



CHURCH INFLUENCE UPON THE FAMILY

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President David O. McKay described the two major purposes of the Church during the General Priesthood Meeting of the October, 1966, General Conference. The first is that of taking the message of the restoration to the world. "The other great purpose of the Church is to translate truth into a better social order or, in other words, to make our religion effective in the individual lives of men and in improving social conditions."¹ Much of the Church's efforts to create and maintain beneficial social conditions in the world are focused upon the family. This focus appears to have two goals: (1) the creation of exalted eternal families, and (2) the development of healthy earthly families, which is essential to the achievement of the first goal.

AREAS OF POTENTIAL INFLUENCE

The potential influence of the Church in bringing about the development of healthy families may be found in three areas: (1) doctrine and practice aimed at members' families, (2) professional resources from both the Church and the secular world, and (3) political and social action aimed at *all* families.² Present efforts to assist the family in coping with its problems are found primarily in the area of doctrine and practice. Influencing legislation and conducting programs of social action are areas where Church intervention could be directed toward changing social conditions which affect the family.

Church intervention can also be categorized into ameliorative and preventive influence. Assisting the L.D.S. family to cope with the strains of daily living is an ameliorative approach. The preventive approach consists of the introduction of changes in other areas of society, thus reducing the source of strain and pressures. If either approach is to be successful, the interdependent nature of family, church, and society must be understood.

¹David O. McKay, "The Church—A Worldwide Institution," *The Improvement Era*, LXIX (December 1966), 1131.

²Political and social action is defined in this paper as those programs and activities (including

The tremendous impact of doctrine regarding the family, upon the lives of individuals as well as upon social conditions, is demonstrated by polygamy. The predominant influence today upon the family is the Church's emphasis on temple marriage and the positive influence this doctrine and practice is assumed to have upon marital adjustment and success.³ All other Church practices designed to strengthen L.D.S. families are seen as supporting the primary goal of temple marriage. The publication of the Family Home Evening Manual and the inauguration of the Home Teaching program are good examples. Both could have a profound effect upon the quality of L.D.S. family life. A corresponding development has been the inclusion of more family relationship material in both the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society manuals. Much of this material reflects the thinking of Mormon social scientists who are making a significant contribution to the Church in making gospel principles applicable in daily life.

L.D.S. PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Implicit in these new developments is an emerging union between gospel principles and concepts from the behavioral and social sciences. Classes in Courtship and Marriage and in Family Relations at L.D.S. Institutes of Religion and the doctoral program in Human Development and Family Relations (among other doctoral programs in the social sciences at Brigham Young University) are evidences of this union. Financial support given by the Church for Utah's Alcoholic Rehabilitation Program,⁴ research conducted by B.Y.U. social scientists for the General Authorities, the Indian Placement Program, and the expansion of Church social service agencies are additional areas where religion has joined hands with secular ideas.

Professionals from social work and from other related fields are employed in all of the Church's social service agencies. The Relief Society Social Service and Child Welfare Department has offices in Salt Lake, Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Idaho Falls and is expanding its program into the Los Angeles area. This large agency administers an adoption program which provides services to both the L.D.S. adoptive couple and to the unmarried mother, foster home care, a program for L.D.S. transients, home maker service, an employment service, the Indian Student Placement Program, and the Youth Guidance Program. The agency offices outside of Salt Lake do not offer all of the above services. The Youth Guidance Program of the Relief Society Youth Service Department has its own offices in Salt Lake and is expanding its services throughout the inter-

legislative action) organized and carried out, by either laymen or professionals, with the intent of removing harmful elements from the social environment.

³Rex A. Skidmore, "An Educator Views Temple Marriage," *The Improvement Era*, LXX (February 1967), 60-66.

⁴The Church provides one tuition scholarship for a member from each ward to attend the annual University of Utah Institute of Alcohol Studies. The Church has also contributed food commodities and financial aid to the State of Utah's Alcoholism Rehabilitation Program. See Thorpe B. Isaacson, "Religion Symposium," *Utah School of Alcoholism Studies*, University of Utah Lectures and Reports, 1961 Manual Supplement.

mountain region. This agency works with L.D.S. problem youth and their families.

