

Mormonism and Revolution in Latin America

LaMond Tullis

I was thinking this past week that politics and religion—the general focus of my remarks today—in many ways are like the weather. They not only make good conversation, but are things about which everyone knows a lot and, aside from that, frequently has strong opinions. In fact, on occasion men have even fought wars about them. On that count I have already had a preview. About a month ago I asked fourteen of my colleagues to review a paper I thought would form the basis of my speech today. And I requested their response in several critical areas. In one of these I had simply asked: “Regardless of what I think *I* am saying, what will the forum audience think I am saying?” Well, I got *fourteen* different opinions!

So I changed the paper—several times, in fact. And now if *your* opinions and interpretations of what I will be saying are still as varied as were those of my colleagues and friends who kindly reviewed successive drafts of this speech, I hope that those opinions and interpretations will nevertheless all be correct.

A WORLDWIDE CHURCH

Now, as our discussion today unfolds I also hope you will see that one aspect of church and state—what I have called the interfacing of Mormonism with Latin American social ferment and revolution—is especially challenging and provocative. By *provocative* I mean not that the matter should exasperate or incense you, but that it should make you want to learn how to be arm in arm with Mormonism as it meets the challenge of the twenty-first century. The seeds of that challenge are now germinating in the world about you as well as in your own hearts and minds and you will,

A forum address delivered at Brigham Young University, 8 April 1975.
LaMond Tullis is associate professor of political science at Brigham Young University.

in spirit and action, and for benefit or blame, gather much of the harvest in your own lifetime.

I refer in part to your experience abroad—or perhaps those of your children. “By 1990, seventy thousand missionaries in the field at any given time,” President Kimball has said. Upwards of a third of them may well serve in Latin America, where even today the membership growth rate is of staggering proportions. Indeed, some have said that the Spanish language will one day rival English as the mother tongue of new members of the Church.

To go to another land under any circumstances is both stimulating and challenging. To go as a missionary is even more so, partly because a missionary is supposed to *know* something about religion and religious commitment in general, but also because he is expected to tell others about his own particular religion and religious commitments. If he has found it difficult in his own language, he may find it positively unnerving in someone else’s. A personal example—one that I would like to forget but somehow cannot—illustrates. One day I was ordaining a Latin-American brother to the priesthood. But rather than say *ordenar*, which means to ordain, I said *ordeñar*, which means “to milk a cow,” or even a goat, for that matter!

It was in the 1950s that President David O. McKay noted that it was time to develop a truly worldwide church. Accompanying that decision was a formidable commitment. It was no less than to take what some have called the “Mormon continental pueblo” out to the non-European-world—to take it across languages, nations, and cultures as never before and to meet head-on the attendant problems of transcultural communication between societies with vastly differing value systems. And one area to receive a renewed and redoubled emphasis was Latin America.

In the ensuing twenty years we have found, and are continuing to find, that becoming a worldwide religion in spirit as well as in organization is much more than building organizations and translating documents and scriptures and sharing them with other peoples in their own languages. Now we see that if we Mormons are to experience the universal brotherhood we seek, then all of us must make some alterations in our views of one another. This will mean an increased giving and taking—one that is as psychological and material as it is spiritual. We will need to increase our empathy and cross-cultural sensitivity, and progressively discard prejudices incompatible with brotherhood.

To accomplish these things without compromising the basic tenets of our religion will be difficult. As far as I know, no other religion has succeeded in doing it. Some people say it therefore cannot be done. The more likely truth is that it can be done, but not without a great desire and expenditure of considerable effort—as much for the givers as for the receivers of the message. Many of us, for example, will be startled when we must finally separate the gospel from cultural and other preferences we sometimes confuse with it. And that time will come because the prophets have already said that it will. At some point, therefore, we—or our descendants—will find it necessary to extricate ourselves from the confusion because the future will one day *be* the present. Should the future that is foretold lie in the time span of our own lives, we can reduce our *own* discomfort by getting clearly in our minds what it is that we should be taking across national and cultural boundaries when we go with the gospel. We may thereby see that a true Mormon brotherhood could be possible *with our help* rather than being brought to pass in spite of us.

My task today, therefore, is to explain *why* we should clearly distinguish the gospel of Christ from our own cultural, economic and political preferences. I will also make some concrete suggestions of ways we might individually get in step with the destiny of the Church on this matter. And I shall do so using Latin America as my frame of reference.

LATIN AMERICA TODAY

Within the last twenty years a new heartbeat has become clearly detectable in Latin America. It emerged with the rapid social and economic changes of the last three decades that reflected an erosion or breaking of major clusters of old social, economic, and psychological commitments. People willingly and anxiously began to adopt new ideas and life patterns. The heartbeat first became noticeable with the massive introduction of Western medicine, which reduced the death rate by more than half; it found expression in schools as the literacy rate soared to unprecedented heights; and it now beats unrestrainably in societies that are rapidly urbanizing, industrializing, and developing means of mass communication that reach into the smallest hut and the most isolated village.

But this process of rapid change, called for years the “revolution of rising expectations,” has been labeled lately by some as “the revolution of rising frustrations.” For many people, hopes once

cherished have been shattered; wants remain unmet; governments are as oppressive as ever. Nevertheless, now there is a big difference, and it lies in the fact that Latin Americans are less fatalistic about their existence. And they are striking out at some of the causes of their frustrations.

Many Latin Americans are angry that their thirst for a life free from excessive want, dictatorial and oppressive governments, international exploitation, and class brutality remains unquenched after so long. Kindled decades ago, that anger now flames in the hearts and minds of a new generation. Sometimes it has exploded with firestorm fury, jumping class and ideological firebreaks with abandon and threatening to consume as it were even the fire fighters themselves. At other times it sputters and spits, waiting for an opportune time to fully ignite. But always it is there. Paradoxically, it motivates Latin Americans more than ever to seek an existence that encompasses human and national dignity and therefore the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Several years ago I was motoring through a Latin American country with my family and parents. As we rounded a bend in the road we were forced to the shoulder by a convoy of ten-wheeled, U.S.-made military trucks crammed with men, women, and children, all under heavy armed guard. I later inquired about the matter. It seems that the people—peasants they were—had joined a cooperative union set up by some Catholic fathers and local university students. The peasants' experience in that union had raised their feelings of self-worth, dignity and hopes for the future. And they had responded by building schools for their children and hiring teachers to teach in them, and forming purchasing and marketing cooperatives so as to bypass what can only be described as substantial exploitation by local moneylenders and merchants. Finally, they had attempted to bargain with local plantation owners, for whom they did seasonal work, for better remuneration and working conditions. Sixty-five U.S. cents for a ten-hour workday was too little, they said. In response, the landowners had called out the national guard (*guardia civil*) for a crackdown.

In discussing this matter with a Utah Mormon living in the country, I found that it was part of their army's counterinsurgency program—heavily supported by the United States—to relocate Indians from combat and infiltration zones, first for their own protection, second to help them understand the menace of Communism. He reasoned further that it was in the best interests of the United

States to support such programs because they promoted stability and protected American business interests in the country.

Now the "combat" he talked about had started out, in fact, as a nonviolent struggle between two opposing forces. On the one hand there were the Catholic priests, university students, and peasants who were trying to raise heads and hopes from the mind-dulling, backbreaking, and dehumanizing life of subsistence living. On the other hand there were the landowners and local politicians who served them, both resisting an alteration in established social relations. Now that was understandable, for the existing relations worked to the distinct advantage of the landowners and their friends. But because priests and students had brought a new vision to the peasants and helped them to organize for its realization, they had created an obvious threat. So the landowners and politicians felt obliged to take action.

When the army entered the "combat zone" it indeed became one, for the confrontation quickly became violent. The peasants lost the struggle—some of them their lives—and those who remained were under heavy armed guard, packed like sardines in Army trucks, being transported to who knows where.

