
The Choir sang the number, "O Rejoice Ye Christians Loudly." The congregation joined the Choir in singing "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

President Kimball

For the benefit of the television and radio audience who have just

joined us, we announce that we are gathered in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the first session of the 145th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Elder Hartman Rector Jr., of the First Council of Seventy will now address us. Following Elder Rector, we shall hear from Elder Robert L. Simpson, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr.

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I have entitled my talk "The World's Greatest Need Is to Listen to a Living Prophet's Voice."

Man's accomplishments

This is an exciting time. I guess there never was a time like this. We have transportation and communication facilities that boggle the mind. We can walk on the moon, send deep probes into space, and look closely at faraway planets; we can produce food in quantities and qualities never before possible. We have a distribution system which assures freshness and nutrition of fresh-picked fruits and vegetables in the middle of the winter. We have mastered the art of making and preserving physical things, but we are unable to control the passions and desires of man.

Man's problems

Man's inhumanity to man makes daily advances, and the man-made efforts that are proffered to solve the problems of inequity between a man and his neighbor seem only to make the situation worse. The great welfare debacle in this and other countries is only now coming to light. For instance, New York City is currently facing a tremendous financial crisis as reported in *Newsweek* magazine of August 4, 1975,

which states that fully 22 percent of this city's total budget goes for public welfare. ("New York's Last Gasp," p. 24.) This is more than is spent on police protection, health or hospitals, or education. More than a million New Yorkers are now receiving welfare payments, and the number is rising daily.

The food stamp program which was initially designed to assist the poor to share in the marvelous productivity of this nation at a time of agricultural surplus is totally out of hand, a monster that threatens us all. Over \$6.6 billion will be spent for this program in fiscal year 1976. That represents over one-half of the total U.S. Department of Agriculture budget. Over 19 million people—almost one American out of eleven—are now getting food stamps.

Recent findings in the program reveal errors in 56.1 percent of the cases investigated: 12.2 percent of the households receiving food stamps were completely ineligible; 37.9 percent were issued too many or too few stamps, and 6 percent were incompletely registered. Of the food stamps issued, 15.2 percent went to ineligible households. Carl B. Williams, Deputy U.S. Commissioner of Welfare, says, "As it now stands, the system is in such a mess that the Government has practically abdicated its responsibility for seeing that the money gets to people who really need it.

In effect," he said, "the Government is giving away billions of dollars with virtually no controls at all." ("Food Stamps—Out of Control?" *U.S. News and World Report*, Sept. 1, 1975, p. 12.)

Welfare

Welfare lists grow daily, and we now face the startling fact that we have third and fourth generations growing up on welfare. They have known nothing else. These people even strike and picket to get more sooner. Candidates for public office seem to be trying to out-promise each other in giveaway programs.

As a commentator said some time ago, "Three men were running for office. The first promised \$20 every Thursday. His opponent promised \$40 every Tuesday, twice as much two days earlier. But the one who won the election promised complete unemployment with a guaranteed annual wage."

This may be somewhat farfetched, but the situation is critical, and there is no real help anywhere visible. As long as we in America have the mistaken idea that because we are born we have everything coming to us without effort, Americans cannot solve this problem.

Idle Persons

Certainly the Lord speaks out strongly against people who are able who won't work but still expect to be fed. He said, "Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer." (D&C 42:42.)

And again the Lord said, "The idler shall be had in remembrance before the Lord." (D&C 68:30.)

Need for Prophet

Why are these conditions seemingly worsening by the hour? Because their solutions are not based on true principles revealed by God through his prophet. We have a living prophet of

God on earth. He has spoken this morning in clear, unmistakable terms. He is not a prophet just for Latter-day Saints. He is the Lord's oracle for the whole world. God has solutions.

As the Lord said of the Prophet Joseph Smith, so he also says of the Prophet Spencer W. Kimball: "Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together.

"For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

"And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days." (D&C 1:1-3.)

