

Dusseldorf Mission, offered the benediction.

The conference was adjourned for six months.

WELFARE SERVICE SESSION Saturday, October 4, 1975, — 7:00 A.M.

A Welfare Services session was held in connection with General Conference on Saturday morning, October 4, 1975, at 7 o'clock. Invited to attend this meeting were General Authorities, regional representatives, stake presidencies, high councilors involved in welfare work, bishoprics, and stake and ward Relief Society presidencies and others responsible for operating welfare production projects. President Spencer W. Kimball was present and presided. The meeting was conducted

by Presiding Bishop Victor L. Brown.

Speakers at this meeting included Bishop Victor L. Brown, Bishop H. Burke Peterson, Bishop Vaughn J. Featherstone of the Presiding Bishopric, Sister Barbara B. Smith, President of the Relief Society, and Elder Howard W. Hunter 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

Brethren and sisters, after what I've heard here today—certainly a full coverage of the subject—I am reminded of an experience I had some years ago. I believe it was one of the few times, if not the only time, that we General Authorities were asked by the Brethren to treat a certain subject at a stake conference. That week I went to Richfield, and Brother Clifford Young went over to Monroe. They had a chorus of young folks from the school sing at Richfield while I was there in the morning, and then they went over to Monroe in the afternoon and sang where Brother Young was. It happened that I talked about the assigned subject in the morning, and Clifford talked about it in the afternoon. When we made our report to the Council of the Twelve, Brother Young said it had been a fine occasion; the only bad thing about it was that the students had had to listen to the same subject twice. President George F.

Richards, then president of the Twelve, said, "Oh, I wouldn't worry about that. I don't suppose they knew you were talking about the same subject."

Old welfare program

I believe that in the remarks I shall now make, you will be able to understand that I am talking about the same subject the Brethren covered this morning in that wonderful presentation.

As Bishop Brown said, the Welfare Services Department of the Church comprises the three programs: the original welfare program, which he characterized as the production program, the personal services, and the health services. Of these three programs, the first organized was the old welfare program, now termed the Production-Distribution program. This program concerns the implementation of the Lord's declaration, "In the sweat

of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (Gen. 3:19); and also the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:31).

You know, of course, how these commandments were implemented anciently. In the days of Enoch as we've already heard, the record says that "the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness.

"The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. . . .

"And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them." (Moses 7:16-18.)

Of the Nephites who survived the cataclysm which occurred in America at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, it is written that "the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth, and behold the disciples of Jesus had formed a church of Christ in all the lands round about. . . .

"And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift." (4 Ne. 1, 3.)

Welfare in the last dispensation

In this last dispensation, before the Church had been organized nine months the Lord directed the Saints to take care of the poor. At the same time he told them that if they did not do so, they were not his disciples. (See D&C 38.)

Five weeks later, on February 9, 1831, he revealed the united order. (See D&C 42.)

Within a month thereafter, he spoke again on the subject, saying to the brethren that, pending the establishment of the order, they must "visit the poor and the needy and administer to their relief." (D&C 44:6.)

During the next three years and four months, the Saints had settled Independence, Missouri, made an attempt to live the united order, failed to do so, had been expelled from their properties in Jackson County, and Zion's Camp had gone to Missouri from Kirtland with the purpose of restoring them to their homes. This the expedition was unable to do. On Fishing River, Missouri, June 22, 1834, the Lord explained the reason for the failure of their putting the Saints back in their homes, as follows:

"Verily I say unto you who have assembled yourselves together that you may learn my will concerning the redemption of mine afflicted people—

"Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now.

"But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;

"And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;

"And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself." And then this statement:

"And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer." (D&C 105:1-6.)

The requirement to live the united order at that time was then withdrawn. The lesser law of tithing was revealed, which, with the law of the fast, has prevailed and persisted in the Church until now.

The Relief Society, after it was organized by the Prophet Joseph in Nauvoo, performed a great service in administering to the poor. There have been many voluntary cooperative projects among the Saints since then.

Churchwide program

But the next Churchwide program oriented toward the principles of the united order was our welfare program. In the October conference of 1936, President Heber J. Grant read "The Message of the First Presidency to the Church" from which I want to quote this morning. In doing so, I shall substitute the word *welfare* for the word *security*. This change in wording was made by President Grant shortly after the program was announced.

"As promised at the last April Conference, we inaugurated a Church [Welfare] Plan. . . .

"The announced objective set for the Church under this Program was to provide by October 1, 1936, by a wholly voluntary system of gifts in cash or in kind, sufficient food, fuel, clothing, and bedding to supply through the coming winter, every needy and worthy Church family unable to furnish these for itself, in order that no member of the Church should suffer in these times of stress and emergency."

I was, at that time, a bishop, and I was in attendance at that conference, thirty-nine years ago, when this message was read. I well remember that immediately thereafter—pursuant to this counsel—we built, in the basement of our ward meetinghouse, some storage closets and gathered clothing and basic food needs.