The role of the Catholic fathers in this episode was substantial, and we should know more about them. They belong to one of three new reformist wings of the Catholic clergy in Latin America. What these reform priests are deeply concerned with is establishing social justice on every front—a concern quite different from that of the traditional Catholic church in Latin America. The philosophy of these new priests is to bring what they call the "first great revolutionary" (by whom they mean Christ) to the people. They say it is an alternative to Marxism as an instrument of needed social reform, and they are working to bring it to pass—peacefully if they possibly can, violently if they must.

It is a curious paradox that these priests should react with violence as a means to what they call Christian ends. In light of our own revolutionary tradition, however, Americans should be able to understand how a person would seek to justify such drastic action. After years of what the American colonists considered insensitive and calloused treatment from Great Britain, some of them threw down the gauntlet and raised arms. Now, after centuries of abuse, exploitation and frustrated revolutions, many Latin American peasants and their allies fear that they may be pushed to similar means to achieve their own liberation. The rifle-bearing patriots of the

American Revolution created paradoxes in their own time, no less so than have rifle-bearing priests and peasants in some parts of Latin America today. When forced to the wall, men will do many things to protect the welfare of their wives and children, especially if they ever get the idea that they have a God-given right—not a gift, but a right—to aspire to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” The new heartbeat in Latin America has convinced people as never before that they have that right. Now they are struggling to make it a reality.

In the struggle, Latin Americans are often attracted to new political religions. The contemporary ones derive, in part, from the priestcraft and legacy of Marx, Mao Tse-tung, Castro, Guevara, Trotsky, Perón and perhaps others, all seeking to reformulate the world by organizing for social warfare and using sophisticated analyses, ideology, organization, gunpowder, and opportunism as their chief weapons. Their message is also extraordinarily persuasive to many young men and women who, although not always in agreement with the respective ideologies or confrontation tactics, find that the angry people “tell it like it is.”

In addition to the Utah Mormon with whom I spoke, I also mentioned the army-truck episode to a young local Mormon elder, bright and well-educated. His reaction to the story was quite different from that of his North American brother. Perhaps his response, although some will think it abrasive and aggressive, will nevertheless help us to understand why some Latin Americans feel the way they do about the matters I have raised. “What you Americans call stability in my country is really gangsterism,” he said, “a national terrorism perpetrated by an outdated oligarchy for its own benefit and funded by the United States for selfish and misguided reasons.” Later, he continued: “You are our brothers in the gospel and thus we love you. But your *country* has made us prisoners in our own land; it has robbed us of our national dignity and has delayed our emergence as a modern nation. Our struggle is a difficult one, and because of your country’s foreign policies, we have suffered.” (That, of course, implicates many of us here today even though we may be innocent bystanders to an incomprehensible drama.) Then, almost with embarrassment, he added: “Please forgive me, brother. I did not mean to be offensive.”

Then, there was Martín, a South American student I came to know well in one of my classes here several years ago. Perhaps he can also help us to understand a perspective that is more and more

in vogue in Latin America. On one occasion we had just reviewed a foreign-policy statement by President Lyndon B. Johnson explaining why it was necessary for the United States to land twenty-thousand marines in the Dominican Republic for combat duty. It was necessary, the president said, to preserve economic stability and protect United States interests there. Martín responded by saying: "What you Americans should do is get on the receiving end of Latin America's traditional economic system for a while. You'd soon respect a different point of view from the one you now have. In our countries, most traditional employers and landlords have been selfish and sometimes even brutal. And they have used their money and power to oppress and exploit us."

Martín does admit that things have improved in recent years, however, because several Latin American countries are now tightening up on laws that reduce "people exploitation." We know, of course, that "people exploitation" has been and still is an endemic problem in the world. Yet to have a brother in the gospel associate it directly with the foreign policy of our own country is jolting indeed. Apparently the matter is much more complex and less open to simplistic judgments than some of us may have thought.