God has solutions

God has solutions! There is only one real road to safety and that is to hearken unto the voice of the prophet of God, because man in his wisdom cannot solve the problems which he is facing today anymore than he could when Paul wrote to the Corinthians. He said, "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." (1 Cor. 3:19.)

And again, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.)

God's wisdom

Can man's knowledge and intellect supplant the revealed word of God? Do we really believe we can prosper by letting this land, established by the hand of God, be run by those who know not God and acknowledge not his hand in all things? There have always been ungodly men who fancied their wisdom superior to any other. Why should we, who have testimonies of the reality of

God burning within us, submit ourselves to the wisdom of men, which has always been foolishness to God?

Solemn Obligation

The Lord has made plain that we have a solemn obligation to choose good and honest men to represent us in secular governmental service. It is obvious that a man's spiritual and moral qualifications should be considered before his academic record or his oratorical ability. It is a sobering thought that whatever laws the elected enact, we are obligated then to obey. The Lord said, "And now, verily I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is my will that my people should observe to do all things whatsoever I command them.

"Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

"And as pertaining to the laws of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil.

"I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.

"Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

"Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil." (D&C 98:4, 6-10.)

Man's foolishness

There are examples of the foolishness of men's programs all around us. At the October conference of 1974, Elder Neal A. Maxwell uttered a truth upon which I have reflected much in recent weeks as successive failures of government programs have become more evident. He said, "The living of one protective principle of the gospel is better than a thousand compensatory government programs—which pro-

grams are, so often, like 'straightening the deck chairs on the Titanic.'" ("Why Not Now?" ENSIGN, Nov. 1974, p. 12.)

Word of Wisdom

For instance, let us take one simple principle of the gospel, which we call the Word of Wisdom. This revelation is recorded in the 89th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. And we won't even consider all of this revelation, but only a part of it, only that part where the Lord warns "that inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good. . . . And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies." (Vv. 5-7.) This is a prohibition against drinking alcoholic beverages. If those in the United States would follow the Lord's counsel by living this divine law, we would be able to feed the starving masses of the world. I cite an Associated Press quote of Howard University nutritionist Dr. Jean Mayer. Said he, "Every year we convert in this nation into alcoholic liquor enough grain to feed 50 million people in the starving nations." In the United States there are 95 million drinkers, of whom 10 million are confirmed alcoholics. These 10 million alcoholics in the United States cost this nation \$10 billion a year counted in lost time, slow downs in work, illnesses, mistakes resulting in spoiled materials, domestic problems, and the rest of the attendant evils that go with alcoholism.

Also, it has been proven that alcoholism shortens the life of every alcoholic from 10 to 12 years; 250,000 new alcoholics are added to this total every year. The Connecticut state mental health commissioner reports that 40 percent of the cases in the state mental health hospitals are attributed directly to alcohol. Superior Judge John A. Starbaro of Chicago has said that "75 percent of all the divorce cases I have heard resulted from alcohol." Alcohol is responsible for one-half of the total traffic deaths in the United States.

There are 25,000 persons killed every year on the highways in the U.S. It might be interesting to note that we had 57,000 American servicemen killed in the Vietnam War. This total is nearly duplicated every two years on America's highways.

There has been much said about increasing the safety of automobiles, and much has been done. No doubt there are still some improvements to expect, but no matter what we do, there is no way to make a car safe enough for a drunk to drive.

Cost of alcoholic beverages

A U.S. Government report issued by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare recently said, "Alcoholic beverages drain the national economy of \$15 billion every year." This is nearly three times the total given to religious and charitable causes. Living this simple principle of the Word of Wisdom would enable us to feed the starving masses of the world. What is man's solution to this problem of starvation? It is pretty well summarized in this clipping that I took from the newspaper recently. It is datelined Singapore. It says that "parents who insist on having more than two children will lose tax benefits, face discrimination in public housing and pay more maternity costs, the government has announced." Earlier the health ministry said that some discriminatory measures will be taken against new additions to large families in 9 1/2 months. "For the Singapore of the 1970s," it said, "the third child is luxury. The fourth and fifth are antisocial acts." The new measures include vigorous family planning campaigns coupled with sterilization and abortion programs. "The government hopes to reduce the natural increase in the birth rate to less than one percent by 1980." ("Family Size Labels a Guy," *Deseret News*, Oct. 25, 1972, p. A9.)

