

“The Spirit of the Army”

BRUCE C. HAFEN

I welcome the BYU community to this gathering. All of us come here each year in prayerful anticipation, seeking the renewal of our perspective and our commitments. I am especially glad to see those who have just joined the BYU staff and faculty. We need you and we welcome you. Among you new ones, I welcome Brad Farnsworth and Alton Wade to their respective responsibilities as administrative vice president and Student Life vice president. I’m also thankful for R. J. Snow’s willingness to accept his new appointment as Advancement vice president after having served in Student Life with exceptional insight and affection these past four years. I express, too, my unbounded appreciation to Dee Anderson and Ron Hyde for their years of conscientious service to BYU, the Church Educational System, and the Church itself. We will miss Dee and Ron. For many productive years they have blessed and helped us all.

My assignment today is to introduce a major innovation at BYU—our accreditation self-study and long-term planning initiative. During the 1994–95 school year, this initiative will involve the entire university community at every level in a fresh and complete reexamination of our assumptions, our current strengths and weaknesses, and our future plans. The self-study portion of this project is required of us

every 10 years by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. However, the long-term planning portion is self-imposed. I will try to explain in a general way the origins, the process, and the purposes of this comprehensive undertaking.

I acknowledge at the outset that some people, and I’ve sometimes been in this category, view self-examination and strategic planning processes as at best a promise of boredom and at worst an occasion for cynicism (if not outright harm). After all, any realist knows that our ability to plan—let alone control—the future is dauntingly limited. As Joe Bob Briggs put it, “Hey—you’re born; you make up a bunch of goals and plans; you don’t do any of them. A bunch of stuff you didn’t think of comes along and makes you into something you didn’t want to be. You whine about being dysfunctional. You eat a lot of Mexican food. You die. This isn’t anything new. This is the way it’s always been. Get over it, OK? I don’t want to have to explain this again.”

Our interest in thinking strategically about BYU’s future reaches back to 1990, when

Bruce C. Hafen was the provost of Brigham Young University when this Annual University Conference address was delivered on 22 August 1994.

President Lee and I gave the BYU Board of Trustees a very long memorandum entitled "Refining BYU's Mission." This document sought the board's advice about such issues as the enrollment ceiling, admissions, academic freedom, timely graduation, employment standards, rank and status policies, the special needs of freshmen students, the need for a fund-raising campaign, and many other matters. In subsequent discussions, the board has also indicated to us its strong interest in developing a longer-term approach to budgeting at BYU—that is, a 3-to-5-year, or in some cases even a 10-year, projection of our budget needs rather than our traditional one-year-at-a-time approach.

As we began working on these issues, we felt the need to have a complete analysis of *all* our programs, so that our vision of the university's future would be both comprehensive and informed by reliable data. We found that a number of departments had already undertaken such zero-based reviews, often with great success. (Incidentally, in this year's project, past efforts of this kind should simply be utilized and updated reasonably. We would not ask departments to duplicate or to ignore their relevant past work.) So we organized a committee on long-term planning in the fall of 1991 and then announced here in 1992 the beginning of an informal planning process that was designed to help us learn how to develop a more coherent idea of our institutional direction and priorities. As a first step that year, we encouraged department-level discussions about the university's religious foundations. To that end, we distributed packets we called "founding documents" that contained prophetic teachings about BYU's most basic purposes. We consciously left the process of structuring these dialogues to departmental discretion, hoping to maximize voluntariness and spontaneity, which seemed to us essential. I hope you will revisit this same material as a source of perspective in this year's self-study.

We then decided to delay implementation of further comprehensive planning until now, when we knew that all units would need to do a self-study for our 10-year accreditation. We did ask departments last year to review the credit hours required in their academic programs because the timely graduation initiative had become so urgent. But we knew those would be limited reviews. Now it is time to begin the self-study to prepare for the accrediting team that will visit here in early 1996. In addition, we announce today the beginning of a university-wide initiative designed not only to answer the questions required by our general accrediting body, but also to refine our collective visions of BYU's purposes and the role of each academic and academic-support unit in achieving those purposes.

We have appointed Jim Kearn of the Economics Department to chair what is turning out to be a very strong self-study and planning committee. The committee reports to the Academic Vice President's Council and the President's Council through a three-person coordinating team composed of Jim Kearn, Associate Academic Vice President Alan Wilkins, and myself. Bob Webb will continue in his role as BYU's official liaison with our accrediting agency. Jim, Alan, and I have spent a good deal of time together over the past several months in literature reviews and consultations that have informed the process we have recommended. We will continue to consult with the best experts we can find, but this will be BYU's own project, directed by appropriate university officials who are fully engaged in the process. Each vice president, dean, director, and chair is the person responsible for managing the self-study and planning matters within his or her own unit, with ongoing support from the university committee.

