

## THIRD DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

The sixth and concluding session of the Conference convened at 2 o'clock p.m., Sunday, October 6th.

Once more the Tabernacle was crowded to capacity, the Assembly Hall was filled with people, and a great number of others congregated on the grounds.

### President George Albert Smith:

The time has arrived for continuing our Conference. I can see quite a number of people who are too comfortable in their seats. They have too much room, and if you will just follow the rule now and move toward the center of these benches, making room for two or three people on each bench, we can seat another 150 or 200 people this afternoon. Thank you very much! I knew you would be delighted to do it. Now if you are all comfortably seated, we will continue.

This is the sixth and closing session of the 117th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square at Salt Lake City.

There are present on the stand this afternoon all the General Authorities of the Church, except Elder Stephen L. Richards, who is detained at home by his doctor's orders, Elder Ezra Taft Benson, who is in Europe presiding over the European Mission, and the Patriarch to the Church, also absent on account of illness.

The proceedings of this session will be broadcast over KSL at Salt Lake City and KSUB at Cedar City.

We will begin the afternoon services by the Tabernacle Choir singing; "Song of Praise," by Gates. Elder J. Spencer Cornwall is the director, and Elder Frank W. Asper is the organist.

The opening prayer will be offered by President Milton F. Hartvigsen of the Bannock Stake.

The Tabernacle Choir sang: "Song of Praise."

Elder Milton F. Hartvigsen, President of the Bannock Stake, offered the invocation.

Selection by the Tabernacle Choir, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," by Wyeth.

### ELDER MARVIN O. ASHTON

*First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

I can truthfully say that I have been to no conference that I have appreciated, and been more inspired with, than this conference. All I regret is that I didn't know ahead of time I would be left this late to speak so I could appreciate it that much more. If I had my way,

I should before you people, thank the Lord for my blessings. I was never more grateful in my life. I would do that, then I would compliment you people for the fine things you are doing, and sit down. I am sure when you compliment people you are on the safe side of things. Someone has said, "Once upon a time there was a man who wouldn't listen to compliments. He was deaf."

I am mindful of the way in which we who visit you people of the different stakes are treated. I'm not only thinking of the presidents of stakes and counselors; I'm thinking of your wives and the courtesies you have extended. All I regret is that we don't have enough time or opportunities to reciprocate the way we'd like to. We appreciate your kindness very much. We appreciate the fine things you are doing.

#### THE YOUTH PROBLEM

When I hear President McKay make the observations about delinquency that he does, and did this morning, the truth hurts. But we might as well face it. I can't help but think of the comments of Mark Petersen about these dark amusement halls. We are reminded of some of the amusement halls that should be there that are not there because of the inactivity of some people.

We live on a corner. On one street, the main street, there is lawn between the trees and the parking. This street gives us no trouble at all. On the other side, the street is not so well kept. Until a few years ago I put in most of my time cleaning up around the yard and knocking over weeds. I found it was much better to plant grass than eternally to scrap weeds. There is some philosophy in that. If we'd stop trying to kill so many weeds and plant more grass, we'd have less trouble with our youngsters. Someone has said that education is a lot like eating. You can't tell what part of what you eat goes to muscle and brawn, but you can tell what causes your stomach trouble. It's down in the sweets; it's down in your amusements. There's where your trouble is. We're not going to take care of this youth problem until we go with the young folks more than we do.

There are some people—I am not guessing, I know what I am talking about—that have a thousand cattle on a thousand hills, and if you'd ask them for a thousand dollars, they'd get nervous prostration. And those same people would hammer the stand and remind us where those young people are going. As far as they are concerned, the young people would go to that place, and you know what place I am talking about. I wouldn't want to break these fine fibres of this radio, but you know what I am trying to say. As far as those men are concerned, the young people would go there, and they would not have a return ticket, either. If we would spend more time in going with young people, we would have less trouble.

If you think I am not mindful of what is being done as far as going with young people is concerned, you are mistaken. I have seen trains roll into the Bamberger Station, loaded with four hundred

people, mostly young people, on excursions, and with proper chaperons and guidance. Those little excursions happened last year, one right after another. Leaders were going with the young people, showing them a good time. Those are the things we've got to do.

