

these very intelligent young men who in the words of the Ancient in *Three Wise Fools*, have reached the age of reason.

PRESIDENT SMITH—AMBASSADOR OF GOOD WILL

These young people are surely worth saving, and I am very delighted that President Smith—our ambassador of good will—is leading the way in this respect; in his kind, tolerant, sweet spirit he has put himself out to speak to many such persons. I know personally of two or three who, because of President Smith's interest in them, are now using the talents with which they are abundantly blessed, for the Church instead of against it. President Smith, like those presidents who have preceded him, is the right man in the right place at the right time. He is the prophet for us in this day.

The Savior also set a very splendid example for all of us to follow. Saul, another brilliant young fellow who had arrived at the age of reason, was so sure of himself that he was persecuting the Christians, even assisting in the stoning of one of the prophets, but that did not deter the Savior from extending his hand, speaking to Saul, and eventually Saul became Paul, one of the greatest of the apostles, the great apostle to the Gentiles. Our Lord also left the ninety and nine and found supreme joy in rescuing the lost one.

May God bless us all, brethren and sisters, with wisdom, especially you stake and ward leaders, in our efforts to discover and remove causes, sources of evil and at the same time keep working diligently to cure and remove the evils that do now exist, I pray in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

A man we shall call Bishop Brown, for the sake of anonymity, sat reading his evening newspaper and came across one item that especially interested him. After reading it he said to his wife who sat near by, "I see that Jones boy has finally gone to jail. It's a wonder he didn't go sooner, considering the record he had." And then he recalled that this Jones boy, when he used to go to Church, was rather rowdy and hard to handle. Later he became a truant at high school, sluffed his classes to go out joy riding with the boys, and then later with a group began to steal automobiles. Then, one night when the boys were short of money, a few of them decided to rob a store. It was for this crime that they were being sent to jail. The bishop, turning to his wife said, "It's certainly terrible, isn't it, how the young people carry on these days?"

This was a favorite theme with the bishop. He would talk about

it quite frequently in his Sunday evening meetings and would quote statistics to prove his point. Among the statistics he would use were some like these:

The F.B.I. reports that the first six months of 1946 show the highest rate of increase in crime in the United States of any period since crime figures have been compiled on a national basis. The increase was fifty percent higher in rural areas than in cities, contrary to the prevailing opinion. More arrests were made among seventeen-year-olds than in any other age group. In 1945, arrests of boys, seventeen years of age or under, increased twenty-nine percent over the three-year average for the period 1939 to 1941. Arrests of girls, seventeen or under, for this same period showed an increase of one hundred and fifteen percent.

What is the picture in Utah? Figures provided by the state child welfare department reveal that from 1936 to 1944, the number of cases referred to the juvenile courts in Utah increased more than three hundred percent. Stealing by juveniles in Utah nearly doubled during this period. Truancy more than doubled. Children listed as ungovernable increased more than four times, and juvenile traffic violations went up twelve times.

Whose children are these? Are they yours or someone else's? In the first six months of 1946, the little town of Layton, Utah, had fifty-one cases of juvenile delinquency, serious enough to be referred to the juvenile courts. Clearfield had thirty-three; Price had fifty-one; Cedar City, thirty-five; Fillmore, twenty-two; Brigham City, thirty-seven; Murray, twenty-seven; Vernal, forty; Provo, one hundred seventy-eight; Ogden, four hundred eighty-one; Salt Lake City, one thousand forty-eight; and many other cases distributed over the remaining parts of the state in proportion.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND BISHOPS

When Bishop Brown would quote these figures to his people, he emphasized the fact that national authorities in child welfare declared that a large part of the responsibility for this condition rested upon the parents, and the bishop made a grand appeal to the parents to improve their home life in order to hold on to their children and avoid as much of this delinquency as possible.

