

# Good from Evil in the Twentieth Century

## Transcending Totalitarianism, Wars, and the Holocaust

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### A FRAMEWORK OF FAITH

**A**s a Latter-day Saint and a historian, I believe in a living, personal God who acts in history and in His Son, Jesus Christ, a historical being who is, in fact, both the apogee and focal point of all human history. Both the Father and the Son continue to care for and direct the earth and its inhabitants; both are involved in directing what happens on the earth and to its people according to Their own divine laws and timetable.

To philosophizing Greek skeptics on Mars' Hill who postulated what to them was an "unknown God" and whose sophistries and doubts remarkably correspond to their modern counterparts, the equally learned Apostle Paul taught: "God that made the world and all things therein, *seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, . . . giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their*

*habitation; . . . for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring"* (Acts 17:24–26, 28; emphasis added; see also D&C 45:1; Abraham 3:21).

In our dispensation, writing in the dark days of World War II, the First Presidency of the Church reaffirmed the divine role in history: "We bear witness to all the world that God lives, and still rules, that His righteous ways and His truth will finally prevail. . . . God will work out in His own due time and in His own sovereign way the justice and right of the conflict, but He will not hold the innocent instrumentalities of the war, our brethren in arms, responsible for the conflict. . . . This is a major crisis in the world-life of man. God is at the helm."<sup>1</sup>

God has endowed each child with some of His own inherent abilities, rights, and capacities, including the right to life, the right of moral

agency and freedom (see D&C 98:5, 8), which includes the right to choose and be held accountable, the right to strive for happiness—the purpose of this life—and other basic human rights, many of which are enshrined in the divinely inspired U.S. Constitution (see D&C 101:77–79; 124:2). God has clearly affirmed these freedoms as part and parcel of all human dignity, stating unequivocally that “that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me. . . . I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free” (D&C 98:5, 8).

Thus, as ancient and modern prophets have proclaimed, God is the active, caring director of the world and its history. He is the creator and governor of the universe. He participates in what happens on this earth, sometimes directing and even intervening in revealed and dramatic ways—as we are told in the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants and by modern prophets—as in the cases of Columbus, the Reformers, the Pilgrims and Puritans, and the American Founding Fathers. More often He participates with a quiet subtlety on a universal scale similar to the manner in which the Holy Ghost influences us individually (see 1 Nephi 13:12–14, 18, 19; D&C 20:11–12; 101:80). But in all, He is an integral actor in human history, seeking, above all, to promote eternal rights and privileges—His own true principles—including the moral agency and accountability of His children.<sup>2</sup>

The scriptures also teach that a major way in which God participates in human history is in the manner, place, and timing of those He brings to earth, what callings, gifts, and inspiration He gives them, as well as when their days are to end, all according to His own will and plan. Some are called to be leaders, Hegelian “world historical persons” who make a significant difference in the world. These include prophets, philosophers, statesmen, and good men and women of all

kinds, including some living in the twentieth century, who teach and practice divinely given principles (see Abraham 3:22–23; 2 Nephi 29:12; Alma 29:8). President Ezra Taft Benson summarized this view, stating, “God, the Father of us all, uses the men of the earth, especially good men, to accomplish his purposes.”<sup>3</sup>

As part of human agency and God’s age-old use of Satan for His own purposes—both important parts of the divine plan—He also permits tyrants to arise and perform their evil deeds. Although in human terms their damage and destruction have been enormous and should not be underestimated, their tenure has proven to be relatively short. Like their master, they did not prevail in the end and will yet be held accountable for their deeds (see Nahum 1:3; 2 Peter 2:12; Mormon 4:5). The twentieth century, especially in Europe, saw more than its share of tyrants who became a curse to the whole world.

Years ago, Elder Bruce R. McConkie predicted that when the real history of the world is written, it “will show God’s dealings with men, [and] the place the gospel has played in the rise and fall of nations.”<sup>4</sup> I believe this is true and will yet be revealed to provide greater understanding and insight to believers. In this chapter, I will discuss God’s transforming involvement in Europe’s twentieth-century history, especially where totalitarian dictatorships were ended and freedom and democracy established for millions of Europeans.

## **GOD’S ROLE IN HISTORY**

Having made the point that God participates in human history, it seems equally important to recognize the divinely established balance between His influence and human agency in world affairs. As I have written elsewhere:

God’s role in human history should not, however, be taken to the extreme. His foreknowledge does not require predestination. Foreordination means that in his wisdom and foreknowledge God has called an individual to

a role in the human drama *if that person chooses to fill it*. To Latter-day Saints, history is a combination of God's direction, which is neither "coercive [n]or continuous," (Poll, p. 33) and divine intervention when that is indispensable to his purposes, with broad freedom of choice for humans within God's expansive framework. In this large realm of human freedom, the panorama of history has taken place. Here, political, social, economic, psychological, and other such forces largely hold sway, and thus are essential in explaining human choices and actions.<sup>5</sup>

But there is more:

The record is incomplete; many important issues about historical injustices and catastrophes are yet to be explained by the God who acts in history, and what is not fully known in the macrocosmic realm is often explained in the meaningful experiences of individual people. God knows and cares about each human being. As with the larger world, God intervenes in individual lives at decisive moments, but also recognizes human autonomy and leaves the majority of life's decisions to individual choice.<sup>6</sup>

In my view, the most complete and true history is one that accurately and honestly accounts for the thought and acts of both God—to the extent that they are known—and humanity. When it is accurate, balanced, and complete, history is, indeed, a priceless expression of truth, "the fairest gem," as the pioneer poet John Jaques wrote.<sup>7</sup> According to the Lord, "truth is knowledge of things as they are, *and as they were*, and as they are to come; and whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning" (D&C 93:24; emphasis added). The first part of this divine definition strikes me as being remarkably similar to the later classic definition of history offered by Leopold von Ranke, often viewed as the father of modern history, as "the way it really was" (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*). Given the secular way subse-

quent historians have dogmatized Ranke's definition, it is ironic that his own faith in God's involvement in history was that the history of each people is, indeed, to be understood as "directly connected to God" (*unmittelbar zu Gott*).<sup>8</sup>

As with the best historians around the world, we believing historians must do our best to ascertain this complex, probable truth of the human condition from a historical perspective and do it with all the wisdom, candor, understanding, intellectual gifts, and good judgment we can muster. And we are both professionally and morally obligated to strive for this truth by applying all of the traditional scholar's virtues of which we are capable, including honesty, humility, accuracy, imagination, perspective, self-awareness, and order, while letting readers know our own intellectual and spiritual moorings. Our judgments, so fundamental to meaningful history, should derive from wide and reasoned experience, broad and insightful reading, serious contemplative thought, a sympathetic understanding of humanity and nature, and the best of life's wisdom. Through the use of true gospel principles, Latter-day Saint historians have, in my view, both the tools and the motivation to write more complete, truthful, and insightful histories than are commonly written in the world. This may be what President Spencer W. Kimball envisioned when, in an inspired address on education and its place in Latter-day Saint life, he called upon Latter-day Saint scholars and artists to write, paint, or compose not so much for the world's acceptance, though that will come, but to create works that will be both true and significant, that will inspire as well as instruct, and that will be pleasing unto God and will be a lasting blessing to the world.<sup>9</sup> By contrast, most contemporary historians rightly suppose that their work will likely have only a short shelf life. In general, they are correct because of new evidence and perspectives, but more importantly, because their judgments are often informed by the latest transitory intellectual fads and man-made ideologies

rather than durable principles. Time and experience soon consign them to a deserved oblivion.

In addition to striving to master our own scholarly fields in secular history, perhaps we ought also to make an effort in both our writing and our teaching on the basis of God's word to His prophets and the promptings of the Holy Spirit, to add, where known and appropriate, a spiritual dimension to our understanding of American or world history. In other words, we should chronicle some of the ways in which we either know, from statements of scripture and the words of prophets, or sense, when dramatic, positive change has been brought about under improbable circumstances—"history is full of accidents"—or when true principles are established and good is done to some part of humanity, that God's intervention is the most reasonable and plausible explanation. One dramatic example of such an "accident" of history was the rapid, unexpected, virtually bloodless, and relatively easy demise of the vaunted Soviet Empire, which historian Walter Laqueur has labeled one of the most unexpected "accidents" of history.<sup>10</sup> I would argue that in this case, as in many others, the divine hand made no accident.

Nevertheless, we believing historians often find ourselves teaching and writing a one-dimensional, incomplete, and only partly true history of the world found in textbooks and contemporary scholarship—even when we personally may believe otherwise—when we exclude God from our accounts of what happens here because that is what is acceptable to the secular profession and the world. However, as believers and as Christians, we have some responsibility to share with other believers and those seeking a fuller truth this more complete history in a language that all of these can understand.

There is room for our perspectives. Earlier, in more believing times before the Enlightenment and its reliance upon reason and skepticism, this form of history was both practiced and respected. If, in the contemporary world, it is

acceptable to write and interpret history from virtually any naturalistic viewpoint, from economic, Marxist, social, environmental, feminist, eclectic, or value-free perspectives, or from the point of view of competing contemporary world-views, why should it not be acceptable to write for believers from a perspective that accepts God's existence and His participation in historical experience? What I am arguing for is that, regardless of subject, but especially when teaching world history, faithful historians should not only heed President Kimball's admonition to "keep [our] subject matter bathed in the light and color of the restored gospel,"<sup>11</sup> considering with students and readers evidence for the divine role in history, but "lead the kind of life that will permit the discernment of God's influence" wherever and whenever it is made manifest.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps this can be part of our unique calling in this new age.

### GOOD COMING OUT OF EVIL

With this framework of faith and philosophy, I turn now to consider how, as a consequence of God's powerful and beneficent influence, working through strong and principled leadership and committed popular support, good has come from evil in a twentieth-century Europe filled with tyrannies, wars, devastation, misery, and some of history's most horrific crimes. Focusing primarily on the defeat of evil totalitarian ideologies and regimes, including the aggressive fascist states of Italy and Hitler's Germany in World War II and the Soviet empire, we will see how freedom, peace, and democracy—though in some places still unproven—have largely triumphed in most of Europe. At the end of World War II, hundreds of millions of Europeans in many countries experienced the end of years—even decades—of dictatorial rule and oppression and the accompanying death, wars, and unparalleled destruction. The subsequent collapse of the Soviet colossus was one of modern history's greatest achievements and one of the least anticipated by both scholars and the general

populace. In both instances, with American and Allied aid, millions have regained their freedom, human dignity, and human rights and are able to once again live in peace with some security and find some a measure of happiness and prosperity.

These incredible and magnificent results were, I believe, brought about because of human determination and commitment to universal human rights and values such as life, peace, freedom, human dignity, and the pursuit of happiness and because of God's powerful sustaining and guiding influence. As a result, when the twentieth century ended, in these and other defining human conditions, most of the people of Europe, as well as in other parts of the world, were much better off than when the century began. Even the liberal and secular *Economist*, one of the world's most prestigious newspapers, concluded in its review of Harold James's new book, *Europe Reborn: A History, 1914–2000*, that "progress, economic and political, is the subtle theme of the book. Europe ended the century more happy, free and prosperous than would have seemed imaginable at almost any time since 1914."<sup>13</sup> In addition, although progress has been slow and there remains much conflict, tyranny, and poverty in other parts of the world, it would appear that just as during the past half millennium much of Western civilization's ideas, institutions, and values have spread across the world, these same benefits and blessings are generally bringing about comparable human progress in many parts of the world.

This, I believe, has come about through a profound divine influence, working through both strong and ordinary men and women of character to defend eternally true principles, bringing a better life for millions of people out of a century of unspeakable evils. That it has been possible to successfully overcome such a broad and diverse palette of wars, miseries, and evil ideas, leaders, and institutions in a relatively short time appears nothing short of miraculous. And all this, in addition to transforming revolu-

tions in communications, transportation, education and literacy, health care, medicine, mortality rates, and quality of life and happiness, to mention only a few—some of which are discussed in other chapters in this book—are now not only available to the masses of people in Europe and the United States but gradually and gratefully are being extended to the peoples of the whole world.