The Outpatient Mental Health Clinic at the L.D.S. Hospital in Salt Lake City provides psychiatric services to ward members who are referred by their bishops. A recent study conducted by this clinic revealed that of the clients who responded to a questionnaire, seventy-four percent said they were helped by the service they received. Eighty-seven percent of the bishops who responded said the ward members they had referred for service had been helped and ninety percent of the bishops said the clinic had been helpful to them. In no case was there agreement between the client and his bishop that he (the client) had not been helped.⁵ Medical social work is also being practiced in the L.D.S. Hospital in Salt Lake under the auspices of the Social Work Service Department. The psychiatric ward at the same hospital is directed by competent psychiatrists. The Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake recently opened a Neuro-Psychiatric Center for emotionally disturbed children under the age of thirteen. The Child and Family Guidance Center, a separate division of the Neuro-Psychiatric Center, provides psychological and psychiatric evaluations as well as family and individual treatment. A day school for emotionally disturbed children is also operated at the hospital.

The survey conducted by the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic at the L.D.S. Hospital may be indicative of the effectiveness of their services for the Church members they serve; however, the number of clients and bishops served in relation to the entire Church population is small. It is difficult to assess the overall impact upon the Church by this and other agencies without an extensive evaluation of their programs and services.⁶

Much of what the Church is able to do in the areas of doctrine and practice, professional services, and social action, depends upon the acceptance of the validity and expertise of the behavioral and social sciences. Available to the Church is an ever-expanding body of knowledge regarding the family. The acceptance of this knowledge is dependent upon the resolution of a much broader issue—the role of reason and of scientific methodology in a Church governed by revelation and authority.

NEED FOR CONTINUING EXAMINATION AND MODIFICATION

In order for religion to keep pace with changing social conditions, two things are needed: (1) continuous revelation, and (2) a continuing examination of both the social determinants and social consequences of revelation. L.D.S. family relations are in constant need of both kinds of nourishment; however, there are socio-cultural factors which make continuing examination difficult.

⁵Summary: L.D.S. Hospital Mental Health Clinic Study, December 1966 (mimeographed).

⁶It is hoped that this short introduction to L.D.S. social service agencies will stimulate the directors and professionals employed therein to give the readers of *Dialogue* a deeper understanding of their work. The author wishes to thank Mrs. Mayola Miltenberger of the Arizona Relief Society Social Service, Mr. Charles Stewart of Youth Guidance Program, and Mr. Grant Hyer of Social Work Service Department, L.D.S. Hospital in Salt Lake City, for information about their respective agencies and social service in the Church.

The process of growth of a religious organization, including Mormonism, is often accompanied by the surrender of charismatic innovation to the standardization of religious experience. Although some elements of institutionalization are necessary for organizational growth, other elements of this process, if taken to extreme degrees, tend to make the religious organization dysfunctional *vis-à-vis* social change. An obvious example is the Catholic Church's position regarding birth control. Counterparts in L.D.S. doctrine and practice need to be identified or aspects of Mormonism will also become dysfunctional for the modern world.

The Church, being in the world, is affected by it; despite this, the Church can provide the family with protective mechanisms against harmful worldly influences. For example, one crucial family function is to serve as a buffer between individual family members and other social organizations. Family Home Evening is a means by which the Church through the family combats environmental conditions detrimental to both organizations. The Church may search for new ways of buttressing this and other crucial family functions.

Much of the doctrine of the Church regarding the family was given during a particular historical era, now past. That era was dominated by rural values and by practices sustaining the functions of a rural family. To avoid anachronisms of doctrine and practice, the Church might profitably examine the status of the modern family in the modern world. Christ said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."⁷ Similarly, Church organization exists for the development and exaltation of individuals and families; the family does not exist for the glorification of the Church. For example, today's family should not be expected to conform to the Church's model of the family, if that model is based upon the economic and social expectations of nineteenth century America.



The contemporary L.D.S. family is not only a handmaiden of the Church, but is also a product of the economic sub-system of the larger society. Value conflicts may occur within both individuals and families when the Church's expectations of the family are incompatible with the dominant values of society, or when Church values are contradictory within themselves. The casualty list resulting from conflict with society will consist of the loss both of exalted families and of adequate familial functioning. Polygamy produced both undesirable consequences, in the form of apostates and incarcerated husbands. Internal value conflicts produce similar kinds of

casualties. If members are repeatedly told that economic success accompanies righteous living, and if successful businessmen predominate as bishops, stake presidents and other Church officials, what does this communicate to the general membership regarding the relationship between spiritual worthiness and monetary success? How then does the working L.D.S. wife reconcile her behavior with explicit injunctions to stay at home and take care of her family rather than