While that may be our problem, I was interested to find that President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., certainly understood the matter. At a 1946 banquet attended by businessmen and bankers he must have startled his listeners by warning them that an unbridled pursuit of profits was fraught with social and political danger unless the welfare of the working man was well considered. "I have not approved and do not approve," he told them, "of capital's weapons—the blacklist, lockouts, and grinding out of the maximum returns for the minimum of wage outlay, even the imposition of starvation wages that too often have been capital's means of dealing with labor in the past. These have worked great injustices that must not be repeated," he said. President Clark emphasized that they must not because otherwise, free-enterprise capitalism—which, when moderated, he considered superior to other economic systems—would soon come to an end. And then only the Communists and socialists would benefit.¹

When tempered and carefully balanced, free-enterprise capitalism seems to be the best all-around economic system we know of.

¹J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "American Free Enterprise," Address delivered Friday evening, December 6, before the Allied Trades Dinner of the Mountain States Travelers in the Newhouse Hotel (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1946).

But where social structure is rigid and mobility low, as has traditionally been the case in much of Latin America, the fruits of capitalism foster neither freedom nor human dignity. In fact, they legitimize servitude rather than encourage initiative and productivity within a framework of personal choice. That is the capitalism the peasants were experiencing. And that is why Martín was so outspoken about what *he* saw and experienced in Latin America. What the Martíns of Latin America are trying to do is bring, in a peaceful way if they possibly can, some of the legitimate economic freedoms to their own countries that most Americans began to win for themselves a half century ago through national legislation that updated the promises of the American Revolution and brought them into line with the expectations of an urbanizing and industrializing society.

Thus, in spite of the new heartbeat, many Latin American Mormons believe they must help forge a clearing in a temporal wilderness if their people are to flourish and grow in the gospel. As forests, sagebrush, and greasewood were cleared by the axe and hand-drawn ribbon saw in the American West, the temporal wilderness in Latin America will also be cleared. But there it will be done by breaking down ancient economic, social, and political traditions incompatible with human dignity and freedom. There will be resistance from many governments and vested interests. There will be persecution. And there will be those representing contrary value systems who will approach our people and say, "Come, do it our way." The temptation for some will be great because those systems focus clearly and articulately on the elements that block individual progress and development, and they prescribe how the wilderness should be cleared. That their prescriptions are, in many cases, anti-Christian makes our challenge a very great one indeed.

Let me back up a little. We Anglo-American Mormons tend to believe that if we just develop our personal talents and skills we will progress. And because that is the way it has always been for most of the present generation, we are generally ignorant of some very real opportunity blocks that impinge on the lives of many Latin American Mormons and their countrymen. Because our Church members there generally do not belong to favored groups or classes—and that really makes a difference in Latin America—they do not have the wide range of freedoms and opportunities for personal development that we enjoy here. Counter value systems such as Communism recognize fully the existence of artificial opportunity

blocks and focus on removing them. Consequently, if we ignore the existence of those same blocks or, worse yet, help to maintain them, we shall hinder or destroy communication with our Latin American brothers and sisters and in so doing shall aid and abet the enemy by in fact helping to deliver those brothers and sisters into his arms.

When we stop to think about this matter a little, we clearly see that our Mormon brothers and sisters in Latin America are either participants in, or are affected by, the drama I have just described. They *and* their countries are alive with a spectacular newness. Everywhere people are working, searching, striving. Thoughts and hopes that have incubated for generations are suddenly hatching and taking their place amidst the abundant religious and political excitement visible in nearly every country. And in addition to the revolutionary political and economic ideas of Marxism and socialism and the new concern for human dignity from the Catholic Left, the revolutionary spiritual ideas of the restored gospel are rapidly spreading throughout the land. Gospel ideas are revolutionary for this life as well as the next because they embody hope for those who have despaired, and they promise opportunity for those who have lacked it.

Thus the frequent news releases in the United States that make Latin America appear as usual—unstable, romantic, and undisciplined—demonstrate only the transparent fallibility of conventional-wisdom commentators. They are as out of touch with Latin America as are some of our own traditionalists with the destiny of the worldwide church. True, in some parts of Latin America the surface characteristics appear the same. Nevertheless, it is certain that underlying them are volcanoes of unprecedented proportions. The new heartbeat has seen to that, and therefore even the quiet parts of Latin America will not be quiet much longer. Nor will the Latter-day Saints, for they have hopes and aspirations not only for the Church but also for the dignity and integrity of their respective fatherlands.

