

It is proposed that we sustain Brother Angel Abrea as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

All in favor, please manifest it. Any opposed, so manifest it.

With the exception of Elder Abrea, whom you have just sustained, there have been no other changes among the General Authorities since the last general conference. It is proposed, therefore, that we sustain all of

the General Authorities and general officers of the Church as at present constituted.

All in favor, manifest it. Contrary, if there be any, by the same sign.

We shall now be pleased to hear from our beloved friend and leader, President Spencer W. Kimball, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

## President Spencer W. Kimball

Once again I rejoice, my brothers and sisters, at the opportunity to be with you in a general conference of the Church. In many ways, the October conference of six months ago seems like yesterday, yet we have been so busy, and so much has happened, it almost seems more like six years.

Since last we met in this historic Tabernacle, two new temples have been dedicated, and ground has been broken for four more temples. New converts who joined the Church in 1980 numbered 210,777 — and there will be even more in 1981. A miraculous upsurge in the work of the Lord has occurred among the wonderful people of the Caribbean Islands. Surely the Lord has blessed us abundantly!

### **Our message is to proclaim, perfect, redeem**

My brothers and sisters, as the Brethren of the First Presidency and the Twelve have meditated upon and prayed about the great latter-day work the Lord has given us to do, we are impressed that the mission of the Church is threefold:

- To proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people;

- To perfect the Saints by preparing them to receive the ordinances

of the gospel and by instruction and discipline to gain exaltation;

- To redeem the dead by performing vicarious ordinances of the gospel for those who have lived on the earth.

All three are part of one work—to assist our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, in Their grand and glorious mission “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39.)

Having these sacred principles in mind—to *proclaim the gospel, to perfect the Saints, and to redeem the dead*—we have endeavored these past six months to carry out our responsibilities among the Saints at home and abroad. I should like, therefore, to give you a brief report on my stewardship since last we met in October 1980.

### **Conferences and temples in Orient**

Ten days after the close of the October conference, President Marion G. Romney and I left, in company with a number of others, to conduct area conferences in the Orient. Our first meetings were held in Manila, Philippine Islands, October 18 and 19, where twenty thousand Saints attended the sessions in the Araneta Colosseum. We also looked over possible sites for the new temple which has just been an-

nounced for that land. We had a very pleasant visit with Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos, who gave up his Saturday morning with his family to meet with us at the presidential palace.

From Manila we traveled to Hong Kong, perhaps the world's most densely populated city, where there are about four hundred thousand people per square mile. There we held meetings in our own excellent stake center on October 20 and 21. The following day we flew to Taipei, Taiwan, where we met on October 22 and 23 in the beautiful Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall. We had breakfast at our hotel with the two top leaders of the Republic of China, Prime Minister Sun and President Chiang, son of the late Chiang Kai-shek. We later had lunch as guests of the governor of Taiwan Province. After leaving Taiwan, we went to Seoul, South Korea, the "Land of the Morning Calm." Meetings were held for two days, October 25 and 26. We met outside in the Korea Seoul Mission compound with more than six thousand present in bitter, subfreezing temperature due to an overnight change in the weather. At our hotel we had lunch as guests of the former Deputy Prime Minister of Korea.

We arrived in Tokyo late Sunday evening, October 26. On Monday, October 27, President Romney and I laid the cornerstone for the Tokyo Temple, and then at 3:00 P.M. the first dedicatory session was held in the celestial room, with color television provided in all other rooms of the temple. During the next two days, six more dedicatory sessions were held. Following the dedication of the temple, the Tokyo area conference was held on October 30 and 31 in the famed Budokan Hall. In every place we visited we also held special meetings with the missionaries, with fifteen hundred being present in one meeting in Tokyo. It was indeed a

thrilling and inspiring sight to see. On Saturday, November 1, we held morning and afternoon sessions of the Osaka, Japan, area conference. We left that evening to fly home, stopping off in Hawaii for three hours for the purpose of setting apart several sealers for the Hawaii Temple.

### Provo and Seattle

On November 14, we installed Dr. Jeffrey R. Holland as the ninth president of the Brigham Young University, succeeding newly appointed Utah Supreme Court justice Dallin H. Oaks.

Three days later, the First Presidency traveled to Seattle, Washington, where we dedicated the new Seattle Temple at nearby Bellevue. Monday through Friday, November 17 to 21, thirteen dedicatory sessions were well attended. Over forty-three thousand members from the great Northwest attended the various sessions.

There followed a very busy period at home during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

### Temples and meetings in South Pacific

On Wednesday, February 11, 1981, Sister Kimball and I journeyed to the South Pacific. In Tahiti we broke ground for a new temple in Papeete and met with the missionaries. We also visited with the Deputy to the High Commissioner of Tahiti at the official government residence.

On Saturday, February 14, enroute to New Zealand, we stopped over in Rarotonga and held a meeting with the Saints in an airplane hangar at the airport. I am told it was the first time a President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has ever visited that island.

