

Smith, President of Relief Society, and Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve. President Spencer W.

Kimball and President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency then gave the following talks:

## President Marion G. Romney

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Brothers and sisters, if I say anything worthwhile here this morning it will be because you exercise faith enough to induce the Lord to bless me on the spur of the moment. I had not prepared nor expected to speak here. I feel a little like the young man felt who, in the early days on his first lecture tour, came out here in the West. As he spoke he became nervous because he saw two cowboys fingering their revolvers and lariats. At the close of his speech, as they came up the aisle he really became excited. When they reached him, however, they said, "Don't feel frightened young man. We know you did the best you could. What we are looking for is the one who brought you here."

### Welfare: yesterday and today

As I have listened this morning I have been greatly impressed by the wise counsel we have received and the great presentations that have been given. It is remarkable how the scope of this meeting held at 7:00 o'clock on the Saturday morning of conference, has grown from a small welfare agriculture meeting to what it is today. When we began these meetings, we held them over in the Assembly Hall. Sometimes even that hall was not filled. As I listened to the Bishop this morning, he said that we had a capacity crowd here, which is obvious; that we have an overflow in the Assembly Hall and one in the Salt Palace. We have multiplied many times the number of people who were then in attendance.

We have also greatly expanded the subject matter. When we began, as indicated, we dealt mainly with the agricultural phase of the welfare program.

We were then in a depressed period and dealing principally with food and other commodities required to sustain life. Now we cover the whole field of welfare services.

A few years ago President Kimball was in charge of the *Indian Placement Program*. Brother Monson was in charge of a department called *Youth Guidance*. The Relief Society was in charge of unwed mothers and adoptions. Other departments were under other leaders. Finally it was decided to put them in one department, which we first operated under the name of *Unified Social Services*. We have since brought the Unified Social Services, the welfare program, and health services—supervised by Brother James O. Mason, under one jurisdiction. What we have today is the *Welfare Services Department*.

### Beginning of Welfare Program

I remember my first association with the welfare program. It was inaugurated in the early 30s during President Grant's administration. Presidents J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Harold B. Lee and Henry D. Moyle were its principal architects. I was a bishop at the time. We had many people living in my ward in that depressed era, who were unemployed and unable to sustain themselves. I remember we were in this building at a conference when President Heber J. Grant told us as bishops to go home and see what we could do to get together the basic food, clothing and other necessities of life required to care for our people during the coming year. I remember that in our ward we built some closets in the basement and gathered food and used clothing, which

we put in those closets to take care of our people during the ensuing winter.

Thereafter the program grew. When we started out we had very few welfare production projects. Before that time, President Lee had begun a welfare program in the Pioneer Stake, of which he was president. Brother Hinckley, Gordon's father, who was president of the stake in which I lived, had set up a stake welfare center. We began immediately to acquire welfare production projects, such as orchards, fields, chicken projects, etc. This movement grew. Production projects multiplied until we were able to, and did produce the necessities of life for Church members who needed help.

### Visiting the stakes

I remember that for fifteen years I was assigned by the Presidency to go around the Church. I visited all the stakes in the United States and Canada once a year, either individually or in regions, and assigned the welfare production budget. We built that program up until we were producing 70% of the commodities distributed to the people of the Church. It was a remarkable accomplishment.

At one time I could call by name every stake president in the Church. I was acquainted with every welfare project in the Church. I was commissioned by the Presidency to see that every bishop in the Church had a financial interest in a welfare production project, from the production of which he could take care of his people.

### Principle of welfare

The basic principle upon which the welfare production program was based was that each bishop was to produce within his ward everything he could to take care of his people; that he would produce a little more than he needed of the things he could produce to exchange with neighboring bishops for things which they could produce in surplus

and which he could not produce. From this principle came the organization of regions and now areas. We aim to get areas established in which the total basic necessities can be produced.

President Clark was used to ask the bishops and the stake presidents, in the meetings we held with them around the Church, "How long can you provide for your people if there's no transportation?" That would be a good idea for you brethren, who have responsibility for your people, to think about. How long could you take care of your people if there's no transportation? Suppose all the power is cut off and we live on what we can produce?

### Welfare and the latter days

I do not want to be a calamity howler. I don't know in detail what's going to happen in the future. I know what the prophets have predicted. But I tell you that the welfare program, organized to enable us to take care of our own needs, has not yet performed the function that it was set up to perform. We will see the day when we will live on what we produce.

We're living in the latter days. We're living in the days the prophets have told about from the time of Enoch to the present day. We are living in the era just preceding the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are told to so prepare and live that we can be, as was referred to or intimated by one of the speakers here today, independent of every other creature beneath the celestial kingdom. That is what we are to do.

This welfare program was set up under inspiration in the days of President Grant. It was thoroughly analyzed and taught by his great counselor, J. Reuben Clark, Jr. It is in basic principle the same as the United Order. When we get so we can live it, we will be ready for the United Order. You brethren know that we will have to have a people ready for that order in

order to receive the Savior when he comes.

I know from my own experience and the witnesses by the thousands that I have received of the Spirit that this is the Lord's work. It is to prepare us. If you'll think of the most sacred place you ever have been, you'll remember that the final thing that we are to do is to be able and willing to consecrate all that we have to the building up of the kingdom of God, to care for our fellow men. When we do this we'll be ready for the coming of the Messiah.

The Lord bless you, brothers and sisters, that you may listen and that you may implement the things that have been taught us here this morning, and live under the guidance of the Spirit day by day. That is possible when we get the connection made between us and the Spirit, and then walk under its guidance. I bless you that we may do so, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

## PRESIDENT SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Brethren and sisters, we have heard much this morning that is vital to our development and I hope that it has sunk into our hearts. Frequently we have letters from the field regarding Welfare work that come direct to the First Presidency and we generally turn to President Romney because he is the past master in this field.

### Law of Consecration

What he just stated about the law of consecration, I have been impressed with very much in the years past, especially in the past year, that as we have talked to brethren, calling them to responsible positions, asking them for additional service, we have frequently been spoken to in this vein. "Will you do this my brother?" And he says, "I've been to the temple." And to me that preaches a great sermon. "I've been to the temple. I know what I have promised. I have made my promises to the Lord and I will fulfill them."

I have been thinking of many things since we came to this meeting. I endorse what Brother Ashton has said. I think if I were starting with a young family, I would want to get the twelve points of Brother Ashton and follow them explicitly myself and teach my children and my family and everybody

with whom I came in contact. It is basic. All my life from childhood I have heard the Brethren saying, "get out of debt and stay out of debt." I was employed for some years in the banks and I saw the terrible situation that many people were in because they had ignored that important counsel.

### Evils of borrowing "on time"

I remember one day there came into my business place a man and he said, "You know, I've got to have a hundred dollars. I'll give you ten dollars for the use of a hundred dollars for one week." And I thought, "Have you gone crazy? What's the matter? Ten dollars on one hundred dollars would be ten percent for a year, it would be about 500 percent for a week. What are you thinking about? Have you lost your reason? Why don't you plan? Why don't you anticipate your needs and then provide for them?"

When I was in the bank I found a little extra time and needed a little extra money, and I kept books for some of the stores in town, especially one little department store. And one of the shocking things of my life was to find on the books the accounts of many of the people in the community that I knew. I knew them. I knew approximately what