This idea of human progress, itself a guiding concept from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thought to have been killed and buried in the brutalities of the twentieth, has nevertheless resurfaced for several reasons. First, through Allied and American power and commitment, Europe was able to defeat first Hitler and Mussolini, then later Stalin and his successors, then most recently other petty Balkan dictators, whose rule was based on the abuse of power, the denial of freedom, and the teaching and practice of false and perverse doctrines. From the standpoint of divinely given, eternally true principles, these oppressing tyrants and their regimes were, in fact, the incarnation of evil; they had, indeed, established "evil" empires. For believers, there is no other word for it. These leaders arrogated to themselves powers over life, freedom, and human agency that belong only to God. In the process, they violated not only the venerated and proven Ten Commandments but also the higher and more demanding first and second commandments: to love God and our fellow human beings. Nowhere was this made more starkly manifest than in Hitler's first foray, the 1938–39 euthanasia of "unwanted" Germans, followed by the planned, systematic Holocaust against six million European Jews, or in Stalin's mass murders of other millions of his own people, or in the brutal massacres in the tribal wars in the modern Balkan states.<sup>14</sup> Such tyranny had to be confronted and defeated with force, in wars hot and cold, just as God was forced to cast Satan out of heaven in the

war waged there (see Revelation 12:7–8; D&C 29:36–38; Moses 4:1–4).

From the beginning of these totalitarian states, leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—like prophets of old—warned its members and the world against wicked leaders and false teachings. At the same time, the Church eschewed any direct involvement in world political matters—leaving them to God—and devoted itself to its unique, divinely given task of taking the gospel to the world. This task did, however, include identifying and preaching against false teachings, corrupt political ideologies, and leaders whose power would bring misery and subjection to millions. Since the Church lacked any actual power to make a difference in the political affairs anywhere in the world, it would pursue its spiritual and moral mandates, remaining confident that, in matters beyond its control, God was still at the helm and would make things right in His own time and way. In my judgment, this is precisely what He had done over the past century by raising up wise and courageous world leaders to resist evil. He has likewise imbued rank-and-file good people—Tom Brokaw has called those in America “the Greatest Generation,”<sup>15</sup> but they come from many parts of the world—to put their lives on the line for freedom and human rights and to expose, for all to see, the falseness and the miseries brought about by many temporarily powerful and seductive ideologies, including fascism, communism, and a basket of similar isms.

Second, notwithstanding wide and often valid criticism, the United States has been able to carry out its own divine mandate to use its universal principles, power, values, and institutions to promote good in Europe and around the world. This does not mean that American foreign policy has been without error or abuse. But looking at the twentieth century, by its willingness to resist evil and confront abuses of power and tyranny in Europe and elsewhere, the United States has been able to significantly and posi-

tively affect the freedom, happiness, and prosperity of millions of Europeans, many of whom had rarely or never experienced them before. It seems to me, for example, more than fortuitous that it was the United States, not Nazi Germany, Japan, or some other dictatorship, that became the first country to possess a nuclear bomb or later became the world’s sole superpower. Otherwise, the history of Europe and the world may have been very different. Equally significant was its role and determination to contain communism in Europe, to aid and defend a recovering Western Europe through such institutions as the Marshall Plan and NATO, and to provide many of the principles and bases for the establishment of a firm democracy in West Germany and Italy. Like ancient Israel, the modern United States has a mandate, a calling, to be an influence for good and freedom in the world.

Third, during the twentieth century, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was able to expand and strengthen itself in Europe and the world and thereby become a more significant force in blessing the peoples of the world. Latter-day Saints believe that the teachings and principles of the gospel, so clearly taught in the Book of Mormon, provide the only real long-term sources of both personal and social peace and prosperity wherever one lives in the world (see 1 Nephi 13:30; 2 Nephi 1:7; Ether 2:9–12) and that the United States is a “promised land with responsibilities.”<sup>16</sup> During the twentieth century, as well as the nineteenth, thousands of European converts came to the United States to help build up and strengthen the Church in the United States and subsequently provided tens of thousands of missionaries to return to and bring the gospel to their homelands and to other countries that had been newly opened up. At the same time, notwithstanding the wars, the Church was able to strengthen its members and institutions in the countries of western Europe where missionaries had been since the nineteenth century while at the same time opening up missions in

numerous countries in central and eastern Europe where the Church had never been before. In addition, many Latter-day Saints in Europe have been able to establish third- and fourth-generation families, have temples where they can go to deepen their faith, perfect themselves, and renew their commitments to God and humanity. They are also gradually gaining a measure of respect in their larger communities. As a result, the cities of all of Europe, with the exception of Turkey, currently have small but thriving native Latter-day Saint congregations. The Church is established from Norway to Spain and from Scotland to the Urals in Russia—and beyond.

### **DECLINE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE RISE OF WORLDLY ISMS**

The nineteenth century bequeathed to much of the world, but especially to Europe, whose ideas, power, influence, and civilization were extending out to most of the world, a legacy of declining faith in God, growing faith in science and humanity, and increasing secularization of individual lives and society.<sup>17</sup> The result has been a declining confidence in the truths of traditional Christianity and its increasing irrelevance to modern life. Throughout the twentieth century, this process has continued unabated. As the peoples of an expanding Europe experienced the upheavals of a wide variety of transformations—the intellectual and cultural sea change of the Enlightenment; the political, economic, and social upheavals of the Industrial and French revolutions; the fundamental and dynamic character of the ongoing demographic revolutions—these same people, and especially their influential elites, experienced a loss of religious faith and a vacuum of values as many traditional truths were questioned and discarded. Higher criticism, which questioned the historicity, miracles, and teachings of the Bible, destroyed the religious faith in many educated elites and trickled down to weaken the confidence of the rank and file. Even the later spiritual giant, beloved

teacher and pedagogue Karl G. Maeser, had become agnostic toward God and Christianity in his part of intellectual Germany before his conversion to the gospel.<sup>18</sup> Because of its own doctrinal and behavioral weaknesses and compromised history, traditional Christianity itself lacked the credibility, persuasion, and power to confront its new intellectual competitors effectively.

One result of the many forms of disillusionment with Christian doctrines and practice and rising skepticism was to convince many thoughtful people that what the nineteenth-century philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche had pontifically pronounced was true: God was dead. For some, He had never existed; for others, including Nietzsche, He had been killed by modern man's unbelief and incapacity to believe. Either way He was dead, and so, logically, was every teaching and truth that came from Him. God was dead to humanity, dead to the world, dead to human life and history. And much of science, especially Darwinism, geology, and modern physics, seemed to confirm it. This, in my judgment, as much as any other idea, has created the climate of moral relativism that has since spread throughout the world, especially among intellectuals.<sup>19</sup>

Nor was God needed. He and His teachings had become irrelevant to the modern world. Traditional Judeo-Christian answers to Life's Big Questions were no longer credible—Does God exist? Can a person know Him? Is there life after death? What is the nature of man? Or the purpose of life and human existence? What is good? Is there such a thing? Human beings would need to look to themselves—to their own self-appointed lights, as secular existentialism taught—to find any kind of moral guidance and meaning to life. Thus, new worldly ideologies with increasing appeal sprang up like toadstools after rain to fill the void.

These new ideologies included a whole basket of isms, which Princeton historian Harold James, commenting on their staying power, has

cleverly called “wasms.”<sup>20</sup> Some, like nineteenth-century liberalism, with its emphasis on human dignity and choice, contained many principles that by gospel standards are true, but most taught ideas that contradicted fundamental divine truths on every side and created a fertile intellectual and emotional soil for destructive myths and tyrannies to come. The ground was also prepared by the persistence of such notions as the divine right of kings, with all its inequalities and phoniness, which had plagued pre-World War I imperial Russia, weakening that country and making it a vulnerable prey for the modern, Marxist-inspired revolutionary elite with their motivating paradigm for an inevitable worldly utopia.<sup>21</sup> Though most Russians knew little or nothing of Marxist Bolshevism, they had lost confidence in the Romanov monarchy, and, wearied and devastated by World War I, they discarded a known past for the Bolsheviks’ promised future.

In addition to Marxism-Leninism, these myths came in a variety of forms almost too numerous to mention but including such ideas as several forms of secular and Christian socialism, with their laudable quests to promote social equality and alleviate poverty, and others more pernicious and destructive, such as the worship of the state, the glorification of war, militarism, nationalism, imperialism, social Darwinism, racism, anti-Semitism, fascism, totalitarianism, national socialism, and others. There seemed to be no end. Most of these rejected outright any active, living faith in God or submission to the primacy of His will, while some, like the nationalists, imperialists, fascists and anti-Semites, often arrogantly made baseless claims of divine approval for their wicked behavior and doctrines. Most rejected God’s existence, His authority, and His commandments in favor of their own ideas of envy, hatred, conquest, force, and will.

Let’s consider a few of these ideologies in more detail. From a Christian point of view, Marxism was flawed from the beginning, al-

though there is reason to believe that its founders, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, genuinely sought a philosophy that would bring some temporal relief for the exploited industrial working masses and the poor everywhere. Still, their comprehensive worldview rejected the existence of God and His laws or a life after death, preferring to discover overarching determining laws in the contemporary capitalistic economic and social structure. Society could and would be reformed in macrocosm without the need for the moral reform of its individual members. That kind of reform would, however, necessarily require violence; the capitalist exploiting classes, they predicted, would never relinquish power peacefully. Morality was defined not by eternal, universal laws, but by what would eventually contribute to the utopian triumph of the promised egalitarian communist society. Far from helping create a new society and a new humanity, traditional religion, both Jewish and Christian, was an “opiate of the people,” harmfully distracting rank-and-file people from recognizing the true sources of their miseries.<sup>22</sup>

In place of agency, there was to be a “dictatorship of the proletariat” that would, in fact, exercise coercion, always promised to be temporary, but which turned out to be remarkably permanent and a defining of state and society in subsequent communist countries. Thus, the excesses of both Lenin and Stalin, bad as they were, were not anachronistic to Marxism but, given its doctrines, its natural result. Marxism-Leninism became the quintessential philosophical system as well as blueprint for change in the twentieth century, both for some intellectuals and for some under communism’s coercive power who were brainwashed into believing it.<sup>23</sup>

Like Marxism but offering an opposite vision of modern society, nationalism is an ideology that burst into full flower in nineteenth-century Europe following the French Revolution and has spread around the world. But unlike Marxism, nationalism defines people vertically,



according to ethnic and national categories of heritage, culture, language, and the group identity to which individuals feel they belong, rather than horizontally and internationally according to social class.

Nationalism in Europe has had a checkered history. Seeing its positive side in the 1918 creation of his country out of the Austrian Empire and later as a force in overcoming communism, the early Czech dissident and later statesman Vaclav Havel thought it embodied the “desire to renew and emphasize one’s identity.”<sup>24</sup> Besides identifying the group with its unique heritage, language, culture, and religious traditions and symbols, he also correctly believed it to be profoundly emotional and subjective. As far as identity goes, we are what we think we are. Like Marxism, nationalism provides a modern emotional focus for one’s primary allegiance, turning it into a reason for a connection to nationality and state.

Over the past more than two centuries, nationalism in Europe has played a number of positive roles. In the French Revolution it gave power to French democracy and later sparked movements leading to the independence of several Latin American and Balkan states and ultimately to the unification of Italy and Germany. In the twentieth century, it helped destroy a number of empires: the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman Turk, Russian, and German empires in World War I, and the Soviet Russian at the end of the twentieth century, giving rise to a host of independent nation-states.<sup>25</sup>

But nationalism has also had a dark side. A primary cause of both world wars, it has stirred bloodshed wherever it has become the primary allegiance and exclusive worldview of its adherents. As the Polish Solidarity leader and theorist Adam Michnik has written, “Nationalism is not [just] the struggle for one’s own national rights, but a disregard for someone else’s right to national and human dignity. Nationalism is the last word of communism, a final attempt to find a so-

cial basis for dictatorship.”<sup>26</sup> Little wonder, then, that one of the greatest challenges of contemporary Europe—an expanding, functioning European Union—is not only the overcoming of nationalism as a basis for lasting peace but the quest to create a European identity devoid of nationalism’s competitive hatreds.

Nationalism in its exclusive and virulent form—unlike patriotism, which is a healthy and deliberate love of one’s country—opposes Christianity when it rejects the fundamental truth that we are all children of the same Father God, which is more important and defining than anything else that may separate us. And nationalism, in its extreme form, may reject other human universals, like human rights, human dignity, and human nature. Where Christianity is inclusive, nationalism is exclusive. Where Christianity stresses human commonalities and commands universal love for all of humanity, nationalism seeks to elevate one people at the expense of another, teaching hatred for all others who are different.<sup>27</sup> Nationalism identifies enemies rather than friends; it divides rather than unifies. It sparks conflict instead of encouraging negotiations and peaceful settlements. And, more often than not, it promotes hatred rather than love.

Despite its destructive nature, nationalism has proven to be one of the most resilient and enduring isms of the modern world. Both Hitler and Mussolini successfully and effectively appealed to it to win followers. Even Stalin, in the tense and defining days of 1942–43 during World War II, recognized the power of nationalist tradition to bring Russians together and acquiesced and even sponsored a return to Russian traditions, including cynically promoting the Russian Orthodox Church, to bring about greater unity among the Russian people when fighting the Nazis.

