

sure that just as certainly as you are sitting there and I am standing here, I know that God lives and that this is his Church. He, himself, through the Holy Ghost, has revealed this to me. In answer to prayer I have been the happy recipient several times of revelation direct from God, given verbally, once orally. Hence I positively know that he lives. In recent years I have publically related some of these experiences many times. Many thousands of other Latter-day Saints have testimonies as strong as mine. But all true Latter-day Saints are firm in our precious faith. May all of us let it be our guiding light and keep us loyal to the leadership of the First Presidency of the Church, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I earnestly invite each of you, my brethren and sisters, to say a prayer that while I stand before you, you may get something out of what I say that will do you good, and that what I say will inspire what you get. I rely wholly upon the Spirit of the Lord to direct me on this occasion.

#### TEACHINGS NOT NEW

During this conference I have listened intently to everything that has been said. What has been said has thrilled me, although I have not heard anything much that is new. During the past weeks I have read many conference addresses given from this pulpit during the last twenty-one years, and I have not found much in those addresses that was new, but I thrilled with every one of them.

Truth, sufficient to guide us through our lives and back into the very presence of God, was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith during the early years of this last dispensation. The Lord counseled the brethren in that day that they were to pretend to no new revelation. They were to speak and teach what had been revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. In the main, that is what we are still doing.

I know, of course, that there have been new revelations given since the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know that every man who has stood at the head of the Church from then until now has received revelations from the Lord. I know President Smith receives them today. But not many new doctrines have been revealed since the Prophet's time.

#### BUILD-UP OF SPIRITS

What we get out of general conference is a build-up of our spirits as we listen to those particular principles and practices of the gospel which the Lord inspires the present leadership of the Church to bring to our attention at the time. He knows why he inspired

Brother Joseph F. Merrill to give the talk he just gave. He knows why he inspired the other brethren who have talked in this conference to say what they have said. It is our high privilege to hear, through these men, what the Lord would say if he were here. If we do not agree with what they say, it is because we are out of harmony with the Spirit of the Lord.

#### WELFARE WORK

I desire to say a word or two about the work that I give a great deal of my time to, the welfare work. I hope they will be worth remembering. There are few of the brethren who so consistently go to all the stakes in the Church as I. I go because I am sent. I feel very humble in it and very grateful that the brethren have enough confidence in me to send me about the Church to tell the stake presidents, bishops, Relief Society presidents, and other welfare workers some things about the welfare program.

I thank you, my brethren and sisters, for your faithfulness in coming to the regional and stake welfare meetings that we call. I have never called one, and I never shall call one that is not authorized by the Presidency of the Church. Last year, of the 173 stake presidents invited to attend the welfare budget meetings, 163 attended. Of the 172 Relief Society stake presidents invited, 163 attended. That made the attendance record of the Relief Society presidents about 55/100ths of one percent better than the record of the stake presidents. The record of attendance of the bishops and the independent branch presidents was, however, 61/100ths of one percent better than the record of attendance of ward and independent branch Relief Society presidents. Thus the attendance record of the brethren was about 5/100ths of one percent better than that of the women—quite a record for men. Welfare workers who attended those meetings traveled 488,323 man-miles coming and going. You have, my brethren and sisters, made a marvelous record of loyalty to the welfare plan.

#### 1951 WELFARE BUDGET

Just now we are in the midst of touring the Church with the proposed 1951 welfare production budget. We are not inviting so many people to the meetings this year as we did last year, because we want to get down in our conferences with you to the discussion of some of the details of the welfare operations. We do not feel we need to promote the welfare program as an idea so much as we have done in the past, because we believe that most of the people are now converted. But we do need to perfect its operation.

First, we want to get to the point in the program just as soon as possible where the necessity to call upon the Saints for cash contributions to meet the annual Church welfare production budget is eliminated. We are presently doing two things to accomplish this. In the first place, under the direction of the brethren we have taken

out of the proposed budget a couple of items which required the raising of cash: transportation of coal and cash for the purchase of cloth. As a result, the 1951 welfare production budget will be \$132,000 less than it would have been with these two items left in.

Second, with these items eliminated, we are urging that the budget be produced in commodities and not in cash. This can only be done by getting in hand the means with which to produce the commodities—permanent welfare production projects. We have nearly enough projects to produce our budget needs, but we are a little out of balance. Some projects are larger than they need be, while in some places there are no production projects. If, somehow, those who have no projects could buy into the larger projects, so that all the production could be turned into the welfare program, it would help. All those who have no projects will, of course, need to get them. We are stressing this matter as we go about the Church.

#### NOT A DOLE

Another thing we are doing is emphasizing the counsel given by the brethren from the beginning that the welfare program must not become a dole. Our people must be given the opportunity to work for what they get. In the spirit of the Master let us give them an opportunity to work so that we do not violate the primary purpose of the welfare plan. When they set it up, the brethren said, "Our primary purpose was to set up, insofar as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift, and self-respect be once more established among our people. . . . Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership."

#### PRINCIPLE OF THE FAST

Now one more point: We desire to encourage throughout the Church the principle of the fast—abstaining from the eating of two meals on fast day and giving the equivalent thereof to the bishop. A minimum fast offering is the equivalent of the two meals, and a maximum fast offering may be measured by the greatness of one's heart. God bless you that you may continue in this great program with all the energy of your souls.

If I had time, I would like to give you a lesson on it out of the first six verses of the 105th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, but I do not have time. I will simply say this: The reason the Saints did not go back into Jackson County, Missouri, and redeem Zion at the time the Prophet came from Kirtland with Zion's Camp was because the members of the Church in Zion would not impart of their substance, as becometh Saints, to the poor and afflicted among them. We may find that just such a consequence rests upon our performance.

God bless you, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.