⁷Mark 2:27.

supplementing her husband's income? Rather than allowing religious instruction to support, implicitly, materialistic cultural themes detrimental to the family, the Church might acknowledge the harmful quality of these themes and construct countervailing interpretations and practices.⁸

To become more effective in stabilizing family life, the Church can take into account the basic nature of man, of family relations, and of the conditioning forces of contemporary society, and then apply this knowledge to existing doctrine and to the formulation of new doctrine and practice. Such an application may lead to a dropping of some emphases and practices, the reinterpretation of still others, and the creation of new ones. An awareness of the manner in which socio-cultural factors influence religious phenomena is important in the examination and application processes.

Behavioral consequences are a manifestation of the socio-cultural factors associated with doctrine. An example of how doctrine is translated into behavior is found in the varying marriage, birth, and divorce rates of different religious denominations. Is it possible, therefore, to validate religious doctrine for a specific time and place on a pragmatic basis? When social conditions change, religious instruction may become dysfunctional for its adherents. An example is Brigham Young's advocacy of early marriage.⁹ As social conditions have changed, both the traditional reasons and the functions of early marriage have become irrelevant to new conditions.

The second manifestation of socio-cultural factors is in the formation of doctrine and practice. Do environmental conditions play a role in conditioning religious phenomena? For example, is the anti-birth control position of the Church a product—in part—of social and cultural forces in American society?¹⁰ If so, what effect does this knowledge have upon our interpretation and understanding of this doctrine?

In reconciling L.D.S. doctrine and practice with the secular world, several additional problems need to be mentioned. Is it possible to keep doctrine and practice abreast of the profound changes of an industrialized society? Many obstacles to effective family life and personal development result from these changes and the pressures and strains they generate.¹¹

Is L.D.S. family doctrine universally applicable to the wide variety of cultures in which Mormon families live? The relativity of different cultures and ethnic groups may require a concentration on meeting the needs of families within their own cultural framework, rather than on a rigid adherence to the

⁸Quinn G. McKay, "Values in a World of Change: Wise Ways with Worldly Wealth," *The Improvement Era*, LXX (May 1967). Dr. McKay attempts to disconnect spiritual worthiness from economic success.

⁹See John A. Widstoe, *Discourses of Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1925), p. 301.

¹⁰Letter from The Office of The First Presidency, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (11 January 1967) indicated the attitude of the Church today regarding birth control is the same attitude as expressed by President Joseph F. Smith (see *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 278). Special attention in the letter was given to the concern for the mother's health and well being.

¹¹See Reed H. Bradford, "Values in A World of Change: Constancy Amid Change," *The Improvement Era*, LXX (May 1967) for a description of these changes.

American model of family relations.¹² In the U.S., supporting legislation and programs designed to strengthen family life for all Americans may be one of the most important contributions we can make in creating social conditions compatible with Christian ideals.

Efforts by the Church to change social conditions which we define as harmful may run counter to the contrasting culture of the secular world. For example, legislation intended to abolish the sale of liquor by the drink may run counter to the values and rights of other Americans. Such efforts to impose our own values or way of life on others would not only meet with defeat, but might detract from a primary purpose of the Church—that of winning converts.¹³ The abolition of polygamy, as a practice, indicates that Church doctrine can be modified and reinterpreted when political, economic, and social conditions combine to produce negative side effects which may outweigh the intended purpose of the doctrine. If the Church is to continue to be relevant to the problems of the modern world, doctrine and practice must be appraised, which may then result in the assignment of priorities to religious goals and means.¹⁴

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Doctrine and Practice

A recent article by Dr. Rex A. Skidmore indicated some of the positive effects of temple marriage; however, it illustrates some of the problems of studying and interpreting the behavioral consequences of Church doctrine.¹⁵ Dr. Skidmore's conclusions become uncertain when compared with other available statistics. A quick survey was made of marriage and divorce statistics in *Vital Statistics of the U.S.* for the most recent year available, 1962.¹⁶ Although no definite conclusions can be made on the basis of only one year's statistics, there were indications that Utah (which is roughly seventy percent L.D.S.) has a bad divorce record, especially for early marriages. Even though the statistics from Dr. Skidmore and the Federal Government were not drawn from a comparable base, how does one reconcile the difference in conclusions drawn? If temple marriage does contribute to marital stability, then what portion of Utah's population is responsible for its poor divorce record, and how does living in a "Mormon culture" affect marital behavior?

