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Unto All Men*

HOWARD W. HUNTER**

As you are engaged in this important East-West Week on the campus, I have been asked to say a few words, in keeping with the theme of the week, about the growth of the Church in the world and, in particular, the growth in the Pacific and the Far East.

The growth of the Church is counter to the trend being established by many other churches. This is a day in which nearly every major Christian church is facing serious problems. They seem to be suffering substantial declines in membership; there are fewer persons in attendance at religious services, according to writers. Members of the clergy are finding fault with the doctrines and long-standing practices of their churches. If we can believe what we read, there is little harmony among the clergy of many faiths, and there is a lack of unity. Finance appears to be a problem, and prestige is declining.

Comments have been made by news writers and in articles appearing in national publications about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as an exception to this trend. Such comments are not without justification in fact. The reasons are many. The program of the Church is a vital, vibrant force in the lives of its members. We hold the conviction that this is the Church of Christ, which imposes upon us the responsibility of sharing that witness with others. There are hundreds present here today who have gone into the world to express their feelings to others about their belief. This enthusiastic dedication, and devotion, has resulted in one of the large factors responsible for the growth of the Church that has taken place and is taking place in the world today. We honor each of you

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who has taken part in this magnificent effort and has had an interest beyond self.

It seems to me that the events of this week on the campus also demonstrate the principle that we have an interest beyond our own little domain. I know of no other campus where there is a greater percentage of students and faculty with the experience of having lived in lands beyond our borders. You have been students of the affairs of other people—of their culture, art, music, business, political affairs, and other matters—which makes this University outstanding and the logical place for studies that extend interest beyond our own land.

Since its beginning, the Church has had an interest in other peoples. The first section of the Doctrine and Covenants opens with these words from the Lord to his people:

Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: 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. (D&C 1:1-2.)

THE GOSPEL TO ALL PEOPLES

Following the admonition to carry the gospel to all persons, missionaries have gone to the nations of the earth. Within a year after the organization of the Church, missionaries were sent out in the United States. Within only three years, missionaries were sent beyond the borders of this nation. The first went to Canada; then the work was extended to England. Not much was known of the West at that time, and less was known of the vast area beyond the shores of the Pacific. Strange stories were brought back by returning seamen; yet, the first missionaries sent out to peoples who spoke a language other than English were called to go to the Pacific.

In the frontier settlement of Nauvoo, during the time of the construction of the temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith called four, young married men to leave their families and go to the Sandwich Islands, now known as Hawaii. They traveled to the East Coast but were unable to find a ship going to the Sandwich Islands. Finally, they were able to book passage on a

whaling vessel scheduled to stop at Tahiti in the Society Islands. The ship left New Bedford, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1843. The long route they took to Tahiti is an interesting one as we look at it today. The ship sailed southerly in the Atlantic, across the equator, and under the southern tip of Africa. Then it went west across the Indian Ocean, under Australia, passing Tasmania and New Zealand, and into the Pacific Ocean, sailing northeasterly toward Tahiti.

One of the four missionaries died during this long, strenuous trip and was buried at sea. The next spring, because of the need for supplies, the ship put in at the island of Tubuai in the Austral group. Addison Pratt, one of the missionaries, decided to stay on this Polynesian island, and the other two continued the voyage to Tahiti.

During the first three months, Elder Pratt baptized ten people, including the only six white men on the little island. A branch was organized and it grew and prospered. The two who went to Tahiti had problems because of the fighting between the French and the Tahitians. Elder Guard went to the island of Anaa in the Tuamotu group. He was the first white missionary to the island. Within four months he had baptized 620 people and had organized five branches. From this difficult beginning the work has spread across the Pacific.

Six years later ten missionaries were sent to the Sandwich Islands. Within eight months 220 persons had been baptized. More missionaries were sent, and four years later there were four thousand saints in Hawaii. Missionaries went to Australia in 1851; and the first to New Zealand, the land of the Maori, arrived in 1854. Then followed Samoa, Tonga, Raratonga in the Cook Islands, and other islands of the Pacific. The work continued to roll forward through the Polynesian Islands and Australia and New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere. Fifty years ago there were about thirteen thousand members of the Church in this area of the world. Since that time the growth has been significant. Today the membership, including Hawaii, is about 160 thousand.

