

ELDER MELVIN J. BALLARD*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

WORLD WAR BROUGHT HOPE

Twenty-one years ago our fathers, brothers and sons were enlisting in the great struggle of the World War; they were responding to the appeal that we were going to make the world safe for democracy, and we were led to hope and believe that it was the last great war, and the war to end war.

When the war was over we saw nation after nation abandon their monarchical forms of government and become republics, patterned after this nation, and our hearts were full of joy at the prospect that at last democracy and peace were going to reign.

QUICK RETURN TO WORSE CONDITIONS

Since then we have been greatly disturbed to see nation after nation abandon its democracy and go back to a condition some of us think worse than the condition under the czars, the kaisers, and the rulers, into a dictatorship. Today we witness the nations of the earth spending more money than in any other time in their history in building equipment upon the sea and the land for future wars. It is a sad picture, and yet I suppose that our wish was father to our thought, and we had hoped to see the end of the struggle and strife in this world.

GOSPEL ALONE CAN BRING PEACE

But the Lord knew that there could be no peace only upon certain principles; peace could not come through treaties filled with hatred, malice, greed, and selfishness. Peace could not come through the might of armies, it can only come in one way. He offered that way one hundred years ago to the world, and more than sixty thousand missionaries of the Church have carried the message to the nations of the earth, offering them peace through the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that makes for genuine real brotherhood.

The Lord knew there would be only a few who would accept that message. The majority would reject it. He provided for the few a refuge of peace; but so far as the world is concerned he said—(I am reading from the 1st Section of the Doctrine and Covenants):

And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth: I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh;

For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.

And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst.

Peace taken from the earth, and the devil having power over his dominion. During the last one hundred years, or since these words were

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Third Day

spoken, more light and knowledge has come into the world in the realm of science, through the laboratory, and otherwise, than in all the ages that have preceded it, and if this were all used for the alleviation of human suffering, peace and prosperity could be here, and poverty abolished.

But when we see men and nations spending their wealth to use the gas engine, the laboratory, the air plane, as means of human destruction, surely the devil has seized the blessings and privileges the Almighty intended to use to bring about peace, and is using them to destroy that which he presently shall lose the right to rule over. If the devil is not in the character of warfare that goes over the front line trenches, swoops down upon the poor helpless women and children, drops its deadly bombs and assassinates them, then I do not know anything that has ever happened in this world that is so like the work of the devil as that. He is ruling in the midst of men.

But it is not a picture that we need to be discouraged with. Hope is only to be deferred, for the promises shall be realized.

PERILS TO OUR COUNTRY WILL COME FROM WITHIN

I read again another word of warning, this from the 45th Section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, wherein the Lord said, concerning this nation or land of America, (reading from the 68th and 69th verses):

And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.

Thank the Lord for that promise. I am not afraid of any foreign foe disturbing this nation. Our perils will all come from within. It is true the Prophet saw even the Constitution hanging as by a thread, but, thank the Lord, he never saw the thread break. He saw this people play a conspicuous part, to be a balance of power with others to preserve it. For after all, it is destined, according to the word of the Lord, to become the savior and blessing of all flesh, not only the peoples of the United States. And after the experiments with dictatorships and other methods, they will, at last, when they have learned their lesson and are prepared for it, be willing to receive the Lord's offering, after much suffering.

They could have saved themselves all this, for if all the nations of the earth had received the message of the Gospel, as your fathers did who came from those foreign nations, would there be peace in the world? Yes. If the spirit that is in the hearts of you Germans, you Scandinavians, you English, you Scotch, who are in this Church, were in the hearts of all your people living in these foreign lands today, there could not be war. There would be brotherhood and there would be peace.

I am, I say, therefore disturbed only over the problems that may

arise here with us. You students of history know well that the adverse circumstances, the poverty, the want, the unemployment and the depletion of the value of the currency of the various European nations laid the foundation for dictatorships; unknown dictators arose who offered security against want, against poverty, against need, and like drowning men grasping at straws, the nations of the earth accepted the proffer, and sold their liberties for bread.

That is not the spirit of one of the founders of this republic who said: "Give me liberty or give me death." Liberty, one of the most precious things, must be preserved. I have said in many places to our Latter-day Saint brethren and sisters who are converts from abroad: "I cannot blame you for being proud of your English ancestry, your Scotch ancestry, or your German ancestry, but when you joined this Church and came to America you should have kissed that all goodbye, and it is not my business to glorify the dictators who now reign, no matter how good I may think their services are to that nation from which I came; it is not my business to glorify them, but to become loyal to the government of the nation in which I live." I hope we shall not find any Latter-day Saint members glorifying the conditions that are in their Old World homes.

PROMISES MADE BY THE LORD REGARDING ZION

Again the Lord said, in the 115th Section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, that he had provided for the security of the membership of the Church even in this land. I read as follows:

The gathering together upon the land of Zion, and upon her stakes, may be for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth.

Here is the place of refuge—America. When I read the story last week of the people leaving London, and Paris to go into the rural districts, digging trenches on their front lawns, and gas chambers being built in every home, everybody being prepared to put on gas masks suddenly, as in a few hours these cities might have been engulfed in a terrible raid such as modern war provides, I said: "Thank God for the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans that separate us, (at least from the immediate danger,) from these perils. There is no place on earth so secure as in these United States, and it is the business of every Latter-day Saint to be loyal to this government.

That is why the Church is undertaking this relief program, to win everybody off from the back of the Government, and off from the back of the State, who can stand on his own feet. Many of you aged people may feel somewhat offended that you have been asked if you can support yourselves and not be a burden upon the State or the Nation, for we can lie down upon our Government to the extent that we may imperil its credit and produce the very conditions that would bring the same revolutions and the same troubles that engulf the Old World. God bless us that we may not come to that day, and Latter-day Saints, show the way!

There is another message found in the 103rd Section of the book of Doctrine and Covenants, which was given in the darkest hour of the Church, at a time when the Saints had been exiled from Missouri. They were in dire distress, many had turned away, and then the Lord said:

Verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize—

How wonderful the promise! It is all conditional. I want to focus your attention upon the conditions:

I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them.

Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour.

And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the saints, to possess it forever and ever.

THE LORD'S PLAN MUST BE FOLLOWED

These conditions we must comply with; we must adhere to the appeals that have been made during this conference; we must adhere to the word of the Lord as given to this people, to observe to keep the commandments, to keep the Word of Wisdom. You young people, we are not asking you to give up your tobacco, your liquor, and your other evil practices, immorality, just to punish you or deny you what you think are privileges you ought to have. We see your destiny, but we know you cannot go forward to that destiny, to carry the work of the Almighty to the triumphant victory over the nations of the earth, unless you adhere to the Lord's plan. If you do subscribe to it, if you do pay your tithes and offerings, if you do adhere to the Word of Wisdom, if you adhere in loyalty to this Church, there is no power on earth nor in hell that can stop this people from marching on to their glorious destiny, to be the light of the world, and to win the world ultimately to Christ.

When that day comes—for only through him can peace come—then will swords be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks. God help us to realize our tremendous responsibility, not only for ourselves and the Church, but for the whole world, and for the kingdom of the Redeemer that shall be triumphant in the earth. God speed that glorious day, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

TABERNACLE CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

During the period from 10:30 to 11:00 a. m., the following program of choral and organ music was presented by the Tabernacle Choir and Organ as part of the proceedings of the General Conference, and was broadcast by radio throughout the United States and Canada by the courtesy of the Columbia Broadcasting System, originating over Station KSL, Salt Lake City: