

REPORT OF THE CHURCH AUDITING COMMITTEE

Elder Orval W. Adams, at the request of President Clark, read the following report:

President Heber J. Grant and Counselors,
Dear Brethren:

We have examined the Financial report of the Church for the year 1940. The records are complete, accurate and intelligible; the accounting system is adequate and modern; the budget is in balance, and the Church is free from debt.

Sincerely yours,
Orval W. Adams
Albert E. Bowen
H. H. Bennett
George S. Spencer
Church Auditing Committee.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

My brethren and sisters, while I stand before you I trust that the Lord will lead me to say something that will be helpful, uplifting, and encouraging.

You have heard the report read by President McKay, and there are certain things I should like to refer to briefly in that connection.

First, let me say that we miss Elder Reed Smoot this morning, a man of valiant, able, and conspicuous service to his nation, and a man who I think has been the greatest single missionary of our time.

You have already heard regarding the Saints in Europe. I may say that since our last Conference we have evacuated the missionaries from the Pacific Isles, Australia, and New Zealand, and have returned them, some to Hawaii, and the rest to the mainland. This evacuation was carried out speedily as was the one from Europe, and without any accident or untoward incident.

BUDGET IN BALANCE

As Brother Orval Adams has told you, the budget is in balance. We have lived within our income; the Church is not in debt. As I have said on a previous occasion we hope and intend, so far as we are able, to keep it this way; first, because we believe that is the way the Church should be run; secondly, because we believe we should set the example in handling your trust funds, you members of the Church; thirdly, because, for what it may be worth, we would like to set an example that might be followed by our own governmental agencies.

During the last year we spent more for stake and ward purposes; education, temples, and relief assistance, than we spent in 1939. We spent less for missionary work, due probably entirely to the withdrawal from foreign fields, and we spent less in hospitals, largely due to the fact that the hospitals are becoming better business institutions, and are maintaining themselves.

As might be expected, and as ought to be, in view of the employment which is now being furnished and has been for some months, there were 18,294 fewer persons receiving relief from the Church in 1940 than in 1939. This load should lessen, but I should like to urge all presidents of stakes, bishops and counselors, the auxiliaries, and the Welfare organizations to remember that the major part of the employment which we now have available is for war purposes and war industries, and when this war is over those industries will cease; those employed in them will be thrown out of work; it will take considerable time for readjustment, and the need for your Welfare program as planned will be greatly intensified.

URGES CARE IN SPENDING

We are trying as best we can to spend your funds, which you have given to the Lord, wisely; we are trying to make no commitments that we cannot meet in the matter of buildings and other activities so numerous in which the Church is engaged. We are trying not unduly to expand our activities. We are being very careful and ask you brethren, (and we rejoice beyond expression to have so many bishops and presidents of stakes here at this Conference, perhaps the greatest number that has ever assembled at any individual Conference of the Church) we are asking you brethren, in making up your building program, to remember that you are on a rising market; that you cannot tell just what your materials are going to cost; therefore we urge you to be careful in the making of your estimates.

In the spending of tithing funds, we are trying to spend them for the welfare of communities rather than for the welfare of particular individuals. The Church is not a banking institution, and while, through our Welfare organization, we are helping individuals, that is done upon the recommendation of the quorum to which the individual belongs, and with their guarantee. If we were to undertake to lend to everybody who needs help there would be no money left for the regular activities of the Church.

We are trying to practice economy, and particularly in our buying, because, I repeat, we are spending funds marked with the highest kind of a trust, and so we urge you brethren, you bishops, you presidents of stakes, in your buying, to get the most that you can for your money. These funds are not given to you to spend to help some particular person in whom you have a special interest, however worthy that person may be, unless he can give you the service for his funds.

We are trying not to build magnificent cathedrals, but serviceable meeting houses, and would like you brethren and sisters to have that in mind when you are planning for the expenditure of funds.

GRATITUDE EXPRESSED FOR GENEROSITY OF SAINTS

Our Fast Offerings, to which Brother McKay alluded, have increased, in the average, (there is only a slight increase over 1939)—the average this year was 83 cents, as he stated, and 82.2 in 1939.

Twenty-eight stakes in 1939 paid more than a dollar; 45 in 1940. But we missed some of the excellent records that were made by stakes in 1939, and the maximum of 1940 was not so great for a stake as it was in 1939.

We have begun and are pushing to completion the Idaho Falls Temple. We have erected a memorial building to Joseph Smith on the Brigham Young University campus. We have been adding Welfare storehouses, and in addition we have been carrying on the regular building of the Church.

