

President George Albert Smith:

If Elders Henry D. Moyle and Eldred Gee Smith are in the congregation, we shall be pleased to have them come forward at once and take their places on the stand.

The choir and congregation will now sing: "We Thank Thee O God for a Prophet." After hearing the reports of our brethren regarding other parts of the world, surely we recognize the hand of our Heavenly Father in the blessings that have come to us as a result of the restoration of the Gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters: In a very old-fashioned way I ask for an interest in your prayers. I wish also to express gratitude for your uplifted hands and your sustaining vote. I hope that what I shall say will not detract in any way from the beautiful truths that have been given to us already in this conference, particularly with reference to the pioneers. My grandfather was one of the original group to enter this valley. I am proud that his statue will grace the new monument with Wilford Woodruff and his file leader, Brigham Young.

THE FORMER INHABITANTS OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

I have been thinking today also, of the pioneers, but of other pioneers who preceded the ones we have been honoring today. About twenty-five centennials ago, a hardy group left the comforts of a great city, crossed a desert, braved an ocean, and came to the shores of this, their promised land. There were two large families, those of Lehi and Ishmael, who in not many centuries, numbered hundreds of millions of people on these two American continents. Their scriptures and records taught them of God. They had many blessings, and many promises. They were given, by the creator of this land, a clear title to the Americas—a certificate of title, free and clear of all encumbrance. There was, however, one condition: They must serve the Lord their God if they were to retain title to the property. Their wickedness brought on wars, which scattered and destroyed them and divided them into two factions, the Nephites and Lamanites, and finally they peopled the continents. The years went apace; the Savior came to them after his resurrection—which glorious event we are celebrating today, this Easter day. The Savior so inspired them that for twice the period of our own Church history they were righteous and were devoted to their Heavenly Father. And then came prosperity and wealth. The sins of the world overtook them, and for about one hundred and seventy years, both

factions were wicked, very wicked indeed, until the great battle on Cumorah when the Nephites were literally destroyed. The Prophet Mormon recounted sixty thousand people lying in their blood in death, and this because of their wickedness. Their enemies had been permitted to come upon them. Mormon exclaims:

And my soul was rent with anguish because of the slain of my people, and I cried:

O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!

Behold, if ye had not done this, ye would not have fallen. . . .
(Mormon 6:16-18.)

The penalty for their wickedness was that they were to be scattered and driven, cursed and scourged. They were to be "cut off from the presence of the Lord." Scales of darkness were to be their curse, and they were to become "as chaff is driven before the wind" or "a vessel is tossed about upon the waves without sail or anchor or anything wherewith to steer her."

. . . wherefore, as they were white, and exceeding fair and delightful, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them.

. . . I will cause that they shall be loathsome unto thy people. . . .

And cursed shall be the seed of him that mixeth with their seed: . . .

. . . they did become an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety. . . .
(II Nephi 5: 21-24.)

APPRECIATION FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF LEHI

I do not know when I began to love the children of Lehi. It may have come to me at birth, because those years preceding and after I was born, were spent by my father on missions among the Indians in Indian territory. He was president of the mission. This love may have come in those first years of my childhood, when my father used to sing the Indian chants to us children and show us souvenirs from and pictures of his Indian friends. It may have come from my patriarchal blessing which was given to me by Patriarch Samuel Claridge, when I was nine years of age. One line of the blessing reads:

You will preach the gospel to many people, but more especially to the Lamanites, for the Lord will bless you with the gift of language and power to portray before that people, the gospel in great plainness. You will see them organized and be prepared to stand as the bulwark "round this people."

I do not know when my appreciation for them came, but I have always had a sympathetic heart for the sons and daughters of Lehi, and so, recently, when President Smith called Brother Cowley, Brother Ivins, and myself to give attention to their problems and to

. . . the work of disseminating the gospel among the Indians. . . not only to the Indians close to us but also over the world, in the islands of the sea and elsewhere. . . .

a great thrill came to me such as I have had few times in my life.

