

Sunday, April 5

you have been attending Columbia's *Church of the Air*, coming to you from the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, and originating with Station KSL. The network Mormon service today was presented as part of the proceedings of the one hundred twelfth annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as leaders of the Church listened in session

(End of Broadcast)

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in the upper rooms of the Salt Lake Temple. The speaker was Elder Stephen L. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Copies of his sermon may be obtained by writing to the station to which you are listening.

The Tabernacle choir joined in the service with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting and Dr. Frank W. Asper at the organ.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

We shall now continue our service in the upper room of the Temple. President David O. McKay of the First Presidency will now speak to us.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

WITH a number of young men from each of many wards in the Church serving somewhere in the terrible conflict now raging, it is easily understood why our minds are turned toward the deprecation of war, and to the hope for peace. Thoughts of loved ones are pretty closely linked with their soldier boys in army encampments. There are many, too, who should like to know what the attitude of the Church is toward the present war. This is a fitting day and occasion on which to consider this subject.

Easter, as you know, is an ancient spring festival with which Christendom has long since associated the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Savior's resurrection is the most glorious event in the history of mankind. It proclaims the victory of the soul over death, and the existence and progression of the individual personality beyond the grave.

The resurrected Lord's first greeting to His disciples, in the evening of that memorable day, was "Peace be unto you."

And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you. (John 20:20-21)

That was His message, too, at the last meeting He had with them before his crucifixion. Said He: "These words I have spoken unto you that *in me ye might have peace.*"

The peace of Christ abides in the heart. It is an individual blessing. But it is a condition to be enjoyed also by groups of individuals, and to that end His disciples were to declare peace to the world.

On this Easter Day, the Risen Christ beholds in the world not peace, but *war*.

In the face of the tragic condition among mankind, honest thinking men and women ask how is it possible to reconcile the teachings of Jesus with the participation of the Church in armed conflict.

War is basically selfish. Its roots feed in the soil of envy, hatred, desire for domination. Its fruit, there-

fore, is always bitter. They who cultivate and propagate it spread death and destruction, and are enemies of the human race.

War originates in the hearts of men who seek to despoil, to conquer, or to destroy other individuals or groups of individuals. Self exaltation is a motivating factor; force, the means of attainment. War is rebellious action against moral order.

The present war had its beginning in militarism, a false philosophy which believes that "war is a biological necessity for the purification and progress of nations." It proclaims that Might determines Right, and that only the strongest nations should survive and rule. It says, "the grandeur of history lies in the perpetual conflict of nations, and it is simply foolish to desire the suppression of their rivalry."

War impels you to hate your enemies.

The Prince of Peace says, Love your enemies.

War says, Curse them that curse you.

The Prince of Peace says, Pray for them that curse you.

War says, Injure and kill them that hate you.

The Risen Lord says, Do good to them that hate you.

WAR INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF THE SAVIOR

Thus we see that war is incompatible with Christ's teachings. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of peace. War is its antithesis, and produces hate. It is vain to attempt to reconcile war with true Christianity.

IN the face of all this, I shall seem inconsistent when I declare that I uphold our country in the gigantic task it has assumed in the present world conflict, and sustain the

Church in its loyal support of the government in its fight against dictatorship.

In justification of this seeming inconsistency, I shall not attempt to prove that there are occasions when Jesus would approve of a nation's starting a war. That He used force to drive from the temple the money changers, and other desecrators of the House of God, is a fact; but only a misapplication of the text can make that incident a justification for one Christian nation's going to war against another. On that occasion, as on all occasions, Jesus opposed and denounced wrong. With the strength of fiery indignation and of his own moral force, and not merely with a whip of small cords, Jesus drove the self-convicted desecrators from the temple.

Neither shall I attempt to prove that He favored war when He said: "Think not that I come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword." (Matt. 10:34) They who would quote this saying as indicating that Jesus approves of war surely put a strained interpretation on its true meaning, which refers most clearly to the incompatibility between truth and error. It clearly refers to the necessity of a choice, which has been made by thousands, between accepting the gospel or continuing in ease and comfort with relatives. There is not in that quotation any justification for one Christian nation's declaring war upon another.

Nor, again, would I try to justify my seeming inconsistency by referring to what He said on another occasion as follows:

But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. . . .

And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords, And he said unto them, it is enough. (Luke 22:36 and 38)

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Without reading into the text something which is not intended or even implied, the most that one can get from this admonition is that henceforth the disciples going forth into an antagonistic world might supply themselves with necessary support and the usual means of defense.

None of these sayings of the Savior's can be taken to prove that He justifies war.

Tolstoy, in his *Christianity and Patriotism*, says:

A Christian state, to be consistent, ought, on entering upon a war, not merely to remove the crosses from the churches, to turn the churches themselves into buildings for other purposes, to give the clergy other duties, and above all, to prohibit the gospel—but ought to renounce every precept of morality which follows from the Christian law.

Notwithstanding all this, I still say that there are conditions when entrance into war is justifiable, and when a Christian nation may, without violation of principles, take up arms against an opposing force.

Such a condition, however, is not a real or fancied insult given by one nation to another. When this occurs proper reparation may be made by mutual understanding, apology, or by arbitration.

Neither is there justifiable cause found in a desire or even a need for territorial expansion. The taking of territory implies the subjugation of the weak by the strong—the application of the jungle law.

