country which has vindicated its right to be regarded as the cradle of the World Order of

Bahá'u'lláh . . . Let not, therefore, those who are to participate so predominantly in the birth of that world civilization, which is the direct offspring of their Faith, imagine for a moment that for some mysterious purpose or by any reason of inherent excellence or special merit Bahá'u'lláh has chosen to confer upon their country and people so great and lasting a distinction. It is precisely by reason of the patent evils which, notwithstanding its other admittedly great characteristics and achievements, an excessive and binding materialism has unfortunately engendered within it that the Author of their Faith and the Center of His Covenant have singled it out to become the standard-bearer of the New World Order envisaged in their writings. It is by such means as this that Bahá'u'lláh can best demonstrate to a heedless generation His almighty power to raise up from the very midst of a people, immersed in a sea of materialism, a prey to one of the most virulent and long-standing forms of racial prejudice, and notorious for its political corruption, lawlessness and laxity in moral standards, men and women who, as time goes by, will increasingly exemplify those essential virtues of self-renunciation, of moral rectitude, of chastity, of indiscriminating fellowship, of holy discipline, and of spiritual insight that will fit them for the preponderating share they will have in calling into being that World Order and that World Civilization of which their country, no less than the entire human race, stands in desperate need.

On a lesser application of this principle, is it not more than vaguely probable that America's largest and most rootless minority, the victims of the most wretched forms of racial prejudice, are destined to be co-partners with whites—their exact apparent opposites—as standard bearers of racial unity?

. . . Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and white will be an assurance of the world's peace.”

Shall we continue to be unmoved by Abdu'l-Baha's glorious promise?

April 27, 1967