It should be clear that nationalism has little compatibility with Latter-day Saint doctrines and practices. From the outset of its restoration, the gospel has continually emphasized the over-

arching unity of all God's children and their equality in His sight. Christ's mandate to the Apostles was to preach the gospel throughout the world. To Latter-day Saints, all ethnic, class, religious, and language differences pale in comparison to the fundamental unity we all have as members of the family of God. Still, nationalism's pull has been so powerful that Saints, along with others, have often had difficulty separating distinct and discrete cultural elements from universal gospel principles.<sup>28</sup> Nationalism has great power and durability and has an overpowering emotional component. In some parts of the world today, including Europe, it remains a powerful force.

A similar case can be made for imperialism, in its modern manifestation, which was an outgrowth of the strong support for nationalism and the glorification of the state and of modern capitalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The so-called "new imperialism" of the late nineteenth century began in Europe with an overvaluing of one's own nation-state, justifying its conquest of weaker peoples in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the globe in order to strengthen the state and its economic system in competition with other nation-states. Imperialist states sought land, people, raw materials, markets, and power. No doubt some imperialists also harbored mixed motives in believing that they were bringing to the "backward" peoples of Asia and Africa and elsewhere not only Christianity but a higher level of civilization. And in some senses they were right, especially where they raised the levels of literacy and education and, ironically, helped give conquered peoples a sense of their right to direct their own destiny.<sup>29</sup> But imperialism foundered on the fundamental truth that "it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another" (D&C 101:79). It is presumptuous to claim that under the principle of innate human dignity, others have the right to determine the laws and fate of those they have conquered, even if that conquest has been semi-

benevolent and participation has brought significant benefits, as in the case of the British Empire. With the fall of the Soviet Empire, the last vestige of this historical phenomenon has hopefully come to an end—and none too soon.

### EVILS OF TOTALITARIANISM

More than half a century after the death of Adolf Hitler and the end of World War II, it seems quite unnecessary to people of my older generation to chronicle the evil nature and deeds of the man and his followers, but perhaps it has some merit for rising generations. The same is true for his contemporary, Josef Stalin. In spite of the fact that their guiding ideologies—fascism and communism—were in many ways ideologically opposite, particularly with regard to their economic systems, they were in fact, in their persons as well as in their ideas, values, and methods of governing, remarkably similar, as scholars have widely commented. The fundamental attitudes and premises of totalitarian societies have more commonalities than differences. In spite of continuing academic debate over the validity and meaning of the term "totalitarianism," I am still persuaded by the definition given several years ago by the German historian Karl Dietrich Bracher. Bracher's four criteria of totalitarianism are "(1) an official and exclusive ideology; (2) a centralized and hierarchically organized mass movement; (3) control of the mass media for the purpose of information; and (4) control of the economy and social relations."<sup>30</sup>

In addition, Bracher, citing the advantage modern technology gives dictators to mobilize the masses and control society, concluded that "the fundamental dividing line in recent history is not between left and right, and not between capitalism and socialism, (despite the differences between them), but between dictatorship and despotism, and freedom."<sup>31</sup> As a result, totalitarian regimes are, in fact and by nature, overwhelmingly and fundamentally evil. They repudiate basic and true principles, deny human

dignity and freedom, and subvert the inalienable rights of humanity.

But there is more. Both national socialism and communism are best understood as secular political religions that competed and challenged Judaism and Christianity for the hearts, souls, and primary allegiance of the people; both promised salvation in the here and now.<sup>32</sup> Both worshiped other gods and had their own prophets, rites, and scriptures. Both claimed a scientific certitude about their inevitable triumph as well as their vision of the future. Both absolved individuals of the need for personal change, reform, or responsibility for evil or misery they themselves have brought about by transferring blame to a collective scapegoat. For the Nazis it was the Jews and other inferior races; for the communists, the capitalist exploiting class. Both were also involved in social and moral engineering. As historian Michael Burleigh has pointed out, "Unlike the Soviet experiment in engineering souls, the Nazis went a stage further in seeking to engineer bodies as well as minds, though the inhuman characteristics both regimes sought to inculcate, especially in the young, were often hard to distinguish."<sup>33</sup>

With their "personality cults," both Hitler and Stalin fully personified the cardinal sin of pride toward God and humanity. Assuming god-like powers, they tortured, killed, imprisoned, or exiled all who opposed them or whom they thought inferior. Both had such contempt for humanity that they consolidated all powers that mattered in their own hands. Both were profound haters with little capacity for love. Both ordered the killing of people without remorse of conscience. Both had no use for human freedom or agency, for democracy or any form of government by the people, or for the rule of law. Law was what they said it was. According to President David O. McKay, speaking to general conference in April 1942, both were the worst kind of criminals because "to deprive an intelligent human

being of his free agency is to commit the crime of the ages."<sup>34</sup>

Their ideologies, a mishmash of resentments and most of the false isms inherited from the nineteenth century, would eventually fail and become thoroughly discredited in real life. Hitler's national socialism, as its name suggests, tried to combine two of the modern era's most appealing and potent ideas, nationalism and socialism, but failed. Like communism, Nazism could be sustained only by coercion.

Besides virulent nationalism and his own brand of a state-dominated socialism with its claim for the existence of a national community (*volk*), Hitler's perverse ideology had as its defining doctrine the combined ideas of biological and scientific social Darwinism, racism, and anti-Semitism. These were enhanced by the traditional German deification of the state and its self-appointed leader over the principles of individual freedom and human rights or other social institutions, including family or church. It also promoted the idea of war as a natural condition that was beneficial for life, of the legitimacy of imperialism and conquest, and of race as the determining force of history. Thus, as Burleigh argues, "Nazism's long-term triumph would have spelled the end of everything [the Christian Church] stood for." Notwithstanding Hitler's blasphemous claims that he was doing the work of Providence, his replacement of God and all He stood for was his real goal.<sup>35</sup>

The German people of the '20s and '30s share some responsibility for the wars, miseries, and long-term moral stain that Hitler and his party brought upon them. After all, as is well known, with the onset of the Depression he attracted a huge and adoring following and came to power in at least a semilegal way. Albert Speer, Hitler's former architect and confidante, clandestinely wrote his thoughts while serving his twenty-year prison sentence in Spandau prison. He described what had brought him and many of his generation to enthusiastic support of Hitler

and the Nazis. It was, Speer said, their ambition and their resentments. These operated freely in an acute moral vacuum devoid of any appreciation or understanding of the principles of basic human rights and dignity. They were interested primarily in scientific and technical matters. Principles of humanity and democracy were ignored or deemed of less concern.<sup>36</sup>

This judgment was corroborated later by Hajo Holborn, a young German historian who, like many other concerned Germans of his day, escaped to find refuge in the United States. In the 1960s, while concluding his three-volume magnum opus, *A History of Modern Germany*, he came to a similar conclusion. He wrote:

The actual decline of German education, goes far to explain not only why so many Germans voted the Nazis into power but also why they were willing to condone so many of their subsequent crimes. German education hardly dealt with "the whole man"; it chiefly produced men proficient in special skills or special knowledge but lacking not only in the most primitive preparation for civic responsibility but also in a canon of absolute ethical commitments. . . . The higher philosophy and humanities were largely formalistic or relativist and did not produce a firm faith. In these circumstances it was inevitable that so many people fell for cheap and simple interpretations of life and history, as offered by the racists. To young people in particular this proved an irresistible temptation.<sup>37</sup>

A more recent historian agrees. Michael Burleigh tells us that his book, *The Third Reich: A New History*, "is an account of the longer-term, and more subtle, moral breakdown and transformation of an advanced industrial society, whose consequences astute observers, with an instinct for these things, could predict some ways before they happened."<sup>38</sup> In a more recent work, historian Robert Gellately sums up his view on the responsibility of the German people for giving and allowing Hitler to keep power: "As a reward for

such accomplishments [ending mass unemployment, tearing up the Versailles Treaty, acting as a strong leader], and even though there were persistent pockets of negative opinion, rejections of Nazism and even examples of resistance, the great majority of German people soon became devoted to Hitler and they supported him to the bitter end in 1945."<sup>39</sup>

While German Latter-day Saints and the Church leadership strove in the spirit of the twelfth article of faith to protect their community and the missionaries who were trying to build it up, Nazism was, in fact, antithetical to the gospel. Missionaries in Germany returned to the United States and Utah with tales of the realities of national socialism, which most had seen and experienced personally.<sup>40</sup> The regime categorically rejected all the fundamentals of true Christianity that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stood for. Little wonder, then, that President J. Reuben Clark, First Counselor in the First Presidency, after private trips to Germany in 1937 and 1938, and notwithstanding the Church's political impotence and its need to protect the twelve thousand Saints then living in Nazi Germany, referred to what much of Hitler and his party was doing in Germany as "detestable."<sup>41</sup>

A similar judgment could be passed on Soviet communism, which appeared nearly a generation before Hitler's Reich and lasted over four decades longer. President Heber J. Grant's other counselor, David O. McKay, speaking at the height of World War II, saw Hitler and Stalin and their ilk as followers of Lucifer whose "impelling motives . . . were pride, ambition, a sense of superiority, a will to dominate [their] fellows and to be exalted above them, and a determination to deprive human beings of their freedom to speak and to act as their reason and judgment would dictate." He then concluded, "Our defense is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere."<sup>42</sup> Though President McKay diplomatically did not mention

names, it is doubtful anyone there did not know whom he was talking about.

The Soviet Empire and all other communist states have demonstrated clearly that their brand of socialism could be neither freely established nor freely maintained. On the contrary, true to its fundamental Marxist-Leninist doctrines, it required a totalitarian political, economic, and social structure with dictators, secret police, a planned economy, and a bureaucracy to establish and preserve it. The so-called temporary dictatorship of the proletariat by the communist party turned out to be as permanent as “temporary” taxes. In most countries, walls, fences, armies of informers, border guards, and secret police proved absolutely necessary to keep the best and most skilled workers from fleeing this “workers’ paradise.” As Laqueur concluded, “Despotism was inherent in the system established in November 1917.”<sup>43</sup>

In his survey of recent European history, the respected intellectual historian Roland Stromberg approvingly quotes Peter Jenkins in his assessment of how the various forms of socialism—not just communism—have performed: “The ‘overwhelming experience of the twentieth century,’ he affirmed, “is ‘the moral failure of socialism.’” This is followed by a similar judgment from political scientist and socialist sympathizer John Dunn: “No confident model for the socialist organization of society at any stage of development survives with its credibility intact.”<sup>44</sup> Simply stated, communism’s own fruits signaled its failure. Those who lived under it lost faith in it first; later, its failings even became clear to those, like Mikhail Gorbachev and his advisers, who used it to govern and perpetuate their power. Contrary to much academic speculation, communism never had within it either the ability or will to reform itself and become more like the free societies of the West. False ideas must always be discarded, not finessed.<sup>45</sup>

While some dictators and tyrants, like Hitler and Mussolini, paid lip service to God or

Providence, all exhibited a boundless hubris by arrogating to themselves powers that belong only to God, including the power over life and death, in the denial of inalienable God-given human rights such as agency, freedom of choice, and the right of people to pursue their own happiness without fear, in peace and freedom.

