

Saturday, October 1

Second Day

Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

These services are being broadcast in the Assembly Hall by television. Those standing in the doorways of this building may find seats in the Assembly Hall if they wish to do so.

This session of the Conference will be broadcast as a public service over television and radio. The names of the stations were announced prior to the beginning of this meeting. We again express appreciation for the service that is being rendered by these stations. This morning's session, in addition to being broadcast direct, was video-taped for release to many television stations tomorrow morning to the eastern and central parts of the United States, and also in Hawaii.

Both of the sessions today will be re-broadcast over KSL Radio and KIRO Radio at Seattle Sunday morning starting at one o'clock, and will be heard in many parts of the United States and the world.

We are pleased that this morning's session will reach a vast audience of listeners, both in the United States and abroad over the Church-owned short-wave station WNYW with headquarters in New York.

We are pleased to note the attendance this afternoon of special guests, prominent state and city officials, and leaders in educational circles. We extend a hearty welcome to them.

We are also pleased to welcome our stake, ward and temple authorities and general auxiliary officers of the Church.

President McKay joins us in extending a most cordial welcome to our vast unseen audience, and to all who are gathered in this historic building.

The singing for this afternoon's ses-

sion will be furnished by the Relief Society Singing Mothers from the Northwest Region, conducted by Florence Jepperson Madsen, with Robert Cundick at the organ.

We are exceedingly pleased to have these sisters with us this afternoon, and extend a hearty welcome to them.

We will begin this service by the chorus singing, "Send Out Thy Light," and the invocation will be offered by Elder Justin B. Lillywhite, president of the Fullerton (California) Stake of Zion.

Singing: "Send Out Thy Light."

Invocation by President Justin B. Lillywhite of the Fullerton Stake.

President Joseph Fielding Smith:

The invocation was just offered by President Justin B. Lillywhite of the Fullerton Stake.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers will now favor us with "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place," conducted by Sister Madsen.

After the singing, our first speaker will be Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

Singing: "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place."

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will be our first speaker, and he will be followed by Bishop John H. Vandenberg.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley
Of the Council of the Twelve

I am grateful for the inspirational music of these lovely women.

Conference meetings in Viet Nam

As we sit here in security and comfort this beautiful autumn day, my

thoughts reach across the vast stretches of the Pacific to our brethren in Viet Nam. It is early Sunday morning there. Many of those who can be excused from war duties will soon gather for their Sunday meetings. The only room available to them in Saigon

will be crowded to capacity. Other meetings will be held in Bien Hoa, Phu Loi, Cam Ranh Bay, Bac Lieu, Chu Lai, Plei Ku, and a score of other places with strange-sounding names. Most of those in attendance will be in uniform. With grateful hearts they are likely to sing, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet." They will pray for us who are here assembled in conference. They will renew their covenants with the Lord as they partake of the emblems of his sacrifice. They will study his word. They will comfort and sustain one another.

Our men in the armed services

I have thought that I would like to use this opportunity, if the Spirit will give me inspiration, to speak a few words concerning our men in the armed services the world over—whether in the service of the United States or other nations—Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, the Philippines, and others.

I should like to speak a word of assurance to mothers and fathers, many of whom are sick with worry concerning their sons. I should like to extend an invitation to those of our young men in service who may not be actively associated with the Church. I should like to express appreciation to those of our brethren who have done so much to bring a measure of peace to the hearts of many others with whom they are associated while in the service of their respective countries.

In the United States growing numbers of our young men are being inducted. Draft requirements have swelled tremendously during the past few months, and there is no indication that they will be substantially lessened in the near future.

Many thousands of young men of the Church are now in military service, and more are entering every week. Sorrow and anxiety and gnawing fear concerning loved ones afflict the homes of many of our people.

The word that most strikes fear in the heart of a mother these days is Viet Nam. It is a land so far away. The heat is oppressive. The jungle is so dark. Everything is so strange. Is

the Church there, they anxiously ask?

Some few weeks ago a mother called me. She said that her son was in the Marine Corps. She inquired whether there was a branch of the Church anywhere in South Viet Nam. I assured her that there are many groups and branches and told her how her son could find the one nearest his base.

"The Church is here"

A few days later she called back and said that she had just received a letter that she would like to read. He had written: "Mother, don't worry about me any more. I've found the Church. Your prayers have been answered. This morning seven of us found a place where we could be off by ourselves. We sang the hymns we sing at home, but they had a new meaning for us. We administered the sacrament, and I have never appreciated it so much. We read together the Book of Mormon, and we bore testimony one to another. Don't worry about me. The Church is here, and I'm in the Church."

I join with you in a prayer that peace will soon come to that troubled part of the world. I would earnestly hope that your sons will not be called to serve in those hot, fearsome battle-grounds; but in case orders take them there, I want to assure you that they may find the Church operating under the direction of devoted and faithful men.

South Viet Nam in Southern Far East Mission

South Viet Nam is a zone of the Southern Far East Mission. There are four such zones in that mission: Taiwan, or the Republic of China; the Philippines; Hong Kong; and South Viet Nam. Presiding over the South Viet Nam Zone is a presidency of three worthy men, and under them are three district presidencies, each consisting of three worthy men. Within these districts are nearly thirty branches or groups, each with a president or presidency.

Three Mormon chaplains are stationed there, and a fourth is assigned to go there. No more devoted or capable members of the Church will be

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found anywhere in the world. May I read a few lines from one of them, our zone president, Major Rozsa. These words were penned as he rode a C-47 over the bomb-cratered jungle of that embattled land. He says:

Priesthood leaders in Viet Nam

"Viet Nam, in many ways, is a wonderful experience for our LDS brothers and sisters. I have never been amongst more choice men and women in the gospel than those serving here in Viet Nam. I have never seen so much priesthood talent assembled in one area, except at conference time in Salt Lake City, as I have witnessed in Viet Nam. We have numerous brethren who have served as bishops, in bishoprics, on high councils, as branch presidents, and in other offices. I firmly believe that those priesthood bearers who remain faithful and serve their country and the Lord while in Viet Nam will provide a great potential leadership within the Church.

"Our priesthood holders face a life in Viet Nam that is different from anything they have known elsewhere. The fighting is different, the political situation is different, the controversies over our presence in Viet Nam are unparalleled in past conflicts—controversies among our fellow Americans at home, and the constant temptations that lead to immorality and moral decay, are more pronounced here than I have witnessed in other lands during other conflicts.

"Our men and women are being tried in a refiner's fire. Those who remain true will have made great strides toward the kingdom of God." Such is the estimate of Major Rozsa.

Now listen to the words of another young man in a remote battle area: "I've just attended services held in a tent here on base. . . . I'm only a deacon, but I have come to learn that in our Church . . . everyone seems to help everyone else as brothers and sisters should. . . . This group may be small in number but it is large in faith. I attended an hour-long service this morning and I'm proud to tell you even though we are [many thousands of] miles away from our home, Church, and loved ones, we still be-

lieve in the gospel and bear our testimonies with sincere faith."

Let me give you another snatch from a letter: "I'm thankful," this young officer in a commando unit writes, "for the Church here in Viet Nam. It has really been a great help to me. It's been here in times of need when we come under mortar and recoilless rifle attack. I'm thankful that I know about the plan of salvation and what to expect after death, because it has really been a source of strength for me."

Invitation to be active

This leads me to a second point I wish to mention—an invitation to our young men over there who may not have become actively associated with the Church. You need the Church and the Church needs you. The individual there must seek out the Church. A systematic effort is made to find all Church members, but it is not easy under present circumstances. There are more than 300,000 Americans there, among whom it is estimated there may be 3,000 members of the Church. You families, you fathers and mothers, urge your sons to look for the Church. Or you may write to our brethren there concerning your boys. A pair of dedicated home teachers will call on that son or brother and extend him an invitation with all the solicitude that home teachers in your ward would exercise.

Fellowship of priesthood a priceless blessing

And to you young men who may be sent to that distant part of the world, may I extend an invitation in behalf of your brethren in Viet Nam, that you make your presence known. The fellowship in the priesthood you will enjoy will prove to be a priceless blessing in your life. It will bring you the association of good men—of great men who love the Lord and who love their fellowmen. You will find happiness in such company; and more important, you will be protected from those evils which, if partaken of, will inevitably bring sorrow and regret all your days. And you will be prompted

to participate in new and enriching opportunities for service. Listen to the words of a letter written by a young man in that area where there is much of evil, of bloodshed, of tragedy:

Comrades in arms taught the Gospel

"The two of us," he writes, "have been teaching the gospel to our associates. We've taught Vietnamese, Koreans, Chinese, Filipinos, and Americans and have been having really wonderful and gratifying results. Every baptismal that is held we have people ready for baptism. Right now we are using five Vietnamese, who have already joined the Church, as interpreters, and this is surely an experience teaching these people . . . with an interpreter. It takes a lot more explaining to get a point across, but you can always see and feel the Holy Ghost working with us. . . . Right at the present time we have sixteen people that we are teaching. Six of them have committed themselves to be baptized October 8."

And from another letter: "Last night I interviewed a young man for baptism who had been taught the gospel by one of our recent converts. We will hold his baptismal service tomorrow in the South China Sea."

Priesthood administers to the wounded

Nor is this matter of sharing the gospel with their associates the only thing for which I extend the appreciation of the entire Church and of many others who are the beneficiaries of their inspired and selfless service. One of our chaplains writes: "I again visited C-Med last night. We had two LDS casualties brought in. . . . Both were in the intensive-care wards. I took Elder Richard Southard with me, and we anointed and blessed them, as well as a badly wounded Episcopalian boy and a Baptist boy, who requested a blessing from us as they were in the same ward. We also anointed and blessed a small Vietnamese child who had been wounded, while its heart-broken mother sat on the bed weeping."

This great spirit in our men who have gone to war as citizens of the

nations of which they are a part is almost as old as the Church. More than a century ago British members of the Church had what they called the "floating branch" among sailors in the Mediterranean. There was also an "expeditionary branch" of our British brethren during the Crimean War of the 1850's.

Twenty thousand native members in Far East

We now have approximately 20,000 native members of the Church in the Far East—some 3,000 in Korea, 10,000 in Japan and Okinawa, 6,000 Chinese in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and a thousand Filipinos. This marvelous Church membership is the sweet fruit of the simple, quiet work begun by our servicemen stationed in these lands who initially taught the gospel there, first by their example and secondly by their precepts, and in so doing they opened the way for the coming of missionaries, for whose coming they had pleaded.

Laying foundations for great work

I am confident that today, out of the misery of that fearful, tragic, vicious war in Southeast Asia, will come some measure of good as the Lord, working through faithful men, turns the evil snares of the adversary to blessings in the lives of many of his children.

As I think of our brethren, there come to mind these great words of promise given through revelation in the year 1831: "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.

"Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind." (D&C 64: 33-34.)

To our brethren over there I extend our appreciation and invoke upon you the blessings of the Lord, that you may be encouraged in your faith, that you may be protected in your duties, and that you may have cause to rejoice in the midst of sorrow as you share with others the precious gift of the faith that is yours. God bless you, my dear

brethren, this Sabbath day, as the sun rises over those distant embattled shores and you gather together to worship in the name of him whose peace must come, if peace is to come at all, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Joseph Fielding Smith:

We have just listened to Elder

Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder John H. Vandenberg, Presiding Bishop of the Church, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve.

Bishop Vandenberg:

Bishop John H. Vandenberg

Presiding Bishop

Under the heading of "Vital Statistics" in the daily newspaper, there are listed the names of those happy men and women who have received licenses to enter into the holy state of matrimony. There are also listed under the same heading those unhappy individuals who have failed in matrimony and are now suing for divorce. Oftentimes, this is a longer list. One wonders what happened in the latter cases that brought their status from bliss to chaos.

The following excerpt from a letter written by a 16-year-old girl tells how family trouble may start:

"My dad and mother are good people, and I love them very much. We have family prayer but not very often any more because Mom and Dad are always fighting about money. We have lots of bills to pay each month, and my dad is working two jobs to make more money. I am wondering if it is all right for me, since I have a job at a drive-in, to give my money to my mother and skip tithing for a while?"

The young lady should be commended for her desires to help her parents, but the matter would not be helped by diverting her tithing to the cause.

Management of money

The answer to this family's problem is not necessarily more money. The need for more money is merely the symptom. The malady is excessive debt, caused by uncontrolled credit purchasing. The cure is a reappraisal of the income after allowing God's due, a survey of the amounts needed

for the real necessities—shelter, food, clothing, health—and a calculation of the residue of income for the amortization of other indebtedness, with a resolve by all that no further credit purchases be made. It may even mean the forfeiture of some luxury items that should not have been purchased in the first place. Here I would caution people against borrowing more money to consolidate debts, thereby increasing their interest rates and extending their bondage.

Unwise indebtedness

Unwarrantable indebtedness is one of the curses of this day and age. It causes many people to live their lives in bondage. The lure of buying on time under the "easy payment plan" too often puts the millstone around the neck of the purchaser; and when once in the credit rut, it is very hard to get out. Sorrow, grief, divorce, and delinquency are all perpetuated by such foolishness.

When a family finds itself too far in debt, the atmosphere of discouragement enters the home, relationships become tense, tempers become short, and marital troubles begin to erupt. To meet the indebtedness, the mother may frequently leave her children to themselves while she finds employment out of the home. Irregularities in the home follow: service to God is disregarded, tithing is neglected, prayers become less frequent, persons begin to feel separated and apart from God and church, and the condition explained by Isaiah ensues:

"... the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither