

of this, and I do so in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Marion G. Romney

We have just listened to Elder J. Thomas Fyans, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Brother Ottley will now lead us in singing hymn number 202, "When upon Life's Billows." After the singing, Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church, will address us."

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The congregation sang the hymn "When upon Life's Billows."

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### President Romney

Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church, will now speak to us.

He will be followed by Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Bishop Victor L. Brown

### Blessing the one

I pray my remarks this morning will find lodging in the hearts of everyone who hears them. The subject I have chosen is "Blessing the One." Welfare services, by their nature, embrace much of everyday life—this is why President Kimball has defined welfare services as the gospel in action. Since the gospel is a resource upon which the individual draws in striving to achieve his or her exaltation, welfare services must needs be such a resource.

As you may know, the Presiding Bishopric has the responsibility to manage many of the temporal affairs of the Church. This includes overseeing the operation of the welfare services Storehouse Resource System. While this embraces a host of activities and responsibilities, I believe the most important responsibility we have in this regard is to make sure that ultimately this vast enterprise focuses on each individual, the giver and the receiver, in order that the individual is blessed, lifted, and inspired.

The more aware I become of the welfare efforts of governments and other organizations, many of which have the highest purposes, the more

awed I am by the Lord's method of blessing those in need by helping them help themselves. I am proud and gratified as I see you local priesthood and Relief Society leaders from many parts of the world focus your attention through the welfare services program on the individual. Many examples come to mind, repeated in ward after ward throughout the Church. In my mind's eye I see a bishop in a sensitive and confidential interview with a welfare recipient, a quorum president visiting the home of a member just laid off work, a visiting teacher bringing a meal for a young family whose mother has been hospitalized, and a stake high counselor encouraging a beautiful Lamanite youth to stay with the placement program in spite of the many difficulties experienced during the first month at a new high school.

In each instance, the Church leader is interested in doing at least three things:

1. Understanding the problem
2. Helping resolve the problem by assisting the individual to help himself
3. Encouraging a closer relationship between the Lord and the individual

### Deseret Industries assists

May I share with you two true stories of how helping in the Lord's own way has blessed the one—how the spirit of love and charity which permeates the Church's welfare services system really does ultimately lift the individual.

Richard's life, before joining the Church, was one of welfare checks, food stamps, social worker interviews, public health clinics, and unpaid medical and utility bills. Neither Richard nor his wife knew how to handle even small amounts of money. Richard experienced a marvelous conversion to the Church but came in with many personal deficiencies. He had great difficulty in holding a job. He was referred by his bishop to Deseret Industries for employment. For the first time in his adult life, he began earning a regular paycheck. As Richard worked at Deseret Industries, he began to develop pride in himself. He no longer humped over when he spoke. His wife and children began to develop respect for him as patriarch in the home.

The Deseret Industries rehabilitation coordinator worked closely with Richard as did his bishop. A checking account was established in his name. A workable family budget was outlined and agreed to. Doctor bills that had remained unpaid for over a year were paid. A two-and-a-half-month-old electric bill was paid the day the power was to be shut off. All other bills were slowly brought up to date and handled properly.

Richard's life was changing. He felt self-worth and direction. Early in July of this year, the general manager of a large laundry-linen business came to the Deseret Industries. He was looking for good employees. Richard was to be given the chance to interview for a job. He expressed great anxiety about the in-

terview. Richard and the Deseret Industries rehabilitation coordinator practiced interviewing over and over. Richard passed the interview and was hired. A new life-style was about to begin.

When Richard left Deseret Industries, a luncheon was held in his honor, during which the following was recorded:

"Brothers and sisters, I have good news and bad news. The good news is that I have found a job in the labor market which will pay me more money than I have ever made before. For the first time in my life, I will be able to provide for my family in the way our Heavenly Father wants me to. I am progressing, which is what this life is all about. The bad news, or I should say the sad news, is that I will be leaving all of you. I love you from the bottom of my heart. I am grateful for what Deseret Industries has done for me. I pray that you will all find the happiness I have experienced in working at Deseret Industries. I especially want to thank both Jim Wilson and my bishop who have done so much for me. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen."

Richard surpassed his own and his new employer's expectations. He has recently been promoted and given a handsome increase in salary. A soul, a human life, has been blessed—probably nothing else could have done what a bishop and a Deseret Industries rehabilitation coordinator did.

### Indian placement program

And now another example. [Some of the actual names and places have been changed.] In March of 1978, a letter was received by the Wilson family, who live in Idaho. It began, "Dear Brother and Sister Wilson, Just a short note to see how things are going with you and let you know how things are with me."

This letter was written by the

Wilson's Lamanite foster daughter, Celia Red Horse, whom they had not heard from for several years.

The seeds of their relationship had been planted in 1965 in a talk delivered by Elder Spencer W. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. Brother Wilson, who was a bishop at the time of Elder Kimball's address, was impressed with the words of a scripture from the Book of Mormon: "I will soften the hearts of the Gentiles, that they shall be like unto a father to them" (2 Ne. 10:18). As the meeting continued, Bishop Wilson was further touched in his heart and determined within himself to help with the Indian student placement program. In the fall of 1967, a wonderful new experience came into the lives of the Wilson family when sixteen-year-old Celia Red Horse came to live with them for the school year.

To quote the Wilsons: "We enjoyed Celia and had some special times with her. She was a good student and very obedient. When she went home to the reservation, we communicated with her for some time, but gradually, as the years passed, there was less communication."

After Celia left, the Wilsons had several other young Lamanites in their home over the years, all of whom they came to love, appreciate, and have a special relationship with. By 1978, when Celia's letter arrived, eleven years had passed. The Wilson family had grown to include ten children of their own, and they had not participated in the placement program for two years. May I continue to read from Celia's letter:

"Right now, I am working as a secretary. . . . I am saving a lot of my pay so that I can buy clothes for my daughter before she can go on placement.

"I guess I haven't seen you or your family for about ten years. I

know everyone has changed quite a bit. I imagine the kids are all grown up and gone. . . .

"I have one little girl. Her name is Margaret. She is seven and will be going on placement this fall. She wants to go. . . . I have told her all about the program. She has never been away from home in all her seven years.

"Do you remember my brother David? Well, he has already been on his mission, and now he is at BYU. He is coming back this summer to baptize Margaret. He came home in December for the Christmas vacation. Then, while he was back for Christmas, he blessed my brother's little girl. Before that, he baptized two others in our family.

"How old are Joy, Curt, Rhonda, Gary, and Jenny? I remember them all — Joy and her allergy, Curt and his accordian, Rhonda and her ballet lessons, and how Gary used to swim like a little frog in the swimming pool. I can still remember Jenny and her red hair. All of these kids are probably teenagers or older. How are they all doing?"

Celia goes on to mention that the problems of modern youth having to do with alcohol and drugs have infiltrated the reservation as seriously as they have the inner city. She indicates deep gratitude for the Church and its teachings, which have such a profound effect in keeping young people from some of the mistakes of their peers. She also indicates that through the teachings of the Church her family is closer and more secure. She tells us that most of her little brothers and sisters are going to be involved in the placement program this year, and then she goes on to ask:

"Are you still participating in the placement program?"

"Please write and tell me all the news. . . .

"I think I better close here. Take care, and may the Lord bless

you in all your righteous endeavors. Love. . . ."

As Brother and Sister Wilson read this lovely letter from Celia, Brother Wilson vaguely remembered a portion of the address he had heard Elder Kimball deliver twelve years earlier. "Elder Kimball had said that success would not be felt in the first generation, but real success would come in the second, third, or fourth," Brother Wilson recalled. "When this statement came back to me, I felt that we should invite Celia's daughter to come into our home, for this would be the second generation of the same family in the same home."

An inquiry was made through the Indian placement program as to whether it would be possible for Margaret to live with the Wilsons. When Celia found out this was possible, "she immediately called us and with tears said how pleased she would be to have Margaret come to the home where she had once lived," Brother Wilson said.

Margaret spent the 1978-79 school year with the Wilson family and, like her mother before her, brought as much to the Wilson family as she received from them.

"She is very generous with others," Sister Wilson said. "If someone comments on something that she has and says, 'I like that,' then Margaret will give it to him. Each of our children receives an allowance, and since Margaret is considered one of the children she also gets an allowance.

"Last Christmas we talked about doing something as a family to help somebody else. Margaret had saved up quite a bit of her allowance, which she gave to the family project.

"She helps out with household chores just like any other member of the family. She and Angela, who is also eight, share kitchen duties one night a week. They also have other

responsibilities in the home."

Brother Wilson recalled that when Margaret first came into their home, she was very quiet and did not express herself very well. Her mother, Celia, had asked the Wilsons to help Margaret learn how to pray and express her feelings.

Now "she asks if she can ask the blessing on the food or if she can offer prayers," Brother Wilson reports. "And when she prays, the rest of us really listen because she has some very good thoughts."

As the end of the school year approached, the Wilsons made arrangements for Celia to visit with them in Idaho, and a special reunion time was held with her at that time as she came back to her foster home and stayed with her daughter and her foster family. She took Margaret home with her and, in discussion with the Wilson family, decided that Margaret should remain home with her family this year and attend school on the reservation.

### Real objective of welfare plan

We see exemplified in this experience the blessings associated with giving and receiving. These sentiments were expressed so well by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in a special meeting of stake presidencies on 2 October 1936:

"The real long-term objective of the welfare plan is the building of character in the members of the Church, givers and receivers, rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them, and bringing to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this Church."

It is my prayer, my brothers and sisters, that each of us as leaders and parents will constantly strive to lift, ennoble, and bless the one through the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.