

In conclusion, may I plead that we as a people—as a nation—be less wasteful. If we are served more than we can *comfortably* eat, have a "portion" of it returned so it will not be wasted. In the United States enough food is wasted, it is said, to feed all the people in the war-torn countries of Europe.

May our boys and men and women in uniform, when they return, find us all less wasteful, more thrifty, and cooperative, and may they find more unity, and faith, and love in our quorums, our wards, and especially in our homes, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

It would not require much to convince me, my brethren, that these semi-annual general conferences come every few days. If you know someone whom you would like to age rapidly, just give him some recurring responsibility concerning any part of these proceedings. It is something of an assignment to watch the clock, and to watch President Clark and President McKay, and to watch you, and to think, and to speak at the same time. I read not so long ago an article concerning the responsibility of those who speak and write in time of war, but I am convinced that the gravity of this responsibility is not limited to wartime. Those who speak or write, any time, for the influencing of others, have one of the greatest responsibilities, and surely one which we should not care to undertake in these gatherings without the sustaining help of our Father in heaven.

GOOD GOVERNMENT AND GOOD MEN

There has been running through my mind a statement by William Penn: "If men be good, government can not be bad." At first I was inclined to challenge it seriously, as we are inclined to challenge all statements of broad generalization. I challenged it because I thought of all the exceptions to the rule. I thought of all the peoples, historically and also in the present, who had become captive peoples and oppressed peoples quite beyond their choice or their power to resist. I thought of all the straight-thinking minorities who have resisted the popular fallacies in every generation and in every country. But I became convinced, as I thought further through William Penn's statement, that it had a broad and fundamental truth in it: "If men be good, government can not be bad"—in the long view of things, and admitting all the exceptions.

INDIVIDUALS SHARE RESPONSIBILITY IN WORLD AFFAIRS

For convenience, historians have written history in a manner that gives emphasis to a comparatively few individuals—as though Alex-

under the Great conquered the world. (We don't hear much about all of those who followed Alexander the Great and made this possible)—or as though Hannibal did what he did, individually; or the Caesars, or the Pharaohs. Even though historians concentrate upon and would make history seem to be the doings of one man, or a few, in every generation, in every country, yet the great host of men and women who follow them carry their share of the responsibility, not discounting the importance of leadership, good or bad.

We are inclined to repeat this fallacy of history in our own generation, if we are not careful. We have had the opportunity of observing at close range the leaders of the world in our generation perhaps more intimately than in any other, for many centuries past, because of our facilities for rapid communication and travel in these days. We have heard the voices, read the thoughts, and have seen both in picture and in reality many of the leading figures of our own day—and we are likely to think, if we are not careful, that all the acts of each nation head up in one man, or in a handful of men, that all of the troubles stem from them. We may think, as Brother Bowen suggested yesterday, that the war is the cause rather than the result of our difficulties.

We are apt to over-simplify history both current and past, and to look for scapegoats and to fix responsibility too conveniently; but I am sure that if we will think a little more closely we will be impressed with the truth that a man isn't a leader unless he has followers, and that he couldn't accomplish those things which he does accomplish unless a very considerable number of people were willing that he should accomplish those things.

I am reminded of one of the statements of Heber C. Kimball, who, in his characteristic and colorful way said, "I will tell you, the Devil has his smart men."¹ Even Satan would be impotent unless he had a considerable following; and so I say, going back to William Penn, whenever and wherever there is deterioration in government, the people may look to themselves. Whenever and wherever there is corruption, the people may look to themselves. Whenever and wherever there is flagrant public waste, the people may look to themselves. Whenever and wherever there is loss of freedom, the people may look to themselves. I am sure that no man, great though he may be, or potentially great in the powers of leadership, could accomplish much of his purposes without a considerable following; and our responsibility for our allegiance as followers is likewise great.

