

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, and brethren: As Brother Lee mentioned, I am to speak a few moments about the proposed priesthood correlation program.

Through a program of priesthood correlation, we bearers of the priesthood must increase our efforts to encourage, teach, and inspire the Saints to become "partakers of the divine nature," to use Peter's phrase, through obedience to the sanctifying principles of the gospel.

We are performing far below our potential in this matter. President Joseph F. Smith seems to have visioned the time when the priesthood would do much more than it has been doing. In his opening address at the April conference of 1906, he said:

"We expect to see the day, if we live long enough (and if some of us do not live long enough to see it, there are others who will), when every council of the priesthood in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will understand its duty; will assume its own responsibility, will magnify its calling, and fill its place in the Church, to the uttermost, according to the intelligence and ability possessed by it. When that day shall come there will not be so much necessity for work that is now being done by the auxiliary organizations, because it will be done by the regular quorums of the priesthood. The Lord designed and comprehended it from the beginning, and he has made provision in the Church whereby every need may be met and satisfied through the regular organizations of the priesthood. It has truly been said that the Church is perfectly organized. The only trouble is that these organizations are not fully alive to the obligations that rest upon them. When they become thoroughly awakened to the requirements made of them, they will fulfil their duties more faithfully, and the work of the Lord will be all the stronger and more powerful and influential in the world." (*Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 159-160.)

Now, since President Smith made this statement fifty-six years ago, the Church

has not only grown in numbers, but its programs and activities have multiplied. Many special committees—priesthood and auxiliary—have been set up and assigned particular functions. Many of these functions are rightfully the responsibility of the priesthood. Fellowship, for example, and working with inactive members of the priesthood, both Aaronic and Melchizedek.

With a view to correlating some of these activities, the First Presidency in 1960 asked the general priesthood committee to consider the problem and bring in a report and recommendations. Pursuant to this assignment, fourteen representative stakes were selected and since then have been experimenting with programs which they themselves have developed within certain prescribed guidelines. The brethren have been most co-operative and creative in this work. To them we express gratitude and thanks. The results have been encouraging.

Their plans and developed material are now in the hands of the all-church co-ordinating council. It is anticipated that a program will be perfected, approved, and presented at stake conferences to each stake in the Church during the last half of 1963, with the program to go into operation throughout the Church in January 1964.

Now, priesthood correlation, as we are using the term here, contemplates all that is now being done in ward teaching and much more. It unites under one undertaking many activities. It requires that attention be given to every member of every family, particularly to those who need special encouragement to live the gospel. It means much more than a perfunctory visit once a month. It includes:

- (1) Periodic visits to every family by two priesthood bearers;
- (2) Laboring with Melchizedek Priesthood bearers to build spiritual and temporal "strength";
- (3) Laboring with inactive and over-age members of the Aaronic Priesthood under 21;

Saturday, October 6

Second Day

(4) Activating and bringing into full church participation senior members of the Aaronic Priesthood and their families;

(5) Fellowshiping and bringing into full activity recent converts, new arrivals, and all inactive church members;

(6) Encouraging all parents and other family heads to maintain genuine Latter-day Saint homes in which are practised and taught the sanctifying principles of the gospel. It aims to bring all parents to a realization of President McKay's statement that "The character of the child is formed largely during the first twelve years of his life. It is estimated," said President McKay, "that in that period the child spends sixteen times as many waking hours in the home as in school and more than a hundred times as many hours in the home as in the Church. Every child is, to a great degree, what he is because of the ever constant influence of home environment and the careful or neglectful training of parents. . . ."

It is anticipated that priesthood correlation will include ward teaching, fellowshiping, activating inactive bearers in the priesthood, both Melchizedek and Aaronic.

It will be the responsibility of the two brethren who visit homes under the priesthood correlation program to familiarize themselves with the spiritual status of each member in every family assigned to them. It will be their responsibility to make sure that infants are blessed; that children are baptized at eight years of age; that boys are worthy and qualified to be ordained to the priesthood at 12 years of age and that they are so ordained; that they move through the grades of the priesthood in proper order; that candidates for marriage are properly taught the importance and sanctity of temple marriage and the church standards which will qualify them for it, to the end that they will be married in the temple.