FULFILMENT OF A PATRIARCHAL BLESSING

I had waited forty-two years for the fulfilment of this patriarchal blessing! When I was called to the mission field in 1914, my assignment was to the Swiss-German Mission, and then the war broke out and prevented my going there, and I was sent to the Central States Mission. I knew there were no Indians in Switzerland and Germany. I knew also there were Indians in the Central States Mission, but in all my two years' mission, I had not seen an Indian. I wondered, "Can I have failed, or did the patriarch err," and now, forty-two years after the promise, President George Albert Smith called me to this mission, and my blessing was fulfilled.

I love those downtrodden and deprived people. Brother Cowley and I spent some time on the Hawaiian Islands last summer, and those good people found their way into my heart. We have about a half-million children of Lehi in the islands of the sea, and about sixty million of them in North and South America, about a third of them perhaps, being pure-blood Indians, and about two-thirds are mixtures, but they have the blood of Jacob in their veins.

Someone said:

If my pen might have the gift of tears I would write a book and call it "The Indian," and I would make the whole world weep.

I hope I may help to make the whole world weep for the children of Lehi. Can one refrain from tears as he contemplates the fall of these people who have been brought down from culture and achievement to illiteracy and degradation; from kings and emperors, to slavery and serfdom; from landowners of vast continents, to indigent wards of governments and peons—from sons of God with a knowledge of God, to rude savages, victims of superstition, and from builders of temples to dwellers in dirt hogan.

MIGRATION OF NEPHITES TO PACIFIC ISLES

The predictions concerning the scattering of the early American was fulfilled to the letter. Not long before the birth of Christ, a great man by the name of Hagoth left continental America with colonies of people. He

. . . went forth and built him an exceedingly large ship . . . and launched it forth into the west sea, . . .

And behold, there were many of the Nephites who did . . . sail forth with much provisions, and also many women and children; and they took their course northward. . . .

And the next year:

. . . this man built other ships. And the first ship did also return, and many more people did enter into it; . . . and set out again to the land northward.

And it came to pass that they were never heard of more. . . . And . . . one other ship also did sail forth. . . . (Alma 63:5-8.)

It has been thought by many people that they went to the Pacific islands. And the scripture would so indicate:

But great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea: wherefore as it says isles, there must needs be more than this, and they are inhabited also by our brethren. (II Nephi 10:21.)

Elder Cowley and I visited some of these peoples on the "isles of the sea" and found them developing and progressing and doing well.

But we are not so fortunate here at home in the United States. There are some bad conditions in our own nation and continent.

THE SAD STORIES OF THE CRUELITIES OF THE SPANISH CONQUERORS

The conquerors came and robbed and despoiled and destroyed. The battle of America, a four-hundred-year struggle began with the discovery of America and ended not until the owners were dispossessed of nearly everything they had owned. Cortez with a handful of soldiers came into Mexico and through deceit and misrepresentation was able to conquer thirty million people. Preying upon their superstitions and beliefs in the return of the Fair God, he gained access to their beautiful city, took their lives, carried off their treasures and desecrated their homes and temples. He gave them a soldier's helmet which they brought back to him full of gold nuggets. They laid at his feet great quantities of gold and silver, jewels, and other priceless treasures. These valuables seemed only to whet his appetite, and he sacked their chests and vaults for more. His soldiers closed the three exits to the courtyard at Cholula, it is written, and with his mystery weapon, the cannon, massacred them by the thousands. And in their loved city of Tenochtitlan his soldiers were permitted to profane the temples with the very blood of the Indians who were slaughtered in great numbers. The Aztec king was tortured and assassinated. It is a sad story how they were despoiled and dispossessed of their rich homeland—how whole valleys together with thousands of the Indians for servants, were granted to individual Spanish conquerors. The Aztecs were enslaved and branded. The history of Mexico claims that in 1800 though ". . . only ten percent of the population was Spanish, but almost all the property belongs to them." And even after the slaves were presumably freed, their condition of servitude as peons for centuries following, was nearly as distasteful and onerous. The

millions of Indians could literally have smothered the invaders with their very bodies, but it was not to be. For the prophecies had to be fulfilled.