Tomorrow Alan and Jim will explain our project to the faculty, then the university committee will distribute the review instruments to the appropriate campus leaders. During fall

semester, each academic unit will analyze its historical origins and current status. During winter semester, the academic units will then develop a well-informed concept about their future role. Under the committee's direction and with broad faculty input, we will concurrently develop a list of criteria to use in evaluating academic programs. Then we will evaluate each program according to those criteria—first a self-analysis by each unit, then a review by the university committee. We will take these evaluations into account in developing our future institutional priorities. The academic support units will also begin their self-studies now, but won't need to complete their longer-term plans until they have a chance to see the academic priorities that emerge next spring. Despite differences in roles, we regard the work of all university departments, academic or academic support, as having equal significance in this process.

We are also taking two steps to join these unit-level efforts with some institution-level analysis. First, at the urging of the academic deans and drawing on successful planning processes at other universities, we have developed a brief statement of existing board and institutional policies that define the general parameters—the “givens”—within which this year's self-study and planning will proceed. During 1994–95 we will amplify this statement until it becomes a complete, even if still general, statement of the university's priorities for the next five years and beyond. This statement will then act as something of a “functional” or “operational” university mission statement that reflects the outcome of the self-study and planning efforts of the entire campus. In developing this statement we will seek extensive input from both the university community and the BYU Board of Trustees.

As a second university-level step, we are creating a task force on institutional priorities that will assess BYU's external environment along with its institutional strengths and weak-

nesses. During fall semester, this group will find meaningful ways to involve the campus community in its deliberations. This dialogue will feed into our drafting of the operational mission statement. This task force will include members of the self-study committee and selected administrators, among others. We will report the work of this group to the campus at a midwinter meeting in early January. Then, during winter semester, within the framework that by then exists, we will assign several additional task forces to develop recommendations in key institutional areas, such as religious and general education, organizational structures, programs that reach out to the entire Church membership, admissions, international directions, and possible new program areas. The reports from these groups will then be combined with the evaluations of the academic programs to form an overall set of priorities that we will recommend to the board of trustees.

Now, I realize that all of this activity will consume a great deal of precious energy and time. I know that it will impose significant new burdens; so why are we doing it? I expect four specific results. One result will be a serious and orderly dialogue all across the campus about the distinctive nature and purpose of the university and its programs. That conversation, in all its variations, will itself be among the best fruits of our collective efforts.

A second result will be a thoughtfully articulated statement of priorities that will influence decisions about space, budgets, hiring, enrollment, and other resource allocation issues for the next several years. Some of this reallocation process will be internal to specific units, which will eventually be asked, with appropriate financial incentives, to improve the fit between their resources and their newly clarified priorities.

The third result will be a framework against which future evaluations will occur, thereby enabling a process of continuous improvement

in everything we do. The initiative we launch this fall will thus create not just a snapshot of BYU, but a motion picture—a continuing “MRI” of the university’s inner workings that will establish greater accountability, more rational institutional decision making, and—in short—a more excellent university.

As a fourth result, this process allows us to define and control BYU’s future destiny. We will do this by creating, as a community, a set of shared and coherent expectations between the board, the faculty, staff, students, and external BYU audiences. This level of harmony and increased communication can help develop the unity we need to invite the Lord’s spirit more fully into our campus life. It will also help ensure that Brigham Young University becomes a thriving part of the Church’s future and not just a relic of its Great Basin past. By the turn of the century, BYU must be the Church’s newly reborn child of promise, not a withered image of Father Time whose era has come and gone.

Against this background, I would now like to sketch the conceptual framework within which our self-study will begin. The first element in that framework is the current BYU Mission Statement, published in our catalogs and widely available. It was developed under the able direction of President Jeffrey Holland and Provost Jae Ballif and approved by the board in 1981. We today reaffirm that eloquent description of BYU’s basic purposes.