I would like to thank the people on behalf of the General Authorities for their generosity, their loyalty, their service in carrying on the temporal affairs of the Church as well as the spiritual affairs. The Lord has in this Church combined the spiritual and the temporal very closely and we therefore have both as a part of our mission, and, I repeat, the First Presidency and the General Authorities of the Church are grateful beyond expression for your services of the past.

PERILS OF TIMES

Now, I have not time to touch on more of those matters, although there are several others that deserve mention, but I want to read something to you to conclude my remarks.

The perils of these times justify some comment. May I be pardoned if I repeat now some things I have said on other occasions.

In September, 1923, eighteen years ago, at a religious service in this Tabernacle, I mentioned certain trends I then saw. They were: a spirit of revolution that threatened the very foundations of government everywhere, indeed the destruction of the existing bodies politic of the world; the unrestricted immigration of aliens who were foreign and in tradition hostile to our systems of government; the enhancement of the power of the Federal Executive; the breaking down of the mutual independence of the three branches of government,—executive, judicial, and legislative; the disappearance of local self government and the assumption of control by the Federal Government of the very details of our lives; the curtailment of our constitutional guarantees under the Bill of Rights; the building of class in our nation and of class conflict and hatred; the spread of Bolshevism, we call it Communism now, working for the overthrow of our government, the doing away with religion, even the overturning of our family relationships.

During the eighteen years passed since then, I have on all opportunities repeated these observations.

I will leave you to make up your own minds how far these trends have become realities.

NO MAN SEES END

No thinking person doubts that our people, our nation, and the world are now passing through one of the great crises of the world's history. We are in the midst of a world-wide revolution, which is wholly alien to our free institutions and is foreign in birth, concept, and directing

head. No man, of his own power, sees the end. But the end the revolutionists seek is fairly clear; it is the overturning of the whole existing order, political, financial, economic, social, religious, the complete destruction of our Constitution and the government established under it, and then the setting up of some sort of despotism that shall destroy, in all these fields, the free agency which the Lord gave to man. The revolutionists plan that this is to be largely done during the war, under the plea of war necessity; it is to be continued after the war under the excuse—if we are not then too cowed to require an excuse—that this new political order is necessary that we may rehabilitate the world. They count that then, after a little time, the revolution will be secure. There seems no doubt that this is their conscious, deliberate, planned end. We have gone a long way already down this road.

OUR DUTY TO SUSTAIN THE CONSTITUTION

Knowing as we do that God set up this Constitution of ours and that He has declared it "should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles," (D. & C. 101:77) it is the duty of every member of the Church to protect and defend the Constitution against any and all attack. In this country our lawful political allegiance runs not to any man, not to any party, not to any "ism," but to the Constitution of the United States and to the free institutions set up under it. There can be no tampering with the "just and holy principles" of the Constitution. No true Latter-day Saint can or will do other than reverence the Constitution; each will do all in his power to save it from pollution or destruction.

FORMER PREDICTIONS REPEATED

For the past several Conferences, I have spoken about world conditions. In the April Conference of 1937, I said:

... there is strongest reason for believing that some of the most skilled, astute, and shrewd diplomats, politicians, and statesmen of all Europe are now planning to have the people of the United States finance the next European war either before the war begins or during its progress.

I continued:

Furthermore, certain of these same diplomats, politicians, and statesmen are planning to entice the United States into an offensive and defensive military alliance in order that we shall participate in that next world war by sending our young men to the battlefields of Europe. The argument they now plan to use to bring this about is that in this way only can the peace of the world be preserved. While this is a most profound fallacy, it will unfortunately find a sympathetic ear among many of the people of this country who do not fully understand international relations. It will require the wisest statesmanship on our part to prevent the United States from becoming again the victim of a world military catastrophe.

I need make no comment about these statements.

TO BE PEACEMAKERS THE DESTINY OF AMERICA

This war began as a war for empire. This is an unrighteous cause. A war to enlarge and maintain empire of conquest is no better. This war continues for these two objects. All other issues urged in this contest are merely ancillary to the getting or keeping of empire. America has no place as a belligerent in such a conflict. We do have a place in the world by Divine design and destiny as the makers of a lasting peace, but we must come to this task not as joint conquerors but with clean hands and a contrite spirit, bearing in our hands the olive branch of peace, spiritual hope, and righteousness.

We have heard that our help in the conflict was always to be short of war; but we have for many months been in fact actual participants in the war.

We have also been told our sons would not be sent abroad to fight, but American vessels on both of our coasts are reported now actually making ready for use as troop transports.

It does look as if only Divine intervention of some kind can keep our sons on our own soil, fighting for our own cause, in defense of our own freedom and liberties.