There are two other practices, mentioned earlier, which may have harmful side effects upon L.D.S. family life. The anti-birth control practice and the

¹²For a discussion of some of the cross-cultural conflicts and problems which occur when the American brand of Mormonism, including its social and political orientation, is transported abroad, See Peter Houghton, "We Love the Americans, But . . ." *Dialogue*, I (Autumn 1966), 188.

¹³McKay, *op. cit.*

¹⁴Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), chapters nine and ten. Professor O'Dea introduces the notion that value conflicts in the Church could be lessened if priorities were assigned to L.D.S. values (and consequently, to doctrine and practice).

¹⁵Skidmore, *op. cit.*

¹⁶U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, *Vital Statistics of the U.S., 1962, III, Marriage and Divorce*, 1965.

emphasis, expressed less lately, on early marriage, need to be studied.¹⁷ Space does not allow for an elaboration of these practices; however, it is hoped that social scientists in the Church will study these and make their findings available.

Professional Resources

Despite present efforts of the Church to strengthen its families, it is the author's belief that L.D.S. families will continue to feel the strain and stresses of urban living. Additional efforts and programs will be needed to protect the family. The social services described above are primarily corrective rather than preventive. Preventive programs could provide L.D.S. families with more mechanisms of defense against the stresses of urbanization. Educational programs involving both Church leaders and laymen may become important means of prevention. If knowledge is power, then understanding the inter-dependent relationship between society and family may provide Church leaders with new means of protecting the family. The bishop has a key role in assisting families, and educational programs could be focused on his role.

Colleagues of mine report a variation of performance among bishops in administering welfare services to Church members. Some bishops recognize their limitations in counseling and in handling welfare matters, and consequently use professional consultation and other community resources. Other bishops appear threatened by the possibility of professionals performing their traditional functions—functions supported by scripture. I have been told that the subject of marriage counseling is so delicate in some Church agencies that social workers dare not refer to it as one of their functions for fear of offending some bishops and General Authorities. Still other bishops are totally unaware of the assistance they could receive from L.D.S. and community social agencies. Implicit in all three responses is the tremendous need for greater education of ward and stake leaders in handling of welfare matters, family counseling, and the use of community resources. The Relief Society Social Service Department and other Church agencies appear to be the most appropriate organizations through which workshops, seminars, or other educational means could be used to assist the bishop in understanding these complex problems.

On the ward level, meaningful participation by both laymen and professionals could be initiated in the area of family life education. The Sunday School's Parent and Youth course is didactic in orientation, fulfilling many important needs. Some instructors are skillfully able to turn the class into a discussion group where parents are able to share solutions to the problems of parenthood, as well as discuss lesson material. Discussion groups composed of parents could be brought together, under the auspices of the Priesthood or an auxiliary, where the discussion of the group members' parent-child relationships and problems would be the focus. Family life education discussion groups are seen by professionals as a preventive tool, as well as a corrective one, for assisting

¹⁷G. Homer Durham, "These Times: Population Growth," *The Improvement Era*, LXX (February 1967), 77. Dr. Durham's discussion is the first attempt this author has seen in a Church periodical at presenting some of the problems of over-population.

parents with family problems before they require intensive professional help.¹⁸ Obviously there are not enough trained professionals to lead such groups in every ward; however, intelligent, emotionally mature parents could be trained to lead such groups.¹⁹ Proper training and supervision could be given discussion leaders by professionals in existing Church agencies, and other professionals in the Church could be asked to volunteer their consultation services.

A recent innovation in institutional psychiatry is that of the therapeutic community.²⁰ Treatment based on this concept consists of making all contacts between hospital staff and patients, and between patients, therapeutic.²¹ Although more difficult to apply outside of closed institutions, where much of a person's environment can be controlled and dealt with, important aspects of this treatment concept could be applied on the ward level. The application may occur twofold. The long range, preventive level of application would consist of the promotion of mental and family health of ward members through ward classes, activities, and interpersonal relations among members. A more specific application would be the rehabilitation of Church members who are mentally ill or socially deviant.²² Administrators of the Youth Guidance Program are now implementing elements of the "therapeutic community" into their program.