The second element of the conceptual framework is an important new university statement that we’re calling the “1994 Policy Summary,” which summarizes five key areas of university policy that have been developed or clarified within the BYU community under the direction of the BYU Board of Trustees since 1989. Because this summary provides primary institutional context for the entire self-study and planning process, we will distribute it in printed form with the University Mission Statement and the self-study documents. I will

now share its language with you as a way of launching our institutional self-study. As I do, it should be obvious to you that not every phrase here applies in the same way to everyone who works at BYU. This language is deliberately general, and it will be expanded and illustrated as we develop a longer operational mission statement during the coming year. Also, the Policy Summary focuses for now primarily on faculty and student issues, because our project’s natural sequence begins with the academic units and then invites the academic support units to respond to the clarified academic priorities. I will read each of five statements, followed in each case by a few subparts.

1. BYU aspires to excellence in both its religious and its academic missions. To compromise either part is to undermine its institutional purpose.

a. The presence of the best-prepared students, faculty, and staff in BYU’s history creates an environment of high spiritual and intellectual quality. Both anti-intellectual and anti-Church attitudes are misplaced here. Neither a mediocre university nor a spiritually half-hearted one will help the church fulfill its expanding mission. We are conscious of the history of many other church-related universities, where growing academic aspirations have often become associated with reduced denominational loyalties. We are also conscious of the history of many smaller church-related colleges that have minimized their academic aspirations as a way of emphasizing their religious priorities. BYU will choose neither of these paths. Rather, we embrace the difficult but promising task of combining genuine religious faith and serious intellectual effort. This combination of commitments represents the best possible way to teach and learn.

b. Therefore, all faculty, staff, and students should engage their academic and professional tasks with a sense of rigor and intensity that represents the very best in the historic role of American universities.

c. Scholarly work at BYU should frequently integrate religious perspectives with the perspectives of a faculty member's discipline. However, integration of this kind requires real rigor in both the religious and the disciplinary dimensions, lest the integration appear to devalue either the religious or the academic field, or both.

d. The university community should model the attributes of Zion, seeking a spirit of charity and mutual respect in all personal and professional relationships, including those between students and faculty, staff and faculty, men and women, members and nonmembers of the Church, and people from differing national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

2. BYU is a national, academically selective, undergraduate teaching university offering both liberal arts and occupational degrees, with sufficiently strong graduate programs and research work to be a major university.

a. The ratio of undergraduate to graduate students will be maintained at approximately 90-10 for the entire university, although there will necessarily be variations within individual units. We expect both the graduate and undergraduate programs to be very strong.

b. The enrollment ceiling of 27,000 full-time students is fixed.

c. BYU aspires to be a leading teaching university that cares deeply about the quality of its faculty scholarship. Thus it firmly supports research and creative work and intends to maintain substantially the present proportion of university expenditures devoted to support for research, whether in space, equipment, personnel, or general overhead.

3. The continuing support of the Church for BYU when an ever-diminishing proportion of qualified LDS students can attend underscores the need for BYU to remain very close to its sponsoring Church.

a. Tithing will continue to supply most of the university's operating budget, consciously creating a sense of accountability to the tithe payers and leaders of the Church.

b. Admissions and hiring policies will emphasize Church loyalty. We want to admit and hire those who are most likely to contribute to and draw from BYU's unique religious and educational purposes. Non-LDS people who are admitted or hired have equal value with all others in the community.

c. Admissions criteria will emphasize both religious and academic preparation. We then will select from among those best prepared the ones who are most likely to use a BYU education to influence others for good.

d. BYU will attempt to teach and graduate as many students as possible within its enrollment ceiling while at the same time improving its educational quality. Toward that end, we will attempt to make more effective use of our year-round academic program.

e. BYU will seek to share its educational and spiritual resources with the Church.

f. The university's academic freedom policies are essential to preserve the freedom to explore and learn within a context that supports the mission of the Church.

4. The most important responsibility of faculty and staff is to enhance each student's BYU experience. Adding to the student's understanding and personal growth is the university's highest purpose.

a. No task will have higher priority than good teaching. The best teaching is informed and stimulated by continuing scholarship.

b. The university will have a special concern for freshmen and other inexperienced students.

c. Our concern will be for the total development of each student, neither just the academic nor simply the religious dimension.

d. All faculty should be concerned with the quality of religious education, general education, and student life. Academic departments

should not focus narrowly on their major students at the expense of these broader needs.

