

Saturday, April 4

First Day

spirit of testimony exists throughout the Church today. This is the spirit that is in your hearts. As long as that spirit endures within us, God will bless us, He will sustain us, and this work will roll on to its final destiny and objective, which is to preach the gospel of Jesus

Christ to all people, that the world will be prepared for the second coming of the King of Kings, which event I pray will soon come to pass that we again shall know peace, harmony, and good will among men, which I pray for in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I AM almost tempted to say that the short talks are better than the long ones. I don't know whether I dare say it or not.

I was interested this morning in hearing Brother Thomas E. McKay report conditions in the European Missions, and particularly was I interested in hearing that the local missionaries in Great Britain had reported sixty baptisms. You presidents of stakes each has a mission in your stake. In spite of the intensive activity of this day, and some shortage of personnel, I am sure that if the missionaries of England, in the conditions in which they find themselves after this length of time, can do this kind of work, we can ably man and conduct our stake missions. Scattered throughout the length and breadth of the British Mission there are not to be found as many members of the Church as there are in many of our stakes, and their resources and opportunities cannot compare with ours—and yet they are going forward. We do appreciate the cooperation we have received from you stake presidents and we ask you for a continuance of this cooperation in this highly important obligation which the Lord has placed upon us, and which should have yet greater emphasis and attention.

The radio mail brings in a good deal of interesting comment from many thousands of people. One listener sent in a clipping from *The Christian Advocate*, three or four days ago. *The Christian Advocate*, according to its own masthead, is the official magazine of Methodism. This is the opening sentence of the clipping:

If the prophets had kept out of politics,

they would never have gotten into the Old Testament.

It struck me rather forcibly, and also the thought struck me that if this had appeared in our own publications someone would have criticized it as "politics," but since it appeared in a Methodist publication I suppose it is all right to present it here without hearing it derided as "politics." (Laughter) Seriously, I believe the time is opportune to leave just this thought, since we are not now in the midst of any political campaign, since we face no immediate election, and since the heat of such things is not with us at the moment:

As I looked back to those prophets who would never have gotten into the Old Testament if they had kept out of "politics," I suddenly became aware that the Philistines certainly didn't like the "politics" of the Israelites; I am sure that the Pharaohs didn't like the "politics" of Moses when he led the children of Israel out of bondage. I am equally sure that Saul didn't like the "politics" of Samuel when, at the Lord's command, he anointed David king; and I am sure that the captains and kings didn't like the "politics" of Jeremiah, or any of the other prophets of God.

But this fact is fundamental: The principles of religion enter into every activity of life. Should the activities of politics extend themselves into every activity of life, we must be increasingly careful to weigh every issue of politics according to principle, and not according to politics, if you please. I am sure that politics were attributed to the President of this Church, by many, when he took his stand, courageous and out-

spoken, on the prohibition question, for example. Call it politics if you wish. The principle is there and always will be, and some day his stand will be vindicated. It has been already in the minds of thinking and honest men.

I have been reading recently the last twenty sermons of Pastor Martin Niemöller, whose unfortunate country could no longer tolerate his preaching. In his next to last sermon is this comment:

We are being accosted on all sides by statesmen, by the man on the street, who tells us: "Do not speak so loudly or you will land in prison. Pray do not speak so plainly; surely you can say all that in a more obscure fashion." But, brothers and sisters, we are not allowed to put our bushel under a basket.

One more sermon after that, and Martin Niemöller no more ascended to his pulpit, and I think he has never been heard from since.

A quotation from Jeremiah will be of interest to all who have the sacred trust of leadership in the wards and stakes and missions of this Church:

Thus saith the Lord; Stand in the court

of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah. . . . all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; *diminish not a word.* (Jeremiah 26:2)

As we face the issues of the future, my brethren, may we, in the leadership of our people here at headquarters, and you in your stakes, weigh all the issues according to principle. There comes a time in the career of every man when he must speak according to the truth or break the trust of his office, and when the Presidency of the Church, and their associates in the general councils of the Church, unitedly take a stand on any principle, let us remember the prophets of the Old Testament, and meet the issues according to their merit as principles, and on no other consideration.

I leave you my testimony of my gratitude to my Father in heaven for the Presidency of this Church, and those who are associated with them; for the restoration of the gospel, and all that it means. This is the work of the Lord, and it will go forward to the accomplishment of His purposes, regardless of the schemes of men and the confused issues of the day. God be with you. Amen.

ELDER RUFUS K. HARDY

Of the First Council of the Seventy

MY brethren, I rejoice greatly at this opportunity of saying a few words and being in your midst.

I sense and understand somehow—I think I am correct—that there are just about one hundred forty-one spiritual gardens which we here tonight have to take care of after we leave this meeting, and I am sure that we all feel that we can go back to these places, having drawn from that great reservoir which has been given to us here, and give that heavenly and spiritual food to those people who live and who abide in the vicinity in which we operate.

You know, I have been struck with this thought, that in all of the history of religion, in all of the Bible stories and all the stories of the Book of Mormon, God's advent among men commenced with small beginnings. As we have been

chatting here tonight, talking about this great and marvelous and wonderful man Moses, just for a moment let your mind dwell on that man, if you like—the cradle; then the leaving of his country because of what he had done; then, as I remember it, the Bible says that Moses, watching the flocks of Jethro, at the back of the desert near Mount Sinai, saw this peculiar burning bush, which was not consumed, and the voice said to him, as he drew near it: "Moses, Moses," and he said: "Here am I, God." And then think of the length of time it took the Lord God Almighty to prevail on him to do the thing that he should do; his excuses of his speech, of his tongue; and finally, I think, as it occurs to me, more in desperation than anything else. God said to him: "What have you got in your hand?" "A staff."