

Friday, October 5

First Day

President David O. McKay:

You will be interested in this note just handed to me: "We wish to extend our appreciation for being able to attend this conference. One Hundred Twelve Seminary Students from Marsh Valley

High School." We welcome you students and hope you will enjoy your visit to this General Conference.

Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

In keeping with the spirit of the masterful address given by our great leader, President David O. McKay at the beginning of this conference, I declare to you this morning that human liberty is the mainspring of human progress.

The one great revolution in the world is the revolution for human liberty. This was the paramount issue in the great council in heaven before this earth life. It has been the issue throughout the ages. It is the issue today.

It is difficult for Americans to understand the danger to our liberty. "It is generally outside the range of our experience." But we live today in an age of peril. We are threatened with the loss not only of material wealth but of something far more precious—our liberty itself.

Never before in the history of our country has there been a greater need for all of our people to take time to discover what is happening in the world. Every day decisions are being made affecting the lives of millions of human beings.

We as a people have never known bondage. Liberty has always been our blessed lot. Few of us have ever seen people who have lost their freedom—their liberty. And when reminded of the danger of losing our liberty and independence our attitude has usually been: *It cannot happen here.*

We must never forget that nations may, and usually do, sow the seeds of their own destruction while enjoying unprecedented prosperity.

The children of Israel, willing to sacrifice liberty, wanted Moses to be their king. Generations later their descendants begged Samuel the prophet to give them a king. He pointed out the fallacy of their reasoning. Samuel, like other great

spiritual leaders, ancient and modern, saw the results that would follow the surrender of liberty.

In that sacred volume of scripture, the Book of Mormon, we note the great and prolonged struggle for liberty. We also note the complacency of the people and their frequent willingness to give up their liberty for the promises of a would-be provider.

The record reveals that a man "of cunning device . . . and . . . many flattering words," . . . sought . . . "to destroy the foundation of liberty which God had granted unto them, . . ." (Alma 46:10.)

Then Moroni, the chief commander of the armies, dramatically ". . . rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole.

". . . (and he called it the title of liberty) and he bowed himself to the earth, and he prayed mightily unto his God for the blessings of liberty to rest upon his brethren, . . ." (See *ibid.*, 46:12-13.)

This great general, Moroni, like the prophets whose words are recorded in the Book of Mormon, spoke of the Americas as a chosen land—the land of liberty. He led the people in battle who were willing to fight to "maintain their liberty."

And the record states: ". . . that he caused the title of liberty to be hoisted upon every tower which was in all the land, . . . and thus Moroni planted the standard of liberty among the Nephites." (*Ibid.*, 46:36.)

This is our need today—to plant the standard of liberty among our people throughout the Americas.

While this incident occurred some seventy years BC, the struggle went on through one thousand years covered by this sacred Book of Mormon record. In fact, the struggle for liberty is a continuing one—it is with us in a very real sense today right here on this choice land of the Americas. Yes, on an island strategically situated only ninety miles from our shores.

Just a short time ago Fidel Castro broadcast to the world his boastful confession that he had been a hard-core communist all of his adult life. He gloried in the fact that he had been able to confuse and deceive many people simply by saying he was not a communist. And because there were gullible people in this and other countries who believed his false assertions, he was able to establish a Soviet beachhead—"A communist satellite under active Russian control."

Americans must face the cold hard fact that Fidel Castro was encouraged and supported in his seizure of Cuba. Why? Simply because many Americans were led to believe the falsehood that he would resist Soviet influence and restore the full basic liberty of the Cuban people. A few of us issued early warnings based on unimpeachable evidence. Two United States ambassadors repeatedly warned that Castro was part of the communist conspiracy and that he was working for the communist conquest of Cuba. These voices went unheeded.

This is merely a repetition of the same deceitful pattern which was used after World War II to have us tolerate revolutionary communists in China—to accept them as "agrarian reformers"—and allow them to seize and enslave some 450,000,000 people on the Chinese mainland.

This is the same deceitful pattern which we have been asked to accept in the Congo, in Laos, in British Guiana, etc. In fact, everywhere the communist conspiratorial machinery is preparing for a seizure of power, we are assured there is no immediate danger from communism.

In less than half a century this evil system has gained control over one-third of mankind, and it is steadily pursuing its vicious goal of control over all the rest of the world. It is time, and

past time, for us to be alarmed.

I raised a voice of warning two years ago following my return from South America. And now, today, Cuba is being used as a base to spread subversion and armed revolution throughout Latin America. Cuba is being used as a funnel through which communists are infiltrating other American Republics. There can be no stability in Latin America so long as "The shadow of the hammer and sickle is darkening the Western Hemisphere." The communist objective is to isolate North America.