Here, therefore, we drive head-on into the problem that I have raised. Frequently the attempts that many Latin American Mormons make to achieve dignity and integrity at home will bring them into direct conflict with the international politics of the United States. So when we Anglo-American Mormons support a foreign policy that injures our Latin American brothers and sisters—assuming outright that it is true, or right, or just, because it is “ours”—you can see what happens to some Mormons on the receiving end. They

are hurt. More and more a worldwide Church with headquarters in the United States will have to cope with that problem. If in the pursuit of our own nationalistic foreign policies we impede the development of a worldwide Church, should we not pause and take note? Whatever our decision, we will, I believe, eventually become convinced that the needs of the worldwide Church should be carefully considered.

Aside from these problems there are others—a thousand examples could be raised—in cultural areas as well as international politics. When my generation went to Latin America as emissaries for the Church, for example, sometimes we appeared to be as curious as we were incomprehensible. Especially was this true when we got overly vocal in our national and cultural pride, thereby projecting ourselves less as ambassadors of Christ than as ambassadors of America. Now we see that for members of the Church in Latin America the gospel is also rooted in the soil of *their* national homeland and in the dignity of the whole man as he stands before God—where he is. That is part of the concept of “Multiple Zions” enunciated by President Harold B. Lee.² Thus people are joining the Church in spite of feelings they may have about the international politics of the Church’s motherland or the culture of those native to it.

So why is it to our advantage to make a distinction between the gospel we profess and our own political, economic, and cultural preferences? It is simple. If we do not, we cannot become a worldwide church in spirit even though we may do so in organization. A diverse people cannot have brotherhood if one of its segments insists on being always right, all the time, on everything. The gospel is transcendent truth. But man-made political and social institutions are not. So in social, cultural, and political areas we cannot expect that widely divergent peoples should adhere to the same specific perspectives. It is certain that some aspects of culture, ideology, and political practices are more compatible with gospel principles than others, and from that point they are temporarily preferable. But only the principles of the gospel constitute eternal truth.

Without, I hope, belaboring this point, I refer again to politics. Politics is a process by which men get power and distribute valued

²See also Martin B. Hickman, “The International System and the Missionary Church,” *Commissioner’s Lecture Series, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church Educational System* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1973).

goods. The process may be evil or benign. It may work to our advantage or not. We may win or we may lose. But, as Brother Hugh Nibley has so eloquently argued in the Autumn 1974 issue of *BYU Studies*, all of it is strictly a matter of this world.³

In the days of Brigham Young there was one "politics" which seemed to work best for the Saints. That was Brigham Young's politics. Later he thought it would be to the members' advantage, and that of the Church, if the Saints belonged to competing national political parties. So, I am told, at a general conference he pointed his finger down the center aisle of the Salt Lake Tabernacle and announced that from that time forth those sitting on one side would be Republicans and those on the other Democrats. And while I cannot verify the authenticity of this incident, it does give an interesting insight into what some Mormons think one aspect of our political history to have been like. Aside from that, we have the image of the brotherhood of Saints entering partisan national politics by authoritative fiat, whether by the Tabernacle episode or some other arrangement. Whatever, the decision was made in the highest councils to enter partisan national politics. Having made that decision, however, I am sure that the brethren did not consider half their people to be wrong and the other half right!⁴

RESPONSIBILITY OF CHURCH MEMBERS

So where do we go from here?

A church worldwide in spirit as well as in organization does not just happen. Nor, unlike the creation of organizations and erection

³Hugh Nibley, "Beyond Politics," *BYU Studies* 14 (Autumn 1974):3-29.