One president of a stake told me a day or two ago that his stake is arranging for a thousand young people to come here in 1947. We'll have less trouble if we just go with youth more. Thank the Lord for these fine bishops and presidents of stakes who have taken that philosophy and are going with their young people. It's easy enough to say they're going to that certain place. It's a different thing entirely to try to keep them away, by going with them to proper places. I think we ought to take this thing just as seriously as we possibly can.

#### FAITHFULNESS TO BE ENCOURAGED

This singing we have had in this conference is a sample of what we ought to be thankful for. The Singing Mothers on the first day of this conference and those fine people who came from Richfield, most of them young, are an inspiration. A lot of young people are going to this place we are talking about, but there are thousands of them that we're taking care of through the fine cooperation of the people of this Church. This work that N. Lorenzo Mitchell has been doing with the boys of his chorus is a sample of what can be accomplished.

May I just shift gears a little bit and mention another side of things. Do we think of those lowly, patient, sacrificing fellows or wives or families that in every ward are doing their duty and living their religion? Sometime ago at a stake conference, I noticed a little lady about eighty years of age, plodding up the steps, the best she could. My hand automatically went to her arm to give her a little lift. In talking with the stake president, later, he said, "Do you know who you walked up the steps with?" I said, "No, sir." He said, "The mother of sixteen children, eight of her own and eight of the good lady who died, whose place she took. She, with her husband, operated eighty acres of land. When everybody else had automobiles, they had a horse and buggy; but they pulled all those boys into the mission field and pulled all those children into college—all from that eighty acres."

Now, let's not forget those people. We who have the responsibility such as I have right at this minute are not worth very much, except for the devotion and stability of people like this good lady that I am talking about.

Hyrum Jensen, on Highland Drive and Twenty-seventh South Street, in Salt Lake City, has put a double roof over the little adobe house down there. It is the home of Mary Fielding Smith. That little lady, after the death of her patriarch husband, took her little family under her arms and under her wings and on her own initiative went through life taking care of those children, facing the obstacles that she had. That double roof over her little adobe house is a shrine,

and it should be. Let us not forget that kind of people. They are the sinew and the muscle of this Church, and without them we wouldn't be worth ten cents. Let's not forget it.

I ask you, Bishop; you, Stake President; and you, Officer of the ward, wherever you are, are you mindful of these people? Are you playing to others with large machines or wealth, or do you keep in mind eternally that the most important thing you can do, is forever-lastingly to pay courtesies and tribute to people who have given their lives for the Church? If you don't mind, I am going to relate a story that probably I have told before some of you, and if you'll act as if you've never heard it before, I'll certainly appreciate it.

When you think of this upside down world and what the world needs, it doesn't take much intelligence to know what the conditions are. But the important thing now is the need in this world of character, of men and women making decisions, forgetting what is going to happen if you do this or what is going to happen if you take the other course. What's right? How many men will figure out what's right, then pull the trigger, regardless of what the results are? We do too much catering; we always ask ourselves, "What will happen?" How much steel have we got in our spines? Do we make decisions no matter what happens?

#### A STORY FROM LINCOLN'S LIFE

Here's the story:

He is a man whose birthday we celebrate. He's six feet four, in his stocking feet. He is running for Congress. One afternoon a little lady comes in to see him, and he isn't in. She leaves a tiny note on his desk. She has to go on her way because of the stress of conditions. She goes, praying that he'll get the note. He does. When his campaign director, Sherman, comes in, he says, "Bill, I don't make that talk tonight."

(By the way, his adversary had been going up and down the country. He had thrown all the "mud" he possibly could at him, and I suppose if there is anything in the world that raises the hair of a man with any ordinary corpuscles in his veins, it is to answer an antagonist, especially if the antagonist is careless about what he says.)

He says, "I won't make that talk."

