

from 1980 on they increasingly reported directly to the Missionary Committee in Salt Lake City.

The internal organization was also at this time restructured to separate ecclesiastical from professional responsibilities. Missionaries were organized into branches whose presidents, called as lay leaders from among Church members in the Provo area, provided needed ecclesiastical authority and service in counseling missionaries and in conducting Sunday meetings. In addition, full-time staff members supervised professional activities such as training and business affairs.

MTC REGIMEN. The MTC is regarded as a mission field. All costs are paid by the missionaries, including board and room, books, and study materials. Every missionary is assigned another new missionary as a companion, and they are together twenty-four hours a day.

The schedule is rigorous. Classes have ten to twelve students who meet in three-hour sessions, morning, afternoon, and evening. Studies include the scriptures, languages, and missionary methodology. Academic responsibilities are balanced by spiritual development and recreational opportunities. Temple attendance and weekly devotional addresses given by visiting General Authorities aid spiritual well-being. Exercise programs promote physical fitness.

The intensive methodology used in foreign-language instruction is based in part on a program developed by the U.S. Army: Trainees learn by listening and repeating. Classroom instructors are usually experienced former missionaries and foreign students from nearby campuses. Linguistic drills are related to the culture, customs, and characteristics of the assigned mission field. In one week basic grammar is learned, and after two weeks a missionary begins to converse, pray, and sing in a new language. In eight weeks, missionaries are reasonably adept in conversation and can teach gospel lessons in a foreign language.

INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION. The Church now operates Area Missionary Training Centers beyond Provo. Previously, missionaries called from outside the United States and Canada typically went directly to the mission field without orientation. Area centers have now been developed to give missionaries from other lands advantages similar to those provided in Provo. The first of these centers was established at São Paulo, Brazil, in 1977. By 1990, thirteen Area MTCs functioned in Latin

America, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific. All are adjacent to Latter-day Saint temples.

The goal of the Missionary Training Centers is to provide initial training for full-time missionaries, preparing them to teach more efficiently the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. All programs are continuously evaluated in terms of this objective.

RICHARD O. COWAN

MISSION PRESIDENT

In 1990, some 257 mission presidents, along with their wives, and sometimes families, served in geographical mission areas in more than a hundred nations. The period of service for a mission president is usually three years. In the Church being a mission president is regarded as a challenging and exhilarating spiritual assignment, a link of fellowship with the Master. Calls are issued by the **FIRST PRESIDENCY**. Both husband and wife are set apart as missionaries by the **LAYING ON OF HANDS** by an assigned General Authority, often a member of the First Presidency or **QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES**, and receive **BLESSINGS** and counsel appropriate to their assignment.

The calling is not a regular remunerative position, but interrupts professional employment; whatever financial losses accrue are part of the expected sacrifice. The family involved gives of its time and energies without salary, though there is a modest allowance for living expenses. Men and women from all walks of life and all nationalities and backgrounds serve, called, as it were, "from everywhere to everywhere." Typically, the president is a high priest with extensive prior service in the Church. His wife is likewise experienced in Church leadership and teaching. Their competence in the language and culture of their designated country is enhanced by mission presidents' seminars and training sessions.

A strong legacy of mission presidents permeates Church autobiography and biography, oral tradition, fiction, and folklore. Narratives range from some of flagrant and even life-threatening opposition and martyrdom to sublime accounts of conversions to Christ. It is a common feeling that the Spirit attends missionary work as it does no other.

An important concern of the mission president and his wife is naturally the continued nur-

ture and care of their own children who have come with them. A second concern is the nurture and care of the missionaries, the majority of whom are young, uprooted, often struggling with a new language, and facing new stresses. The mission president trains, counsels, assigns, and gives spiritual support to each missionary, and his wife plays a vital role in training programs and the health, welfare, and safety of each missionary.

A mission is generally assigned from 120 to 250 full-time missionaries, with young men serving two years and young women serving eighteen months. In addition, there are some part-time missionaries and older couples. Older couples generally serve from one year to eighteen months. Single missionaries always labor in same-gender pairs; married couples labor together. Leadership roles are assigned to senior companions, district leaders, and zone leaders. Each mission has a rotating central missionary staff: typically a secretary, recorder-historian, supplies manager, and travel coordinator. Since new missionaries arrive and seasoned missionaries are released each month, training, retraining, and making new assignments and transfers are perpetual tasks.

The mission president, under supervision from Church headquarters, establishes mission rules, study patterns, goals, and discipline. His assignment requires constant travel to zone conferences, which are also testimony meetings, at least every six to eight weeks. The president and his wife have direct contact with the missionaries by phone, mail, and personal visits. They continually foster programs of goodwill, service, and understanding.

At the end of three years, the mission president and his family return home to resume their vocational and regular family lives.

GERALD J. DAY

MISSIONS

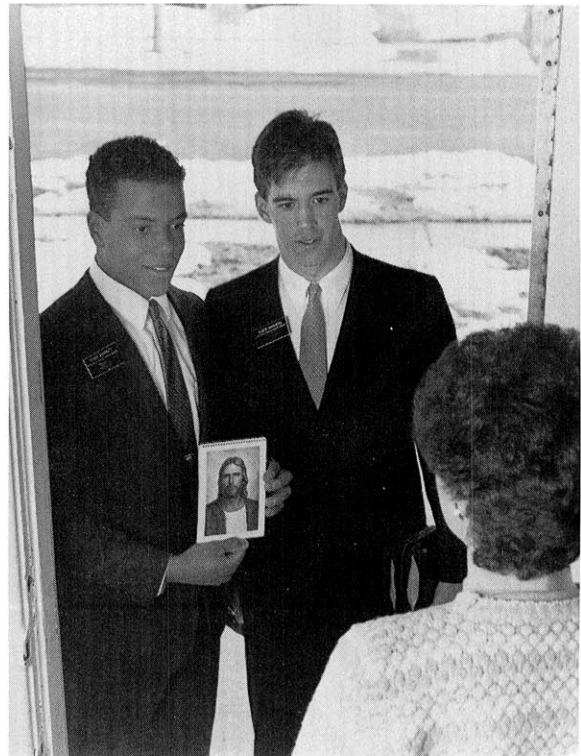
The mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to invite everyone to come to Christ. This includes a mandate to proclaim the GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (cf. Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; D&C 42:58). "Therefore, go ye into all the world; and unto whatsoever place ye cannot go ye shall

send, that the testimony may go from you into all the world unto every creature" (D&C 84:62). From the earliest days of the Church, missionaries have been called to the nations of the earth to preach that message.

The ultimate destiny of missionary work was envisioned by the Prophet Joseph SMITH in 1842:

Our missionaries are going forth to different nations. . . . The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done [HC 4:540].

Two basic types of missions are organized to carry forward the missionary effort: full-time missions and stake missions.



The LDS Church has no paid ministry. The majority of missionaries in the LDS Church are young men between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one who serve on a voluntary basis for approximately two years.