In New Zealand we held a meeting with several hundred Saints on the grounds of the Auckland Airport. We conducted meetings at the temple and the Church College of New Zealand and with the missionaries. On Wednesday, the eighteenth, we flew to Tonga, where we broke ground for the new temple in a beautiful coconut grove at Nukualofa. The king and queen of Tonga and many of the nobles of that kingdom were in attendance throughout the entire day's activities. Of the 247 missionaries we met with in Tonga, 235 are natives and 12 are from America.

On Thursday, the nineteenth, we proceeded to Samoa, where we broke ground in Apia for a temple in those lovely islands. Several thousand Saints sat out in the open during a heavy tropical rainstorm during the entire service. Present for this occasion were the Chief of State of Western Samoa, the Prime Minister, and several members of Parliament.

Early the next morning we had one of the loveliest experiences of our lives, as we visited the Church School of Western Samoa. As we entered the gymnasium, the largest building on the campus, we saw seventeen hundred children sitting cross-legged on the gymnasium floor, crowded in as tightly as little sardines in a can. They ranged from small four- and five-year-old kindergarten children in the front to teenaged high-school youngsters in the back of the hall. What a beautiful, thrilling sight they were as they sang "I Am a Child of God"! They were all dressed in their school uniforms in colors of blue and gold. With their beautiful dark hair and big brown eyes, they presented a picture of youth and beauty that was breathtaking. The tears came to our eyes quickly and without shame. At the close of my remarks, I announced to the students that in honor of the occasion I was declaring a holiday for the rest of the day. Judging by the

sound of the applause, I think I may have become an instant hero—at least for that day. After the brief meeting, we left the hall with the haunting strains of the Samoan farewell song, "Tofa My Faleni," ringing in our ears and warming our hearts.

### **Hawaii, Southern States, Caribbean**

We flew to Hawaii that night, arriving the morning of Saturday, February 21. During the day we visited the BYU—Hawaii campus and the Polynesian Cultural Center. Sunday morning we attended the Oahu Stake conference, and then, in company with Elders Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, and Boyd K. Packer, we held a meeting in the Hawaii Temple. We then toured the newly remodeled visitors' center and there met with the missionaries. On Monday, February 23, 1981, we returned to Church headquarters.

After four days at home and the office, Sister Kimball and I left on Saturday, February 28, for Florida for a week-long series of meetings with the Saints and some business leaders. On Saturday, March 7, we broke ground for the new temple in Atlanta, Georgia. Ten thousand were present for this occasion, including the governor of Georgia and his wife, several legislators, and U.S. senators Jake Garn and Paula Hawkins. Immediately following that service, we flew to San Juan, Puerto Rico. The next morning, Sunday, March 8, we held a meeting with over twenty-six hundred members of the stake and mission on that island. We next visited the Dominican Republic and held a meeting at Santo Domingo on Monday. Two years ago there were only two families of members on that island, but at our meeting we had over fifteen hundred members present. We left Santo Domingo on Tuesday, March 10, and

that night dedicated a new visitors' center on the Church's Deseret Ranch near Orlando, Florida.

### Washington, D.C.

On Thursday, we visited the Washington, D.C., Visitors' Center and then met with the Washington Temple presidency and set apart several sealers. The next morning, Friday, March 13, in company with Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, we visited with President Ronald Reagan in the Oval Office of the White House. We presented to him his genealogy on his mother's side. We then met with Mrs. Reagan. Both were very warm and gracious and very appreciative of the genealogical record.

Sister Kimball and I then traveled directly to Arizona, where on Saturday we attended the funeral of my sister, Alice Nelson, who had passed away during our absence. On Sunday, March 15, we returned home to prepare for this general conference.

### Love and greetings

This has been a busy but enjoyable and fruitful six months, during which we have traveled some fifty thousand miles by air. We are grateful to the Lord as he has blessed us,

and we have observed the vitality and progress of the Church in many parts of the world. Wherever we have gone, we have been thrilled and humbled by the love and devotion of the members of the Church.

As we begin this conference this morning, I bring you love and greetings from the Saints and missionaries in the Orient, the South Pacific, and the Caribbean. I add my own love and greetings and leave my blessings with you.

I know that God lives and that His Son, Jesus Christ, lives. He is our Savior and our Redeemer and our Mediator with the Father. May He bless us all during this great conference, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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Following President Kimball's address, the Choir sang "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth" without announcement.

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### President Romney

We have just heard from President Spencer W. Kimball, followed by the Tabernacle Choir singing "Jesus, Once of Humble Birth."

We shall now hear from Elder James E. Faust, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder James E. Faust

"We thank thee, O God, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days."

This morning I desire to say something which hopefully might give some help and perhaps another focus to the minds of young people. I have never felt more keenly the need for both the aid of the divine Spirit and the understanding of those who hear. I humbly pray that I might not be misunderstood.

### Vision of Jesus and the Twelve

I should like to begin by relating a marvelous vision Joseph Smith the Prophet had concerning the Twelve Apostles in his day, which has profound significance for me. Heber C. Kimball recorded, "The following vision was manifested to him [Joseph Smith] as near as I can recollect:

"He saw the Twelve going forth, and they appeared to be in a