THE INDIANS A DOWNTRODDEN RACE

That is a gloomy picture, but the world should weep also at the treatment of the real Americans in our own states. As the colonists came from Europe and settled along the Eastern seaboard, the great "push" continued. Mile by mile we crowded them back. When the Indians resisted our encroachments, we called them "murderous redskins" and continued our relentless aggression. When they killed us "whites," we called it a massacre, but when we took their lives, we termed it a necessary riddance of a menace. We were fighting for their lands and rivers and forests and minerals, but they were fighting for their rights, their homeland, their families, their very lives.

I would not justify any evil that the Indians ever did, but can we not see that they were on the defensive, fighting for their liberty, for independence and to perpetuate their rights to the promised land to which they had title from the Creator?

But the laws had been broken. They had forfeited their rights because they had failed to keep the commands of God. The prophecies must be fulfilled, and the plan of God must now be consummated. It was necessary, for the ultimate good of the Indian himself, that the Gentiles must come from foreign shores to become "nursing fathers" to these benighted people; the Pilgrims and Puritans had to come to settle this land; the Revolutionary War had to be fought and won so that peace and freedom and liberty could be established here, and so that the gospel could be restored, and this that the record of the ancestors of the Indians might come forth, and the gospel of Jesus Christ be made plain to them.

The prophecies were being fulfilled by us Gentiles. We pushed the natives ever westward until the Pacific stopped their further movement in that direction. Then we crowded them into the corners and upon reservations, oftentimes territory of little value. The country became crowded, and we pushed southward, this time making war on Mexico, a Lamanite country. Again we used might, and subdued and took from the original Lehithe owners and also from Mexico, the new claimants, the great territory of the southwest, including much of the states of Arizona, New Mexico, California, Utah, Wyoming, and Nevada. We did pay for this vast empire, some fifteen million dollars, which is the approximate present value of the one little Gila valley in Arizona where I lived for so many years. We later paid ten million dollars for another area involving a considerable portion of Arizona, known as the Gadsden Purchase.

We went relentlessly on in our battle of aggression until we finally were undisputed conquerors of this expansive domain, so rich in natural wealth.

TROUBLES MULTIPLIED THROUGH INJUSTICE

Down near Lordsburg, New Mexico, there is an pretentious monument. On it are the words, "Here Geronimo surrendered, thus ending Indian wars in America forever." The final war of self-defense was waged in the southwest by the Apache chief, the courageous Geronimo. He led his thirty-four warriors with their wives and children against the United States army. And the battle of America lasting four hundred years had ended. We battled but a few short years for our independence from Britain and were rewarded with success. The Indians fought valiantly four centuries for their freedom and lost. This proud people was reduced from wealth to poverty; from two vast continents to crowded reservations. We hail George Washington as the great patriot because he led us successfully against our aggressors. And because they cannot, we erect a tiny monument to mark the spot where the last survivor chief was subdued while resisting our aggression. It is a sad story. Let the world weep.

But there were still some outbreaks. Because of the chaotic condition and the hopelessness of their situation, some groups of natives continued to commit depredations against the new alleged owners of their properties. The Navajos were in the way also. We sent our army against them. We tracked them into the mountains and canyons of northern Arizona and killed them in great numbers; they claim we killed their sheep numbering fifty thousand; we destroyed all their thousands of peach trees, in *Canon de Chelly*.

Our war against them was relentless. The ultimatum was surrender by July 20, 1863, or extermination.

Orders were given to kill every male Navajo capable of bearing arms, wherever he may be found. Women and children were to be captured and held as prisoners.

And then to Colonel Riggs came these instructions:

I have been informed that there is a spring called *Ojo de Cibolo* . . . where the Navajos drive their stolen cattle and "jerk" the flesh at their leisure. Cannot you make arrangements for a party of resolute men from your command to be stationed there for say, thirty days, and kill every Navajo and Apache they can find? A cautious, wary commander hiding his men and moving about at night might kill off a good many Indians near that point.

A bounty of twenty dollars was placed on a good Indian horse, and a dollar for a sheep.

