

*To the Church:* In April, 1924, in response to call from the Presidency a Council met in Independence comprising the following officials: The First Presidency, the members of the Quorum of Twelve who were in America (eight), and the Bishops (except those in foreign fields). The genesis of this Council has been presented in the *Herald* for June 18, 1924, and needs not repetition.

Among other things accomplished by this Council was the adoption of the following, which the Presidency presents to the General Conference with the recommendation that it be adopted:

This church, as defined by the late Joseph Smith, is a theocratic-democracy—not man-made, but of divine appointment and origin. (Matthew 16:18; Doctrine and Covenants 1:5; 17:7; 1 Nephi 3:221; 3 Nephi 10:1.)

The government of the church is by divine authority through priesthood: (Doctrine and Covenants 68:4; 104; Acts 20:28). The government in its objective is beneficent, and its purpose is betterment of human conditions. The divine authority becomes operative through the consent of the governed—the common consent indicated in the law (Doctrine and Covenants 25:1; 27:4). It is divine government among the people, for the people, and for the glory of God and the achievement of his purposes towards ideal conditions.

God directs the church through clearly indicated channels (Doctrine and Covenants 43:1, 2; 27:2); and his voice is the directing power of the church; but to this the assent of the people must be secured.

In organic expression and functioning there must be recognized grades of official prerogative and responsibility (Doctrine and Covenants 104; 122:9), with supreme directional control resting in the Presidency as the chief and first quorum of the church (Doctrine and Covenants 122:2, 9; 104:42). This control it is presumed is beneficent. Protection against prostitution of this power is amply provided in the law.

To carry into effect the purposes of the church, effective administration is imperative, and organic solidarity is maintained only by effective discipline, which is in consonance with the beneficent purposes of the church, but yet strongly enough administered to prevent the purposes of the organization being frustrated by individual caprice and rebellion. Authority to be effective must be respected.

This view of the organization of the church affirms the interdependence of departments and coordination of action and holds General Conference as the instrument of the expression of the will of the people.

It is, we feel certain, quite generally apparent that under existing conditions this matter should receive attention and the issue settled early in the Conference, hence we suggest and recommend that the Conference give its entire attention to this matter until settled.

FREDERICK M. SMITH,

*For the Presidency.*