We all have the deepest sympathy for the woe and misery which afflict the innocent peoples of Europe. We join them in sorrowing for lost loved ones. We pray to the Lord to mitigate their suffering and assuage their grief. But we need not be so much concerned about political Europe. This war is merely the outbreaking of old political hatreds that have festered in Europe for a thousand years. They have never been fully wiped out before; they will not after this war is over. Our great concern is that this endemic yet virulent infection shall not spread to America and leave us with an incurable malady.

I have before urged and I now urge that we put hate away from us, because it is the hates from the last war that have made this one. Hate and righteousness cannot dwell in the same heart. Hate cankers the soul and destroys spirituality. Hate has no place in the hearts of the followers of Jesus.

A CHOICE LAND

With infinite patience, infinite mercy, infinite love, the Lord has tried to lead His children of this earth along the paths He has made for us, that we today might not become ripened in iniquity and subject to chastisement as were His children in the olden times. We who live on this hemisphere have a special blessing and a prescribed decree. This is the blessing:

Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. (Ether 2:12.)

This is the decree:

Wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept

off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off. (Ether 2:10.)

May the Lord help us so to live that we enjoy the blessings and escape the decree.

Too many of us of this land have not hearkened to the voice of the Lord, nor observed His laws and commandments. The offenses of the peoples of the earth have been great; the eternal law seems to be that there must be an equal atonement.

Jesus said to His disciples:

"Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh! (Matt. 18:7.)

THE LORD'S PLANS WILL TRIUMPH

But in all the afflictions we now have or that loom up ahead, it is my faith that the Lord is at the helm, for this is a major event in the history of man. It is my faith that nothing has happened and nothing will happen that is contrary to His plan or that is against His will. In the final event, God does not permit any trifling with His decrees. However far afield men may wander, Righteousness and Truth finally triumph. Of these things I have the same knowledge that I have that I live.

Of all peoples, we are, with this knowledge, the most blessed in the earth. Because, however dark may seem the days, we shall face our trials with the sure knowledge that God lives; we know that He can hear and answer our prayers according to His wisdom; we understand that we have an existence hereafter where we and our loved ones shall be forever safe from the ills of the flesh; we know that we shall have eternal happiness if we live and die righteously; we know that the Lord will bless and protect wherever he may be, every man who lives the principles of the Gospel and who does his duty.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

We believe in peace. We are the devoted followers of the Prince of Peace. We abhor war, save in the actual defense of our homes, our families, our liberties. For we remember that when Peter struck off with his sword the ear of Malchus, the servant of the High Priest, the Lord said: "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. 26:52) The Lord made no exceptions to His law. History has made none.

We pray for peace. We pray that the Lord will keep the youth of America out of the European conflict. We ask Him to bring peace into the hearts of men.

With all my heart I join in the anxiety and pray the prayer of President Grant. God bless our boys and the boys of all America! God bless the youth of the world, ignorant of the why of all this and innocent of any blame therefor.

May the Lord bless us and increase our testimonies of the truth of

His Gospel, for the day cometh when this shall be our greatest solace, and comfort, the sheet anchor which shall keep us from spiritual despair. God bless us, preserve us, increase our testimonies, help us to live the Gospel, I ask in the name of Jesus, Amen.

PRESIDENT RUDGER CLAWSON

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

This is a very wonderful gathering. It looks very much like a Priesthood meeting, but it is a general meeting of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, a very important gathering.

I was deeply impressed with the remarks made by President Grant. I am sure we are all very happy to have him with us, to take the lead and point out the way. The Lord bless him and heal him!

A VERY SATISFACTORY REPORT

The statement read this morning by President McKay was and is perhaps the most elaborate and comprehensive statement ever made to the Church, both financially and socially, from this stand. The budget is balanced and the Church is out of debt. What excellent good news that is! How we ought to rejoice and glorify the Lord for the prosperity and the faith and good works of the Latter-day Saints! We feel relieved, we feel strengthened and encouraged when we can have such reports as those that were also commented upon by President Clark, and his further remarks this morning were indeed impressive and encouraging to the Latter-day Saints. It is hoped they will have a good effect throughout our country.

GOSPEL PREACHED BY WORD AND EXAMPLE

Brethren and sisters, the Lord has said in a revelation to Joseph Smith the Prophet—said it in more than one place in the scriptures—that salvation is the greatest gift of God to man, and that salvation comes by the preaching of the Gospel. The miracles and blessings that follow the preaching do not come before but come after the preaching to confirm the faith of the Latter-day Saints and all who will receive the word of God. God does not give signs and miracles to make us believe, but rather to strengthen and help those who receive the message.

I call your attention to an incident connected with the crucifixion of the Savior. It was his great mission to come to the earth, under the direction of His Father in Heaven, that His precious blood might be shed for the redemption of mankind. After His crucifixion, and just prior to His returning to Heaven, He delivered an important charge to His disciples in these words:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

So I take it that that responsibility is upon those who are called to