## WAR, OPPRESSION, AND HOLOCAUST

Abusing power through demagoguery, the cult of personality, the unilateral denial of constitutionally protected human liberties, and the establishment of totalitarian police control, the dictators were able to attract or coerce enough support from the masses to establish oppressive tyrannies that wreaked much havoc and misery on the world. In this they were aided by both intellectuals and common people who, in the political, psychological, and economic turmoil of the time, lacking any credible philosophy of life or real-life experience with freedom and democracy, and void of the judgment to recognize and choose wise leaders, fell for them and their false ideologies. The result is well known: heretofore unknown levels of destruction, misery, death, and human degradation that came in the course of the twelve-year Nazi regime in Germany; the seven-decade Soviet tyranny; World War II; the Holocaust, a triumph of planned and coldly calculated human brutality then without parallel in human history; and the near half-century Cold War, with its huge human and financial costs. Gerhard Weinberg, a leading historian of World War II, has calculated some of the costs of that war. According to his figures, the Soviet Union had 25 million deaths, two-thirds of which were civilians. Poland lost 6 million; Yugoslavia, 1.5 to 2 million; Britain, 400,000; and the United States, 300,000. “The total for the globe as a whole probably reached 60 million, a figure which includes the six million murdered because they were Jewish. . . . The costs in human life and suffering, in destruction and economic dislocations, had been of absolutely unprecedented magnitude.”<sup>46</sup>

Laqueur quotes Solzhenitsyn in his estimate that at least 15 million perished in the gulags (labor camps) and that the total number of deaths in the Soviet Union—from the purge trials, collectivization of agriculture, the Civil War, and World War II—may have reached anywhere from 60 to 100 million.<sup>47</sup>

And there was another war going on inside World War II, which we now know as the Holocaust, its nature and barbarity hidden by the larger war. After the 1941 Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler's Germany, following the breakthrough precedent set by the murderous, internal Euthanasia Program carried out in the late 1930s in its own country and with its own people, began the "Final Solution" of the Jewish Question, the planned and carefully organized murder of Europe's 11 million Jews. It now seems clear that until Allied troops found and liberated the first camps in western Germany and Austria in the spring of 1945, the world as a whole had simply not been able to comprehend that such a crime against humanity was being—or even could be—carried out by what was considered a civilized, cultured nation. Over the centuries, Germans had contributed much to the cultural efflorescence—in art, music, literature, philosophy, science, and history, to name a few—of Europe and the world. For most, including American Jews, it was something inconceivable, something, as Deborah Lipstadt has written, "beyond belief."<sup>48</sup>

The Holocaust of the Jews and other contemporary genocides are among the world's greatest catastrophes. Anyone who cherishes life in all of its richness and meaning can only feel sorrow for those, especially children, whose lives were cut short by the actions of wicked men, not for what they had done but for who they were. But for believing Christians and Jews for whom eternal life is the ultimate hope and reality, it was not an ultimate tragedy. Captain Moroni in the Book of Mormon sheds some light on war and catastrophes of this kind: "For the Lord suffereth

the righteous to be slain that his justice and judgment may come upon the wicked; therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord their God" (Alma 60:13).

Comprehending how the Holocaust could be permitted by a loving God has been understandably difficult for those lacking a strong trust and religious faith, for those coming from a secular background, for those who lack confidence that life is eternal, or for those who want God to dispense ultimate justice in the here and now. We do not know why this evil was allowed. Still, I believe justice will yet be done, if not here, then in the eternal worlds. In these matters, God will have the final word. We can rest assured that His full justice will one day be carried out.

Still, some good did, in fact, come as an immediate result of the Holocaust. While anti-Semitism has not been eradicated from the world, the world has awakened to its falseness and capacity for evil. The moral impetus created around the world, and especially among Jews, led to the founding and support of the state of Israel. After centuries in the wilderness, the Jews now have a home, fulfilling the prophecies of the scriptures. Great Britain and the United States have, in very deed, become the "nursing mothers" to Israel and to Jews around the world (Isaiah 49:23).

In spite of a penchant for recent history to stress the dominant role of impersonal forces, this era dramatically demonstrates that people—even individual people—do make a difference in world history, both for good and for evil. Hitler, with his will, passion, and mesmeric oratorical abilities, and Stalin, the suspicious, cunning, and calculating killer—along with their successors, acolytes, and imitators in many parts of the world—succeeded in bringing about the unspeakable miseries that plagued much of the twentieth century. Truly, this sad era in human history validated with remarkable clarity the ancient scriptural truth that "when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the

wicked beareth rule, the people mourn” (Proverbs 29:2). Or, to cite another proverb that seems to plainly describe God’s view of the twentieth century’s dictators: “These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren” (Proverbs 6:16–19).

Although the evils caused by these and other dictators reached unprecedented levels, God permitted these human catastrophes to happen for reasons He has not revealed. On this subject, Mormon taught that “the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed” (Mormon 4:5). In my judgment, this should not be interpreted as some kind of divine justification for the man-made horrors of wars, brutality, and the Holocaust. God allowed the most evil of people to carry out these horrible acts. Each person, the second article of faith teaches us, will be responsible for his or her own sins and not those of anyone else.

God also played a major role in bringing these and other tyrannies throughout the world to an end in the following ways: (1) through the revelation-by-experience of the falseness and failure in real life of many of their ideologies and leaders; (2) through the recognition of the oppression and human misery—the opposite of happiness, the divine goal of human existence—they inexorably brought about; (3) through the deaths of dictators, and, conversely, through the “calling” of statesmen whom He placed in important positions of power at defined and appointed times; and (4) through inspiration to countless decent, ordinary people in many countries, moving them to act in reclaiming certain human rights that they were being deprived of—and this through mostly peaceful means.

As a result, while the world still lacks universal peace, significant progress has been made in spreading peace and democracy to some major parts of the world: the defeat of Hitler and his minions and the Japanese warlords spread peace to most of Europe and parts of Asia, and the largely peaceful dismantling of the Soviet Empire brought the extension of basic human freedoms and rights to hundreds of millions of people who had never known them before. This new freedom has improved the security, peace, and happiness of much of humanity. To give this some perspective, one need only ponder the plight of humanity had Hitler and other tyrants been able to achieve their goals.

Consider a few facts: never in the world’s history have so many people on the planet been as aware of their divinely endowed human possibilities nor had such a conscious desire to exercise their inherent freedoms or to realize their inherent dignity. Never has the world produced so much food, although distribution still lags far behind production. Overcoming the age-old curse of world hunger is now within our grasp. Never has medical science been able to alleviate so much human suffering in the world. Never has there been such awareness that war is not the answer to human disagreements and must be avoided wherever possible. Never in history has Europe been so prosperous, free, and peaceful. Small wonder, then, that while condemning the plethora of sinfulness in today’s world, speakers at the recent April 2004 general conference reminded us of the blessings of living today and encouraged us to look with optimism and faith toward the future.<sup>49</sup>

## PROPHETIC VIEWS

Throughout the twentieth century, the Church’s response to the various competing ideologies and isms has been clear and consistent. Church leaders have spoken out against all ideologies that contradicted revealed gospel truths. This applies to anti-Semitism, the ideological

centerpiece of Hitler's racist worldview and the focal point of his and others' manifold hatreds. At the April general conference in 1921, when the Ku Klux Klan was attempting to make inroads into Utah, bringing with it its own brand of anti-Semitism and its own hate list, President Heber J. Grant presented clearly the Church's views on this matter:

Some of you may be familiar with the agitation that is going on at the present time, in the publications, against the Jewish people. There should be no ill-will, and I am sure there is none, in the heart of any true Latter-day Saint, toward the Jewish people. By the authority of the Holy Priesthood of God, that has been restored to the earth, and by the ministration, under the direction of the Prophet of God, Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ have been to the Holy Land and have dedicated that country for the return of the Jews; and we believe that in the due time of the Lord they shall be in the favor of God again. And let no Latter-day Saint be guilty of taking any part in any crusade against these people. I believe in no other part of the world is there as good a feeling in the hearts of mankind towards the Jewish people as among the Latter-day Saints.<sup>50</sup>

In the intervening years, this authoritative condemnation of anti-Semitism has not changed or needed amendment.

One Latter-day Saint, Senator Elbert D. Thomas, a New Deal democrat from Utah and a close friend of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Jews, recognized earlier than most (in 1942) the true nature and reality of the Holocaust. In harmony with his Latter-day Saint faith, he believed Europe's endangered Jews should be helped to settle in Palestine, then under British control. Thus, he strove to get the U.S. government to help save Europe's Jews by rescuing them from Nazi grasp and taking them there. When, because of British intransigence, that proved to be impossible, he worked to save as

many as possible by belatedly bringing a remnant of them directly to the U.S. His efforts were great, but his success small. Still, Thomas represented well the strong sympathy of Latter-day Saints for the world's Jews and tried to use his power and influence to save some of them. In the years following the war, he and his family would be strong supporters of the new state of Israel.<sup>51</sup>

In addition to warnings against anti-Semitism and any ideology of which it was a part, from as early as 1922 the Church warned against any sympathy toward communism, then gaining an impressive following among European and some American intellectuals. In an editorial in the *Improvement Era* entitled "Bolshevism," Dr. Joseph Marion Tanner wrote: "Today Bolshevism is the greatest of all world problems. . . . It has in it international aspirations, and it is making direct headway to the overthrow of the social and political world today. . . . [It] consists for the most part of class hatred and bids fair to repeat some of the excesses that belong to the French Revolution of more than a century ago."<sup>52</sup>

In 1936, having learned "with great regret" that some Church members were "joining directly or indirectly, the Communists and are taking part in their activities," thinking communism to be a modern counterpart of the failed nineteenth-century Church United Order communal movements, the First Presidency of the Church published an official editorial clearly stating their position. "The Church," they declared,

does not interfere, and has no intention of trying to interfere, with the fullest and freest exercise of the political franchise of its members, under and within our Constitution. . . . But Communism is not a political party nor a political plan under the Constitution; it is a system of government that is the opposite of our Constitutional government, and it would be necessary to destroy our government before Communism could be set up in the United States. . . . To our Church members we say: Communism is not the United Order, and bears only the most superficial re-



semblance thereto; Communism is based upon intolerance and force, the United Order upon love and freedom of conscience and action: Communism involves forceful despoliation and confiscation, the United Order voluntary consecration and sacrifice.<sup>53</sup>

The editorial concluded by reminding all members that communism “proscribes the religious life of the people” and “even reaches its hand into the sanctity of the family circle itself, disrupting the normal relationship of parent and child. . . . Such interference would be contrary to the fundamental precepts of the Gospel and to the teachings and order of the Church. . . . Communism being thus hostile to loyal American citizenship and incompatible with true Church membership, of necessity no loyal American citizen and no faithful Church members can be a Communist.”<sup>54</sup>

The First Presidency issued its most comprehensive statement on the conflict between good and evil in the twentieth century at the April 1942 general conference. And even though the United States had joined Britain and the Soviet Union in fighting Hitler’s Germany and imperial Japan, Church leaders continued to speak out forcefully against communism as they had done for over two decades. Members were counseled to eschew “false political isms,” including communism and “all other similar isms.” “Hate,” leaders reaffirmed to Church members, “is born of Satan; love is the offspring of God.” Further, “the Church stands for the separation of church and state. The church has no civil political functions. As the church may not assume the functions of the state, so the state may not assume the functions of the church.” They then quoted D&C 98:16: “‘Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace. . . .’ The Church is and must be against war.”

Church leaders then cited the following verses: “And now, verily I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is my will that my peo-

ple should observe to do all things whatsoever I command them. And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, *belongs to all mankind*, and is justifiable before me. Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land; and as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than this, cometh of evil” (D&C 98:4-7; emphasis added).

To be certain that the universal application of this message would not be overlooked, the First Presidency added, “While by its terms this revealed word related more especially to this land of America, nevertheless the principles announced are worldwide in their application.”<sup>55</sup>

There is reason to believe that the Lord did hear the prayer of millions around the world and of the First Presidency of the Church to take a hand in bringing the war to an end. At the close of the conference, they prayed, “Let nothing stand betwixt us and Thee and Thy blessings: work out Thy purposes speedily; drive hate from the souls of men that peace and brotherly love may again come to the earth and rule in the hearts of Thy children, that nations may again live together in amity.”<sup>56</sup>

## **MEN OF DESTINY AND MORAL PRINCIPLES**

In this century of war and turmoil, the Lord provided the free world with leaders who felt deeply about the threat the Axis powers posed to their own countries and the world and about the principles and rights spelled out in the American Constitution. Consider for a moment the importance of Winston Churchill, one of the great men of the twentieth century, whom historian Simon Schama called a “Man of Destiny,” whose courage, will, leadership, convictions about freedom, and inspiring speeches galvanized not only his own nation but brought other peoples worldwide to understand the evil to all of humanity that Nazi Germany posed while at the same time

warning of Stalin and the false principles in communism.<sup>57</sup> Or consider the significance of the understanding and relationship Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt had with each other, which helped galvanize Great Britain and the United States into a powerful democratic force. One can only wonder how Churchill, long a “voice in the wilderness in both his own party and country,” was brought to his destiny at just the right place and time.<sup>58</sup>

The same can be said for the wartime leadership of President Roosevelt, a man of faith, not fear, who recognized the threat of Hitler’s Reich to all the world and both warned and prepared the United States, after its return to isolationism after the First World War, and who committed American power to fight for its own universal principles in other parts of the world. President McKay later vigorously defended this position in a general conference address on April 5, 1942. While decrying war, he also made the case for a “just” war, for Allied participation against Hitler: “Notwithstanding all this [the scriptural and other arguments against war] I still say that there are conditions when entrance into war is justifiable, and when a Christian nation may, without violation of principles, take up arms against an opposing force.” These conditions did not include “real or fancied insult,” “the desire or even . . . need for territorial expansion,” or “to enforce a new order of government, or even to impel others to a particular form of worship.” “There are, however, two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say *enter, not begin*—a war: (1) An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly, there is a third, viz. Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one.”<sup>59</sup>

The age of World War II spawned a whole host of heroes and heroines who were in the right places at the right time. In addition to those already mentioned, consider the accomplishments of the great generals and later statesmen, George

C. Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Omar S. Bradley, and others, as well as the courageous troops from several free countries serving under their command, who, fighting against tyranny and for principles they had learned living in free societies, made up the “Greatest Generation.” Marshall, especially, personifies someone who made a huge and lasting difference. Although he longed to be a field commander, the role given him was to use his enormous capacity to organize the armed services of the United States for victory in war. Later, as secretary of state under President Harry S. Truman, he became the principal architect of the Marshall Plan for Europe, which, contrary to the vindictiveness following World War I, reached out with magnanimity, compassion, and vision to help transform former enemies into friends, to help them establish democracy, and to win the peace.<sup>60</sup>

One thinks of other fortuitous events in the war. Is it not also significant that Hitler and his allies made so many mistakes and errors of judgment in their conduct of the war? These included such strategic blunders as attempting world conquest, allowing the British Army to escape at Dunkirk, underestimating the strength of the Soviet Union, and treating the people of the Soviet Empire with such brutality and contempt that possible allies were turned into inveterate enemies. Other blunders were declaring war on the United States and denigrating America’s will and ability to fight because of the role Jews played in American life and government. Is it not also significant and fortuitous that the Allies, not the Germans who had long led the world in science, were the ones to develop the atomic bomb? Is it not also worth noting that by 1941 the United States had become such a powerful country that it was able to do more than its share in the winning of the wars both in Europe and Asia?