⁴Stewart L. Grow and J. Keith Melville have advised me that the Brigham Young episode, like so many others about the man, is in fact apocryphal. Grow and Melville affirm, however, that the political dimensions raised are certainly on target. In the quest for statehood, a bitter political controversy erupted between "Saints" and "Gentiles" as regards who would control the Territory of Deseret if it were ever admitted to the Union as a state. Thus the People's Party (the political arm of the Church) and the minority Liberal Party vigorously sought faithful constituents. At the same time, the Democratic and Republican parties were looking for a base in Utah as a means to enhance their own national position in the event Utah obtained statehood. The Republicans, especially the radical ones who were fresh from their conquest of America's South, generally took the side of the Liberal Party and were making grim reality out of equally grim threats—outlawing polygamy, disincorporating the Church, disfranchising Utah's women, and so forth. Confusion, anxiety, and frustration abounded among the Mormons in Utah.

For the Church's part, how could it come out of the struggle with the least adverse from among universally adverse positions offered it? Diffuse the national competition for political power, its leaders thought. So there was a move in 1890-1896 to divide the Church's People's Party among Democratic and Republican national political parties. Some oldtimers did, in fact, report that they were "called" to the Republican party—in view of the fact that it was so difficult to get members

of buildings, will it be brought about by authoritative fiat. General Authorities cannot do it for us. Only *we* can, because a church worldwide in spirit—whatever else it is—reflects the minds and hearts of its individual members. It requires members who are sensitive to other people's sensitivities; members who share psychologically and materially with each other as well as in a common transcendent vision; members who are empathic and therefore capable of putting themselves in their brothers' shoes; and above all, members who do not confuse their personal preferences with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

While these attributes do not come as a gift from anyone, they do emerge from the hearthstone of the Mormon home. This is so because children tend to recreate the attitudes and values of their parents. So in the interest of what happens in the next generation, here are some things you can do now:

First, become acquainted with Mormons from other lands and learn something about their societies and cultures. While you are enrolled at this university, take advantage of the rich opportunities that are afforded herein to do so. There are classes, clubs, and chances for informal associations. We pride ourselves in being cosmopolitan, but we need to work harder to make that cosmopolitanism a reality. We enjoy a diversity of national and ethnic origins, but that diversity must allow us to resonate with and mutually understand each other if it is to be part of a worldwide church in spirit.

(As an aside, I have often thought what a waste it is not to combine Priesthood and Relief Society meetings on this campus one day a month when the sisters present their lessons on Mormons in Peru, Thailand, the Philippines, Japan, Mexico, and so forth. Those lessons have helped me. And they could help others.)

But now my *second* point. If you receive a mission call, know that you must acquire the spiritual conviction and integrity that

to join it. Accommodation with America was forced on Utah and the Church, and joining national political parties by ecclesiastical persuasion, and sometimes by authoritative fiat, was one way the Church's authorities tried to deal with the problem.

Interesting and authoritative discussions on these related episodes may be found in Gustive O. Larson, *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood* (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1971); Richard D. Poll, "The Political Reconstruction of Utah Territory, 1866-1890," *Pacific Historical Review* 27 (1958): 111-126; Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958); Stewart L. Grow, "The Development of Political Parties in Utah," *Western Historical Quarterly*, vol. 16, supplement; see also Grow's unpublished doctoral dissertation, "A Study of the Utah Commission 1882-1896," (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1954).

preaching the gospel requires. There is no substitute for that. And there is no way to fake it. But after acquiring that conviction and integrity, and after establishing spiritual contact with a prospective member, also know that the communication problems remaining are about fifty percent a language problem and fifty percent a problem for *other* modes of communicating with people. Talking machines alone do not preach the gospel very well, and when we know little more about other people than the rudiments of their language, we are only slightly better than talking machines. Frequently we are worse. To resonate with the hopes and fears, the aspirations, the high ideals and spiritual convictions of another people; to understand the heartbeat of a new land; to feel pain and happiness as others feel it—that is to know them. And to know them is a basic ingredient of successful communication. So expand your awarenesses in these areas through study and by personal associations. And when you go on your mission, do not confine yourselves on your “days off” to the American ghettos. Whatever else they may be, it is certain that they are sanctuaries of the weak and the blind. Immerse yourselves in your new land in all legitimate ways. My experience, and that of others I have known, assures me that you will be less a curiosity and more a brother to those whom you meet.