We did an efficient job of it. The Indians claimed later that they did not know they had an option to surrender; they thought

that they were the victims of an extermination order, and not till they were starved out did they finally raise the flag of truce. We took them over into New Mexico on a reservation and after four years of starvation and freezing and hopelessness for them we imposed upon them a treaty. They were to commit no more depredations and were to be given that vast area of territory of little value. They were to receive some small allowances. They were to require their children to go to the schools, and we were to furnish them a school, and a teacher for every thirty children. If you could go with me to the reservation and hear these Navajo parents plead for schools for their children, you would realize how greatly we have failed to live up to our part of that treaty of 1868. There are more than twenty-four thousand children of school age, but with all the government schools, plus those schools operated by churches, only about 5,100 of the little folk can hope to get into a school. The nearly 19,000 children yearn in vain for schooling. In September, ambitious parents send these little ones long, rugged miles, to a school building, only to find it filled to capacity, or to find it locked for want of repair or a teacher. Back of these long rugged miles, even longer now, they trudge home to wait another year, still hoping for better luck next time. There is a big backlog with many thousands of children and adults who have never had a day of school, and unless we change our policy, these defrauded people in the heart of this rich and educated nation, will still be illiterate fifty years hence. The median school year for the Navajo is .9 of a year, as compared to 5.7 years for the average Indian and 8.4 years for our own children. The records reveal that while 3.7 percent of us have had no schooling, and 25.2 percent of the Indians in general have had none, there are sixty-six percent of the Navajos who have never had such opportunity. Illiteracy is reported to be about seventy-five percent among the Navajos while the United States negro is only 16.1 percent and we United States whites are 1.5 percent illiterate. When we speak of educated Indians, we do not mean those with degrees but those who can read and write. Of one hundred ninety-five literate, "educated" Navajos surveyed, only sixteen had more than eighth grade training. To take care of the children on the reservation it would require twelve five-hundred-pupil high schools. There is not a single one available. The tribal leaders say:

A PLEA FOR SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN

Why? Why can we not have schools? We cooperate always. We reduce our sheep when we are told we have too many. We do everything. But all they do is to close our school.

In Tolani area there are six hundred school children with one little school building which might accomodate sixty, but even it is closed. At Tohatchi, New Mexico, is a large school plant with school buildings, dormitories, residences, hospital, but for five years it has been closed. The officials say there is no appropriation to repair and

fit it for school purposes. At Aneth, Utah, are 1,500 Navajos. They beg for a teacher for the one little closed school there. At Sheep Springs the Indians called a mass meeting and wrote us:

. . . We want a Mormon school here so our children will get good education by you Mormons. The government cannot take care of us all . . .

One group came to the superintendent and asked; "Can't you help us build a school?" The superintendent said he was sorry, but "there is no money for lumber, doors, windows, nails, roofing." So the Indians collected one hundred dollars for materials and with old lumber and logs built themselves a building, then begged for a teacher to train their children. The appeals of these untaught people cause one to weep in sympathy. They wrote:

Our little children beg us to go to school, but there is none for them. We cannot vote. We do not have influence with congressmen. We pay taxes and send our sons to war. The United States Congress makes big treaties with other countries and makes big loans, but not once in history has it observed the sacred treaty of 1868 to give us schools.

Even under most unfavorable conditions of roads and long distances and cold weather, the attendance of the children is eighty percent to ninety percent. In our little school at Blanding, Indian mothers kneel at the desk of their little ones and urge them on in their learning.

PITIALE CONDITIONS

The Lord had promised the sons of Lehi:

They shall prosper in the land of promise if . . .

But little prosperity has come to the Navajo and little can come until we Gentiles, their "nursing fathers," help to train them. Though they have sixteen million acres of land, it is of such barrenness that it takes about one hundred sixty acres to support a horse. Of seven thousand three hundred livestock owners only about one hundred have an economic unit. The average of seven sheep, a half-acre of land and the little they can make from rug weaving and silversmithing and incidentals, will bring about eighty dollars a year, or \$1.50 a week, income, for each person.

It is estimated that the Navajo woman makes about three cents to seven cents an hour at her weaving and the silversmith makes little more. During the war the allotments from the three thousand six hundred service boys gave the tribesmen some financial relief, but now they are reduced again to their starvation incomes.