Secular historians have also called attention to the moral dimensions and motivations that helped the Allies prevail in World War II. In his recent book *Why the Allies Won*, Richard Overy,

seeking defining political and moral as well as economic causes, describes how Hitler's person, ideas, and behavior made it easy for the Allies to claim the moral high ground: "The firm conviction that what they were fighting was a wicked thing greatly simplified the Allied war effort." Hitler, they believed, was the Antichrist, having given himself a "crude messianism," while displaying a depth of demagoguery, brutality, savagery, violence, and unlimited capacity for hatred that no one had seen before in a political leader. Thus, it came as no surprise to either the Nazis or the Allies that "Nazism and Christianity were fundamentally at odds, and the [Nazi] Party made little effort to disguise it." Nor was it a wonder, Overy concludes, that "in 1945, the sense that the forces of light had triumphed against the forces of darkness was overwhelming, even more as the grim catalogue of German and Japanese crimes was fully exposed for the first time to the public gaze." Moreover, on the Allied side, "leadership counted for a great deal."<sup>61</sup>

Other historians concur. In his magisterial history of World War II, *A World at Arms: A Global History*, Gerhard Weinberg concludes, "The most basic challenge which the events of the war years placed before all inside and outside Germany was an unprecedented aspect of [a world dominated by] evil: the deliberate attempts to eliminate physically from the face of the earth whole populations, whose members were to be killed regardless of age, sex, or conduct, but instead solely as a punishment for having been born."<sup>62</sup> Echoing Holborn, Weinberg stated that all of this had been brought about by the "dangerous capacities of human beings with the highest levels of education and training and a total absence of moral sensibility." But Weinberg also praised the positive human element: Roosevelt for his success in "picking the right men for the right posts" and Marshall for his global view of the world. Then he offers this conclusion: "Whatever the destruction and the dangers, whatever the new

challenges and problems, constructive individuals with a combination of insight and enterprise were entirely capable of coping with them. As so often before in history—if rarely on such a huge scale—it turned out that the most important possession of human beings was what they carried between their ears, and that could not be taken from them as long as they remained alive."<sup>63</sup>

Yet God's influence, sometimes direct, defining, and recognizable but often largely unrecognized and unchronicled, appears to extend well beyond inspiration to leaders alone. Common people, including a number of courageous, principled opponents to Hitler and his government in and out of Germany—including the Huebener group in Hamburg; the White Rose student group centered in Munich; the July 20, 1944, Stauffenberg assassination attempt; and many others—exposed the criminality of the regime and evils around them. The leaders paid for their involvement with their lives.<sup>64</sup>

Equally courageous and inspired, I believe, were those dissidents of every political and moral hue within the pale of Soviet hegemony who were either slaughtered or interned in the evil Gulag Archipelago begun by Stalin and continued by his successor, or those who later protested against communism and eventually helped bring down the vaunted Soviet Empire.<sup>65</sup> They exhibited a sense of human dignity, character, and determination born of conviction and inspiration to fight for their God-given rights and for just causes. Many other good people throughout the world have been, and are, "anxiously engaged" in a variety of good causes and "do many things of their own free will" (D&C 58:27). These include, for example, millions of rank-and-file Poles who joined the Solidarity movement in the 1980s; tens of thousands of East Germans who participated in mass protests in the streets or voted on their government with their feet by escaping; brave Hungarians, both leaders and citizens, who refused to send them back; Czechs who united themselves into the small but influential

Chapter 77 club; courageous pastors and flocks in Romania; and other similar groups in virtually all the countries of the former Soviet Bloc.<sup>66</sup> In our day, they all once again have reaffirmed with power the truth of President McKay's statement that "individual freedom is innate in the human soul."<sup>67</sup>

### **THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM AND THE SOVIET EMPIRE**

Just as God had a hand in bringing down the dictators responsible for World War II and the Holocaust, so He also had a hand, according to His own timetable, in bringing about the end of communism and the Soviet Empire in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Walter Laqueur has called this collapse "The Dream That Failed." In his book by that name, Laqueur describes how a majority of scholars of the Soviet Union—historians, political scientists, philosophers, and others—had become enamored with the Soviet Union and expected its communist system to go on indefinitely. For all those—and they were legion—who thought that the "Soviet Union was making slow but steady progress toward greater freedom and prosperity" and for those critics of the Soviet system everywhere, "the collapse [of the Soviet empire] also came as a surprise." Whether one of the proverbial accidents of history or a proof that "the unexpected sometimes does happen," as Laqueur and others have argued, the end of the Soviet Empire was, even to most experts, unexpected. But what evidence do believers have that this, one of the most exhilarating and blessed events of the late twentieth century, came about because the Lord had a hand in it?<sup>68</sup>

Looking back, there are several events that augured well for the future but at the time seemed like mere straws in the wind. One of the first of these was the signing of the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords in 1975, which was casually brushed aside by powerful policy makers like Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and the Soviet Union's top leaders, Leonid Brezhnev and An-

drei Gromyko, as well as by much of the Western press.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, as it turned out, the important third section, or "basket," eventually took on an enormous significance for both leaders and the hundreds of thousands of citizens throughout the Soviet Union and Empire. It focused on universal human rights, including the statement that "the participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief." In addition, it spelled out: "Other rights mentioned in basket three included increased cultural and educational exchanges, reunification of families, marriage between citizens of different states, travel for personal or professional reasons and the further exchange of oral, written or filmed information."<sup>70</sup>

The leadership of the Soviet Union blithely signed it because they believed, as Michael Schroth has argued, that human rights were purely a matter of state sovereignty, while in the West the Accord was viewed as merely another affirmation of individual liberty. Apparently, hardly anyone in power thought much would come of it.<sup>71</sup>

The actual results of the Helsinki Accords, however, turned out differently. Beginning with the new administration of President Jimmy Carter, the United States jumped on the bandwagon: numerous human rights watch groups began to form in the Soviet Union with the intent of holding their government accountable to the principles of the Accords. Radio Liberty beamed its supporting message to 35–40 million adults in the USSR who listened to it at least once a month. An additional 65 million people throughout the rest of the Soviet Empire listened to similar broadcasts on Radio Free Europe.<sup>72</sup> When striking workers in Poland were arrested, a Workers' Defense Committee (KOR), linking for the first time in Poland workers and intellectuals, Catholics and non-Catholics, and the forerunner of Solidarity, protested to their government: "You signed the Helsinki Declaration on Human

Rights, and we want to and will make practical use of your signature." In Poland and elsewhere, the principles of Helsinki found fertile soil and were beginning to take root.<sup>73</sup>

Equally powerful was the effect in Czechoslovakia, where the famous movement known as Charter 77, named for its founding year and consisting of 242 people, including writer and activist Vaclav Havel, sent a document appealing to the communist government "for the protection of those human rights which were previously violated." One signer called Charter 77 the "true child of the Helsinki Conference of 1975. The government may treat it like a mean step-mother, but it cannot destroy that child, if it does not want to renounce completely its own obligations which it adopted in the family of other European nations at Helsinki."<sup>74</sup>

The Helsinki Accords had a similar effect on the new leadership in the Soviet Union. In his *Memoirs*, Mikhail Gorbachev, for me a key person placed by God to help bring about the transformation, wrote, "I was trying to grasp the underlying causes of many grievous phenomena in our domestic and foreign policies," and "I had qualms of conscience about the cruel and undeserved punishment meted out to [the dissidents]."<sup>75</sup> Gorbachev fit the query, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

The same was true for his colleague, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who wrote in his book, *The Future Belongs to Freedom*, "It was difficult to persuade even my colleagues on the simplest point: Since we had signed the Helsinki Final Act and had assumed obligations under international conventions and agreements, we had thereby acknowledged the right of other participants in these agreements to inquire into the issues and to insist that we observe the obligations we had undertaken."<sup>76</sup>

How else does one explain the appearance and placement of these two powerful men of conscience, especially Gorbachev, with sympathy

for the rights spelled out in the Helsinki documents, in a tightly controlled and encrusted communist party bureaucracy? At the same time, how does one account for the role of President Ronald Reagan with his strong anticommunist convictions and his willingness to challenge the Soviet Union to an arms race that they with their unproductive economy could neither sustain nor win and to bring a concerted moral focus to the Cold War by calling the Soviet Union an "evil empire" while demanding that the Berlin Wall, its most visible symbol, be torn down?<sup>77</sup> For this believer, all of this has all the markings of a divine act. Reagan was firm in his principles; he had a firm faith in the principles of freedom as well as a conviction that the Soviet Union was, indeed, an "evil empire." He had conviction, boldness, and the support of a large segment of the American people as well as British prime minister Margaret Thatcher and others throughout the world who believed in the same principles.<sup>78</sup>

Simultaneously, other portentous events were taking place. What Laqueur has called "the Gorbachev miracle" began to unfold. In an attempt to strengthen the Soviet Union, Gorbachev outlined his plans for reorganizing the government, the economy, and the country in order to carry out these principles. He would make good on his commitment to freedom of speech by making the country and government more open to its own people and to the outside world. His program of *glasnost* (openness) called for an end to much of the traditional secrecy, censorship of the press, and police control in Soviet society. Freedom of speech was recognized as a necessary strength in any modern society. The planned economy and the decision-making process in both government and industry needed to be restructured to free the market and bring about more incentive, productivity, and accountability. Following the disaster in Afghanistan and the military withdrawal from that country, the Soviet Armed Forces would no longer be used to enforce a disavowed Brezhnev doctrine, which asserted

Soviet control by military force in the satellite states. At the same time, thousands of Soviets were demanding through the watch groups and other organizations that the principles of Helsinki be taken seriously. If Gorbachev could do such things in the USSR, what might be possible in other parts of the Soviet bloc? The behavior of the reformers in the Kremlin, whose power and will to use force had kept most of them in power for nearly half a century, sent a shudder down the collective spine of all the communist satraps in the other countries of the Soviet Empire.

The singularity of these men and their roles in this most dramatic transformation of the late twentieth century is put into bold relief by the fact that while Shevardnadze went on for a time to become the leader of his native Georgia as the Soviet Union became dismantled, Gorbachev went down to ignominious defeat in his quest for the presidency of a freer but more modest Russia in subsequent elections, garnering only 1 percent of the popular vote. The same was true for the Polish Solidarity leader Lech Walesa, who, after having been elected to one term in office as president of Poland, could only muster 1 percent of the popular vote in 2000.<sup>79</sup> Still, even to their detractors, their places in history are fixed and assured. In the right places at the right time, both—and many others like them—had a unique, positive, and revolutionary impact on Europe and the world of the late twentieth century.