Less than fifteen years ago communism was not a powerful force in Latin America. Today it is not only strongly present there as an enemy to be reckoned with—it is openly allied with a government located on an island only about 90 miles south of Key West, Florida.

The only political party now functioning in Cuba is the popular Socialist Party—the Communist Party under another name.

It is authoritatively reported that by the end of 1958 there were 316 known communist or pro-communist publications in Latin America, the largest number being 55 in Mexico. About one half are newspapers and other periodicals. There were more than 150 communist publishing houses and bookstores. These activities have increased sharply since 1958. (*South Wind Red*, by Ray, p. 17.)

True to communist and dictator tradition, the Cuban government has deprived its people of the rights of a free press, free elections, and the protection of other fundamental human rights.

How did this situation come about? How is it possible for communism to be here and now moving into Africa, pressing upon all of Asia, threatening the Middle East and increasingly becoming a danger in the Western Hemisphere?

There are, of course, many reasons. Our apathy—our complacent indifference is a major cause. We have permitted ourselves to be pacified and lulled away into carnal security as Book of Mormon prophets predicted. (See 2 Nephi 28:21.)

As emphasized from this pulpit two years ago, we have a rich history to guide us. Think back with me a moment to

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the year 1823. In that year, James Monroe of Virginia was President. John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts was Secretary of State. These two men formed and announced a policy—the Monroe Doctrine—which has profoundly influenced the development of our entire hemisphere. (Here was the situation that called forth this policy—known as the Monroe Doctrine—in 1823.)

Several of what are now the Latin American republics had by force of arms newly won their independence from Spain and Portugal. Among them were Columbia, Mexico, Chile, and Brazil.

Meantime a number of the sovereigns of Europe were seeking to enforce the "divine right of kings" with the express purpose of putting "an end to the system of representative government. . . ."

This our government refused to permit. It said so plainly in the celebrated Monroe Doctrine. The heart of the Monroe Doctrine consisted of these words ". . . the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. . . ." The Monroe Doctrine, which should be and is an enduring cornerstone and living principle of national policy, stated further: "The political system of the allied powers is essentially different . . . from that of America. . . ."

Surely if it were true a century and a half ago that European monarchy was essentially different from our American system of representative government, it is even more true today that the communist system is totally different, totally incompatible, totally inimical to our free way of life.

This is a time of decision. Further vacillation will serve only to drive all of Latin America straight into communist hands. If action is not taken against the power-drunken bandit and his cohorts, the day will soon come when it cannot be done at all.

The Monroe Doctrine was first invoked against the Russian Czar Alexander. The Cuban menace represents the first time in one hundred years that a hostile foreign power has established a firm beachhead in the Americas.

The American people are deeply upset,

frustrated, and angry at what they fear is a retreat from the time-honored Monroe Doctrine—a retreat which could now end in war.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., whose scholarly work on the Monroe Doctrine, as Under Secretary of State, is well known, in tracing our destiny said this:

"Then came our GREAT Monroe Doctrine which placed us of the United States squarely behind efforts of Latin America to gain freedom and against those European states who would thwart it.

"God again moved us forward towards the destiny He has planned for us. He was preserving the blessings He had given to us." (*Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine*, Dept. of State Publication #37, December 17, 1928.)

President Joseph Fielding Smith in his ever timely volume, *The Progress of Man*, in discussing America's fortification against other nations makes this significant statement.

"The greatest and most powerful fortification in America is the 'Monroe Doctrine.' . . . It appears to the casual observer that this doctrine came by chance . . . but this is not so. It was the inspiration of the Almighty which rested upon John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson and other statesmen, and which finally found authoritative expression in the message of President James Monroe to Congress in the year 1823. . . ."

"It is generally understood . . . in the Church that the greatest and most significant principle by which this land is fortified against the encroachments and invasions of European and Asiatic powers is found in the Monroe Doctrine. . . ." (Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 357, 466-467.)

This Monroe Doctrine widely accepted by the republics of the south, has been the continuing policy of our nation for almost a century and a half. It has been reaffirmed by many American presidents. We are on solid traditional American ground in demanding that the communists should not attempt to extend their political system to this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

If time permitted, we could show that in recent years, the principles of the Monroe Doctrine have been strength-

ened by various joint agreements among the American nations: These should be invoked. The longer we wait the more difficult will be the job.