The health conditions are deplorable. They have but one full-time dentist for sixty-three thousand people and no field nurse or

doctor, though they should have twenty-five or thirty of each to even approach rural standards. The birth rate is high, but the death rate is also very high, being sixteen per thousand as against 10.5 for the nation and 6.36 for the Church. The large family lives in the dirt hogan being one small circular room with dirt floor, no windows, and with a stove or fire in the center. All members of the family sleep on sheep pelts on the floor. There is no privacy, practically no furniture or equipment. There are no sanitary conveniences inside or out. With a single towel, a common cup, no hot water nor disinfectants, it is easy to see why trachoma, impetigo, and other skin diseases run through the family, and why dysentery, venereal diseases, and tuberculosis run rampant. In a survey of thirty-one families it was found that three in each family had tuberculosis. In their scattered condition, and with such limited hospital facilities, many lie in their hogans, coughing in the air, spitting on the floor, to finally die on the ground floor without medical assistance. Their numerous superstitions bind them down. The use of peyote is increasing, and its demoralizing opiate effect is most destructive. The Indians have learned all the white man's vices, and liquor is "at flood stage" there. And thus they live without the power to raise themselves from the deplorable situation. They cannot lift themselves by their bootstraps. They must have help. They realize it. The late chairman of the tribal council epitomized their thinking when he said:

We are a ward of the people—that means we are slaves. They chase us down . . . with a gun . . . to Ft. Sumner. . . .

"WEEP AND PRAY FOR THE INDIAN"

How I wish you could go with me through the Indian reservations and particularly Navajo Land and see the poverty, want, and wretchedness, and realize again that these are sons and daughters of God; that their miserable state is the result, not only of their centuries of wars and sins and godlessness, but is also attributable to us, their conquerors, who placed them on reservations with such limited resources and facilities, to starve and die of malnutrition and unsanitary conditions, while we become fat in the prosperity from the assets we took from them. Think of these things, my people, and then weep for the Indian, and with your tears, pray; then work for him. Only through us, the "nursing fathers and mothers," may they eventually enjoy a fulfilment of the many promises made to them. Assuming that we do our duty to them, the Indians and other sons of Lehi will yet rise in power and strength. The Lord will remember his covenant to them; his Church will be established among them; the Bible and other scriptures will be made available to them; they will enter into the holy temples for their endowments and do vicarious work; they will come to a knowledge of their fathers and to a perfect knowledge of their Redeemer Jesus Christ; they shall prosper in

the land and will, with our help, build up a holy city, even the New Jerusalem, unto their God.

Only in our doing all in our power to restore these people to their heritage can we even approach a justification for having taken their promised land. May the Lord assist us all to see our full duty respecting these people and give us the courage and determination to guarantee that they have the education, culture, security, and all other advantages and luxuries that we enjoy—I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Through seven inspirational sessions I have not lost faith that my time would come.

To one who has spent the major part of the last year amidst the rubble and destruction of war-torn Europe, this conference has been doubly inspirational and appreciated. As I have looked into the faces of this well-fed (almost too well-fed in many cases) audience, well-clothed, surrounded with all the comforts and blessings of life, I have found that my thoughts have many times drifted across the Atlantic to those of our brethren and sisters with whom I have been closely associated during recent months. I love them, my brethren and sisters, as I am sure you do, many of you having descended through progenitors from those nations.

We have heard much in this conference regarding Europe and the Latter-day Saints in those countries. You heard testimonies from two of the former mission presidents of those missions who told of the suffering of the Saints and who bore fervent testimony to the faithfulness and devotion of Latter-day Saints in Europe. You heard from Brother Frederick W. Babbel, my companion and faithful associate, regarding his observations in Europe. If the Lord will bless me during the next few moments, I should like, in keeping with the suggestion of President Smith, to refer briefly to some other phases in connection with observations and travels in Europe, covering a period of some ten months and more than sixty thousand miles.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOD'S DIRECTING HAND

I hasten to suggest, my brethren and sisters, that even though many fine comments were made regarding our mission over there, I assure you I know the source of the success which attended our labors. Never at any time have I felt it would be possible for me or my associates to accomplish the mission to which we were assigned without the directing power of the Almighty. I shall never forget my feelings when I read in the press the announcement by the First Presidency regarding our call. The magnitude of it seemed overwhelming. They gave us a four-point charge: First, to attend to the