

empire must stand or fall by our response to that call. The choice is moral rearmament or national decay. That choice will decide whether ours is ultimately to go the way of the other dead kingdoms or whether our commonwealth led by God may become a leader of the world towards sanity and peace.

THE TRIUMPH OF RIGHT

Cloudy as the skies may be, I am not one of those who despair for I believe in the triumph of right. In its consummation a leading role must be played by the Church, one of whose prime functions it is to transmute religious truths into living practices. The teachings of those truths and habits of practice becomes then the highest and most solemn duty of every person in the Church, and above all, of all those to whom the responsibility of leadership, in whatever capacity, has come, for therein lies not only the hope for eternity, but the hope of the world for stability and safety, here and now.

This pronouncement comes from men of high intelligence and wide learning and deep penetration and ripe experience in the affairs of men and of nations. They have read the lesson of history and know that the decline of great nations has generally followed and been primarily due to moral disintegration.

As Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg called upon his countrymen to resolve that this nation under God should have a new birth of freedom, so these spokesmen of the British Empire have sounded a clarion call for spiritual and moral regeneration as the only means by which under God it can be saved from the limbo of dead kingdoms. That call is not for Britain alone but is for all nations and all people who love justice and desire to see her enthroned.

ELDER MARVIN O. ASHTON

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

I don't think ever before have I envied the presidents of the missions until this Conference. If you have noticed, yesterday and today, most of them had ten minutes notice before they were called on. This suspense sometimes is terrible.

I heard of a good old lady once who was waiting for some news, either good or bad, she didn't know which, and when it finally came she said: "I do hate to be held in suspension." I want you to know that this good old lady had no monopoly on the feelings that come from one being held in "suspension."

If ever I feel the sacredness of an opening prayer, praying for those who would be called upon to speak, it is on these occasions, and I certainly trust that the prayer offered today may reach the realms on high and be effective in my behalf.

AN EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION

I, for one, right here, lest I forget, want to follow the suggestion of Bishop Wirthlin—I do want to express my appreciation for my affilia-

tion, not only with the First Presidency of the Church, the Apostles, the Seventies, and others of the Authorities of the Church, but I desire to express the appreciation I hold for you fine bishops, you fine presidents of stakes, and not forgetting the members in general, that we contact as we go about. I do appreciate them, and I appreciate the sustaining power and influence that they give us as we travel around.

As far as I am individually concerned, many things influence me and my testimony of the truthfulness of this Gospel, but there is nothing that stands higher, or that I consider more important than the lives of you fine people, because, after all, "the test of the pudding is in the eating." If the Gospel hasn't made such characters, good-bye to the Gospel. I do want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation. More every day do I appreciate these things.

WHAT OF OUR REAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS?

I am not unmindful of the things that we are accomplishing in this Church. I would not want to be understood to think otherwise. I believe we have taken a stride, a rapid stride. Before we get through, the eyes of the world will be consistently upon us, to the extent that they will see that we really have accomplished something, and in a big way, too.

What does concern me sometimes is: Are we going just as fast as we ought to, and are we accomplishing just what we ought to? Are we really, if you please, getting our toes in the ground as we ought, in every way we can, to accomplish what is ahead of us?

There is an expression they call "ancestral pride." I wonder if it hurts you, I wonder if it hurts me. I know what it did to the ancient Hebrews. Just what is it doing to you? Do you stop still because you stand by to see what those before you accomplished? One man has said that, "Ancestral pride is backing up to go forward." The other day, in Los Angeles station, I was waiting for the train to start. I couldn't see the trees overhead. I couldn't see the tracks below. All I could see was the train at the side, and all at once I thought we were starting, and soon I thought we were going at a pretty good gait. But in about two minutes I changed my mind, because I found that I wasn't moving at all, or the train I was in wasn't moving at all; just that train at the side. Do we sometimes think we are going somewhere, because we see the activity of something at our side? I often think of that.

I am wondering sometimes if I am too serious about what my grandfathers accomplished—and by the way, one of them helped to bring that machinery across the plains, with one hundred yoke of oxen, to try to attempt the manufacture of sugar. I am not unmindful of him. I am not unmindful at all of what my father could do. My father didn't have much of an education, but he could build a city. I am wondering just how seriously we take this thing, and how much initiative, really, we have in and of ourselves. I am sure it is something to think about.

If I have one prayer in my heart more than another it is that I may stand on my own feet, and look at this thing seriously and ask myself the question: Well, just what am I doing about it? Or do I sit in a

trance and see movement going on, and kid myself that I am moving? And I think it is the worst disease in the world.

SOME PROBLEMS PRESENTED

As has been brought out this afternoon, we have some problems ahead of us that ought to make us serious. When we are consuming four dollars per capita for liquor in the State annually, and in some of those villages or towns ninety-eight per cent of the people are members of the Church, it gives us something to think about. When we see returned missionaries wearing out the bottoms of their shoes in trying to get work, it is something to think about. I met a fellow yesterday, a good member of the Church. I hadn't seen him for thirty years, and the strange part was, I recognized him. Before we got through talking he said this: "The reason that so many people leave the Church, fine people sometimes, is because of the lives of our missionaries; the way they fall aside." I often think of the expression of Shakespeare, speaking of Cassius, "When much enforced they give a hasty spark and straightway cold again." Whose fault is it? It is theirs, a lot of it, and some of it is ours.

When we see, all over this state, tumble-down houses, broken down fences, and things that are in a terrible shape, we have something to think about. When we see houses that were built by the early pioneers, and people still in them, and they have hardly put a shingle on the top of the roof since they were originally built, we have something to think about. And when we see the unemployment, it presents another problem for us to think about.

A PLEA FOR MORE THINKING

I sometimes wonder if we are more interested in being well groomed around a mahogany table to pass on motions, than we are interested in our apparel being covered with the dust of real American initiative. I don't think we read enough, but I do wonder if we don't read more than we think,—we would rather read more than we would attempt to think.

I sometimes think we would rather go around with a can-opener in our pocket to split the tin, going into the canned thoughts of somebody else, than we would do some honest-to-goodness real home cooking in the way of thinking for ourselves.

I think these are challenges to us. I think we should get down to some real, honest-to-goodness, homespun initiative, that we should analyze conditions and see what is the matter. Whether it be grammatically correct or not, we should plunge into it, knowing we are right, and pull the trigger. I think that we ought to put more steel in the backbone of our young people.

EXPERIENCE OF A FARMER

I am not forgetting the experience of that little German back in the Middle West, who decided that he could raise a better grade of corn. He

fastened paper sacks over the tassels so that he could control the pollenization of that corn. He got along fairly well. He almost wore himself out. First the grasshoppers came; then the drought. His neighbor said: "Now, look out. You had better water it, better protect it." He said: "It stands just as it is, and we will see if it can take it." By the time he let that corn "take it" from the grasshoppers and from the drought, he had a kind of corn, in 1937, that just netted him about five hundred thousand dollars.

I pray that the Lord will help us to really see situations as they are, and to give us the backbone to do things as we see they should be done. May he strengthen our testimony, and may we appreciate the leadership of this Church more every day of our lives, I ask these blessings in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The Nebo Stake Choir, which has furnished the music for this session of the Conference, is made up of the choirs of the various wards in the Nebo Stake.

We thank you, brethren and sisters, for the excellent service you have rendered this inspiring Conference throughout the day.

SERVICE OF PEACE OFFICERS COMMENDED

You have undoubtedly noticed the care that the peace officers of our city are taking to direct automobile traffic and to protect pedestrians. The City Commission and the peace officers will appreciate our cooperation in their efforts to avoid accidents. In behalf of the Conference we wish to commend those officers who are in and around this block, who are rendering such excellent service for our comfort and safety.

The *Nebo Stake Choir* sang the "Hosanna" anthem, after which Elder Peter J. Ricks, President of the Rexburg Stake, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until Sunday morning, April 9, at 10 o'clock.