To make the story short, the next morning we find that great big lanky fellow climbing over something, wading through streams. When the sun comes halfway up, he's sitting on a log, munching his meal out of his one pocket and maybe an apple out of the other, begging or buying a little milk to go with it. Then he goes on his journey. About ten o'clock in the morning he finds himself entering a little courthouse, jammed to capacity. It is summer. The winter ashes are still in the court stove. What's happened? A boy of sixteen is up for murder. The country people are assembled. Notwithstanding the boy's age, the law takes its course. He is being tried. This big lanky fellow I am talking about sits in the back unconcerned-like;

yet they know that probably he is the lad's attorney. They pick the jury, and go on with the trial. He stays mum. (We'll have to shorten this story up a little.) Finally it is important that the attorney for the boy talk. He faces the jury, calls each man by his name. He says, "Years ago, boys, I came here as a lad, helpless, trying to split some rails, calling at this door and the other door, but only one family beckoned me in and helped me out. God bless them. I told God if he'd ever give me a chance to pay that bill, I'd pay it. Sometimes when God calls us, he expects a sacrifice with it. Gentlemen, I have made that sacrifice."

The jury goes out; comes in: "Not guilty." One of those great big arms cupped the mother; the other arm cupped that boy as he swooned.

Incidentally, the boy had got into a tangle with a farmer, his boss. The farmer got out of patience. The boy, not understanding, struck him with a pitchfork. That's the way the farmer met his death.

"Not guilty."

That fellow didn't go to Congress. He was defeated, but he dared to say, "This is the way. I'm pulling the trigger, regardless of what happens."

Later when they had that convention in Chicago and brought those hickory rails in, they raised the roof higher than the architect intended it to be. Abraham Lincoln was nominated President of the United States. He dared to do what was right. He dared take notice of those who are not noticed. He dared put emphasis on the humble walker through life. Do you dare? Do I dare?

#### A DOCTOR'S DEVOTION

There was a little story in one of the magazines, some weeks ago. It is a story of one of those faithful doctors you read about. No matter whether the stork was making his journey, and he was trying to get there first, or a boy was dying, the doctor was always on the job, sitting through and holding that dear person's hand through the night. He made every sacrifice in the world. His little office was on the second floor on the main street, and all the designation that was given was, "Dr. Jones, upstairs."

They tell us in that story, that on the day of his wedding, he got a call from a poverty-stricken Italian family. Their boy had been in an accident. His life was hanging on a string. The doctor had to make the decision quick and fast, whether to marry the girl right this minute or five hours later. He chose to go to the bed of that little sufferer. Of course, the intended wife got her "spunk" up, whirled on her heels, and said: "If he thinks more of the Italian lad than he does of me, well, let him go." (I think that fellow just saved a lot of unnecessary miseries in going through life.)

Well, to shorten the story, he goes through life unmarried—a life filled with devotion, and then he died. The town thought so

much of him, that people went about suggesting, "We will build a monument to his name."

Weeks went on. Months went on. His grave remained unmarked. Finally the father of the boy that he helped, went one day to the grave, unbeknown to anyone. He labeled the grave right: "Here lies the body of Dr. John Jones. Office upstairs!"

#### THE WAY TO THE CELESTIAL KINGDOM

Now we don't know too much about the celestial kingdom. I don't. I don't know how much you know about it, but it's my judgment that we who get up there, if we're not too presumptuous, will get up there because of sacrifice, service, and making the right decisions, no matter what happens.

May the Lord help us to make the decisions, to do what is right, to have steel up our backs, I pray in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

##### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I have carried in my pocket the manuscript of a talk which I thought I might give should I have the opportunity of speaking in conference, but I have not received the inspiration to use it. I have tried to assemble some of my thoughts so as to express them in a way that will be of interest to you, my numerous friends, brethren and sisters, and to say a few words upon the greatest thing in the world. I read a book a few years ago entitled *The Greatest Thing in the World*, and that thing was love.

#### THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

The Savior has had something to say upon this subject, and the thought just occurred to me that if he were here in the presence of this large congregation so that we could look upon him and hear what he would say, perhaps his words would be more impressive than they have been to us by reading them in the scriptures.

A learned man, a lawyer, approached him on one occasion and asked him:

Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Matt. 22:36-39.)

On another occasion he said:

. . . 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. (Matt. 5:44.)