I do not in any way wish to minimize the responsibility of the parents with regard to their children, but if Bishop Brown had read further into the reports of these national experts, he would have discovered that these same authorities declare that a large part of the responsibility for the juvenile delinquency in America must also be borne by the local leaders of various churches; that the religious leaders of our communities must shoulder a good part of the responsibility. Some of the young people who had gone astray came from that bishop's own ward. Did he ever connect their delinquency with his own work as a bishop? Did he connect it at all with the work being done

by his Sunday School, Primary, Mutual Improvement Associations, or Aaronic Priesthood leaders? Did he trace the difficulty in which these young people found themselves to any failure on the part of the leadership of the various organizations in his ward to carry out successfully the youth program of the Church?

The good bishop forgot that his Aaronic Priesthood work was at a low ebb and failed to reach a great number of the boys in his ward. Yet the Aaronic Priesthood program is designed to build character and strength and spirituality in the boys of the ward. When boys are not reached by it, they lose the strength which the program provides and thus weakened, some of them fall into sin when temptation comes along.

The good bishop also forgot that his M.I.A. work was very weak, and like the Aaronic Priesthood activity in the ward, failed to build strength of character among the young people. And he forgot that there was very little enlistment work done in his Sunday School.

He forgot, too, that he had failed to adopt the Latter-day Saint girls' program, because he didn't agree with all of the minor details in it. And he forgot that his ward provided little or no recreation for the young people, and that all last year it had given only two dances for the young people who like to come there. During the remaining fifty weeks of the year, the doors of the recreation hall of that ward were closed against the young people who would have liked to go there for their dances. And yet that same good bishop would stand up on Sunday night and denounce some of these young people because they went to public dance halls.

Did the bishop ever think to ask how often young people like to go out? Did he content himself with two dances a year when he was young and when he went courting?

YOUTH NEEDS RECREATION

Do you know, my brothers and sisters, that all last year the average ward in this Church gave fewer than five dances for the young people and that the average stake gave only a little more than three? If we put them both together, then last year there was an average of only eight dances given under Church sponsorship, to which the young people of any given ward or stake could go, and during the remaining forty-four weeks of the year, our young people had to shift for themselves? And do you know that every summer when the weather gets warm, except for a few canyon or park outings, the wards and stakes of this Church very generally go out of business and close their doors so far as recreation is concerned?

I know that you do not approve your young people going to public dance halls where so often liquor is available and where frequently undesirable elements are present. Yet, like Bishop Brown, we do so little about it. Our young people would far rather dance in good places with good people to good music, but they want to do it

more than eight times a year. Likewise, our young people enjoy their Fireside groups, their M Men and Gleaner work, their Boy Scout and Aaronic Priesthood, their Junior girl and Bee Hive activity when there is an interested leadership present. But put yourselves in their places. Which of you would stay with an organization that was only half alive?

SOULS PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

The worth of souls is great in the sight of God.

When our young people fall, can you count the cost of it? Remember there is a price tag attached to every evil deed, and that price tag is a big one. The cost of sin is so great that it can hardly be measured by mortal men, but it must be counted in remorse, broken hearts, lost opportunities, and lost souls. Compare that price with the price of well-supervised, Church-sponsored recreation. Compare that price with the expenditure of time and effort required to conduct good M Men and Gleaner activity, or a good Boy Scout, Aaronic Priesthood, Junior girl, or Bee Hive program. Which price would you rather pay?

A wise man said:

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6.)

He did not say, neglect the child and let him run the streets. Neither did he say, forget the youth program of the Church, and let the children shift for themselves. The Lord loves the children; it was he who said:

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:14.)

Do we ever forbid the children? When we close the doors of our recreation halls most of the year, do we forbid the children? When we fail to adopt the youth program of the Church, which is specially designed to bring the children unto the Lord, do we forbid the children? The Good Shepherd not only said, "Feed my sheep," but he also said with great emphasis, "Feed my lambs." May we do so, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

ELDER ANDRE K. ANASTASIOU

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I feel it a great honor to stand before the Presidency and general authorities of the Church assembled in this great building, together with the multitude of Saints.

For twenty-eight years I hoped and prayed to be in Zion and to be inside the Tabernacle. This is a great opportunity and I feel very humble, indeed, standing before you, brothers and sisters.

It was my task to be called to preside in an acting position over