

Before Election in November

WE ARE ONE WORLD

Evan A. Fry, Radio Director
Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints
Independence, Mo.

Sunday, October 3, 1943
10:00 p.m. KMBC, 980 KC
Kansas City, Mo.
All Rights Reserved

Every speaker, every magazine, every thinker today, is concerned about our post-war world. We are all thinking through our old concepts of democracy again. We are all re-evaluating our concepts of religion again, in the light of a suddenly changed and changing world. The old world will never be the same. What will the new world be?

In this thinking about a new world, it is well that we should consider thoroughly the inseparable connection of Christianity and Democracy. To speak of one is almost to name the other, for the spread of Christianity and of Democracy have been almost coincident. Where one is, you will sooner or later find the other. The strongest democracies of the world today are also the most Christian nations. Most, if not all of the progress of the world during the past 1900 years, in science, in art, in music, in literature, in invention, in social reform, in charitable endeavor, has been made in Christian nations, with democratic forms of government. Up until a few years ago, and perhaps even today, there was only one hospital in the world not under the auspices of at least nominal Christians -- and that was a hospital for sacred cows of India. Even to this day, there is not a single patent office outside of Christian nations, because non-Christian nations are not making any inventions worth patenting.

The so-called "heathen" or non-Christian nations of the world have always been the nations where caste systems flourished; where ignorance and superstition held sway; where men were totally unconcerned about the suffering of their neighbors in other castes or classes or races; where fields were plowed and crops harvested and threshed according to the same methods, and with the same implements as their forefathers used four or five thousand years before. They have been nations where for the most part tyrants and absolute monarchs held life and death power over their subjects. Surveying all these facts, we are led inescapably to the conclusion that Christianity is the only religion under which democracy could flourish. Democracy is not for the selfish, the proud, the weak, the ignorant, the unskilled, the unmoral or the immoral. Democracy will work only among people of altruistic motives -- people who are strong enough to rule themselves -- who are informed, and skilled, and guided by some inner moral sense of right and justice.

The very premises of Democracy are the premises of Christianity. The great affirmations of Christ were the fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. Democracy asserts that all men were created free and equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Jesus taught the unity of each with all -- that what affects one man or one class of men inevitably affects all other men and classes of men. Democracy is dedicated to the greatest good to the greatest number, with full consideration for minorities. Gradually, after nineteen hundred years of hedging around it, the world is coming 'round to Jesus' concept that we are one world, one people, of one blood, of equal worth and favor in the sight of our common Father. We have tried for many centuries to break up the world into little sections. We have fought war after war over the boundary lines of those sections we called nations, or over the jealousies and envies of the sections we called races or peoples of religions or classes. We have tried in a thousand different ways to build fences about our own little section of the world to protect ourselves, and keep the other fellow out. We have espoused a most un-Christian isolationism; we have preached the gospel that what happens on the other side of our shabby little fence is no concern of ours.

But at last the world has caught up with our isolationism, passed it, and left us bewildered in the vanguard of its progress. Technology has shrunk the world to one little neighborhood. No spot on the globe is more than forty-eight hours away from your local airport by plane. Radio can speed the thoughts of one man, at a single microphone, around the world approximately 23 times in one second. Our cargo fleets, in the air and on the ocean, bring us necessities and luxuries from every corner of the globe. Catastrophes in the Orient affect the stock exchange in New York and London and Liverpool in a matter of minutes. With increased travel, even the health problem of your local community becomes a world problem. Whether we like it or not, we are discovering that our world is ONE WORLD, one neighborhood. When the world was young, when this nation was young, if one did not like his neighborhood, he packed his belongings into a covered wagon and headed west to a new location. But we can't leave the shrunken little neighborhood that is now this world of ours. If we discover that some of our neighbors are lawless thugs and gangsters, we cannot move away and leave them. We have to deal with them. If we discover that some of our neighbors are dirty, ignorant, diseased, backward, impoverished, we can no longer shrug our shoulders and say it is no concern of ours. They are right on our doorstep, imperilling our peace, our health, our progress, our standard of living. We must help them, save them, or perish with them.