Abortion

And so, this is man's solution to the

problem—birth control, sterilization, and abortion to destroy the unborn children. But you can be assured that this is not the Lord's solution. Hear the words of a living prophet as you heard reiterated this morning:

"Much is being said," said the prophet, "in the press and in the pulpit concerning abortion. This Church of Jesus Christ opposes abortion and counsels all members *not* to submit to nor participate in any abortion, in any way, for convenience or to hide sins.

"Abortion must be considered one of the most revolting and sinful practices in this day. . . . To interfere with any of the processes in the procreation of offspring is to violate one of the most sacred of God's commandments." (Spencer W. Kimball, "Why Call Me Lord, Lord, and Do Not the Things Which I Say?" *ENSIGN*, May 1975, p. 7.)

Man-made solutions

All of these man-made solutions remind us very much of the cartoon which appeared recently in a national magazine. It depicted a department store clerk showing a weird kind of Tinker Toy to a mother. The clerk remarked, "Madam, this toy will prepare your child for modern living. It will teach him about life. No matter how you put it together, it still won't work."

Hearken the trumpet

Certainly we are witnessing this kind of folly today. The programs devised by men, without the light of the Lord, will not work. They never have. They are like straightening the deck chairs on the Titanic. What is the answer? It was given by the Prophet Joseph Smith when he was asked how he governed such a great and diverse people as the Latter-day Saints. He said, "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves." (As quoted by John Taylor, *Millennial Star* 13:339.) The real answer is expanded missionary effort—teach more people more truth,

and they will improve their own lives. Where the gospel is lived, error gives way to truth; idleness becomes productive service; hate and envy become love. Children become blessings; virtue becomes its own reward; and life becomes sacred, a probation to see if we will do "all things whatsoever the Lord God commands us." (See Abr. 3:25.)

All that is needed is to hearken unto the voice of him whom the Lord has chosen to give a clear sound of the trumpet so that all might prepare for the battle. May the world have eyes that see, and ears that hear, and hearts that

understand that they may be converted (see Matt. 13:15), for which I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us. Elder Robert L. Simpson, Assistant to the Twelve and Supervisor of the South Pacific Area, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Robert L. Simpson

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My beloved brothers and sisters, it's been some time since I've attended a general conference of the Church, and this morning I bring you reconfirmation that the gospel is true in London, England; the gospel is true in Auckland, New Zealand; it's true in Nukua'lofa, Tonga; and it's true in Salt Lake City, Utah. And I'm grateful to be here.

Members in Pacific

President Kimball, for the past several months, I have been carrying your message of love and greeting to Church members across the sea; and now here this morning I bring to you the sincere affection and continuing loyalty of more than 100,000 members of the Church in the South Pacific area. They are anxiously counting the days until your arrival next February to conduct the most ambitious and widespread series of Church conferences ever undertaken.

The mere contemplation of forty-four conference sessions in seventeen days at nine different locations staggers the imagination; and if that doesn't do it, just add the thought of approximately 28,000 miles of air travel while

changing your clock eighteen times to accommodate the different time zones.

Such is the schedule of a man who has challenged a people to "lengthen their stride." Such is the schedule of a man who declares not only, "Do as I say," but more importantly, "Do as I do." It is so much easier to respond when the trump gives us that certain sound of example.

"Do It"

Prominently displayed on President Kimball's desk is a slogan which reads simply, "DO IT." With this inspired leader, personal convenience comes second. Everything is done to meet the Lord's convenience. His example for work has become legend and establishes an example for us all to follow.

While I was stationed at an air base in Wyoming during World War II, it was announced in our branch sacrament meeting that the following week a branch conference would be held and that there was a good possibility that the mission president would bring a visiting authority from Salt Lake City with him. As we came to branch conference the