It is almost unthinkable that any people would knowingly and wilfully take on themselves the yoke of communist oppression. No nation has ever done so yet. If large masses of the Cuban people have done so, it is because they have been duped or coerced.

As a people who have known only liberty, we are inclined to feel, it *cannot happen here*. We have become lulled away into a false security.

A most brilliant discussion of the Latin American problem, which appeared in the May 1961 issue of *American Opinion*, concluded with these words:

"... history gives us one more chance. If the American people are too blind or too cowardly to take that chance, then, whether or not we as individuals deserve it, you and I and all that we hold dear . . . must suffer the doom that history mercilessly imposes on fools."

Why are we so timid in standing up to a Godless communist police state which can't even feed its own people, and whose economy, they know, will not support a major war. They "lead from weakness and we retreat from strength."

I say to you it can happen here. It is happening here. We have retreated from the Monroe Doctrine. Our liberty is in danger. But we go blithely and gullibly on our way. Some of us fall for the Kremlin line as planned by the mass murderer Khrushchev and call patriots "extremists" and accuse courageous liberty-loving citizens of "dividing our people."

As President McKay said at the close of the April general conference, quoting J. Edgar Hoover, "There is no place here in America for part-time patriots. This nation is face to face with the greatest danger ever to confront it, a sinister and deadly conspiracy which can be conquered only by an alert, informed citizenry. It is indeed appalling that some members of our society continue to deplore and criticize those who stress the communist danger. Public indifference to this threat is tantamount to national suicide. Lethargy leads only to disaster. . . ."

We must be vigilant. Let us unite. Let us join in our fight against the forces of anti-Christ.

Forgive me for being so blunt, but I feel most deeply on these matters. Possibly it is because I've seen at close range so much of this godless, treacherous conspiracy in the past few years in more than forty nations.

I realize that the bearer of bad news is always unpopular. As a people we love sweetness and light—especially sweetness. Ralph Waldo Emerson said that every mind must make a choice between truth and repose. Those who will learn nothing from history are condemned to repeat it. This we are doing in the Americas today.

As a Church we have a world message of salvation to deliver to our Father's children. The restored gospel can only thrive in an atmosphere of liberty. We are in a worldwide conflict. It is the first of its kind in history. It is between light and darkness; between liberty and slavery. It is a struggle for the souls of men. We must win this war.

In 1946 I stood in Czechoslovakia. The deadening socialist-communist philosophies were even then infiltrating that lovely country. Our church mission was thriving among these liberty-loving people. They too said it could not happen there. Only two years later it had happened. They had lost their liberty.

At the close of World War II while serving as European Mission President, I visited Stanislaw M. Mikolajczyk in Warsaw, the leader of the liberty-loving Polish people and former premier of the Polish Government-in-Exile. I had hoped we might do missionary work in Poland. Though Mikolajczyk was the leader of the indisputable majority of the electorate, he had to flee from Poland to save his life from the insidious encroaching communist police state.

I also talked to our Polish Ambassador, Arthur Bliss Lane. He told me of the tragic course of appeasement our government was pursuing in selling out the Polish people to the communists. Finally, unable to endure it any longer, Lane voluntarily resigned so he could tell the story. He titled his book, *I Saw Poland Betrayed*.

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And so the pattern has been repeated in country after country.

Rather than impede communism our policies in their total effect have apparently helped promote it. And so the honest in heart, many of whom have probably already been murdered, are deprived of the message of the restored gospel—good people who would have responded to the words of truth from our missionaries.

Who then is to blame? What then can be done?

To some extent we Latter-day Saints and Americans everywhere must share some blame for we have not been awake to the warnings of the prophets. We have not exerted our righteous influence as citizens to stop this disastrous course. Our skirts are not entirely clean. Many of us have been asleep in Zion—the Western Hemisphere.

"But," say some, "why should we be so concerned. After all if the Lord wants them to get the gospel message, they'll get it."

Of course, if the Lord desired, he could this instant preach the gospel to every soul and do all our genealogical work. He could also right every wrong, feed the famished, plant our crops, train our children, etc. But his doctrine requires us to do our best ourselves in these areas and ask the Lord's help in our endeavors. After we've done all we can, then the Lord will cover for us.

Now what can be done? We have missionaries and Saints in South America. Those countries fall within the scope of the Monroe Doctrine. These countries are now being pushed in the direction of bondage—the loss of liberty.

What can we do to help meet this grave challenge from a godless, atheistic, cruelly materialistic system—to preserve our God-given Liberty?

We can encourage our government wherever we live, to stand firm at all costs against any further expansion of despotic communism.

We can support our government in keeping the flame of liberty burning in the souls of the oppressed—wherever they may be throughout the world.

We can heed the words of men like Edward Hunter who for twenty years has been reporting communist conspiracy and brain-washing from abroad

and who recently wrote this:

"In Washington these days one hears a great deal of the word *escalation* but never the word *honor*.

"*Escalation* was the reason Americans had to stand by and watch with folded hands as a young man bled to death a hundred feet from them at the Berlin wall of shame, although we had every right to go in and stem his bleeding under wartime agreement.

"Imagine anyone telling an American, only a few years back, that we would stand by idly, witnessing a man die needlessly because he wanted to be free. . . .

"*Escalation* is why we stood by wringing our hands when the East Germans started building the wall, whereas is now known, their orders were to stop if we showed any serious resistance.

"*Escalation*, if continued, will complete our softening-up, until we 'bury ourselves,' as Khrushchev predicts. . . .

"This soft *escalation* policy in Cuba, starting in 1958, permitted 'a small band of hoodlums, under the leadership of Fidel Castro' to conduct 'open warfare against the established government of Cuba, which was friendly towards the United States. . . .' We have, thus passed the time for soft and easy action to protect ourselves," says Mr. Hunter. "We have only one course of action left: to destroy Communist power in Cuba by force of arms."

As I visited among the good people of Cuba in 1955, I had a secret hope we would soon be able to bring to them the truths of the restored gospel. What are our prospects now? People said in Cuba in 1955: *It cannot happen here. We love liberty.*

The insidious but rapid take-over of Latin America is drawing ever closer to the final showdown.

Unless godless communism is stamped out of Cuba, it is only a matter of time until like Czechoslovakia, other missions will likely close and more of our Father's children will be deprived of their liberty and the fulness of the everlasting gospel.

The message of salvation must move forward. God grant that every effort to stay its growth will be frustrated.

Courage and statesmanship are imperatively needed today. We must take chances for liberty. May God bless our

national leaders in this time of crisis.

Yes, the effective preaching of the gospel can only thrive in an atmosphere of liberty. Yes, we all say, we love liberty. But that is not enough. We must protect and safeguard that which we love. We must save liberty.

God grant us the wisdom and the courage so to do, before it is too late, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers will now favor us with "The Voice In The Wilderness," conducted by Sister

Florence Jepperson Madsen. The benediction will be offered by Elder Jesse R. Curtis, formerly president of the Swiss-Austrian Mission, after which this Conference will be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The music for this session has been furnished by the Relief Society Singing Mothers from Central Idaho and Bannock Welfare Regions. Elder Alexander Schreiner has been at the organ.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers sang the anthem, "The Voice In The Wilderness."

Elder Jesse R. Curtis, former president of the Swiss-Austrian Mission, offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2:00 p.m.

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AFTERNOON MEETING

The Friday afternoon session of the Conference convened at 2:00 p.m. in the Tabernacle.

The choral music for this session was furnished by the Relief Society Singing Mothers from the Central Idaho and Bannock Welfare Regions, with Florence Jepperson Madsen conducting. Elder Roy M. Darley, Assistant Tabernacle Organist, was at the organ console.

President David O. McKay presided and conducted the services, and made the following introductory remarks:

President David O. McKay:

Members of the Church are convened in the Tabernacle in the second general session of the 132nd Semi-Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As announced this morning, through the generous cooperation of owners and managers of radio and television stations across the nation, a total of 127 television stations and 28 radio stations will carry to practically every state in the Union and many foreign countries the proceedings of the various sessions of this Conference. The names of the

stations carrying the proceedings were announced to the television and radio audiences just prior to the opening of this meeting. Thank you, owners of these stations, for rendering to the congregations the favor of sending out the proceedings of this Conference.

We have received the following telegrams since this morning's session:

From President Grant S. Thorn of the Northeast British Mission: "We send the love and best wishes for a successful Conference from all the Saints and missionaries of our wonderful mission."

From Brother Carl W. Buehner, Sisters Florence S. Jacobsen and Elaine A. Cannon in Stuttgart, Germany, meeting with M.I.A. Leaders in stakes of Great Britain and Europe: "Meetings inspiring. We miss being home for Conference but send our love and prayers for all."

From President Lloyd Mickelsen of the Great Lakes Mission: "We, the elders and sisters and presidency of the Great Lakes Mission send our love and join you with our faith and prayers for a most successful Conference."

From Senator Frank B. Moss: "Regret my absence from Conference this morn-