

in the United States." (*Security Key*, May 1976.)

Another source reports that "seventy percent of all inventory losses are due to employee theft . . . [and that] 76 percent of all employees steal from the companies they work for." (*Deseret News*, Jan. 29, 1976.)

True doctrine

"We believe in being honest."

I bear you my witness, my brothers and sisters, that this doctrine I've been quoting to you is true and is from the Almighty Himself. He has revealed to us in these latter days the principles by which we may prosper, by which we may perfect ourselves, by

which we may rise from the fallen condition in which we are to the condition we must reach in preparation for the return of the Redeemer to the world. I bear my witness to these truths and to the truths of the gospel as it has been revealed and as we teach it, and I do it humbly in the name of Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Carlos E. Asay of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder L. Tom Perry

Of the Council of the Twelve

As we approach the end of 1976, it seems appropriate for me to direct my remarks to the Church's participation in the United States of America's observance of its Bicentennial celebration.

America's Bicentennial

I have had the exciting experience for the last three years of being involved with the Church committee organized to assist in planning for proper observance of this event. During the last few weeks we have been assembling a scrapbook to record the history of our activities relating to this celebration. How I have thrilled with the accomplishments each day as new pages have

arrived! Each piece helps build a beautiful picture of how our involvement has satisfied a need, told a story, taught a lesson, and helped to build an appropriate observance of this great event.

The Bicentennial on the national scene has been characterized as a backyard celebration, for there was no center. It happened in the villages, the towns, and the cities throughout all of the land. The same could be said of the Church. The credit for the accomplishment belongs to the individual families, the wards, the stakes, the missions, and the districts.

Now let me thumb through the pages of this incomplete scrapbook and highlight some of the accomplishments for you, realizing there is one-fourth of the history of this year still to be written.

Education

The first section I turn to is entitled "Education." It is filled with books, posters, magazines, lesson manuals, stories, pictures, and descriptions of exciting events. I read an account of sixty special education weeks held throughout the land and designed to teach the participants a love for country and the requirements of being a good citizen. I see the *ENSIGN*, the *NEW ERA*, and the *FRIEND* magazines replete with informative articles about the history of our country and our hope for the future. There is an account of a special "freedom shelf" set up in our bookstores with new and old histories of our country. It is interesting to note that one of these histories especially written to tell the unique story of the restoration of the gospel as a part of the establishment of this nation had a distribution of thousands of copies.

I see copies of a poster series designed to teach of God's hand in the founding of America. It was distributed and displayed in our chapels throughout the country. Most noteworthy has been the distribution of 821,000 copies of a special supplement to the Family Home Evening manual. The demand for this manual far exceeded our supply. In homes across America beautiful lessons have been taught on the purpose and destiny of this land.

Public Communications

There is a section of the scrapbook entitled "Public Communications." Here we find stories of videotape presentations displayed in our visitors centers entitled "God Bless America"; clippings from 1,075 newspaper articles in the United States dealing with how the Church is celebrating the Bicentennial; pictures of eighty-nine dance festivals featuring dances of the colonial

period, the largest having 9,000 participants and playing to between eighty and ninety thousand people. There were pictures of floats sponsored by local Church units in parades in the nation. We have pictures of pageants centered around or incorporating a Bicentennial theme—"This Land of Liberty" in Washington, D.C., and other pageants in Nauvoo, Oakland, Independence, Manti, Cody, Hill Cumorah, and of course "Above All Other Lands" in Salt Lake City. Special billboards told the story of our belief in America. One city even installed a dial telephone number, M-O-R-M-O-N-S. By dialing this number you could get information about our great American family and Church-sponsored events dealing with the Bicentennial.

Special mention should be made of the contribution of the Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus. Their outstanding program, "America, America, America," was telecast over many public broadcasting stations. How thrilled we were to watch it on television in both Boston and New York this summer. It was exciting to see our Mormon communities holding town meetings to discuss common opportunities to improve cities and towns.

Many letters were received from communities thanking the Church for being part of their Bicentennial celebration. Several were received with almost identical messages of thanks as follows: "We were struggling with our Bicentennial program. We were deadlocked in controversy over allocating our meager financial resources to so many proposed projects. One night as we met in one of our committee meetings trying to get our program moving forward, a representative from your Church called and offered their support. They expressed their love for America and wanted to participate in its 200th birthday celebration. They suggested a program they wanted to sponsor and, much to our surprise, asked for no funding. The spirit of this group was

carried forward into our meeting and literally saved our town celebration." Yes, our message was heard loud and clear, thanks to our Public Communications organization.

Primary Association

One of the most exciting sections of the scrapbook is under the label of "Primary," our children's organization. Thousands of children during this last year have learned to appreciate this nation and what their role will be in preserving our great heritage. From flag-raising ceremonies to fairs, parades, instructions, poems, stories, essays, diaries, scrapbooks, posters, contests, etc., they have learned about our country. A special production of *Listen, My Children* was put on as a unique summer program over 4,000 times.

How I've thrilled to read some of their original works. A beautiful book was received from the Salem Oregon North Stake with hundreds of statements addressing the topic "How I would like to celebrate the nation's 200th birthday." Some of the responses were as follows: "I would like to fly the flag to show my love for our country." "I love you, America." "I would like to have people love everyone and be kind on America's birthday and always." "I would like to keep America clean and beautiful." And then of course, this interesting remark: "I would like to ride my tricycle, draw pictures, eat cake, and not take a nap on the 4th of July."

Youth, Young Adult, Special Interest

Under the next three headings—"Youth," "Young Adult," and "Special Interest"—we find pages full of their accomplishments. I group them as one

because their activities have been interwoven and similar. They have largely been participants in the dance festivals, nineteen original dramatic productions, Heritage Fairs, Bicentennial balls, etc. Most interesting to me was the host of activities participated in by these three organizations and their willingness to give volunteer service to the communities in which they live. From all over America we find articles with bold headings such as "Youth Group Cleans up the Canyon," "Young Adult Organization Paints and Cleans up City Park," "The Special Interests Group Restores Historic Monuments." Our last survey on volunteer service hours made just before the Fourth of July indicates that we had passed the six million man-hour mark. The majority of this service has been contributed by our youth, young adults, and special interest groups. Our hats are off to you for your major accomplishment.

We estimate today that there have been between seven and eight million man-hours of volunteer service by members of the Church since January 1, 1976. We encourage you not to stop now. We expect to be over the ten million man-hour mark by December 31. I still see a need to fix up, clean up, and paint up to make America beautiful.

Relief Society

Yet another section entitled "Relief Society" is illustrated with pictures, programs, songs, and poems. From their headquarters building located at 76 North Main Street came forth a real spirit of '76. Our wives, our mothers, and our single sisters have put their tender hands on compresses to relieve suffering; industrious fingers to needles, brushes, pencils, and skillets to revive colonial beauty; to concert halls, chapels, and amphitheatres to thrill our souls with music; to auditoriums, speaker's platforms, and classrooms to

Saturday, October 2

Second Day

remind us of the tender role of colonial women and the righteous leadership and thoughtful teaching which must continue to come from womanhood through all ages. With warmth and love we commend the Relief Society for well over 3,000 special events which contributed to our Bicentennial.

Other organizations

The scrapbook is too full to mention all of the organizations and events which have come from the Church's contribution to this great celebration. To the general, regional, stake, ward, mission, district, and branch Bicentennial committees, I congratulate you on a job well done. In my travels from coast to coast I have not witnessed a finer performance than that accomplished by the Church. Your participation has left no doubt concerning your love for this great land—and your determination to preserve its heritage.

Tabernacle Choir

This report could not be concluded without a special tribute to the great Tabernacle Choir. I knew before this summer that no one could stir the heartbeat of this land with patriotic music more than this organization. This summer I was privileged to see a different side of you. I was with you for six days and nights as you toured Philadelphia, Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C. I watched 350 people, 1,400 pieces of luggage go through a tight and rigid schedule of pack, move, unpack, rehearse, and perform over and over again with a spirit I've never before witnessed. You were happy even when weary; considerate even under pressure; dedicated, determined, and anxious to always be at

your best. This was not for personal gain, but for the contribution you could make in building the Lord's kingdom—with anthems, hymns, and songs. I have discovered your greatness. We know of your artistic talent, which is abundant; but in your spirit I find no equal. May God's blessings continue to be with you in bringing heavenly music to a troubled world.

It was during one of your performances that I found the real spirit of the Bicentennial. On the evening of July third, with the Tabernacle Choir centerstage, surrounded by noted personalities from sports, politics, stage, screen, radio, and television, and in the presence of our prophet and the president of our country, seated side by side (which seemed so significant and appropriate on the eve of our 200th birthday celebration), I witnessed a performance I will never forget. Down the right aisle came a patriot soldier to tell us of the faith and courage required of him to give birth to the land of the free. Down the left aisle came a Mormon pioneer woman announcing herself to be Eliza R. Snow. She told of the industry and sacrifice required of her in building a nation.

A new century

The theme had been forged to guide us through the next hundred years of glorious history. First, to exercise faith in God our Eternal Father and to place our trust in Him as a foundation for all things; second, to have courage to uphold righteousness and be a part of preserving it; third, to be industrious and build for the future; fourth, to learn to sacrifice willingly for a brother or sister in need.

Now for a brief moment the pen is in our hand to mark the pages of history. Let us remember the spirit of this glorious celebration with renewed determination to perpetuate the gift of our great heritage. From the dust of an

ancient record we hear again the Lord's declaration to His children: "And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. . . . [For this] is the everlasting decree of God." (Eth. 2:9-10.)

As we start a new century, may it be a new beginning of governing with

righteousness based on the eternal laws of God, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

Elder Carlos E. Asay of the First Quorum of the Seventy will now address us.

Elder Carlos E. Asay

Of the First Quorum of the Seventy

I want to take this opportunity to express my love and appreciation to the members of the First Council of the Seventy who were released yesterday. I've appreciated so much their leadership and support these past six months. I also sustain the new members, the new presidents of the First Council, and pledge my full support.

members of the Church, young and old, be influenced and motivated by that special spirit which accompanies the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Would that all Latter-day Saints had intimate and continuous association with the missionary spirit!

Spirit of missionary work

A few years ago, in a mission presidents seminar, President Hugh B. Brown said: "If God would grant me one wish—just one—it would be this: that each missionary felt and enjoyed the spirit of his calling." He also stated that if all missionaries were blessed to feel this spirit, miraculous things would occur in the world.

If I were granted one wish, it would be similar to President Brown's. My wish, however, would apply to all members of the Church, not just the full-time missionaries. Within my heart is the compelling desire that all

Sons of Mosiah

The spirit of which I speak is best understood by reading the accounts of great missionaries such as the sons of Mosiah. It was their desire that they might impart the word of God to their brethren, the Lamanites. Note the depth of their feelings:

"Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble.

"And thus did the Spirit of the Lord work upon them." (Mosiah 28:3-4.)