

GENERAL CHURCH WELFARE COMMITTEE

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President Henry D. Moyle:

President McKay, the voting seems to have been unanimous in the affirmative.

President David O. McKay:

You will note that only the Presidency of the Young Women's Association was presented to you for your sustaining vote. It will be appropriate to accept the recommendation that with the honorable release of Sister Reeder and her counselors all members of the Young Women's Board have received an hon-

orable release also, leaving the new Presidency free to choose as many of the Board as they wish, and any others. It is recommended, therefore, that with the present release of the Presidency of the Young Women's Board all members of the Board be also honorably released. All in favor will manifest it. Any opposed? That is why there was a hesitancy in the presentation of the Young Women's Board.

Thank you all for unanimous voting. President Henry D. Moyle of the First Presidency will be our first speaker this morning. He will be followed by Elder Mark E. Petersen.

PRESIDENT HENRY D. MOYLE*Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

I am sure, my brethren and sisters, that we all appreciate the opportunity to lift our hand to sustain President David O. McKay as President of the Church, and in so doing we have in our hearts a feeling of deep gratitude for the privilege that is thus afforded us as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

It is glorious to be a member. It is glorious to have any office or calling in the Church, no matter how relatively humble the title may sound. I am impressed constantly with the fact that,

regardless of our calling, we are all encouraged, we are all dedicated, and we are all working in the service of the Master. I am sure that we do not permit our closeness to the work, we do not permit the fact that we have such ready access to our Father in heaven through prayer to take our membership in the Church lightly or to take our callings in the Church lightly. We are always conscious of his nearness to us and the blessings which we receive in answer to our prayers.

I am sure it would be more pleasing

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Second Day

to our Father in heaven to have us resign our positions—and that is not a practice which we commend in the Church—but nonetheless it seems preferable to neglecting our duties in the least detail. It gives us an awesome feeling to realize that we are dedicated to the work of the Lord, and having thus committed ourselves, it is not our privilege or our prerogative to violate his commandments, even the slightest of them. The Lord expects, and we expect it of ourselves, each one of us, to live out our lives here upon this earth in as complete conformity to the laws of God as we are capable. No means of rationalizing, no means of conjuring up excuses as to why we should do this or should not do the other, contrary to the will of our Heavenly Father, has any place in our lives.

I am grateful this morning that throughout the world the work of the Lord is progressing most satisfactorily, indeed so satisfactorily that sometimes we feel that we are hardly capable of keeping up with the progress of the Church.

In the mission field the Lord has blessed us. I just want to give you two figures. In the first nine months of 1959 in the foreign or full-time missions of the Church, we had over 23,000 what we call convert baptisms, and in the first eight months of 1961 we have had over 54,000. We are constantly asked why it is that this great increase in converts should come about at this particular time.

My first answer to that question would be that the faithfulness and the devotion of the Saints, their efforts to live lives of righteousness, to dedicate their lives to the principles of truth and right, is of primary importance. We know without any question of a doubt that the blessings which descend upon us as a people are directly commensurate with our faithfulness, with our nearness to our Heavenly Father. As we keep the channel of communication between us and our Father in heaven open, we can expect to be blessed more abundantly all the time.

In the second place, we cannot be close to this missionary work without being conscious of and without acknowl-

edging the fact that the Lord has touched the hearts of men all over the world and has made them responsive to the humble testimonies of the elders as they go forth in the performance of their duties as missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ in preaching the gospel throughout the world.

Our approach, our initial contact with our friends throughout the world, is the simplest approach we know how to make. Our lessons and their presentation are also direct and to the point. This simplicity of our approach and presentation of the gospel belies the existence of any design or device or scheme or contrivance or intrigue of any kind by which unsuspecting investigators might be brought in as members of the Church without their really knowing what they are doing or without their having exercised an absolute free agency of which President McKay spoke so beautifully yesterday.

Let us stop and think for a moment what a young missionary has to accomplish before he leads the convert down into the waters of baptism. He must first teach him the Word of Wisdom, and that means teach him in practically all cases to give up practices which have been lifelong and confirmed and live virtually a new life and to have the investigator commit himself to the keeping of this commandment of the Lord from the time of his baptism until the Lord calls him home.

We ask him to reform his life with reference to Sunday observance. We teach him that Sunday—the Sabbath—is a holy day. The Lord has prescribed for his children what should and what should not be done on the Sabbath day. And here again the convert is required to give up in many instances that weekly activity toward which he has always looked previously—a holiday, rather than a day of worship.