The first stake in the Church to be organized outside of North America and Hawaii was in the South Pacific, the Auckland Stake in New Zealand. This stake was organized in 1958, at the time the New Zealand Temple was dedicated. The growth since that time has been phenomenal. There are now

forty-nine stakes outside of the United States and Canada. Of these, twenty-two are in the Pacific area: four in Samoa, three in Tonga, seven in New Zealand, seven in Australia, and a new stake in Japan.

EDUCATION IN THE PACIFIC

The interest of the Church in the education of its members is an important factor in the growth and development in the Pacific. The missionaries in the early days taught both children and adults in many areas where education was not otherwise available. In some places schools were established to help students in elementary education, language, agriculture, and religious education. Much good has come from such schools, and the Maori Agricultural College, in New Zealand, is an outstanding example. Today the Church has schools across the Pacific. In Hawaii, next to the Hawaii Temple at Laie, lies the beautiful campus of The Church College of Hawaii. It was built especially for the young people of Polynesia and has been attended by many of our fine young Latter-day Saints from the Far East as well. Adjacent to the college the Church has constructed the Polynesian Cultural Center, where students can perform in their native cultures and earn their transportation, tuition, and board and room while pursuing a higher education. Their wholesome appearance and enthusiastic performance has made this Hawaii's most patronized tourist attraction.

In addition to Hawaii, we have schools in many other places in the Pacific. In Western Samoa there are primary and postprimary schools in Sauniatu and Vaila; an elementary school at Pesega; and also the well-known Church College of Western Samoa, a secondary school near Apia. There are also six other primary schools in Western Samoa. In American Samoa the Church maintains the Mapusaga High School. Its campus, in a tropical South Sea setting, is one of the most beautiful in the Pacific and in some ways similar to the well-known Liahona High School in Tonga. Moreover, there are ten intermediate schools in the Kingdom of Tonga. To the west, in Fiji, the Church has established an elementary school in Suva. It would thrill you to go into the classrooms of the four hundred students in the elementary school in Tahiti and see the work that is being done and the results of this Church school. On to the south and adjoining the New Zealand

Temple grounds is the campus of The Church College of New Zealand, where young people from many places in the South Pacific attend school.

These schools give young people the opportunity for an education that many of them would not otherwise receive. In addition, they touch their lives with religious education and spirituality. The growth of the Church has been the highest in areas where we have established schools. Many of our students go into the mission field upon being graduated and render effective missionary service. Their education and background qualify them to take their places in leadership in the Church, adding great strength for future growth.

GROWTH IN THE FAR EAST

The Church has fanned westward across the Pacific. It is now extending missionary work into the Far East: Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Malasia, Indonesia, and Thailand.

Twenty years ago, about the time of the birth of most of you assembled here today, there were only about four hundred members of the Church in Japan. Since that time missionary work has been renewed. Today there are more than fifteen thousand saints on those islands, and the work is proceeding rapidly. We now have four missions in Japan, and the first stake has been organized. There are nearly five thousand members of the Church in Korea; over five thousand in the Philippines; about four thousand in Hong Kong; four thousand in Taiwan; and growth in Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam and Indonesia is taking root.

The door has been opened for the sweep of the gospel through the Far East. We are building congregations of saints, constructing chapels, and carrying forward a great missionary program. At the World Conference on Records in Salt Lake City, hosted by the Genealogical Society of the Church, representatives of the national libraries of four of the major countries of the Far East were present and participated in the proceedings. The result was a boon to genealogical work. Negotiations are now in progress for microfilming in some of these Asian countries.

The day has long since passed when the Church is thought of as "the Utah church" or as a United States organization. It

has attained international aspects: it is a Mexican church, a Samoan church, a Chinese church, a Japanese church. We have deep interest in peoples of many lands. This worldwide Church spans the oceans and touches the lives of people on all continents, making them brothers through the gospel. It is only proper for Brigham Young University, as a part of the Church, to give a worldwide accent to its program. Its faculty and student body are foremost in experience with and understanding of other people.

During this important week, as you pause to focus on the Pacific and Asia, we commend you for your efforts to expand understanding. As believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is our hope that greater insight will come to the nations of the world and to men everywhere. This requires conscientious effort, and Brigham Young University should be a leader. I pray the Lord will bless you in your efforts.

I know that the work in which we are engaged to build the kingdom is true. Before I leave this microphone, I want to tell you of my positive conviction that God lives and loves his children, regardless of their race or color. His son, Jesus Christ, is our leader and stands at the head of the Church. I bear witness of his divinity as our Savior and of his divine leadership and direction of his Church. I pray that God will bless you in your endeavors to bring understanding to men everywhere, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.