John Donne, a seventeenth century poet, was a man with a vision far ahead of his time -- a truly Christian concept of our "one world" -- when he penned the few short lines that introduced the best seller of a few years ago -- the novel, FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS. May we quote those words again?

"No man is an Island, intire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the Maine. If a clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse as well as if a promontorie were, as well as if a Manner of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; an therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

I do not believe that it is any exaggeration to say that the Christian Church, speaking of it in its broadest sense, holds the world together, and will increasingly be the means of holding together our post-war world. Take the United States as an example. Take the influence of Christianity and the Christian church out of America -- eliminate it totally from the customs, the habits, the morals, the ideology, the thinking, the laws of the American people, and what would there be left? It is very largely because the United States is a Christian nation that we have achieved such success as we have achieved with democracy. We have been the greatest experiment in Democracy the world has ever known. We have taken people of almost every race, every nation, every social class, every caste, every degree of political ideology, every social theory, and have amalgamated them into a strong and progressive nation to which the world looks for leadership. We shall need to initiate and carry to a successful conclusion a similar program of unification for the whole world in the near future. As we in America have made "from many, one," so the world is also going to be forced to become one, unifying its widely divergent customs and beliefs and governments in some kind of workable Christian whole.

What the framework for that kind of world unity will be, we cannot tell as yet. But Christian people who believe in the brotherhood of man, and the equality of all men before God, must see to it that some kind of framework is established and made to work, or our ONE WORLD will all perish together, and us with it. The lesson of the melting pot in the United States is that every man, every race, every nation, every social class, has its contribution to make to the good of the whole. If one unit is destroyed, the whole is lessened by that much. When one member of the body suffers, all suffer with it. When the bell tolls the death of an unknown somebody

in the wildest, most inaccessible part of the world, it tolls for thee, for that somebody was a part of you.

On this world-communion Sunday, when Christians in every country are thinking in terms of a new world fellowship, it might be interesting to review what the churches of today have already done and are doing. In China, it is the graduates of Christian missionary schools who are leading the Chinese in their fight for freedom and political stability. In India, it is the graduates of Christian missionary schools who are leading in the fight for a unified India; who are gradually breaking down the caste system; who are spreading to others the culture and enlightenment they have gained. In Africa, it is the same. In Japan, it is the Christian people upon whom we pin our hopes for a better relationship after the war. In Germany and the conquered countries, it is Christian leaders who have taken the lead in defying Hitler. The power of the church is growing. The leaven of the kingdom is leavening the whole lump. The day of that kingdom yet shall be.

The Protestant churches of America have a total of 27,000 missionaries now at work in foreign fields, with staff members totalling 72,000. These missionaries have established over 55,000 churches in foreign fields, with something over 6,000,000 members, of which 3,000,000 or approximately half, are boys and girls. Foreign mission hospitals serve 500,000 patients every year, and in addition minister to over three million out-patients through their dispensaries. Considering the millions of non-Christians in the world, these figures may seem small, but the influence of these missionaries, schools, hospitals, and churches is of no small significance, and may yet be the means of uniting the whole world in Christian fellowship and cooperative endeavor.

Our fighting men on a thousand fronts have found the missionary there before them; and consequently they have found Christian fellowship with men and women of many races and colors and nationalities. When many of these boys return to us, they are going to be changed men, fired by a totally new concept of the responsibility which enlightened America owes to the non-Christian nations of earth. These boys are going to take the lead in demanding that the church do something about the post-war world. They are going to demand that Christian principles of love, justice, and mercy (all three) be observed in writing the peace.

As we set about the increasingly important task of spreading the name and the gospel of Jesus in all the world, let us not undertake it self-righteously. We should be aware that many things about our own lives, and our own nation, are unChristian; and that we need in some things to heal ourselves before we undertake to suggest a cure to others. But Christianity changes first individuals; then these changed individuals change the world. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is devoted to this task, first of individual regeneration through the gospel of Christ; and second, of evangelization of other peoples so that they too may become new creatures in Christ Jesus; and third, the establishing of a new world order by these individually changed people, in which there shall be true fellowship, brotherhood, regard for the weak and the needy, and justice, freedom, and equality of opportunity for all.