Family Service Evaluation Committees will be organized throughout the stakes and regions of the Church to assist stake presidents and bishops to more effectively handle problem youth and families. These committees consist of volunteer consultants who may be professional teachers, nurses, social workers, and others who will assist the bishop and his ward members in rehabilitating Church members. Committee members may also be called upon to render direct service through the bishop to the ward member or utilize other community resources in helping the member and his family.²³ The focus of such a committee could be expanded to include the discussion of any human relationship problems encountered by a bishop. The handling of family problems in this manner will help in reducing the deterioration and disintegration of some of our families.

¹⁸Family life education is defined in the *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (1965 ed.), p. 315, as "efforts to disseminate information about family relations, personality development, and social adjustment." For a discussion on its potential value to all families, especially newly marrieds, see Helen L. Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky (eds.), *Personality in the Making* (Palo Alto: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1952), chapter 9, particularly pages 201-209.

¹⁹The War on Poverty has been the impetus for using non-professionals and aides indigenous to the population. Laymen in the Church are as competent as others to carry out similar functions. This will become increasingly necessary, both in and out of the Church, in light of the magnitude of social problems we face.

²⁰This term was first used by Maxwell Jones, a British psychiatrist in his book *The Therapeutic Community* (New York: Basic Books, 1953).

²¹The Utah State Hospital in Provo, Utah, is a pioneer in American psychiatry in incorporating many of Jones's ideas and in developing new programs in institutional psychiatry.

²²The author has been assisted in refining his thinking regarding the application of the "therapeutic community" concept through a conversation with Grant K. Hyer of L.D.S. Hospital, Social Work Service Department, Salt Lake City.

²³*Youth Service Handbook*. Youth Guidance Program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Relief Society Youth Service Department, Salt Lake, 1965.

The rehabilitation efforts of the Church could be assisted in other ways, on the stake level, by the use of professionals and professionally trained and supervised laymen. A full- or part-time professional trained in working with both individuals and groups, and in giving consultation to bishops, could implement the work of the Family Service Evaluation Committee. One area of need which such an individual could meet would be in establishing group and club activities for the elderly L.D.S. Golden Agers.²⁴

A ward member needing rehabilitation would thus be affected by the Evaluation Committee, the professional worker, his neighbors, priesthood quorum leader, home teacher, bishop, and others. The efforts of all could become coordinated in assisting Brother X to remain in the community with his family, functioning as father and breadwinner, rather than having to return to the mental hospital, or to prison, or to succumb to poverty or some other debilitating social disease.

Political and Social Action

The role of the Church in affecting federal, state, and local legislation will always be a controversial one. Professor J. D. Williams believes that the First Presidency of the Church is justified in taking political action in two areas: first, "whenever the rights of the church might be endangered by government or pressure groups," and secondly, "whenever church doctrines are frontally threatened by political developments."²⁵ The second area might be expanded to include social, economic and cultural developments as well as political. In other words, the Church might actively support and promote legislation and social action designed to improve social conditions, when such conditions are congruent with both Church doctrine and the welfare of the general public. Supporting legislation designed to stabilize family life for all members of the community would be congruent with Church doctrine stressing the sacred nature of the family and also with the public interest. Such political action can be further justified on the grounds that gospel principles cannot be lived in a vacuum. Rather, the living of healthy, productive lives is often dependent upon the creation of healthy social conditions.

There appears to be a certain baseline of economic subsistence which must be met for all families. Having the economic necessities of life may be a prerequisite to accepting and living a spiritual life. Among social workers there is a maxim that "You can't casework (work with the psychological problems of an individual) an empty stomach." This fact is also recognized by some Church leaders. While addressing Relief Society presidencies of the Church regarding their role in assisting needy families, Elder Harold B. Lee said ". . . the first thing we have to do is to build a sense of security, a sense of material well-being,

²⁴Temple work and genealogical activity create interest and purpose in life for many Golden Agers who live close to temples. However, others are not completely absorbed into these activities. Such members could probably become involved in other kinds of group activities, which are commonly associated with Golden Age Centers, but under Church sponsorship.

²⁵J. D. Williams, "Separation of Church and State in Mormon Theory and Practice," *Dialogue*, I (Summer 1966), 52.

before we can begin to lift the family to the plane where we can instill in them faith."²⁶ Adequate economic assistance, along with other services, to families in poverty could be actively supported by the Church. Such assistance, through existing public welfare programs, would provide families with the basic economic necessities upon which adequate social functioning is based. Economic programs even broader than public welfare are being proposed as solutions to economic problems of American families. A guaranteed annual income for all American families will increasingly become a national issue, requiring careful scrutiny of alternatives and possible outcomes. An editorial in *The Deseret News* has already come out against such income maintenance programs.²⁷ Such programs may have far-reaching consequences for the families assisted.