It will be the responsibility of the two visiting brethren to know the available church activities for each family member and encourage him to avail himself of them—such activities, for example, as Sacrament meetings, stake conferences, and other ward and stake activities; activities provided by priest-

hood quorums, auxiliary organizations, the church educational system; genealogical and temple work, and so forth.

In brief, it is the hope that through priesthood correlation the responsibility which the Lord placed upon the elders, priests, and teachers at the time the Church was organized will be discharged. You will remember that in the revelation recorded in the 20th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, given in 1830 at the time the Church was organized, the Lord prescribed the duties of the elders, priests, teachers, and deacons. He there said, ". . . An apostle is an elder," so I assume that the responsibility placed upon the elder is borne by every member of the Melchizedek Priesthood. President Joseph F. Smith must have been of the same opinion because he said:

"Brother Charles W. Penrose is eighty-two years of age. I am going on seventy-six . . . and I want to tell . . . you that we are not too old to act as teachers, if you will call on us to do it, not one of us. . . . So long as life lasts, and so long as we possess ability to do good, to labor in the upbuilding of Zion for the benefit of the human family, we ought, with willingness, with alacrity to yield to the requirements made of us to do our duty, . . ." (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 188.)

By some it has been thought that some of the directions given in the revelation referred only to ordained teachers. It would seem, however, that the responsibility has been placed upon every bearer of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and the priests as well as upon the teachers. For in the revelation the Lord says that the elder's calling is ". . . to teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church; . . ." That's the responsibility of the elder (which as above explained includes all bearers of the Melchizedek Priesthood). Then the Lord says that it is the priest's duty to help him in certain activities—not the whole scope of the elder's responsibility, but he says it is the priest's duty to ". . . visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties, . . . And he is to take the lead of meetings when there is no elder present; . . ."

And then he repeats, "And visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties.

"In all these duties the priest is to assist the elder. . . ."

And then the teacher's duty is to help also, but not in as wide a scope as the priest, but, "The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them;

"And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking;

"And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty." (See D&C 20:38, 42, 47, 49, 51-55.)

We hope to develop a program in this priesthood correlation through which all these responsibilities will be discharged. When we have seen that every member of the Church does his duty, we think we will be able to stand approved before the Lord.

This is a tremendous undertaking. It will take training of teachers. It will take a new determination. It will mean that every priesthood member will have to be a man of courage. Someone has said that the courageous man finds a way and that the ordinary man finds an excuse. No man that holds the priest-

hood wants to be just an ordinary man.

"Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 107:99-100.)

And again:

"Wherefore, [says the Lord] lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins, and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand.

"Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, which I have sent mine angels to commit unto you;

"Taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of my Spirit, which I will pour out upon you, and my word which I reveal unto you, and be agreed as touching all things whatsoever ye ask of me, and be faithful until I come, and ye shall be caught up, that where I am ye shall be also. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 27:15-18.)

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, as I now come to announce the first tangible step forward that the Church will see on a church-wide basis, I am reminded of something you said when you came to the first regional meeting of the church welfare plan held in 1936 down in the old Pioneer Stake Hall where all the stake presidents of this area were called together. You sat through an hour or two of what must have been somewhat of a painful discussion of the details of beginning this far-reaching new welfare movement. You asked no questions, you made no comment, but at the conclusion you made this statement in something of a parable which I should

like to apply tonight to this correlation movement.

"An engineer pulled his train into a station one dark and stormy night, and while the engineer was out oiling his engine and getting ready for the next run, a timid passenger left his place in the train and walked up to the engineer and asked, 'Aren't you afraid to pull your train out into the dark tonight, raining and storming like it is?' Without looking up, the engineer replied, 'I am not pulling my engine out into the dark tonight.' 'Why,' said the passenger, 'it's pitch dark outside the lights of the station. I should think that with the responsibility of these four or five hundred passengers depending upon your