Of course we know that anyone who opposes a profitable evil or anyone who opposes a popular fallacy is certain to be deliberately misunderstood. Nevertheless every generation and every people have produced those straight-thinking minorities who have seen what they have seen and who have felt an obligation to say what they have said; and any man who sees his own generation headed for a precipice at

¹Heber C. Kimball, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. VI, p. 35.

the bottom of which lie tragedy, destruction, sorrow, and misfortune, cannot honorably remain silent. He has an obligation to speak, even though he be misunderstood, and even though false charges be levied against him. This is true at all places in the world at all times.

PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG'S VIEW OF LEADERSHIP

We have a leadership in this Church, who have an obligation, as President Grant stated yesterday morning, to instruct this people to do anything which the Lord inspires them to do, and I am sure that we must understand the authorities in their fulfilling of this obligation. I am sure that the prophets of God throughout all the ages, have not, in most cases, seen the end fully from the beginning, but it has been given unto them to know in what they must instruct their people whether they could fully state the reasons or not. There are many things that we must still accept on faith.

I should like to read you a quotation from Brigham Young. He had his troubles, too; they are not all confined to our generation. It was at the time when the cornerstones of the Salt Lake Temple were being laid, April 6, 1853. Brother Brigham was the object of much criticism. The people had built their temples in the past, at Kirtland and Nauvoo, and had had to abandon them. They had many practical problems facing them—food, shelter, Indians, and many other stark realities were pressing them. No doubt many of the people thought it was folly at such a time to undertake so great a task. Said President Young:

Some will inquire, "Do you suppose we shall finish this temple, Brother Brigham?" I have had such questions put to me already. My answer is, I do not know, and I do not care. . . . I never have cared but for one thing, and that is, simply to know that I am now *right* before my *Father in heaven*. If I am this *moment*, this *day*, doing the things God requires of my *hands*, and I am precisely where my *Father in heaven wants me to be*, I care no more about tomorrow than though it never would come. I do not know where I shall be tomorrow, nor when this temple will be done—I know no more about it than you do. . . . This I do know—*there should be a temple built here*. I do know it is the *duty of this people to commence to build a temple.*²

I am sure that this ties in with the statement of President Grant yesterday morning.

THE HOME-COMING OF THE SOLDIERS

I should like to leave this subject for just one moment, and close with another thought which has been mentioned by several speakers at this conference, including Brother McKay previously, and read a couplet which in a very few words states what I think our returning boys, who have been serving their country, expect. It is from a poem by Kenneth Parsons, just two lines:

²Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. I, p. 132.

When we come home again, forget the band. Just have the things we fought for, understand?

I believe this is in the heart of every man who is away from home, in the armed forces. May God grant that they will return to find their homes as they would have them; their children reared in those paths in which they would have guided them; and find the free institutions and the free enterprise for which they have fought; and peace and happiness and the opportunity to live in peace with those they love.

God lives, and has given us life; he still speaks to us through his appointed servants; Jesus is the Christ—which is the testimony I leave with you, in his name. Amen.

President Clark:

The congregation will now sing: "Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessings," Song Folder No. 21, L.D.S. Hymns 315, Hymn Book No. 98.

The closing prayer will be offered by President Christian Call of the Idaho Stake, after which this conference will stand adjourned until 2 o'clock this afternoon. The proceedings of the afternoon session will be broadcast over KSL at Salt Lake City, and KSUB at Cedar City. It will also be carried over KFXD at Nampa, Idaho.

Singing by the congregation, "Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessings."

The closing prayer was offered by President Christian Call of the Idaho Stake.

Conference adjourned until 2 p.m.

SECOND DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

Conference reconvened at 2 p.m., Saturday, April 7, in the Assembly Hall.

President Clark:

This is the fourth session of the 115th Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are convened in the Assembly Hall on Temple Square, Salt Lake City.

There are present on the stand this afternoon all the General Authorities of the Church as sustained yesterday, except President Grant who is at his home, to which a special wire has been run from the Assembly Hall so that he may "listen in."

The proceedings of this session will be broadcast over KSL at