

MAYOR'S COMMITTEE ON UNITY

Statement of Charles E. Hughes, Jr., Chairman
March 6, 1944

I welcome the opportunity to work with the excellent and representative committee which the Mayor has appointed. Its purpose of promoting mutual understanding and respect is vitally important to this city, where vast numbers of people of different races and religions live and move and work in close quarters. Antagonisms between any groups react to the injury of all.

I am sure that no one will expect the Committee to announce any definite program at this time. It must be carefully planned, and will require the best thought of all the members of the Committee. Progress towards harmony between different racial and religious groups depends ultimately on the disposition and attitude of the people themselves, and the prejudices which retard it are often deep-seated. But it would be as much of a mistake to exaggerate the difficulties as to underestimate them. There are many signs which give sound reason to hope that the time is ripe for efforts which will command public acceptance, without which there can be no durable progress.

To accomplish this the facts as to existing conditions and past experience must be assembled and made known. To that end the Committee will select some persons having special qualifications, who will give their full time to the work of the Committee.