Third, as I have emphasized, we need to make a clear distinction between our cultural and other preferences and the gospel of Christ. The gospel has flourished and has been blessed and sanctioned by God under numerous kinds of governments and economic and cultural systems. There must be some compatibility, of course, between these preferences and systems, and the gospel. Referring to the political area again, one key is freedom. Freedom unfettered by practices that limit the exercise of religious conscience or that relegate classes of citizens to servitude or bondage or to oppression and exploitation, is freedom compatible with the gospel. Governments which actively foster freedom of conscience and opportunity and protect it for all its citizens are Mormonism’s implicit friends. This is so whether they happen to agree with the foreign policy of the United States or not. Learn, therefore, something about freedom of conscience and opportunity and extend your understanding beyond the parochial interests of any given country or class of people within it. The Church is beyond the nation state because no state is an official representative of God.

Fourth, do strive to be openhearted, understanding and devoid of prejudice incompatible with the gospel. Studies show that in

some areas we Anglo-American Mormons are no more socially prejudiced than is the mainstream of American society. But that is small comfort because the same studies show that we are no less so.⁵ Yet we should be. And that is a personal challenge to us if we are to become a worldwide church in spirit.

Finally, with respect to the Church in Latin America, and in order to help build a bridge between the temporal world and spiritual self, do reflect on the relevance of Brigham Young's understanding for the modern day—and extend yourselves accordingly, because opportunities abound now as never before.

Brigham Young set up schools, universities, farms, factories, banks, cooperatives, and credit unions—and yes, colonization companies, and mining enterprises—right along with chapels, tabernacles, and temples. And, just like our forefathers, Latin American Saints who have similar temporal needs have taken the hopes and visions that the gospel gives them and are now striving for temporal as well as spiritual development. Both you and they may find yourselves becoming practitioners of Brigham Young's temporal arts and his spiritual virtues. In numerous countries our leaders have already established Church-sponsored schools. Now the call is out for medical missionaries, agricultural technicians, teachers, and entrepreneurs to help in areas of literacy, nutrition, preventive medicine, and manpower training.

The First Presidency, echoing Joseph F. Smith's belief that a religion which cannot save a man temporally cannot hope to save him spiritually,⁶ announced as early as 1968 that "The historic position of the Church has been one which is concerned with the quality of man's contemporary environment as well as preparing him for eternity. In fact, as social and political conditions affect man's behavior now, they obviously affect eternity."⁷ And as this is so, substantial numbers of young men and women will be called to labor for the temporal welfare of the Saints as well as for their spiritual welfare.

The gospel is not undermined by such cooperative pursuits; it is simply made more complete. There is now a chance for those of us who are temporally well off and often in need of the Spirit

⁵Armand L. Mauss, "Moderation in All Things: Political and Social Outlook of Modern Urban Mormons," *Dialogue* 7 (1972):57-69.

⁶William E. Berrett and Alma P. Burton, eds., *Readings in L. D. S. Church History*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1958), 3:364.

⁷The First Presidency, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "Citizens Obligations," *Deseret News*, 7 September 1968 (with correction of 11 September).

to unite with brothers and sisters who can teach us much that we still need to learn about ourselves. And we can extend our hand to help them. This is an expression of brotherhood, one most completely realized when people from different lands and cultures can find mutual acceptance of one another in their hearts as well as in their evening prayers. There is no doubt that it will cost more. There is no doubt that it will take more of our time. And it will demand more of us in every way. But it will help to weld us into a true Christian brotherhood.

The future is not painless. As far as I know, there was never a promise that it would be. But, even so, just as great men and women in ages past changed the course of world history, so also can you now. And as you rise to the challenge of the twenty-first century, many of you will not only help give tone and temper to the revolutionary landscape in Latin America, but I believe that you will also reap a harvest of benefit rather than blame from the seeds of brotherhood that you sow this day. And perhaps in *your* lifetime you will thereby see a part of the promised brotherhood of Jesus Christ rise to meet its prophetic destiny. Should that be our happy lot, I am certain that we will rejoice with the heavens in having learned at last to live Christ's second great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:39).