### EXTENDING THE CHURCH TO EASTERN EUROPE

Simultaneously, important events were happening on the Church front that would contribute to the diminution of some of the tensions in the world and in Europe. Already in 1973 President Harold B. Lee and his counselor President N. Eldon Tanner were contemplating what needed to be done to expand the Church's missionary work—one of its primary missions—to the many parts of the world then without it. When President Lee unexpectedly passed away

at the end of that year, the challenge was taken up by his successor, President Spencer W. Kimball, who, although an inveterate longtime foe of communism, had little interest in continuing the strong anticommunist cold war rhetoric prevalent in the Church. Rather, he exhibited a strong determination and initiative to shift the Church's missionary work into a higher gear—he called it “lengthening our stride”—and take it into many more parts of the world. Like his predecessors, he was convinced that the Lord would, in His own way and time, take care of the political problems then hindering the spread of the gospel. He understood that the Church had little influence over these political and international relations matters, but the time had come for the Church to do what it could to more aggressively fulfill its divine, worldwide spiritual role and prophetic destiny. One result of this lengthening stride was the deep concern that led to the revelation to give the priesthood to the blacks, thus removing a stumbling block to the expansion of missionary work in South and Central America, Africa, and other parts of the world. But much had happened before that historic day.<sup>80</sup>

In 1974 the First Presidency called David M. Kennedy, former secretary of the treasury and U.S. ambassador to NATO, to be the Church's first international ambassador, with the specific charge to work on the problem of taking the gospel to communist countries. After prayer and study, Kennedy singled out Poland as the best country for a possible breakthrough into the Soviet world. By 1977, a year that was quickly becoming a kind of *annus mirabilis*, Kennedy had built enough of a trusting relationship with the communist government there that they were willing to allow President Kimball to make an official visit to Poland and dedicate the country for the preaching of the gospel and to allow a few older couples to answer questions and teach the gospel to those who requested it. No traditional, direct proselyting by young Latter-day Saints was yet permitted.<sup>81</sup>

President Kimball's dedicatory prayer on Sunday morning, August 24, in Warsaw's quiet Saski Park, became Poland's immediate destiny and patriarchal blessing, spelling out in part what was going to happen to that country, and as it turned out, to its neighbors. He petitioned God for the following blessing: "We pray that no wickedness or combination of evils could possibly rise up against this nation; that they will be delivered from the hand of wicked assassins and from all their enemies, and [that the] evil deeds of enemies may be confounded to the end that this people may live in peace and comfort and happiness and that they may hear the word of the Lord with gratitude."<sup>82</sup>

In the years that followed, this seems to be precisely what happened. In 1978 Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Krakow became the first-ever Polish pope, John Paul II. He was an informed, experienced, credible opponent of communism, having been tutored by longtime communist foe Cardinal Stefan Wysinski. In both word and deed, Pope John Paul II gave courage to the leaders and followers of the growing Solidarity movement of the 1980s, which eventually numbered 10 million adult Poles.<sup>83</sup> These were striving to build a freer life and a civil society and to peacefully bring about changes that would implement the freedoms spelled out in the Helsinki Final Act. In the process they became an inspiration to thousands of like-minded citizens in neighboring countries. During these years the Polish communist government itself was wise enough to preclude giving the Soviet armies any possible pretext for an invasion similar to what had happened in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, a decision made clear only in 1989 when Gorbachev refused Soviet military support to East German communist leaders and cautioned them against using brutal force against their own people.<sup>84</sup> Poles were protected and inspired at the same time.

By 1985 a few Latter-day Saint couples were serving in Poland and had brought a small num-

ber of members into the Church. Later on in 1990, after the fall of communism throughout much of eastern Europe, Church leaders received inspiration in Warsaw to make the bold decision to establish a mission not only in that country but also in all of the countries of the former Soviet Empire.<sup>85</sup>

The developments in Poland were more advanced toward greater freedom for the people than in most of the other Soviet Empire countries. Still, by the early 1980s things were also stirring for the Church in its relations with the communist government of the German Democratic Republic, Poland's immediate neighbor to the west. What was different was that this was the only communist country in the world with a significant Latter-day Saint population. Prior to World War II, the Church had been relatively much stronger in eastern and southeastern Germany than in the western part of the country. Some five thousand members lived behind the wall that was put up in 1961 to keep ambitious and educated East Germans from fleeing to the west. Many, if not most of these Saints had joined the Church during the Weimar Republic or before or during the Third Reich and the early days following World War II. For decades Church leaders had encouraged them to remain where they were in Germany and other parts of Europe in order to maintain and strengthen the Latter-day Saint communities that had been established there. For those who had obeyed, life had not been easy, something Church leaders knew all too well. First, they had experienced all of the misery of the Hitler years and especially World War II, when most families lost soldiers and civilians to the destruction of war. This was then followed by a new variety of totalitarian society superimposed by the military regime of the occupying Soviet army and carried out by sycophantic German communist lackeys.<sup>86</sup>

After the iron curtain was in place, Church members in what became known as East Germany were largely cut off from contact with Church headquarters and the rest of the Church and

were confronted by a hostile regime suspicious of their ties to an “American” church. Few in number and politically powerless, they also had few friends either in the government or among other Christians in the country. Contacts with the larger Church remained irregular, sometimes clandestine, and were kept to a bare minimum. Informers for the secret police, the feared Stasi, were everywhere, and included Church members.

In 1968, five years after being called as an Apostle, Elder Thomas S. Monson began a generation of service to these beleaguered Saints. In the introduction to his book *Faith Rewarded*, he has preserved examples of overpowering divine impressions to help him serve in his special calling. He writes: “I wish it were possible to fully describe conditions in East Germany when I first traveled there. The Communist party’s hammer-and-sickle flag was displayed in each window of the ancient and war-ravaged hotel where I stayed. Church meetings were watched and monitored by the secret police. East German citizens were not allowed to leave their country without special permission from the government, and such permission was seldom granted. The feeling in East Germany was one of overwhelming oppression, with evidence of Communist rule all around.” Later that year, on a drive to Goerlitz in the southeastern corner of the country, he was

surprised to note that all farm machinery was horse-drawn. Not one tractor did I see. The weather was cold and foggy; hence, a very dismal atmosphere pervaded the scene. The autobahns were void of traffic, indicating the scarcity of automobiles in East Germany. . . . We went to a local hotel, which was the most archaic of any hotel I have yet seen. My room had ceilings fifteen feet high, with a bed that resembled a box and a sink which was ancient in vintage. The room was cold, and a Communist flag graced the window. Lavatory facilities existed only on the second floor of the hotel, and these were most inadequate. Communism has noth-

ing to offer as a competitor to the free enterprise system.<sup>87</sup>

On that trip, under divine inspiration, Elder Monson made the members of that small branch—and all members in the German Democratic Republic—a prophetic promise: “If you will remain true and faithful to the commandments of God, every blessing any member of the Church enjoys in any other country will be yours.”<sup>88</sup> Later, in April 1975, he felt inspired to rededicate the land—this new state—“to invoke our Heavenly Father’s blessings upon the German Democratic Republic.” He prayed, “Heavenly Father, wilt Thou intervene in the governmental affairs. Cause that Thy Holy Spirit may dwell with those who preside, that their hearts may be touched and that they may make those decisions which would help in the advancement of Thy work.” There then followed this prophetic statement: “May today mark the dawning of a new beginning of thy work in this land.” Elder Monson recorded, “As I spoke these words, we heard the unmistakable sound of a rooster crowing, followed by the pealing of a cathedral bell in the distance. The day had been overcast, but during the prayer the sun shone brilliantly upon us, warming our bodies and giving us the assurance that our Heavenly Father was pleased with the prayer which was being offered.”<sup>89</sup>

A few hours later, Elder Monson confided to his journal the following assessment of the day’s experiences: “I think I have not enjoyed a more spiritual experience as a member of the Council of the Twelve than the experience of offering the prayer in this Communist-controlled land, invoking the blessing of our Heavenly Father on as faithful a group of Saints as ever existed.”<sup>90</sup>

Throughout his record, Elder Monson recalls numerous miracles along the way. On Saturday, June 29, 1985, at dedication services for the Freiberg Germany Temple, he noted that nearly ninety thousand East Germans had attended the



open house, a number unheard of in that country. A few months later he wrote that Germany's legal counsel, Herr Wunsche, told him that "'had the government known two years ago the great interest which the erection of a temple would have occasioned among the population of the German Democratic Republic, permission would never have been given for the erection of such a facility.' We know the Spirit of the Lord prompted the timetable and that the temple has proven to be a great blessing to our members."<sup>91</sup>

By December 1985, he could look back on the changes he had observed in the then seventeen years of ministry: "We have progressed from oppression, restriction and little, if any, printed literature to a position where the people have the full Church program, all the members are in stakes of Zion, a ten-building construction program is underway, and a holy temple of the Lord has been constructed and dedicated."<sup>92</sup> But he also saw the Lord's hand in the rebuilding and transformation of all Germany: "It is truly a latter-day miracle that Germany has been rebuilt following the extensive destruction of World War II."<sup>93</sup> On May 1, 1993, he commented thankfully on how divine intervention had transformed both individual lives and the larger historic scene: "Then the Lord took charge of things in the German Democratic Republic. The result was the removal of the wall and prior to that, the building of a temple and chapels."<sup>94</sup>

Besides the positive influence upon many leaders in these countries not to use force to suppress increasingly large popular protests, it seems clear that a spirit of peaceful change, perhaps from the influence of the temple, had permeated much of the society of the German Democratic Republic. Along with the radical changes instituted by Gorbachev and his associates in the Soviet Union, there followed growing demands for change in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia and increasingly large mass protests each Monday in the autumn of 1989 in East Germany. The combination of ever-growing

crowds and the peacefulness of their protests, Gorbachev's unwillingness to use Soviet troops to put down demonstrations or to allow East German police and armed forces to do it either, aid from courageous Czechs and Hungarians, and support from the United States and other countries finally brought the hated wall, the most visible symbol of communist oppression, tumbling down on the historic day of November 9, 1989.

Subsequently, as is well known, communist parties in power were overthrown, not only in East Germany, which was reunited with West Germany in 1990, but also in Poland, Czechoslovakia (now the separate countries of the Czech Republic and Slovakia), Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania. By 1990 the Church had established permanent, viable missions in each of these countries. The same was true for Russia and for the independent countries of eastern Europe that had once been part of the USSR, including the Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia, and Armenia. Also of note is that the internal collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the revelation of its flawed ideology and practice to most of the world has put increasing pressure on remaining communist countries like China and Cuba to change their own discredited systems and ideologies.

### MISSION OF THE UNITED STATES

Part of the success in the advancement of good and free society in Europe also appears to have been achieved through what I believe is the divinely aided role played by the United States as it became more powerful, took a larger role in world affairs, and intervened with determination in Korea, Vietnam, Bosnia, the Middle East, and other parts of the world to bring democracy, freedom, and inalienable human rights and human dignity to a broader mass of humanity. If the nineteenth century belonged to Great Britain, then the twentieth was the American century. American ascension to power was steady and significant. And, it appears, this role in the world

will continue into the foreseeable future. No one, of course, is arguing that the United States and its policies are perfect, or that it has not made mistakes in the use of its power. But to this believer it would appear that the United States has something of a divine mandate to be for the modern world as ancient Israel was in its day—called to serve as both an example and a blessing to all of humanity and to use its vast resources to advance God-given human rights and responsibilities to as much of the rest of the world as is willing to accept them.

No one believes that war comes from God; rather, as the twentieth century has overwhelmingly demonstrated, wars are brought about by evil in many forms, and the direct results are always the same human suffering.<sup>95</sup> Still, the divine influence continues even to bring good from war. In a world where God is yet alive and well, Satan and wicked people have neither the last word nor the last act. We have already noted that some good—its extent not yet fully known—has even come from all of the century's wars. American power is to be used responsibly, not abused. The United States is to be an example, the scriptural "light on a hill," to share its institutions, wealth, optimism, and knowledge and to help make true principles, peace, and a better quality of life available to people around the world.

Most of the wars of the twentieth century, even those that have ended in stalemate or defeat for the United States, have resulted in the spread of democracy to peoples around the globe previously unfamiliar with it. Notwithstanding the continuing tragedies of war, good has come from them in many forms. Following World War II, Germany, Italy, and Japan were helped to overcome discredited militaristic, authoritarian traditions, replacing them with working, beneficial democracies. Learning the lessons from the failure of harsh vengeance and withdrawal from the world following World War I, the Versailles Treaty of 1919 was replaced by a beneficent Marshall Plan in 1947 in a destroyed Europe. A for-

mer enemy became a generous benefactor. It was one of America's finest hours. At the same time, both Japan and Europe were given protection from a new enemy through NATO, responsible use of nuclear power, and continued American commitments to freedom around the globe. The proclaimed spread of communism by a victorious Soviet Union was largely contained, and a persistent and unfaltering confrontation of the Soviet Union eventually exposed that system and ideology for what it really was: a failing totalitarian dictatorship devoid of moral and political legitimacy.

In addition, the state of Israel was created and has been sustained with American public support and the unwavering support of the United States government. Like other peoples, what remained of the world's Jews finally gained a home of their own in their ancestral lands. Anti-Semitism, while still extant, has been universally exposed and condemned, now accepted and practiced only by the ignorant and bigoted.