We teach him the law of tithing as revealed in these latter days by the Lord to his children, something he has been unaccustomed to in the past, and here again it is obligatory upon the missionary to commit his candidate for baptism to a strict observance of the law of tithing, accounting to the Lord

for the rest of his life for a tenth of his income, his increase.

Converts are taught to live worthy to hold the priesthood of God. They are taught from the beginning that after their baptism they will be introduced into the priesthood. They will have the Aaronic Priesthood conferred upon them, and later the Higher or the Melchizedek Priesthood. In order to be worthy of this progress and advancement in the Church, they must be as strict as possible in keeping the laws and commandments of God.

Then too, they are taught and told and have impressed upon their minds the fact that when they are once members of the Church, they then have an obligation to assist in promulgating the gospel to their friends and neighbors. In short, to be prepared to answer each and every call of the priesthood made of them, just as these fine men and women who today have been called into service have willingly responded. Those who are being released and given other positions accept the changes with the same kind of loyalty and devotion which they have previously extended to the work.

When you take into consideration these and many other unmentioned facts, you have to stop and ask yourself the question, "How can this nineteen-year-old boy of mine or of yours go out into a strange world, many of them to a strange country, where a strange language is spoken, and find almost of a sudden that they are touching the lives of total strangers in a manner which is almost beyond comprehension and certainly beyond the power of man?"

Take these great reformers, these great evangelists, who are able to draw, through their publicity and otherwise, great bodies of men and women. What is their ultimate accomplishment? They do not seek to change a man's way of life. They are happy when they can get the man or the woman to confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and when they have made that confession, that is it. No organizations, no requirements, no obligations of any kind! These are learned men—men, I presume, as brilliant as any men in the world. They are mature, and I

ask you to sit down and stop and think occasionally when you have this missionary work on your mind as to the difference between the results wrought in the lives of converts to the Church and converts to these great popular movements, no matter how fine, how elegant, how praiseworthy they may be.

You know, to me it is nothing short of a miracle to have men and women, mature, much older than the missionaries, submit themselves to these young men to be baptized by them. That involves a serious matter. The average normal citizen, friend, would only do that upon one foundation or one basis and that is that they have received in their hearts a testimony from God that this young elder has the priesthood of God conferred upon him by those who have that authority to preach the gospel and administer in its ordinances. Otherwise, what they do would be a mockery. It is not to be presumed that 54,000 people this year in all of the countries of the world in which we have missionaries would have permitted themselves to go through this formality to no good purpose. It takes some effort, it takes a great deal of humility. Unless they were convinced and converted to the fact that there in this young missionary they had found the power of God vested to administer in the sacred ordinances of the gospel, they would not do so.

It has interested me because in more than one country this year the following question has been raised more or less officially. Can a nineteen-year-old boy be a minister of the gospel? Are we justified as a government to confer upon him the benefits that inhere in the status of a minister of the gospel? And they say no. A nineteen-year-old boy could not possibly be a minister of the gospel. He has not studied. He has not gone through school. He is not mature.

Now, what does that mean? He is not learned in the ways of man. If they stop, as these 54,000 converts have stopped, and reflected and prayed and received an answer to their prayers, they would know that the Lord is capable of conferring blessings upon his children here on the earth through a

nineteen-year-old boy as well as through an older man, that one of the conditions is not that he be steeped in the learning of man, but that he is in tune with the Spirit of our Heavenly Father.

I must not take too much time, but I cannot sit down without giving you one or two examples of what is going on in the world today to indicate this thought of mine that we are converting by the Spirit, and the only virtue in the plan which we have in use now throughout the world is that it is the simplest possible presentation of the gospel that these great mission presidents of ours have been able to work out in the mission field, the least likely to affect the minds or the reason of men—so simple, in fact, that it cannot have any effect upon men of the world unless there is a higher power that touches their hearts and brings conversion to their souls.

I have become more and more convinced in my association with missionary work that most people are touched by the Spirit of the Lord upon the occasion of the missionary's first contact. Otherwise, they would not invite the missionary back time after time to be taught the principles of the gospel and to be brought closer and closer and ultimately into the waters of baptism.

