

Nor created in their hearts humility and the spirit of repentance, but to the contrary, to their condemnation. Nearly everything, it seems, which has been given that should be a blessing to men, has been turned to evil. Many of these discoveries and inventions are now being used to bring destruction to the human race. They are being used in the most cruel, most inhuman, godless war this world has ever seen. They are employed by criminals to aid them in their crimes, by the ambitious in their efforts to destroy the agency of man, and by despots who are endeavoring to subjugate the world to an unholy, wicked rule.

Faith has not increased in the world, nor has righteousness, nor obedience to God. What the world needs today is to draw nearer to the Lord. We need more humble, abiding faith in our Redeemer, more love in our hearts for our Eternal Father and for our fellow men. Yes, this is a good time, a vital time—if we are to survive the forces of evil—for every man to forsake the paths of sin and turn unto the Lord who will abundantly pardon. If we will do this, we may in confidence call upon the Lord and He will be near. He will help us fight our battles to cleanse the world of despotism and make it a fit abode for all who love the principles of truth and righteousness.

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.” (Psalms 33:12)  
Let us make our nation all that it was destined to be, and this will come if we will humble ourselves and learn to be obedient to divine law.

May the peace and blessings of the Lord be ours, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

After the address, the Choir sang “Rise Up, O Men of God” (Noble).

(*End of Broadcast*)

The Choir and congregation sang, “America.”

### PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

*Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise. (1 Nephi 2:20)

That inspired promise made over two thousand years ago, referred to America, in loyalty to which every true American can say in his heart:

Breathes there a man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,  
As home his footsteps he hath turned,  
From wandering on a foreign strand!

#### A GOD-BLESSED LAND

In the giant forest of the Sequoia National Park there is standing

even today, a living tree that was three thousand years old when Columbus discovered America. One cannot stand by the side of this, in all probability the oldest living thing in the world, without wishing that it had the intelligence and power to tell the story of the races and peoples who for forty centuries have lived, flourished, and decayed in this choicest, most wonderful of all lands. The origin and the rise of the Incas might have antedated this old tree's birth, and possibly the coming of the Jaredites might have preceded by a few hundred years this ancient tree's beginning, but the downfall of the Jaredites, the beginning, rise, and end of the Nephites, the influx of European peoples, the conquest of Mexico, the subjugation of the Indians, and the flourishing of European civilization, have all come within the life-span of this awe-inspiring, death-defying, divinely created thing. Nations have risen and nations have perished in the Americas—a land on which it is decreed no king shall ever hold sway.

To each and all of these nations the land was a blessed land, and today is even more glorious than ever. No observer can travel from the sun-kissed beaches of the Pacific to the wooded hills and power-producing rivers of New England without being thrilled by the greatness of these United States. The painted deserts of the West, flower-carpeted in springtime, and holding hidden beauty and entrancing interest in every season—the inspiring monuments of the Rockies, harboring snows as reservoirs for crops in valleys below—the colorful canyons, painted only by the Creator Himself—the fertile food-producing valley of the Mississippi—the mighty forests of the Northwest—the navigable rivers—the climate, varying to suit all needs and conditions—all these and a thousand other equally glorious and productive features bear witness to the age-old declaration that this is a "land choice above all other lands," and inspire every patriot to say, "This is my own, my native land." Millions of Americans today declare with Winthrop: "Our country, to be cherished in all our hearts, to be defended by all our hands."

America, and this includes Canada and the Southern Republics, was a choice land when the Jaredites left the land of Shinar approximately four thousand years ago. So was it fourteen hundred years later when Lehi and his colony formed the nucleus of a nation, prospered on the bounty of the country, and after a thousand years perished because of transgression.

America was a great land when the stately Indian chiefs ruled their tribes, which thrived from the Behring Sea in the north to the Panama and the towering Andes in the south.

Today, yielding to the demands of the greatest economic era since the dawn of her creation America is demonstrating the vastness of her resources and the extent of her natural possibilities as never before. Well may we sing:

I love thy rocks and rills,  
Thy woods and templed hills;  
My heart with rapture thrills  
Like that above.

This country is not only the choicest of all lands, but now the preserver of true liberty, and the hope of civilized man!

