

It has been thirty years since the end of the Korcan War and nearly thirteen years since the war in Vietnam. To honor the alumni killed in the two wars, two bronze plaques were dedicated at Brigham Young University 11 November 1983.

Elder Marion D. Hanks, member of the First Quorum of Seventy and World War II veteran, delivered the dedicatory address defending the United States' involvement in both wars. "Our purposes in being there were honorable," he said. Hanks quoted the late LDS church president David O. McKay who said, "We should sustain this free land and others whose freedom is threatened."

The names of ten men killed in Korea and 61 in Vietnam listed on the plaques were remembered by nearly 400 family members present at the dedication.

Also speaking at the service was BYU student Matthew Duffin, whose father, Rey Lamar Duffin is on the Vietnam plaque. Duffin is one of 92 children left behind by the fathers killed in the wars.

The bronze plaques are located in the Memorial Hall of the Ernest L. Wilkinson Center.

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"A come-from-behind style has helped Salt Lake City's Henry Marsh become the world's No. 1 steeplechaser—not bad for a lawyer"—so reads the caption to a picture of this world-class athlete in a recent *Sports Illustrated*. This local lawyer's hobby has earned Marsh the title as a U.S. record holder and a ranking by *Track and Field News* as No. 1 in the world for the past two years. In the *Sports Illustrated* article, entitled "Go, You Stormin' Mormon," the author pointed out that Marsh's "legal work, his family life and his commitment to the Mormon church would not seem to leave him much time to pursue a track career," but Henry Marsh, they explained, "knows how to pace himself."

Marsh attended BYU (where he met his wife Suzi) and received his law degree from

the University of Oregon. He presently works for the law firm Parsons, Behle and Latimer in Salt Lake City. And in his spare time, Marsh was a 1976 Olympian and planned on participating in the 1980 games in Moscow until the United States "pulled out."

In keeping with his Mormon faith, Marsh served an LDS mission to Brazil and keeps "canned tomatoes" and "canned peaches" in the basement. (the same place he keeps his track trophies incidentally.)

But the insignificant placement of his trophies does not reflect on Marsh's performance: recently in Berlin Marsh broke the U.S. steeplechase record. Pretty impressive considering "track is a sideline" for Henry Marsh.

INTERVIEW

Nibley Talks About Contemporary Issues

Hugh Nibley, professor emeritus of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University, is at 73 the school's most renowned iconoclast. Though his chief interests are what he calls "the old stuff," (ancient and romantic languages, Egyptology, early scripture) Nibley has been increasingly outspoken on contemporary issues facing the LDS church. He insists that "this isn't what I've been preparing for and I resent it like the devil." Still he believes that the Spirit has provided him with opportunities to speak out on diverse subjects and "there I go, stirring people up."

Dr. Nibley was interviewed by staff writer, Lin Ostler Strack, in his office on November 11, 1983. Due to space limitations and the broad line of questioning, we recognize that this interview is necessarily impressionistic rather than exhaustive.

REVIEW: In the October 11th issue of *BYU's Daily Universe* there was a pro-hunting editorial by Jayne Jenkins. In it she argues that "the most dedicated conservationists are the most serious hunter-sportsmen," that hunting "keeps a healthy balance," and that the state earns much money on the hunters. She concludes, "When he (the anti-hunter) wises up he will remember that even the Bible authorizes men to have dominion over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." What do you think about that?

NIBLEY: Oh, so that's dominion is it? To go out and kill everybody? I have always thought it meant responsibility. I wrote an article in the October 1972 issue of the *New Era* in which I outlined my philosophy about the creatures. In it I said that I felt the scriptures showed that dominion and lordship over the creatures means that we have a serious responsibility toward the creatures, not the license to exterminate, of all silly things.

REVIEW: Do you see a philosophy of hunting particular to Latter-day Saints?

NIBLEY: Yes, there always has been. It's a frontier attitude, conquering the West, as it

were. But of course the presidency of the Church has consistently bucked that attitude. Brigham Young, Joseph F. Smith, and then President Kimball have all talked against it. Joseph Smith said never carry anything larger than a pen knife. He who carries a gun will surely regret it. Brigham Young said if the Mormon people weren't so ignorant, they'd be damned for their treatment of the creatures. President Kimball's bicentennial talk against hunting was very exciting but it had almost no effect whatsoever. They swept it under the rug. We say a prophet is a prophet and then freely interpret how we want.

REVIEW: Did your family influence the development of your feelings toward hunting? Did your father hunt?

NIBLEY: I've never thought of that but now that you mention it, I'm sure it was quite important. No, my father never hunted. They taught me it was a very elemental part of the gospel to be at one with all the creatures. They are God's creatures and they are going to be resurrected. My mother felt especially



strong about it. She frankly felt it was immoral, it was wicked, it was killing. Neither of my parents would touch a gun. When rich nobility both English and American came to their place in Cardston to hunt, my parents refused the game. My grandfather, C. B. Kimball, was among the first to settle in Alberta. From the time he was a boy of eleven and for twelve years he had his own herds of sheep and goats. He was in the mountains all day and all night but he never took a gun. When his family arrived there the land was swarming with game. Mother tells of an occasion when her brothers first arrived in Canada, they decided to rustle out the land and they shot their first animal, a gazelle. When they saw the look in that gazelle's eyes, they never shot another animal. Their first was the last.

Of course Doctrine and Covenants 49 tells us that when we need it, the creatures are willing to contribute but we unto him who sheddeth blood, takes life when there is no need for it. If we do it for sport, we'll be damned for it.

REVIEW: The editorial indicated that we are in fact doing the animals a favor by offering them a "quick, bullet-inflicted death" as opposed to the slow starvation some experience in sparse feeding grounds. Do you agree?

NIBLEY: Aren't they generous about it? That is why we have so many endangered species. As the game gets more scarce, we

get more frantic to hunt it. The reason they are starving is that we've occupied their territory. Another doctrine of the Church is that every form of life is to multiply in its sphere and element. We use animal territory for quick-buck subdivisions. Land development is the big thing. Now the only land that's left is in the wild places. So developers go out, buy it up cheaply, and give it silly, exotic names so people will think they're getting something wild and romantic. Of course, we're destroying the wilderness in the process. Those were the proper places assigned to the creatures. We had no business building over the wetlands either and the Lord is showing us that now. Our wetlands have become uninhabitable by the floods because we try to turn everything into a quick profit.

REVIEW: You've been a supporter of environmental issues. How do you think we're doing as a church in relationship to the planet?

NIBLEY: Well, I can say the trend toward hunting is more against it than for it but it is a set tradition. Today we're way behind other states. Ecology and environmentalism are dirty words in Utah. Hatch and Garn hold the record in Washington for being kneejerk anti-environmentalists.

We've been accused of being a church of doom and gloom because of our name, the Saints of the Latter-days. It used to make people laugh. They'd ask can't you have a shorter name and we'd say no, we have to

retain that latter-day part and consider it as such. The latter days have come before and the gospel was always restored in the last days. Catastrophism has become a very real element in history now. There have been times when the earth has been catastrophically smitten. Now the study of climatology has shown us that since 1978 there have been 50 times more earthquakes than ever before. Things are happening that have never happened before. The dream President John Taylor had in 1877 is a very graphic description of nuclear holocaust or a description of nerve gas. There is no shooting, no guns, no parades, no activity, just widespread destruction. If that wasn't a nuclear blast he described over New York City, I don't know what it could be: sudden violent wind and flash of flame and all of the ships in the harbor instantly exploding. No, these times are very serious. It's all part of the same picture. He who kills one thing will kill another. A person who kills for his master will not hesitate to kill his master.

REVIEW: In three recent speeches, "Work We Must But the Lunch is Free," "We Shall Still Weep for Zion," and your BYU commencement address, you have in the presence of LDS General Authorities made some strong statements about the direction of the Church. What did you expect to accomplish?

NIBLEY: I only know that at times like this we can't keep silent. My sense of urgency comes from the fact that I spend all my days now with the scriptures. And the two marks of the Church I see are and have been for a long time these: a reverence for wealth and a contempt for the scriptures. Naturally, the two go hand in hand. We should call attention to the fact that these things we are doing are against the work of the Lord. There is one saying of Joseph Smith I think of quite often. "If the heavens seem silent at a time when we desperately need revelation, it is because of covetousness in the Church. God has often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness." And now the Church isn't just shot through with covetousness, it is saturated with covetousness. And so the heavens are going to be closed. We're told we don't get revelation if we put our trust in money in the bank.

REVIEW: How have some of these ideas been received by members of the Church?

NIBLEY: Some of the people are very impressed. When I gave my "Free Lunch" speech at the Cannon-Hinckley club, David Kennedy was there. We talked about it and he asked for copies. It's interesting that the most favorable response I receive is from business big shots even though I am very critical of wealth. They say they feel guilty when they listen to that stuff but they feel more guilty if they don't. I've been told many, many times that it has changed a person's whole

outlook on business. Some persons have even said, "I've known all along something was wrong but I haven't been able to put my finger on it. I have sensed that's what scripture says but nobody has ever pointed it out to me. Now that I have had it explained, I understand why I have always felt so uncomfortable." I've had a lot of that sort of confirmation.

REVIEW: There has been some talk about your commencement speech making officials on the stand uncomfortable. Have you had any official negative feedback?

NIBLEY: No. I submitted the talk in advance and it was enthusiastically approved. So there you are. Every book I have ever written I have always said, if there is any doubt about it I don't care if it is never published. There is only one thing they censor anyway. You can say anything you want about anything but you must never, never, never say anything disrespectful about money. Even if it were a verse of scripture, they would cut it right out. And now it is even closer to home with Utah being the fraud capitol of the world. People simply can't resist the temptation to make huge profits in a hurry. They get taken again and again because of their greed. Brigham Young said all that needs to be said on the subject; President Kimball has, too, and others. So I just quote everybody like mad. All I say is a montage of what other people have said. So don't point a finger at me; I just saw what was there.

REVIEW: You seem to have become a sort of conscience for the Church. It takes a great deal of courage to speak out without fear of reprisal. How did you develop such self-confidence?

NIBLEY: I didn't develop it. I started right out at the beginning that way. My first year at BYU, 1946, I was on the committee to organize faculty banquets where we would rib everybody. We would lampoon each other mercilessly in the name of spoofing. The sky was the limit. It was like some of the press banquets today. At BYU we don't do it anymore, however; we've started to take ourselves too seriously.

When I first came here, I went to a few of the apostles including J. Reuben Clark, Richard L. Evans, and John Widtsoe to ask if it would be better to remain lowkey, keep my nose clean, and avoid these things. The answer was always the same: That is the worst thing you could do. We've got to have some voices speaking out because everybody knows that all the virtue isn't on one side of what we're doing. Since then I haven't shifted one iota.

After Henry D. Moyle gave his first talk at BYU I told him that when he hit the podium, I heard a cash register ring. He laughed. He was a very wealthy man but he was frank and outspoken and we had wonderful talks.

My answer to all this is ask the Lord and he will tell you what to do as long as you behave yourself. Nothing in the world is more personal than that.

REVIEW: Do you feel we are as a people preparing ourselves for a Zion society?

NIBLEY: I don't know. I can't say because that is the Lord's work and not mine. It isn't my calling. I guess every man should counsel his brethren but I certainly have to be counseled as much as anybody. And as soon as you start talking with this or that person you realize that they are much nearer it than you are, and that goes for some of the Brethren.

I'm simply pointing out what the scriptures say. We're emphasizing the scriptures in Sunday School this year but our approach is extremely superficial. My answer to all this is to ask the Lord and he will tell you what to do as long as you behave yourself. Nothing in the world is more personal than that.

REVIEW: What are you working on now?

NIBLEY: I'm getting deeper and deeper into the old study. I'm more and more sure of sources. I've been collecting some marvelous stuff on Joseph Smith recently. I could say my testimony gets stronger every day. These scriptures are true, they are real. As the literature expands and associations turn up, you realize that all scholarship is comparative scholarship. There is no end.

I was in Independence, Missouri for the first time last month to give a talk. I went to Adam-ondi-Ahman and Haun's Mill. I was told that there is nothing to it, nothing

out there. Boy, they couldn't have been more wrong. Adam-ondi-Ahman is the real thing. I am absolutely sure of it.

REVIEW: Was that a spiritual witness?

NIBLEY: No. It was simply sizing up the territory. I made all these comparisons about the temple and decided it is the perfect setting for what is supposed to happen. The atmosphere was something extraordinary. Haun's Mill was a very haunting, eerie sort of place. The stream is a lugubrious, midwestern mudstream in a deep gully with trees on either side. Very depressing.

REVIEW: Are you doing much work with early Mormon texts?

NIBLEY: A lot of other people are doing that, making documents available now, for which I am extremely grateful. But no, I am mainly working with the inspired works, the scriptures. The woods are crawling with people who can do research on the early Church. I won't spend time on that. But what excites me is when Joseph starts to give us books of Abraham and Enoch and Adam and apocryphal writings and reconstructions of the New Testament and inspired translations of the Bible. Then you can go back to old sources and see if that is comparative, see if he has a leg to stand on. Once you start comparing, there is no end but it gives you such marvelous control over Joseph Smith and his critics. His timing was so perfect.