

Speaking Out

From The
New South

By ROBERT DURR

RACIAL UNITY

The A. B. C. of this basic task is repeated here by request:

DIFFERENCES in location, topography, and climate, in connection with prolonged isolation and man's creativity, served to differentiate mankind. The extent to which that process of differentiation has gone is amazing. Africa, for example, has eight hundred languages. China's early Republic officially recognized five racial stocks—Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Muslims and Tibetans.

The Soviet Union is a multi-national state and its people are as varied as its climate—175 nationalities speaking 150 languages and dialects. Europe has more than forty cultural groups, organized into twenty or more states, speaking fifty languages and dialects. India is a sub-continent as varied as Europe. Such enriching differentiations in language, culture, physique and manner of living have been going on for the last three hundred thousand years. The inevitable result obviously has been many different patterns, a wide variety of accomplishments, and diverse standards of judgment.

This unequal political and social development of mankind constitutes one of the great problems of our time. The achievement of community is our basic social task.

A WORLD ORDER editorial by Mrs. Gertrude K. Henning on the subject "Racial Unity" reads:

"America cannot attain the spiritual triumph destined for it until it has successfully overcome the flagrant racial prejudice now existing within its boundaries. Prejudice against the Negro in some of the southern states has been carried into local laws even though the United States Constitution declares equal rights for that race. This racial discrimination has been held over from pre-Civil War times and passed on to succeeding generations in spite of scientific enlightenment that human beings are alike in structure in all races.

"Prejudice is man-made and not God made. In America African Negroes were brought here as slaves to work on the great plantations of the South. Opportunities for schooling and independent wage earning were not offered, or open to them. This resulted in the fact that few were able to acquire education and from that grew the feeling that the Negro was intellectually inferior. The true facts were not acknowledged by the bulk of the people. Man developed this prejudice by ignoring the facts and by being unaware of the Law of God that there are no racial differences in the creation of man.

"Had the spiritual teachings of Christ been carried out as He had meant them, there would not have been this breach among the white people and the black people of this country. But in the institutions of most churches not much thought and certainly no concerted action was given to this growing racial prejudice.

"In the Baha'i community there is no racial

discrimination; for not only is it a Baha'i principle to teach the oneness of mankind, but also it is a Baha'i ordinance to practice that oneness. In Shoghi Effendi's letter to the Baha'is of America, the Advent of Divine Justice, he states: "To discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority, it is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Baha'u'llah—Freedom from racial prejudice, in any of its forms, should, at such a time as this when an increasingly large section of the human race is falling a victim to its devastating ferocity, be adopted as the watchword of the entire body of the American believers, in whichever state they reside, in whatever circles they move, whatever their age, traditions, tastes, and habits. It should be consistently demonstrated in every phase of their activity, and life, whether in the Baha'i community or outside it, in public or in private, formerly as well as informally, individually as well as in their official capacity as organized groups, committees and Assemblies. It should be deliberately cultivated through the various and every day opportunities, no matter how insignificant, 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."

From both scientific teachings and spiritual laws we may deduce that whatever prejudice there is in the world has been made by man himself. Anthropologists tell us that there is only one human species and therefore all races of human beings must be of one family. No racial differences have ever caused the toes of the feet or the number and kinds of teeth to differ. Biologically all men are outfitted alike. Superficial differences like skin color or texture of hair were developed by climatic environments, as also were body sizes and shapes of skulls.

Because many generations of people lived in one part of the world, certain distinctive traits became more prominent and people were readily recognized as a part of that area from which they came. Modern science has proven that the structure of the human body is the same in all races and that the four types of human blood are to be found in all peoples of the world.

The Manifestations of God also have told us that mankind is one. They have provided the moral teachings so essential since man has the ability to choose the manner in which he behaves. We have the moral and scientific progress. Racial unity is not a dream but part of God's creation and will be an eventual reality. We can choose His way and annul these differences of races for He has given us the pattern for a world society in which all men shall be active brothers.