Consider some achievements of peace, individual freedom, human dignity, and prosperity during the later twentieth century to which the United States and those it has positively influenced have contributed. This list is not comprehensive but includes the following: the commitment to a better world through the establishment of the United Nations, which, with all its shortcomings, has promoted worldwide cooperation rather than conflict while making life better for millions throughout the world through improved food production, health, education and development, and meaningful participation in world affairs; the fundamental principles and attitudes of the Marshall Plan that have contributed to the post-World War II rehabilitation of West Germany and other European countries after World War II and have since been extended to other countries; the establishment of democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Greece, and South Korea; the founding of NATO with its commitment to the containment of the

Soviet Union and Communism; the establishment of a more prosperous Europe based on greater individual economic freedom, tempered by social conscience and responsibility; and the dramatic end of the Soviet Empire and the bringing of greater freedom, prosperity, peace, and human opportunity to achieve happiness to millions who had been without it. The United States also contributed to improved health and life expectancy for millions through better diets, health care, and the availability of medicines to combat traditional diseases and plagues; the vast expansion of scientific knowledge and its worldwide benefits, especially in food production, medicine, transportation, and communication; and the increase in worldwide literacy and the ability to spread knowledge rapidly around the world through space technology and the use of computers.

Finally, the power of the United States has been a blessing, not only to the rise but also to the worldwide expansion of the Church. Here, the divine guidance appears more direct and apparent because its success is of paramount interest to the Lord. The expansion and strengthening of the Church represents for Latter-day Saints the quintessential way in which the Lord can bless the world and His children. It carries within it the true and lasting source of individual freedom, well-being, happiness, and peace. Never at any time in human history has God's kingdom on earth been as widespread, healthy, influential, or strong as it has become at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This includes not only the obvious, dramatic, and continuing expansion of the Church into Central and Latin America but also the opening up of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Church's having made inroads into significant parts of Asia and Africa. These are significant achievements in any case but are especially noteworthy in an increasingly secular, faithless, and hedonistic world. It also includes the building of temples around the world with their unique spiritual power on members and society as well as the role

they play in making a favorable impression on nonmembers.<sup>96</sup>

## CONCLUSION

What can we conclude from this survey? First and foremost, it seems clear that while there has been and still is much evil in the world and that this highly visible and seductive influence has brought much suffering to humanity, there is, for believing people, more reason for optimism than for sadness, more reason for encouragement than for gloom. By knowing that God cares about His children and this earth and participates in its purposes, and by taking a view of history closer to God's view, we can see His hand in the affairs of this world and, as a result, "go forward with faith," as President Gordon B. Hinckley has repeatedly counseled.<sup>97</sup> God has His purposes with us and the world. But we also have our agency; He can and does work with it to bring about His goals for us, His children, and the world. But, notwithstanding the evils and the misery Europe and other parts of the world have seen in the twentieth century, human beings and the Lord working together have, indeed, brought forth a more peaceful world, one of expanding freedoms and human rights, proliferating democracies, expanded security and opportunity for millions of people, better health and education, higher standards of living and prospects for longer lives, improved transportation and communication, and, above all, the spread of the gospel of Christ to millions of people who previously had never heard of it. In this regard our world is a much better place to live in than that of two or three generations past. Even in a gospel sense, there were no "good old days."

Second, there are true principles that govern life and history that give history a meaning and significance in understanding the human condition that is not available if God and His influence are left out. The twentieth century, with its dictators, false principles, wars, and miseries, has, even for secular historians, put a huge question

mark on the validity of value-free history. There is a place for making moral judgments, for recognizing that some people are evil and some ideas false. History must, as Simon Schama recently told a Brigham Young University audience in 2003, be “morally engaging.”<sup>98</sup> From this perspective, it is true that history never exactly repeats itself any more than do events in our own lives. But true, meaningful history, like an individual’s good memory, can minimize the likelihood of repeating the mistakes of the past, in personal life, and in future world policies.

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### NOTES

1. “The Message of the First Presidency to the Church,” *Improvement Era*, May 1942, 272, 349.

2. President Spencer W. Kimball was quite specific about his beliefs on this subject: “I have a firm conviction that the Lord led the Pilgrims and Puritans across the ocean, perhaps permitted the persecutions that would bring them here, so that when they came to the American shores with their righteous blood and high ideals and standards, they would form the basis of a nation which would make possible the restoration of the gospel. I am sure that since there was not religious liberty, not political liberty here, the Lord permitted these few poorly armed and ill-clad men at Valley Forge and elsewhere to defeat a great army with its trained soldiery and its many mercenaries, a few against the many, but the few had on their side the Lord God of heaven, that gave them victory” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982], 403).

In his most recent book, American historian Bernard Bailyn celebrates the Founding Fathers’ remarkable achievement and its durability, though they were “provincials—marginal, borderland people.” “The results of their efforts—however groping, unfinished, and tentative—proved to be a turning point in the political history of Western Civilization, radiating out through Europe and Latin America with effects that were as important as they are difficult to interpret” (*To Begin the World Anew: The Genius and Ambigu-*

*ities of the American Founders* [New York: Knopf, 2003], ix; see also chapter 1, “Politics and the Creative Imagination,” 3–36).

3. Ezra Taft Benson, “Civic Standards for the Faithful Saints,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 59. Elder Alexander B. Morrison notes that many of these leaders may not know the Lord is using them (see page 10 of this volume).

4. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), 327.

5. Douglas F. Tobler and S. George Ellsworth, “History, Significance to Latter-day Saints,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:597; emphasis added.

6. Tobler and Ellsworth, “History,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:597.

7. “Oh Say, What Is Truth?” *Hymns* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), no. 272.

8. Leopold von Ranke, “The Ideal of Universal History,” in *The Varieties of History: From Voltaire to the Present*, ed. Fritz Stern (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 54–62.

9. Spencer W. Kimball, “Climbing the Hills Just Ahead: Three Addresses,” in *Educating Zion*, ed. John W. Welch and Don E. Norton (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 1996), 43–80.

10. In his recent book, *The Dream That Failed: Reflections of the Soviet Union*, Laqueur approvingly cites sociologist Daniel Bell’s skepticism that “sociological analysis could not on the whole, predict political decisions that were based largely on variables such as accident,” as well as T. H. Rigby’s observation that “one cannot predict the accidents of leadership and these may prove decisive” (Walter Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed: Reflections of the Soviet Union* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994], 188–89n9, 223). Some historians appear to be understanding more the need for them to make meaningful moral judgments. They may even instinctively understand that a history that does not is rather meaningless; it does not matter because it says nothing to the human condition and may also contribute to the amorality of life in coming generations. On the serious question of why so many West-

ern Sovietologists misunderstood and misinterpreted much of Soviet history, Laqueur concluded that there was “stubborn resistance to the obvious. In part, it may have been a question of prestige; having invested so much intellectual capital in building theories, it was difficult to admit mistakes. Sometimes it was a matter of training and education: because they had grown up in a certain academic tradition and were accustomed to certain methods and approaches, it was not at all easy to relinquish them. On top of all this was the mistaken belief that a scholarly approach meant taking morality out of history and politics” (*The Dream That Failed*, 117).

An earlier example of this change of attitude is an article published in the *New York Times* by Richard Hunt, professor of German history at Harvard, entitled “No Fault Guilt Free History.” When he began to perceive that his students were beginning to take a “no fault guilt free” attitude toward decisions made by Germans that led to and made possible Hitler’s Third Reich and were applying the same rule to themselves, he decided it was time to teach it differently. “Somehow I have got to convey the meaning of moral decisions and their relations to significant outcomes. Most important, I want to point out that single acts of individuals and strong stands of institutions at an early date do make a difference in the long run. This is my next assignment. Now I’m through teaching no-fault history” (*New York Times*, February 16, 1976).

11. Kimball, “Climbing the Hills,” 54.

12. Tobler and Ellsworth, “History,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:597.

13. “Better Luck Next Century,” *The Economist*, November 15–21, 2003, 79; Ralf Dahrendorf, “Towards the 21st Century,” in *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Michael Howard and William Roger Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 339.

14. Michael Burleigh has accurately described Hitler’s arrogance: “Armed with his religious science, Hitler was not only a latter-day Robert Koch or Louis Pasteur, zealously battling lethal pathogens, who happened to be fellow human beings, but God’s partner in ordering and perfecting that part of mankind which concerned him. While one can point to the moment

when Nazism became hubristic [the December 1941 decision to take on both the United States and the USSR] it is important to understand that, in this profounder sense, Hitler’s politics were hubristic all along” (*The Third Reich: A New History* [New York: Hill and Wang, 2000], 14). Similarly, Robert C. Tucker describes Stalin’s major motivation: “Power for power’s sake was never his aim. His life in politics was a never-ending endeavor to prove himself a revolutionary hero, as Lenin did before him, and receive, again as Lenin had before, the plaudits of a grateful party for his exploits as a leader. Power was a prime means to Stalin’s supreme goal: fame and glory” (*Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928–1941* [New York: W. W. Norton, 1990], 3).

15. Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998).

16. Roger B. Porter, “United States of America,” in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4:1495.

17. Roland Stromberg concurred: “Religion was in as much trouble as the family or sexual customs. The Christian or Judaic religious orthodoxies, which had served for many centuries as the regulator of life, had been in slow decline for more than a century; even since Darwin, at least. . . . Increasingly in the cosmopolitan minglings of the modern urban world, religious impulses escaped entirely from the old Christian or Judaic molds. . . . The vast process of secularization, so basic a part of modernization, has continued on; the very nature of modern society is nonreligious. The offer of heavenly salvation no longer operated as a vital option for most modernized urban people” (*Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 4th ed. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997], 472–73). The religious historian Hugh McLeod has described the process: “As the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth were a time of religious polarization, the period since the 1960s has been a time of religious fragmentation. The Christendoms which until recently held sway in so many parts of Europe have nearly all vanished, and the many attempts in twentieth-century Europe to build a secular utopia have all ended in failure. . . . It is clear that during the last thirty years all west-European countries have undergone processes of secularization”

(*Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789–1989*, 2nd ed. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997], 154).

18. Karl G. Maeser, "How I Became a 'Mormon,'" *Improvement Era* (November 1899), 23–26; Douglas F. Tobler, "Karl G. Maeser's German Background, 1828–1856: The Making of Zion's Teacher," *BYU Studies* 17, no. 2 (1977): 155–75.

19. McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe*, 98, 114. Another important element of this process of losing religious faith is the view that even if God did exist, He was unknowable.

20. Harold James, *Europe Reborn: A History, 1914–2000* (London: Pearson Longman, 2003), 439–40.

21. Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime*, as quoted in Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 8.

22. Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1978), xix–xxxviii, 26–40, 91–93.

23. *The Economist* for September 21, 2002, carried a book review of the memoirs of the longtime Marxist intellectual, English historian Eric Hobsbawm, and the obituary for one-time American Marxist William Phillips. Hobsbawm was, as he said of himself and his contemporaries at Cambridge in the 1930s, a member of "the reddest and most radical generation in the history of the university. We thought we knew what the new world would be like after the old world had come to an end. In this, like all generations, we were mistaken" ("Giving Account," *Economist*, September 2002, 79).

24. Vaclav Havel, "Dilemmas of Post Communist Development," in Augustinos, *The National Idea in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gerasimos Augustinos (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1996), 131.

25. See Dennison Rusinow, "Empire and Ethnic Politics," in Augustinos, *The National Idea in Eastern Europe*, 1–14.

26. Adam Michnik, "Nationalism," in Augustinos, *The National Idea in Eastern Europe*, 135–36.

27. Douglas F. Tobler, "Christian Love as a Means of Overcoming Nationalist Animosity" (paper presented at a conference on nationalism in Warsaw, Poland, December 13, 1999).

28. During his lifetime, President David O. McKay vigorously opposed isms of all kinds, but especially communism. In the October 1939 general conference, he warned: "Today there are in this country enemies in the form of 'isms.' I call them anti-Americanisms" (David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], 304). Similarly, President Spencer W. Kimball taught, "Remember that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not compatible with radicalism or communism or any other of the 'isms'" (Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 408).

29. Wm. Roger Louis, "The European Colonial Empires," in Howard and Lewis, *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century*, 96, 99–100.

30. Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die totalitaere Erfahrung*, quoted in Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 83; see also Havel, "Dilemmas," 137. "Communism was far from being simply the dictatorship of one group of people over another. It was a genuinely totalitarian system; that is, it permeated every aspect of life and deformed everything it touched, including all the natural ways people had evolved of living together. It profoundly affected all forms of human behavior" (Havel, "Dilemmas," 129).

31. Bracher, *Die totalitaere Erfahrung*, in Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 83.

32. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. Samuel Beer (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1955), vii; Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 4–25.

33. Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 6.

34. David O. McKay, in Conference Report, April 1942, 72.

35. Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 13.

36. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 16–20, 521–23; Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1976), 411–12.

37. Hajo Holborn, *A History of Modern Germany* (New York: Knopf, 1959–69), 3:813.

38. Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 2.

39. Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.
40. Douglas F. Tobler, "The Narrow Line: The Experiences of American Mormon Missionaries in Hitler's Germany, 1933–1939" (unpublished manuscript in author's possession).
41. D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1983). "Like many Americans and Europeans, Reuben expressed almost immediate queasiness about Hitler's Nazi regime that came to power in 1933. He described Hitler's 1934 purge trials of fellow Nazis as 'an assassination tribunal'; After his second visit to Nazi Germany, President Clark told a general priesthood meeting in October 1938 that 'there are things about [Nazi Germany] that to me are detestable'" (Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark*, 202).
42. McKay, "The Church and the Present War," 341.
43. Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 193.
44. Stromberg, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 473.
45. Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 115–16.
46. Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 894, 898.
47. Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, 133–36.
48. Deborah L. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933–1945* (New York: Free Press, 1986).
49. See especially Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Church Grows Stronger," and Boyd K. Packer, "Do Not Fear," *Ensign*, May 2004, 4–5, 77–80.
50. Heber J. Grant, in *Gospel Standards: Sermons and Writings of Heber J. Grant*, ed. G. Homer Durham (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1941), 147.
51. Sharon Kay Smith, "Elbert D. Thomas and America's Response to the Holocaust" (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1991), 59–156; Douglas F. Tobler, "'Have Ye Remembered the Jews, Mine Ancient Covenant People?' The Jews, the Mormons and the Holocaust," in *Remembering for the Future* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1988), 461–72.
52. Joseph Marion Tanner, "Bolshevism," *Improvement Era*, March 1922, 434–35.
53. Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark Jr., and David O. McKay, "Editorial: Warning to Church Members," *Improvement Era*, August 1936, 488–89.
54. Grant, Clark, and McKay, "Warning to Church Members," 488–89.
55. "The Message of the First Presidency," *Improvement Era*, April 1942, 272, 273, 343–46, 348–50; emphasis added. Years later, President Spencer W. Kimball vigorously reaffirmed the Church's view of war: "We do not favor war. We do not like the blood of war, the stench of war, the suffering of war, the deprivations of war, the cruelty of war, the degradation of war. We hate war but there are considerations that must be kept in mind. How can war be eliminated from the earth? The answer is simple but hard to realize. Let the people of this world live the gospel. Before peace can come to the world around us, it must come into our hearts" (Kimball, *Teachings*, 414).
56. "The Message of the First Presidency," 350.
57. Simon Schama, *A History of Britain: The Fate of Empire, 1776–2000* (New York: Hyperion, 2002), 484.
58. Schama writes: "He [Churchill] was now in his 60s and most saw him as a posturing has-been, too flash, too loud, too much in love with the Riviera good life and country-house extravagance he could ill afford—and, worst of all, too enamoured with the sound of his own voice" (Schama, *History of Britain*, 489). Michael Beschloss makes this concluding evaluation of Roosevelt while lamenting his lack of action to save more of Europe's Jews: "Such flaws, however, are overshadowed by the greatness in Roosevelt's leadership on Germany. In 1939 and 1940, against the advice of hard-boiled advisers who warned that most Americans were isolationist, the President risked his career by campaigning for military preparedness and aid to Britain. Had Roosevelt been more meek or short-sighted, Hitler might have won World War II" (*The Conquerors: Roosevelt, Truman and the Destruction of Hitler's Germany, 1941–1945* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002], 286). See also Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995), 245–81.

59. McKay, "The Church and the Present War," 350; emphasis in original.

60. David McCullough wrote of Marshall, "Like George Washington, with whom he was often compared, Marshall was a figure of such flawless rectitude and self-command he both inspired awe and made description difficult." In his judgment of the Marshall Plan, McCullough called it "one of the great American achievements of the century, as nearly everyone eventually saw" (*Truman* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992], 533, 583); Harold James has recorded Marshall's first mention of the plan that later bore his name: "In February 1947, the new Secretary of State of the United States, George C. Marshall, spoke at the alumni day of Princeton University about the lessons of history. 'Most of the other countries of the world [beside the United States] (brackets in original) find themselves exhausted economically, financially and physically. If the world is to get on its feet, if the productive countries are to resume their functioning, a strong lead and definite assistance from the United States will be necessary'" (*Europe Reborn*, 230). This action found later (1953) support from Elder Spencer W. Kimball: "There is but one race—humanity. We can hardly have a heaven in our own country and leave a hell outside. If we have peace now it must be a world peace. If we have economic security and individual liberty here we must export it to all other countries. The young men of other countries share also our desire for a better world with equal justice and liberty for all" (*Teachings*, 417).

61. Overy, *Why the Allies Won*, 21, 284, 290, 326.

62. Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History*, 899.

63. Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 919–20.

64. Alan F. Keele and Douglas F. Tobler, "The Fuehrer's New Clothes: Helmut Heubener and the Mormons in the Third Reich," *Sunstone* 5 (November–December 1980): 20–29; Karl Heinz Schnibbe, *The Price: The True Story of a Mormon Who Defied Hitler* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984); Rudolf Gustav Wobbe and Jerold Borrowman, *Three Against Hitler* (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, 2002); Peter Hoffman, *The History of the German Resistance*,

1933–1945, 3rd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1996).

65. Aleksander I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918–1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation*, trans. Thomas P. Whitney (New York: Harper and Row, 1974); Nikita Krushchev, *Krushchev Remembers*, trans. and ed. Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970). In *New York Times* article on March 5, 1995, the fortieth anniversary of Stalin's death, Mikhail Gorbachev told how he came to realize what Stalin had done. When Stalin died, "many breathed a sigh of relief. They knew who Stalin really was and understood that the country had been finally freed of a tyrant." He then noted that it was not until the time of Krushchev's famous speech in February 1956 that "all of us learned the full story." But, as Gorbachev learned, "the monster of Stalinism dies hard. And, in fact, it re-emerged in an underhanded way during the Brezhnev period, hidden behind the slogan of stability." He then concluded: "The period of maturation was long and gradual for me as well. In my address on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution—in 1987—I said: 'Stalin knew. Not only did he know, he had a direct part in the repression. His guilt is indisputable and unforgivable'" ("Stalin Anniversary Evokes Thoughts on a Tyrant," *Deseret News*, February 26, 1993, A16).

66. Gale Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

67. David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals* (Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953), 307.

68. Laqueur, *The Dream That Failed*, vi, 43, 44, 190.

69. William Burr, ed., *The Kissinger Transcripts: The Top-Secret Talk with Beijing and Moscow* (New York: New Press, 1998), 326; Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 346, quoted in Michael Schroth, "Triumph of Conviction: The Fall of Communism in the Wake of Helsinki's Human Rights," *Thetean* 32 (2003): 93.

70. See appendix II for the Helsinki Accords Final Acts in its entirety in John J. Maresca, *To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe*,



1973–1975 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), 213, quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 96.

71. Maresca, *To Helsinki*, in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 96–97.

72. Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, *Board for International Broadcasting for Fiscal Year 1976 (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty)* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1975), 42, 43; quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 99.

73. Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 170, quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 101.

74. Thomas, *Helsinki Effect*, 179, quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 101.

75. Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoirs* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 82–83, quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 103; see also Speer, *Memoirs*, 222–40.

76. Eduard Shevardnadze, *The Future Belongs to Freedom*, trans. Catherine A. Fitzpatrick (New York: Free Press, 1991), 37, quoted in Schroth, “Triumph of Conviction,” 103.

77. William I. Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945–2002* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 348. Gale Stokes writes that at the time Gorbachev was selected as general secretary over the Brezhnevian candidate, Viktor Grishin, “it was not a foregone conclusion that Gorbachev would win” (*The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, 71). See also Archie Brown, “The Soviet Union and Beyond,” in *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century*: “Gorbachev’s coming to power was, nevertheless, a turning point in Russian and European history”; “The Gorbachev era saw also the end of the Cold War and it was the new thinking espoused by Gorbachev and the new Soviet behaviour which accompanied it that made this possible” (182, 184).

78. Laqueur criticizes the Western “doves,” those myriad scholars and politicians who believed Reagan was “ignorant and confused” on how to deal with the Soviet Union. He writes: “One of the main bugbears of the doves had been Reagan’s SDI (‘Star Wars’) initiative in 1983, a fantastic scheme that they said would never work, would ruin America finan-

cially, and would impel the Russians to build up their military arsenal. Perhaps they were right with regard to the technical feasibility of the program—this may not be proven for a long time. But leading Russian foreign affairs experts made it known in later years that SDI had contributed to ‘changing Soviet arms policy and ending the Cold War.’ Among them were Aleksander Bessmertnykh, former Soviet foreign minister and Anatoly Chernayev, Gorbachev’s foreign policy adviser.” Laqueur concludes that rather than lengthening the cold war as some critics claimed, “It could be maintained with much greater justice that a firm Western line persuaded the Soviet leaders in the end that the attempt to overtake the United States in the military field was hopeless and had ruined their country. This is what the record tends to show and what many Russians now believe” (*The Dream That Failed*, 127n62, 213).

79. In the June 16, 1996, presidential election, Gorbachev received less than 1 percent of the popular vote (see Michael Specter, “The Russian Vote,” *New York Times*, June 17, 1996, 1); four years later, in October 2000, when Alexander Kwasniewski was voted in for a second term, Walesa, who had served as president from 1990 to 1995, received only nine-tenths of 1 percent of the vote (“Polish President Wins Election for Second Term,” *New York Times*, October 9, 2000, 3).

80. Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977), 416–18; Kimball, *Teachings*, 450–52; Martin Berkeley Hickman, *David Matthew Kennedy: Banker, Statesman, Churchman* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 334; Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 373–79.

81. Hickman, *David Matthew Kennedy*, 350–56.

82. Dedicatory Prayer; in author’s possession. Already in 1981 while traveling with Brigham Young University’s Young Ambassadors in a program tour of the former Soviet Union, former Yugoslavia, and Romania, I gained a hint at the future for the Church in these areas. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley and his wife, Marjorie Hinckley, accompanied the group. Just a month away from becoming a member of the First

Presidency as it turned out, he had been the first Apostle to visit mainland China the year before, traveling with the same group. As we boarded our bus in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), he quietly mused out loud so that only Jae Ballif and I could hear: "When we start [missionary work] in this country, we'll start here."

83. Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, 102–30; Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 89, 118, 126, 143, 321.

84. Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, 139.

85. Douglas F. Tobler, "Pioneering in Poland: Achievements and Challenges in Establishing the Church, 1985–2001" (unpublished manuscript).

86. Douglas F. Tobler, "Before the Wall Fell: Mormons in the German Democratic Republic, 1945–1989," *Dialogue* 25, no. 4 (Winter 1992): 11–30; Garold and Norma Davis, *Behind the Iron Curtain: Reflections of Latter-day Saints in East Germany, 1945–1989* (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 1996); Bruce Wayne Hall, *Render Unto Caesar: State, Identity and Minority Churches in the German Democratic Republic, 1945–1989* (PhD diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 2003).

87. Thomas S. Monson, *Faith Rewarded: A Personal Account of Prophetic Promises to the East German Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996), vii, 2–4.

88. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 5.

89. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 34–36.

90. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 38.

91. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 118.

92. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 119–20.

93. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 127.

94. Monson, *Faith Rewarded*, 164.

95. In the April 1942 general conference, President David O. McKay offered what appears to still be

the Church's moral basis for a "just" war: "There are, however, two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say, *enter*, not *begin*—a war: (1) An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and, (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly there is a third, viz. Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one" ("The Church and the Present War," 340; emphasis in original).

96. See F. Michael Watson, "Statistical Report, 2003," given at the April 2004 general conference. Some relevant statistics included stakes, 2,624; missions, 337; converts, 242,923; temples in operation, 116; membership, 11,985,254 (*Ensign*, May 2004, 26).

97. Gordon B. Hinckley, *The Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997), 127, 186–99.

98. Simon Schama, BYU forum, January 28, 2003. Writing about how historians should deal with the totalitarian dictatorships of the twentieth century, Walter Laqueur observed: "Such outspoken indictments [that a few historians had made] were anathema to historians who argued that their assignment was not to judge, but to understand and explain. But such advocacy of Olympic detachment usually hides special pleading by those afraid of the historical verdicts. The Idea that 'detached' and 'scholarly' are synonyms for 'equidistance' is common among those wishing to put Nazism as well as Stalinism in 'a proper historical perspective.' But indifference vis-à-vis human suffering on a massive scale and monstrous crimes is neither a virtue nor in the tradition of scholarship, and it makes a mockery of the search for historical truth" (*The Dream That Failed*, 48).