Nor is war justified in an attempt to enforce a new order of government, or even to impel others to a particular form of worship, however better the government or eternally true the principles of the enforced religion may be.

There are, however, two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say *enter, not begin*—a war: (1) An at-

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tempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and, (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly there is a third, viz., Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one.

MAN'S FREE AGENCY FUNDAMENTAL TO PROGRESS

PARAMOUNT among these reasons, of course, is the defense of man's freedom. An attempt to rob man of his free agency caused dissension even in heaven. Scriptures tell us:

Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

In that rebellion Lucifer said in substance: "By the law of force I will compel the human family to subscribe to the eternal plan, but give me thine honor and power."

To deprive an intelligent human being of his free agency is to commit the crime of the ages.

Impelling motives of this arch-enemy to liberty were pride, ambition, a sense of superiority, a will to dominate his fellows, and to be exalted above them, and a determination to deprive human beings of their freedom to speak and to act as their reason and judgment would dictate. Applicable to him are the words of Isaiah:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . .

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12-15)

Thus in the beginning was designed the great crime against manhood, to thwart

The wish, which ages have not yet subdued, in man, to have no master save his food.

So fundamental in man's eternal progress is his inherent right to choose, that the Lord would defend it even at the price of war. Without freedom of thought, freedom of choice, freedom of action within lawful bounds, man cannot progress. The Lord recognized this, and also the fact that it would take man thousands of years to make the earth habitable for self-governing individuals. Throughout the ages advanced souls have yearned for a society in which liberty and justice prevail. Men have sought for it, fought for it, have died for it. Ancient freemen prized it, slaves longed for it, the Magna Charta demanded it, the Constitution of the United States declared it.

"This love of liberty which God has planted in us," said Abraham Lincoln, "constitutes the bulwark of our liberty and independence. It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling seacoasts, our army, and our navy. Our defense is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere. Destroy this spirit, and we have planted the seeds of despotism at our very doors."

OUR OBLIGATION TO THE STATE

A SECOND obligation that impels us to become participants in this world war is loyalty to government.

We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that He holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society.

We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed and held inviolate as will secure to each individual the free exercise of conscience,

the right and control of property, and the protection of life.

The greatest responsibility of the state is to guard the lives, and to protect the property and rights of its citizens; and if the state is obligated to protect its citizens from lawlessness within its boundaries, it is equally obligated to protect them from lawless encroachments from without—whether the attacking criminals be individuals or nations.

We are informed by competent authority that twenty years ago the government of the United States entered into an agreement with Japan to maintain peace in the Pacific Ocean, and "keep honorable hands off China." "Before the year was over," writes Mark J. Gayn, in an article *Prelude to Treachery*, "the ablest men on the Japanese naval general staff went to work blue-printing war on the United States and Britain."

From such treachery the state is in duty bound to protect itself, and its only effective means of doing so under present world conditions is by armed force. As a Church:

We believe that all men are justified in defending themselves, their friends, and property, and the government from the unlawful assaults and encroachments of all persons in times of exigency, where immediate appeal cannot be made to laws, and relief afforded. (D. & C. 134:11)

Even though we sense the hellish origin of war, even though we feel confident that war will never end war, yet under existing conditions we find ourselves as a body committed to combat this evil thing. With other loyal citizens we serve our country as bearers of arms, rather than to stand aloof to enjoy a freedom for which others have fought and died.

One purpose of emphasizing this theme is to give encouragement to young men now engaged in armed

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conflict and to reassure them that they are fighting for an eternal principle fundamental to the peace and progress of mankind.

CONCLUSION

GOD bless them and others now registered awaiting the call to duty, and those serving in defense! To each of you we send a message of confidence and trust. Many of you before entering upon your military duties were authorized messengers of peace. Others of you also hold the Priesthood. To all we say, in your personal habits let the same ideals guide you as soldiers in the army as guided you as missionaries. What the Lord said to you then is applicable to you now—

Wherefore, gird up your loins, and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand.

Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. (D. & C. 27:15, 16)

Keep yourselves morally clean. Being soldiers or sailors is not justification for indulgence in vulgarity, intemperance, or immorality. Others may be impelled to do these things because of the beastliness of war, but you who hold the Priesthood cannot so indulge with impunity. For your own sweet lives, and for others who trust you, keep yourselves unpoluted. Your loved ones believe in you, your comrades will respect you, your officers will admire you.

Today as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, there

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is a cloud of spiritual heaviness hanging over the world, as there was darkness at the time of the crucifixion. Let us hope that when this mad orgy shall have ended, that the honest in heart will experience a spiritual resurrection and will associate with one another in a newness of life. As seeds of future wars are often sown around the peace table, may the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ and not the spirit of retaliation and revenge actuate those who meet to determine peace terms. When that blessed occasion comes, may the representatives of the nations recognize the inalienable rights of peoples everywhere to govern themselves. It would be appropriate if there were emblazoned in golden letters on the walls in which they meet, and especially cherished as motives in the hearts of those who determine the conditions of peace, the words of Christ our Lord: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

O Brother Man

Follow with reverent steps the great example

Of Him whose holy work was "doing good";
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,

Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangor

Of wild music o'er the earth shall cease;
Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
And in its ashes plant the tree of peace!

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

The congregation will now sing, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" (Hymn Book, page 149; No. 17 in the Pamphlet).

The closing prayer will be offered by President J. Frank Killian of Emery Stake.