But to go on with President Grant's message, he continued:

"Our primary purpose was to set up, in so far as it might be possible, a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership.

"Our great leader, Brigham Young, under similar conditions, said:

"Set the poor to work—setting out

orchards, splitting rails, digging ditches, making fences, or anything useful, and so enable them to buy meal and flour and the necessities of life."

"This admonition is as timely today as when Brigham Young made it."

President Grant then reported what had been accomplished to date and continued:

Wards and stakes provide for their own

"Every ward and stake is expected to face the necessity, not only of providing for its own, but of helping other wards and stakes. In no other way would it be possible to do the work which the Church is aiming to do. But few stakes and wards are in a position where they may be rightfully satisfied by merely caring for their own.

"This great work must continue unabated during the winter months along all lines and activities possible in that inclement season. When spring comes, the measures taken to supply food stuffs must be redoubled. We shall then easily be able to do better than this year because we can begin our work when the planting season begins. We must not contemplate ceasing our extraordinary efforts until want and suffering shall disappear from amongst us.

"The responsibility of seeing that no one is hungry or cold or insufficiently clad rests upon the bishops, each one for the members of his own ward. He will use every Church organization of his ward to help him in his work. For help outside his ward, he will look for necessary assistance to his Stake Presidency, they to their regional organization, and these to the Presiding Bishopric of the Church whose primary responsibility it is to look after the poor of the Church as a whole.

"For this great undertaking the Lord has abundantly blessed his people already, and he will continue to pour out his blessings so long as the people do their duty by the poor.

"Generations and generations ago, the Lord said to Israel of old, urging them to pay their tithes into his storehouse:

"'Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.'

This generation

"To this generation, the Lord has said:

"'Inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor, ye will do it unto me.'

"And the Lord added this admonition:

"'Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment.'

"Jacob, speaking to the people of Nephi, said:

"'But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.' . . .

"We invoke the blessings of the Lord upon each and every one of you. We pray the Lord continually to inspire his people to the end that we shall once more be able to take care of all those worthy ones amongst us to whom hard times have come in these days of stress."

Conduct of Church members

Having read the message of the First Presidency, President Grant continued with these remarks about how Church members employed on government make-work projects should conduct themselves, saying:

"When we appeal to the people to continue to labor for the WPA, we ask them to labor with energy. I was told that my father, who was the superintendent of public works in early days . . . said, 'I can pick out every man who is working by the day, and every one who is working by the job. I find men working by the day—by the day—by the day; and I find them working by the job, by the job, by the job, job, job—by the job, by the job, by the job, by the job.'

"Now, we want our people who are on the WPA to work by the job and not by the day.

"I desire to call attention to a statement by President Brigham Young:

"'My experience has taught me, and it has become a principle with me, that it is never any benefit to give out and out, to man or woman, money, food, clothing, or anything else, if they are able-bodied and can work and earn what they need, when there is anything on earth for them to do. This is my principle and I try to act upon it. To pursue a contrary course would ruin any community in the world and make them idlers.'

"And what would ruin a community would ruin a state, and I might incidentally remark, a nation also." (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1936, pp. 2-6.)

Two-fold purpose

The Presidency in their message made it crystal clear that their purpose in setting up the welfare program was two-fold: first, to see that no worthy member of the Church suffers for want of the necessities of life; and second, that everyone who can work is given work to do.

During the conference at which the welfare program was announced, and at which this message was read, President J. Reuben Clark said,

"Work is a great thing. It is the law of this earth. When Adam was cast out, upon him was passed the glorious sentence, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt

thou eat bread.' Man as he is would not and could not have existed except for the promulgation of this law. Work is a wonderful thing, no matter what that work may be.

"The great Milton, in that wonderful poem, 'Paradise Lost,' pays this tribute to work, which he expresses, after he opens to us the vision of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden:

"God hath set labor and rest, as day and night,
To men successive . . .
Other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body and mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;
While other animals unactive range
And of their doings God takes no account."

"My brothers and sisters, if we can just get into our minds the dignity and the honor of work, no matter what that work may be, most of the ills from which we suffer will be solved. During the whole range of man's existence there has never yet been any plan by which men may live righteously in idleness, and no such plan, it is my faith, will ever be devised." (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1936, p. 112.)

Welfare Services Employment Center

It has been our experience from the beginning of the welfare program that it is easier to produce the necessities of life than to find employment for, and put to work, the unemployed. Our records for 1974 and 1975 indicate that only about one-fourth of those who receive assistance from the program have worked for what they received. This is an uncomplimentary reflection upon us, their priesthood leaders. It is

time for us to lengthen our stride and quicken our pace in this respect.

On a related phase of our program, let me say that about 300 stakes are involved in the Welfare Services employment center program. In 1974, 17,346 found work through the Church employment effort. While we are pleased with present priesthood participation regarding employment, the present recession is increasing the need for attention to this employment effort. Our more active involvement in this program will be greatly appreciated and will be of great value.