However, as I have already implied, a country may be ever so great and fruitful, yet a nation subsisting upon it be impotent and decadent. As Lyman Abbott has truly said:

The greatness of a nation is measured, not by its fruitful acres, but by the men who cultivate those acres; not by great forests, but by the men who use those forests; not by its mines, but by the men who work them.

God has made America fruitful; man must make and keep the nation great.

#### INTEGRITY FUNDAMENTAL

The foundation of a noble character is integrity. By this virtue the strength of a nation, as of an individual, may be judged. No nation can ever become truly great, and win the confidence of other peoples, which to further its own selfish ends will, for example, consider an honorable treaty as "a mere scrap of paper." No nation will become great whose trusted officers will pass legislation for personal gain, who will take advantage of a public office for personal preferment, or to gratify vain ambition, or who will, through forgery, chicanery, and fraud, rob the government or be false in office to a public trust.

Honesty, sincerity of purpose, must be the dominant traits of character in leaders of a nation that would be truly great.

"I hope," said George Washington, "that I may ever have virtue and firmness enough to maintain what I consider to be the most enviable of all titles—the character of an honest man."

It was Washington's character more than his brilliancy of intellect that made him the choice of all as their natural leader when the thirteen original colonies decided to sever their connection with the mother country. As one in eulogy to the father of our country truly said:

When he appeared among the eloquent orators, the ingenious thinkers, the vehement patriots of the Revolution, his modesty and temperate profession could not conceal his superiority; he at once, by the very nature of his character, was felt to be their leader.

Men of sterling statesmanship, unknown or renowned, who strive to emulate his strength of character constitute today as always the greatest asset of our mighty and much beloved United States.

Also bearing record to integrity and honor as being an indispensable element in a truly great nation is the life of the immortal Lincoln, in whom was "vindicated the greatness of real goodness, and the goodness of real greatness," to whose character the passing centuries can add only more brilliant lustre.

The purest treasure mortal times afford  
Is spotless reputation: that away,  
Men are but gilded loam, or painted clay.  
(*Richard II*, Act I, Sc. 1)

## THE AMERICAN HOME

A second essential, fundamental element in the building and in the perpetuity of a great people is the home. "The strength of a nation, especially of a republican nation, is in the intelligent and well-ordered homes of the people." If and when the time ever comes that parents shift to the state the responsibility of rearing their children, the stability of the nation will be undermined, and its impairment and disintegration will have begun.

The increasing divorce rate in the United States today is a threatening menace to this nation's greatness. Race suicide and tandem polygamous relationships made possible by lax divorce laws are enemies of an ideal national life. The increase throughout the United States in the percentage of divorces is alarming, and this insidious evil is increasing in the Church itself. There are too many couples in the Church who, when difficulties arise, seek the remedy in divorce courts.

In the well-ordered home we may experience on earth a taste of heaven. It is there that the babe in a mother's caress first experiences a sense of security; finds in the mother's kiss the first realization of affection; discovers in mother's sympathy and tenderness the first assurance that there is love in the world.

A week or so ago conditions made it necessary that I share a Pullman with forty soldier boys—gentlemen they were, a credit to any nation. In course of a conversation, one of them remarked: "My dad's hair too is white"; then he added in a tone that expressed the depth of his feeling: "How I should like to see that old gray head this morning!"

He and his companions were en route for an encampment to complete their training before embarking for overseas. They are enlisted to defend not only the free agency of man but the rights and sanctity of home and loved ones. Such an affection for home and loved ones as felt by that soldier boy will make death preferable to surrender to an enemy who would destroy all that true American soldiers hold dear.

## A NATIONAL NUISANCE

At this point I must mention an insidious evil that is destroying, termite-like, the foundation of character as well as that of the home and nation. I refer to the appalling increase in the use of tobacco, particularly among the young. Of its uselessness, expensiveness, injuriousness to health, I will say nothing. I shall refer only to its undermining effect on character and to its slovenliness.

Respect for another's rights and property is fundamental in good government. It is a mark of refinement in the individual. It is a fundamental Christian virtue. Nicotine seems to dull, if not kill completely this trait of true culture, and women are fast becoming its pitiable victims, and the worst offenders in society. There are still a few trains that carry non-smoking compartments, a few eating places with signs, "No smoking." In violation of such placards, it is not infrequent, however, to see a woman with utter disregard for the feelings of her fellow-

passengers, the first in a car to light a cigarette. On one occasion, when the conductor politely called a woman's attention to the fact that a smoking car was in the rear, she blandly replied: "Oh, I'm quite comfortable where I am, thank you!"

It is not uncommon now to see bureaus, dressing tables, desks, mantles, and other pieces of furniture in first-class hotels marred by burning cigarettes. Ashes litter costly carpets. Railroad stations, theatre and hotel lobbies are littered with burnt-out matches, stubs of cigarettes, and cigars. Smoking has become our nationwide nuisance number one. If men and women must smoke, and it seems that many are now slaves to that habit, then for the sake of cleanliness and neatness, and pride of our country, as well as of consideration for others, let them refrain from marring furniture, and from strewing ashes and burnt-out matches and cigarette stubs in buildings where people assemble either for pleasure or instruction. Because of thoughtlessness in this regard, many of our public places are littered as unkept barns.

I appeal to young men and women of the Church to refrain from this obnoxious habit. To bishops, I would say: Choose no person to act as either an officer or teacher in your quorums or auxiliaries who is guilty of using tobacco. If teachers cannot teach by example, their precepts will be as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

#### CHASTITY AN IMPORTANT FACTOR

I mentioned the home as the most important factor in building a great nation. The most vicious enemy to home life is immorality. At the present time social workers are greatly concerned over the number of young girls between fifteen and nineteen who seem to have lost all sense of decency and who shamelessly sacrifice themselves on the altar of lust. Of this evil, Victor Hugo writes impressively:

The holy law of Jesus Christ governs our civilization; but it does not yet permeate it; it is said that slavery has disappeared from European civilization. That is a mistake. It still exists; but it weighs now only upon woman, and it is called prostitution.

Life and social order have spoken their last word to her. All that can happen to her has happened. She has endured all, borne all, experienced all, suffered all, lost all, wept for all. She is resigned with that resignation which resembles indifference as death resembles sleep. She shuns nothing now. She fears nothing now. Every cloud falls upon her and all the oceans sweep over her!

This corroding evil is just as demoralizing to the young man as it is to the young woman. In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints there is no double standard of morality. The young man should approach the marriage altar just as fit for fatherhood as his sweetheart is worthy of motherhood.

And what has all this to do with the greatness of a nation? The answer is apparent. Pure water does not flow from a polluted spring—nor a healthy nation from a diseased parentage.

Chastity, not indulgence, during the pre-marital years, is the source of harmony and happiness in the home, and the chief contributing factor

to the health and perpetuity of the race. All the virtues that make up a beautiful character—loyalty, dependability, confidence, trust, love of God, and fidelity to man—are associated with this diadem in the crown of virtuous womanhood and of virile manhood.

The word of the Lord to His Church is: Keep yourself unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27).

Yes, America is a "land choice above all other lands." It is the responsibility of Americans to build a mighty and superior nation. The history of the nations of the past proves that nations in the most fruitful and most productive of all lands may become senile and decadent.

While our sons, sweethearts, and husbands are offering their lives in defense of the God-given gift of free agency and for the right to live without the domination of tyranny, let us in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as citizens of our beloved country, use our influence to see that men and women of upright character, of unimpeachable honor are elected to office, that our homes are kept unpolluted and unbroken by infidelity, that children therein will be trained to keep the commandments of the Lord, to be "honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and virtuous, and to do good to all men." Cherishing such ideals, we can with all our hearts say with the poet Longfellow:

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hope of future years,  
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!

In the present crisis of the nations of the globe I pray that this great nation and the Dominion on the north may be truly the harbor of freedom, and a safe guide to the confused peoples of the world.

May the members of the Church of Jesus Christ, preaching the restored gospel, ever remember the Savior's injunction: "Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14, 16).

### PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

#### *Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

It is difficult by mere words to express our appreciation of the great mission the Tabernacle Choir is performing. This morning we express gratitude for their presence and the inspirational singing they have given us.

An anthem, "Hallelujah Chorus" ("Messiah")—Handel, was sung by the Choir.

Elder David A. Butler, President of the Snowflake Stake, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2 p.m.