The Church could actively support legislation designed to strengthen family life. There are many legislative bills, proposals, and programs on federal, state, and local levels which fall within boundaries of both Church doctrine and humanitarian intent.²⁸ For example, some states have Family Relations or Conciliation Courts which provide marriage counseling to those in divorce proceedings. Utah, which has a predominantly L.D.S. population, no longer has such a court system. A state-financed marriage counseling service for couples filing for divorce operated in Utah from September 1957 to June 1961. The State Legislature, reportedly under pressure from a few lawyers and judges who were opposed to the marriage counseling service, failed to appropriate money in 1961 for its continued operation, despite the fact that the service had demonstrated its effectiveness.²⁹ Besides providing conciliation services for couples applying for divorce, there are other areas requiring legislative enactment, where marriage counseling could be applied on a preventive level. Primary prevention of divorces could include legislation requiring pre-marital counseling for teenagers obtaining marriage licenses.

Besides actively supporting legislative proposals, the leadership of the Church could encourage its members who hold public office to initiate and support programs designed to strengthen the family. On the local level, for example, Church members on school boards could promote classes in the schools on marriage and family relations so students could more adequately prepare themselves for marriage. There are numerous other possibilities. Implicit in the potential action taken by Church members on all three levels of government is acceptance of

²⁶Harold B. Lee, "Place of Mothers in the Plan of Teaching the Gospel in the Home," *The Relief Society Magazine*, LII (Jan. 1965), 12. An address delivered in the Presidencies' Department, Relief Society Annual General Conference, Oct. 1, 1964.

²⁷"Should Americans Get A Guaranteed Income," *Deseret News* (Saturday, 20 August 1966), 10A Editorial page.

²⁸Doctrine and Covenants 58:26-29 is an example of a scriptural injunction to the Church and its membership to be voluntarily engaged in a good cause.

²⁹Letters from Mr. Richard B. Wheelock, State of Utah, Department of Public Welfare (26 June 1967); Dr. Rex A. Skidmore, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Utah (29 June 1967); interview with Jay Oldroyd, State of Utah Department of Public Welfare (30 June 1967). For an evaluation of the service see Jennings G. Olson, *Study of Utah Marriage Counseling Service*, 1961; and "Research Report: Aid to Dependent Children Trends in Utah—1960," *Utah Foundation, Report No. 176* (July 1960).

the assumption that today's family is vulnerable to increased pressures and strain, thus requiring special assistance.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to survey areas of present and potential Church involvement, rather than to explore in depth any particular one. Certain fundamental concerns and questions should be kept in mind in any further study of areas of Church involvement introduced in this paper.

Church theologians and social scientists must struggle with determining what kind of family, and particularly what kind of L.D.S. family, is possible under what conditions. What limitations does an urban, industrial society place on family life? An increasing awareness of socio-cultural limitations on us as individuals, families, and a Church will serve to sharpen our focus on divine goals and eternal objectives and the means available for achieving them. Can the Church, in both doctrine and practice, effectively reduce the disorganizing effects of the society in which we live? Can the negative effects of rapid and frequent residential and occupational mobility be reduced, the relative isolation of the nuclear family be ameliorated, and the dependent relationship of the family to the occupational and economic system be altered so as to allow the family to play its essential functions? Can the Church more effectively apply the expertise of the social and behavioral sciences in accomplishing its divine purposes? What are the costs and gains of such a marriage between secular thought and religious authority? Both the Church and secular institutions, including governmental programs and numerous helping professions, are attempting to fill the role of the extended family. Why not join hands? Perhaps part of the answer lies in the words of President Hugh B. Brown:

In this fantastically changing world, where old methods, old models, and ideas are being replaced by new and revolutionary substitutes, it is well that church leaders everywhere re-examine and re-appraise their creeds and courageously seek for the causes of the waning interest in religion.

We are passing through a period of radical intellectual reconstruction and spiritual unrest. We must think about religion in order to formulate an intellectual understanding of it. And intellectual understanding is just as needful in religion as anywhere else. We must not permit the surface of the waters of religious life to become fixed and crystallized by the freezing of religious thought.³⁰

³⁰Hugh B. Brown, "The Fight Between Good and Evil," *The Improvement Era*, LXXVI (December 1963).