Curse of idleness

We must never forget that our primary purpose in this welfare program is to do away with the "curse of idleness," abolish "the evils of a dole," and to establish once more amongst our people "industry, thrift and self respect"; that "Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership." (*See Conference Report*, Oct. 1936, p. 3.)

Welfare production

In the welfare production phase of the program, our record is a little better. "Every ward and stake" said the Presidency, "is expected to face the necessity, not only of providing for its own, but of helping other wards and stakes." (*Conference Report*, Oct. 1936, p. 4.)

The implementing of this charge requires that every ward, by itself or in cooperation with other wards, acquire a production facility. During the first five years—from 1936 to 1941—Elder Melvin J. Ballard and President Lee (then a stake president) went throughout the stakes of the Church organizing welfare regions and teaching the program. Thereafter, each year for fifteen years, I was assigned by the Brethren to meet with stake and ward leadership of all stakes in the United States and Canada. This, with my

traveling companions, I did. Our responsibility was to teach the program, assign a production budget for the ensuing year, and to urge each bishop, individually or in cooperation with other bishops, to acquire a production project.

During those years, a welfare committee representative was regularly assigned to accompany General Authorities to stake conferences to hold welfare meetings and teach the program.

The procedural method for teaching Church welfare has now changed, but the objectives of the program remain the same. Its principles are eternal. It is the gospel in its perfection—the united order, toward which we move.

The most recent available information is that about 73 percent of the wards in the United States and Canada are involved in welfare production projects. This leaves about 27 percent—over a thousand wards—that are not. Brethren—you stake presidents and bishops—will you please take steps to see that this void is filled?

Signs of the times

Let us look about us, brethren, and try to understand the signs of the times. We must try to realize that the time approaches of which the Lord spoke when he said:

“Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you;

“That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world.” (D&C 78:13-14.)

Let us move rapidly into a position to fill our welfare budget assignments with commodities produced on our own projects rather than with cash.

What has been said in these re-

marks so far concerns but one aspect of the Welfare Services department. The other programs are of like import.

The relief, encouragement, comfort, rehabilitation, homes supplied, companionships established, hope and peace inspired, and other charitable and benevolent services rendered through our social services program are incalculable. No money value can be placed upon them.

Health services

Our most recently established program—health services—is rendering a spectacular service.

We have been introduced to some of the activities of these programs this morning.

One of the by-products of these programs is substantial financial relief to other sources upon which the cost of the services we render would fall if we did not perform them voluntarily. For example, during the period July 1, 1974, through June 30, 1975, we rendered through our Welfare Services—exclusive of indirect assistance such as capital expenditures and overhead—assistance of a cash value in excess of \$20 million.

Church membership in the United States is about one percent of the total population. This means that if all others rendered assistance in the way we do, it would equate to at least two billion dollars.

Welfare Services missionaries

As we quicken our pace in gathering members into the fold in areas where the fundamentals of Welfare Services are not understood nor practiced, we need experienced help.

We, therefore, request the assistance of you stake presidents and bishops in identifying mature, experienced priesthood leaders and their wives who may be called on full-time missions as Welfare Services missionaries. These couples will assist priesthood leaders, in developing areas

of the Church, by teaching basic Welfare Services principles and by supervising health and agriculture missionaries.

The Welfare Services missionary couples should meet the following qualifications:

1. The brother should have served as a bishop, stake president, or in some other similar Church position in which he has had firsthand experience in administering Welfare Services.

2. They should not now have dependent children.

3. They should be financially, physically, and emotionally prepared to serve an eighteen- to twenty-four-month mission in areas such as Latin America, Asia, and the islands of the Pacific.

4. They must meet all standards of worthiness.

Especially needed are those with language skills or the ability to quickly learn a language. They should be capable of rendering effective "shadow" or supportive leadership.

We are convinced that a prayerful consideration of the membership of each stake and ward will result in the identification of couples who meet these criteria.

Now, brothers and sisters, I have a witness and a testimony of this great work. We love you and appreciate the great work you are doing in it, and the greater work you are going to do. May the Lord bless us. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

I have almost become converted to the welfare program this morning.

There are just two or three things I wish to say. One is the great, great gratitude we have for those who are operating and administering the welfare program. A second thing is to say that, as President Romney has indicated, there is still much to do: greater efficiency and more application to our basic problems. And third, I would like to say I wish our enemies could have seen this program this morning and seen the wide variety of help and assistance and succor that could be given to the people of this world. And then I wish they could have listened to

what President Romney has said, and all the other speakers. We are doing a great service; and it would please us if they would go and do likewise rather than criticize our efforts.

God bless all of you who are deeply engaged in this program. And if it isn't quite up to par, bring it there, will you?—in every ward and branch and stake and mission. And let us come nearer to the accomplishment of what the Lord has given us to do.

I leave my blessings, the blessings of the Lord, upon you as you go back to your areas and carry forward this great work, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.