Brother Brossard tells us the story of twenty-five conversions in France. Certainly there was no scheme that brought these conversions about. There was an army officer, a soldier, in Algeria, and while he was there in the service of his country, his wife had a baby, and it died. It was not baptized in the church of its parents, they believing in infant baptism, and therefore the church denied to that family a church funeral service for the child. I will not go into the details, but we had a friend of Brother Brossard and the missionaries, (and I guess they are friends to all of us) who called the attention of this distraught mother to the missionaries, and they went in at the request of the family and held the services, and these twenty-five baptisms came as a result of it, all from a single group. I was looking for this figure because I do not want to go beyond the facts, but this group is much larger than the twenty-

five, and the missionaries are now in the process of teaching the gospel to the rest of them, and President Brossard assures us that the twenty-five is just a small beginning to what will come about out of this single instance.

Then we have the story of a missionary who ran a red light, and by so doing got the name and address of the traffic officer and an invitation to visit him in his home. The officer's penalty after the missionary got through with him was—what does the Good Book say?—"Go thy way and sin no more."

We have the story of two missionaries coming from Zollingen in Germany who went to the mayor to give him a Book of Mormon, made friends with him, and on a rainy day, seeing them from his limousine, the mayor called to them to come over and get in the car. He wanted to drive them to the City Council and introduce them officially to that august body.

And two missionaries in Hamburg, Germany, went to the chief of police to make themselves known and to tell their story, and as a result he gave them his card and said, "I want you elders to feel free to call upon me at any time in case you have any difficulty, or there is any service we can render you, and I will have my car to you within five minutes."

These were all nineteen-year-old boys, and I could go on and tell you of many others. There was not anything those boys could do or say of their own that would bring about such miraculous results, but the first contact was enough to open the door for future contacts. That is the way the work of the Lord goes on. Isn't it wonderful to realize that the prophecies of old are being fulfilled? How true it is that a stone has been cut out of a mountain without hands and is rolling forth and will fill the earth. Almost every prophecy we have in the Old and the New Testaments concerning the latter days fits into our program and furnishes us the exact, the proper answer to this inquiry as to the marvelous results accompanying the work of our missionaries. They work by and through the Spirit, and let me say this to you mothers and fathers, we love you, and we appreciate your

loyalty, and we appreciate your sons' and your daughters' service. Have no concern about your sons and daughters in the mission field. It makes no difference who their mission president is. As long as they are in the line of their duty, encouraged by their parents so to be, they are in the hands of the Lord, and he has promised to take care of them and is bound by those promises. I can conceive of nothing more wonderful in all the world than to have the absolute assurance that the Spirit of God is with your sons and daughters in the mission field to preserve them, to protect them, to inspire them, to perform a service that no one upon this earth can perform unless he has the delegated power from God to do so.

"And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb,

nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst.

"And whoso receiveth you, there I will be also, for I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up." (D&C 84:80, 88.)

God bless us all and bless the missionaries. They are looking to us today for guidance and direction and encouragement. Let us give it to them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Henry D. Moyle of the First Presidency has just concluded speaking. We shall now hear from Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

It surely is a great inspiration to be here, my brothers and sisters. I am grateful that I had the opportunity with you of raising my hand in sustaining the officers presented here today. With all my heart and soul I sustain the President of our Church, President David O. McKay, as the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Lord. With all my soul I love him and honor him and am very grateful for his leadership.

I am thankful for these men who have been sustained with him. Our hearts all go out to President Clark who is not here; our faith and prayers likewise. I am thankful for the great work that President Moyle is doing. I am thankful that President Brown has been called to his position.

I am very grateful indeed that Gordon Hinckley has been called into the twelve. I have known Gordon most of his life and a good part of mine. We grew up together in the First Ward in Liberty Stake. His father was our stake president for much of the time. His father was as close to me as my

own father nearly, and I loved him as a father, and still do.

And I welcome these other brethren, and these sisters, and I join with all of you in wishing the very best for these who have been released. I express sincere appreciation for the remarkable work they have done.

In one of the recent editions of the *US News and World Report*, the editors commented upon the trouble-making propensities of Mr. Khrushchev. They said that great as is the Berlin crisis, it will not be our last one. There will be others, and still others after that, because Mr. Khrushchev is determined to cause turmoil wherever and whenever he can. They branded him as a persistent troublemaker, and said that he seems to have no other purpose than to cause unpleasantness, misery, and contention.

The world is becoming more and more resentful of the constant trouble-making of this man. International quarreling and bitterness are indeed affecting the nerves of all mankind.