

As Dr. Daniel A. Poling recently wrote in the *Christian Herald*, "It's time for a new crusade," a crusade for decency.

The youth of the Church and of America deserve that we parents live up to our responsibilities in this regard.

Many centuries ago, a celebrated Roman matron, Cornelia, was asked by an acquaintance to display her jewels. Cornelia called to her children to step forward. "These are my jewels," she said.

The youth of the Church and of America are our jewels. Let us prize them as they deserve. A clean America

will be a strong America, a secure America, a prosperous America, a peaceful America, a free America, an America that will continue to merit God's blessings in the future as it has in the past.

God grant it may be so, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

We have just heard Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley.

### ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

#### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

My brethren and sisters, you will pardon me if I say it has been a nervous wait. Twenty-eight years ago, at the October conference, I was sustained as one of your Presidents of the seventies quorum. That means that this is the fifty-sixth time I have stood here to bear my testimony to you. I have to confess that while I like to bear my testimony, the overwhelming sense of responsibility is almost more than I can stand. I seek therefore, your interest and your faith and your prayers that perchance I may drop a word or two that may be comforting to us.

I am happy this afternoon to be one of you, to be engaged in this wonderful work of the Church. I am especially happy and grateful this afternoon for the privilege of bringing my wife with me to this meeting. Some of you will remember that, just a little more than two years ago, reporters came over from the *Deseret News* and asked for a story they could publish in the event she would pass away. Through the faith and prayers of the Brethren, through her faith and courage, she is still with us, and for the whole time that I have been one of your servants, she has stood by my side and traveled with me being a great help and support and a blessing to the people with whom I have ministered. For this I am truly thankful. I am thankful also, regardless of the dangers that threaten us and the unholy conditions that prevail, that I live in this nation.

On Saturday morning, this body exercised the privilege of expressing approval and acceptance of the officers listed by the Presidency of the Church. It was the voice of the people—President Clark expressed it, as the Doctrine and Covenants does, as the common consent of the people. That is basic in the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—the voice of the people. If we are going to meet, successfully, the conditions of which we have just heard, it must be because the voice of the people shall rise up in defense of honesty, integrity, righteousness, and correct living conditions. I think it is within the power of the people to bring that about once the voice of the people could be so aroused.

Then I remember the two years or more I studied the constitution of a nation in which I was resident, a constitution which was not, as ours, the expression of the body of the people, but a constitution which was gathered out of ours and the French Constitution and adapted to that nation. It has taken more than a hundred years for those people to sense the import of their constitution.

I once heard a man say, "Democracy is not what is written on a piece of paper. It is the expression of what is within the heart of men." Our country came into existence just that way, in that the power is resident in the people and that every right and every privilege

that is given to our officers is a concession, a direct concession from the people.

I remember reading about when in the Magna Charta, the right of kings was circumscribed in Great Britain, the voice of the people determined that certain things *only* could be exercised, even by men who claimed that they presided by divine right, the divine right of kings.

That voice, brethren and sisters, has come down to us. It was the voice which produced the Constitution of the United States of America, the grandest country in the world, and with all its shortcomings, and with all the evil that there is in it, I believe that it comes the nearest to being a civil government that is in harmony with the principles that govern in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. With us the power is resident in the priesthood and in the voice of the people. If we could bring our priesthood to a proper appreciation of its function, its privilege, we could determine these things. Just think that last evening nearly 50,000 holders of the priesthood scattered all over these United States, heard the proceedings of the priesthood meeting. If each one of that 50,000 persons who heard could rise up in righteous indignation against this curse of which we have heard, it would in a great measure be reduced if not eradicated. [See conference address of Ezra Taft Benson]

I fear, brethren and sisters, that we approach these topics with too much apathy. We hardly realize the power that there is in the organization which we have. Even though it be small in numbers compared to the total population of the United States, it could exercise a tremendous influence, and does, as a matter of fact, for righteousness throughout the country.

I wish that we could appreciate it, that we could fully magnify it. Some of us are very late in coming to an understanding of our privileges. Just after the morning meeting I was made very

happy by a brother who came to me and told me that his father had recently been able, eager, and willing to gather his family together with him and have his endowments in the temple. That man has been a friend of mine over the years. Just why he never came along before, I do not know. I know that I have loved him and honored him and befriended him in our association over the years, and I am happy beyond expression to realize that he now is assuming a part of his rights in the Melchizedek Priesthood of the Church.

We have so many of those men, brethren and sisters, who are slow in understanding the advantages of it. If we could add that hundred thousand men to the number who hold the Melchizedek Priesthood now, there is no question but that we could influence, very greatly, a reduction in these things of which we have heard.

I do not care to talk a long while this afternoon, brethren and sisters, but I do want to express to you my love and appreciation for our leaders and to hope that I may always be able to sustain them and uphold their hands, and may I be able yet many years to mingle with you brethren and sisters and do what I can to help with the organizations of the Church with which we deal.

May God bless us all, may he strengthen us, give us courage, may he give us a proper understanding and appreciation of the source of power in these United States, and the reasons for the Constitution, so that we may be willing to support it and sustain it, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Antoine R. Ivins, a member of the First Council of Seventy. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker.