

"We have seen a steady erosion of past principles of decency and good taste.

"And—we have harvested a whirlwind. As our standards have lowered, our crime levels and social problems have increased.

"Today, we have a higher percentage of our youth in jail . . . in reformatories . . . on probation and in trouble than ever before.

"Study the statistics on illegitimate births . . . on broken marriages . . . on juvenile crimes . . . on school dropouts . . . on sex deviation . . . on dope addiction . . . on high school marriages . . . on crimes of passion.

"The figures are higher than ever. And going higher."

How do we stand today?

With this level of corruption at home, how can we expect to have peace or victory on the battlefield? Satan knows that time is short, and he's waging an all-out effort to win. He's stopping at nothing.

The enemy in Viet Nam is the same enemy at home. It is the same force of evil that is the cause of riots and destruction all over our country. The same force that is causing all the conditions referred to in the *San Francisco Examiner* is prevalent all over our land.

With conditions at home as here described, is it any wonder that we are at war in Viet Nam? The answer for peace is not military might alone. We must turn to God and keep his commandments. We must seek him in prayer, and be sincere in our prayers.

We must cleanse ourselves from all iniquity. We must humble ourselves. We must again make the home sacred, and we must honor virtue!

Repent and return to God

There is only one answer: Repent and turn to God.

Will you who are within the sound of my voice strive with your whole souls to live the kind of life Christ would have you lead? to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And . . . love thy neighbour as thyself"? (Matt. 22:37, 39.)

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16.)

President McKay has said: "Peace is the exemption from individual troubles, from family brawls, from national difficulties. Peace does not come to the transgressor of law. Peace comes by obedience to law, peace to the individual that he may be at peace with God, at peace in the home, and in the neighborhood. Peace can come into the world only through obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

I pray that we may all keep the commandments of the Lord, that we may have the blessings promised that this "shall be a land of liberty" and "never be brought down into captivity," that this land shall be "blessed forever." (2 Ne. 1:7.)

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Elder Marion D. Hanks

Of the First Council of the Seventy

Last Tuesday morning when I faced ten or twelve thousand Brigham Young University students in their assembly, I thought of a line from a recent movie (probably the only film I have seen recently besides the home teaching film!) about England. I thought of the same line today as I looked at these wonderful singing mothers, appropriate for the son of a great Relief Society worker. The line, you may remember, was spoken on the rooftops

of London. What was said can best be appreciated by English people and those who love them. The line was (in cockney), "Coo, what a sight!" I thought of that today as I saw this chorus of beautiful ladies.

"It bringeth forth much fruit"

Let me illustrate an idea, rather than talk about it.

Last conference I quoted a line from a strong source, a sobering line! "You

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Second Day

can count the seeds in an apple, but can you count the apples in a seed?"

Since then, there has come to my attention the story of William Jennings Bryan, who, looking at a watermelon seed alongside a beautiful 40-pound watermelon, decided to conduct an experiment. He found that a pound of watermelon seeds numbers about 5,000; and then he figured that one watermelon seed, gathering material 200,000 times its weight and somehow getting that material through a thin little stem, had produced the 40-pound watermelon.

The other illustration is from one of your stakes. In the early days of my service in the First Council of the Seventy, I observed in the records of a stake to which I was assigned that this stake had a very strong elders quorum. I was anxious to discover why. I asked the stake president in advance if we might hear from the three members of the presidency of that quorum at our Saturday night meeting. This was arranged.

The quorum president who spoke was a professional man who had been very faithful in the Church but whose duties had made it difficult for him to devote time to active leadership, and so he had really never before held an office. Now he had been called to be the president of the elders quorum by a wonderful man who believed in him and in his potential, and he took the assignment. He wanted to succeed in it, so he worked and prepared himself and got some good help and started out. He told us how he had divided the elders quorum area into certain segments. He and a companion had taken one segment, his counselor and a companion another segment, and the other counselor and the secretary, each accompanied by a companion, also took segments of the quorum area.

They had started out with what I understand to be the spirit of home teaching in our time, although they were working under a little different program in their elders leadership. They decided that an occasional visit just wouldn't do the job, because this quorum was quiescent, to say the best. In fact, when the leaders were chosen,

there were scarcely any others they could count on. So the president and his counselors, with companions, visited these homes, humbly and earnestly trying to get involved in the lives of the men and their families. At the end of the quarter they shifted areas, so that at the end of the year (they hadn't quite finished the year, actually) all of the members of the presidency had become deeply identified with every man in that quorum.

This choice leader bore his testimony of gratitude for the opportunity he had had and sat down in tears. I leaned to the stake president and said, "I understand." He said, "Wait a minute."

The first counselor was a young sales executive who had invested great imagination and creative ability in his leadership. He was charged under the program with the responsibility of the church service of the men, and this meant temporal and religious activity projects. Their temple attendance was high, their quorum attendance uniquely high, their sacrament meeting attendance wonderfully strong. They had projects of all kinds. I remember his mentioning one. They had assigned every man in that rural stake to grow a little porker to sell, but the market went down. He turned around and said to the president with a smile, "I forget how much money we lost on the project, president, but every single man in the quorum responded to the challenge and was involved."

When he sat down, I thought I knew why this quorum was what it was, so I leaned to the president and said, "I understand." He said, "Wait a minute."

We then had called to the pulpit a young farmer, married, with several children. I suppose he didn't have as much formal education as his companions, but he had a kind of Abraham Lincoln honesty about him that communicated quickly, and what he said I don't think I will ever forget.

He said, "When the stake president asked me to be the second counselor in this quorum of elders I said, 'Who are the others?' He said, 'Brother and Brother' And I said, 'I don't know those fellows very

well. Do they intend to succeed, or are they going to fail?' The president said, 'We assume they intend to succeed.' And I said, 'Don't assume it; ask them. If they intend to succeed, I will take the job. If they are going to fail, I don't want anything to do with it. I am not about to get associated with an outfit that starts out to fail.'

"Well," he said, "the president asked them and they said they intended to succeed, so I took the job. Now," he said, without the trace of a smile (and I think it was really a guileless statement, although all of us laughed a little), "I want to tell you that these are successful priesthood leaders. They are great, successful priesthood leaders, and the reason they are is me."

Let me quickly tell you again, he wasn't being immodest or arrogant. The people responded. They knew him. They knew he meant it and how he meant it.

In those days his assignment would make him chairman of a committee called "fact-finding," "statistical," or "reporting," as we came to say. I wonder how many of you would get the fire charged in your veins with that nomenclature. Somehow it did his. He really believed that his assignment was the most important in the Church. He knew that successful priesthood leaders can't really do their jobs unless they have a clear concept of where they are going and a foundation of facts upon which they may move. He supplied that. He knew more about the men in that quorum, I feel quite certain, than almost any other comparable officer in a quorum in the Church. And it expressed itself, this concern, with a quorum that had come alive almost like Nehemiah led Jerusalem to a rebirth long ago.

Now I would like to bear a testimony of appreciation and deep respect for you wonderful brethren and sisters who serve in the Church, who have the courage and the faith to face up to circumstances that are often quite difficult, maybe even depressing, but you do it. God bless you to remember that while the results may not be as spectacular as in this choice quorum, it is a certainty that if you,

with honesty and integrity and a sense of your commission, seek to do the job the Lord has called you to do, wonderful results will occur. I know that. I testify of it and pray God for you and all like you who do the work of the Church, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Joseph Fielding Smith:

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy has been our concluding speaker for this session.

This evening at seven o'clock, the General Meeting of the Priesthood of the Church will be held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. Priesthood members only are invited to be present. This Priesthood session will not be broadcast publicly.

In addition to the overflow meeting in the Assembly Hall, the proceedings of this Priesthood meeting will be relayed by closed-circuit broadcast, originating in the Tabernacle, to members of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood assembled in approximately 425 separate locations in all parts of the United States and in Canada. It is estimated that approximately 10,000 holders of the priesthood will be on Temple Square, and approximately 75,000 others will gather in the other locations from coast to coast and in Canada.

The Sunday morning session will be broadcast by many radio and television stations in the west; and short-waved in English over Station WNYW to Europe, South America, Central America, Africa, and parts of Asia.

This morning's and tomorrow morning's sessions will be carried by direct wire from the Tabernacle over oceanic cables to a large number of saints assembled in chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany and Austria.

The CBS Radio Network Tabernacle Choir Broadcast tomorrow morning will be from 8:35 to 9:00 a.m. Those desiring to attend this broadcast must be in their seats no later than 8:15 a.m.

There will be large crowds attending the services on Sunday, and we ask you please to be courteous and considerate of each other at all times, especially when standing at the