

Talk at Hotel Plaza

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



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Talk at Hotel Plaza

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Chicago, Illinois

Notes by Marzieh Moss

I was in the Orient, and from the Orient to this part of the world is a long distance. Travel is difficult, especially difficult for me on account of my infirmities of body, increased by forty years in prison. My physical powers are weak; it is the power of will that sustains me. Realize from this how great has been my exertion and how strong my purpose in accomplishing this journey through the will of God. May it be the cause of great illumination in the Occident.

In this western world with its stimulating climate, its capacities for knowledge and lofty ideals, the message of peace should be easily spread. The people are not so influenced by imitations and prejudices, and through their comprehension of the real and unreal they should attain the truth. They should become leaders in the effort to establish the oneness of humankind. What is higher than this responsibility? In the Kingdom of God no service is greater, and in the estimation of the Prophets, including Jesus Christ, there is no deed so estimable.

Yet even now warfare prevails. Envy and hatred have arisen between nations. But because I find the American nation so capable of achievement and this government the fairest of western governments, its institutions superior to others, my wish and hope is that the banner of international reconciliation may first be raised on this continent and the standard of the Most Great Peace be unfurled here. May the American people and their government unite in their efforts in order that this light may dawn from this point and spread[pg 84] to all regions, for this is one of the greatest



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bestowals of God. In order that America may avail herself of this opportunity, I beg that you strive and pray with heart and soul, devoting all your energies to this end: that the banner of international peace may be upraised here and that this democracy may be the cause of the cessation of warfare in all other countries.

Observe what is taking place in Tripoli: men cutting each other into pieces, bombardment from the sea, attacks from the land and the hail of dynamite from the very heaven itself. The contending armies are thirsting for each other's blood. How they can do this is inconceivable. They have fathers, mothers, children; they are human. What of their wives and families? Think of their anguish and suffering. How unjust, how terrible! Human beings should prevent and forbid this. These kings, rulers and chieftains should strive for the good of their subjects instead of their destruction. These shepherds should bring their sheep within the fold, comfort them and give them pasture instead of death and slaughter.

I supplicate the divine Kingdom and ask that you may be instrumental in establishing the great peace in this country and that this government and nation may spread it to all the world.