5. Faculty are the soul of the university. We must continue to improve our ability to hire and develop faculty who are highly qualified to foster BYU's distinctive mission.

a. Ideally, each faculty member will combine mutually invigorating teaching and scholarship with a strong commitment to and understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Such faculty offer unique gifts to students, the university, their discipline, the Church, and society. BYU will continue to encourage and reward high-quality teaching.

b. Excellent scholarship helps faculty members strengthen their teaching, giving it life, currency, and perspective. All faculty should engage in demanding intellectual activity that satisfies this purpose. Many faculty will also do original scholarly and creative work of such quality that it produces new knowledge, enhances the reputation of BYU and the Church, includes students in superior research projects, and attracts other strong faculty to seek affiliation with us. BYU will continue to encourage and reward high-quality scholarship.

c. Because disciplines differ and faculty members have diverse gifts and are in varying seasons of their careers, we will accommodate reasonable differences in approach to scholarship among the disciplines and among individual faculty. The degree of appropriate variation in individual faculty assignments increases when one has earned continuing status.

That concludes the Policy Summary. I now want to invite your support for a few specific points about this year's initiative.

First, the accreditation process deserves to be taken seriously. American colleges and universities have been criticized more harshly in the last few years than in many prior decades. Former Harvard President Derek Bok has accurately described the primary reason for

this criticism: "The public has finally come to believe that our leading universities are not making the education of students [their] top priority." One sign of this inattention to the student experience is that higher education has failed to "examine the effectiveness of [its] educational programs. . . . [U]niversities are eager to do research on every institution except themselves" (Bok, "Reclaiming the Public Trust," *Change*, July / August 1992, p. 13). Hence, we are seeing a new national interest in the "assessment" of educational outcomes. This is a new and major component in our own impending accreditation review. Moreover, when they ask about teaching loads, research support, or rising tuitions, the public and many governing boards (including our own) are no longer satisfied with what Bok calls academic "platitudes." Our self-study is an important opportunity to explain and assess our work in substantive and well-documented ways.

The public's confidence has been further reduced by a few proprietary colleges and other schools that have abused federal student aid programs. As a result, the U.S. Department of Education has recently adopted new guidelines designed ostensibly to regulate such abuse. But the federal approach clearly suggests that the responsibility for accrediting higher education could shift from a private, peer-review process to public governmental regulation. As many educational leaders have noted recently, and we join our voices with theirs, such a shift would be a devastating change in national policy. It would be especially dangerous for Church-related higher education. One way to resist the arguments for this kind of change is to show that higher education can keep its own house in order. Taking accreditation seriously helps to do that.

As a distinctive university, BYU has nothing to fear from the current approach to its general accreditation. From my experience as a former member of the body that accredits us, I know of the esteem in which our educational

program is held. Ours is clearly one of the best-regarded institutions in the entire region. I have also seen firsthand the genuine respect that group holds for our religious nature and affiliation. Those people see BYU as an exemplary source of educational strength, not as a place that needs to apologize for itself. I welcome the chance to verify the soundness of our programs—not only for BYU’s sake, but to help demonstrate that higher education can regulate itself.

Second, we begin this year’s process with the enormous advantage of a widely shared general vision about Brigham Young University. For that reason, some parts of the 1994 Policy Summary describe what BYU is *not*, in addition to describing what it *is*. Since we can’t move in 360 directions at once, restating a few present boundaries that establish our 90-degree quadrant leaves departments and colleges free to develop their own aspirations about the roles they can best play within that preexisting sphere. Knowing what the university *won’t* do allows greater focus for a unit to describe what it *will* do.

Third, I ask you to engage this process in ways that move beyond traditional frameworks. One of higher education’s serious contemporary challenges is that the boundaries between the disciplines are breaking down, and new approaches are cutting across academic fields with surprising speed. In addition, changes within particular fields are occurring so rapidly that many seasoned faculty have a hard time staying current in their narrow subfields, let alone in an entire discipline. Moreover, much of what BYU seeks to do for its students—and for society—extends well beyond specialized boundaries. Departmental faculties simply must think about the broad experiences of our students, whether in interdisciplinary endeavors, in General Education, in Religious Education, in cocurricular experience, or in the experiences that await them when they leave us and the disciplines keep

changing. Only by thinking on this scale will we understand the issues that could persuade us to undertake significant structural change as we organize our future curriculum and academic programs.

In this regard, if you identify areas of concern during these next few months that clearly call for the involvement of an interdisciplinary or institution-wide task force, you should make a proposal to the Self-Study and Planning Committee. As mentioned earlier, we already plan to organize several task forces on major university issues, and we invite your help in contributing to the work of those groups.

Fourth, we need to examine not only the content of our programs but also the quality of our basic organizational processes and personal interaction, formal and informal, all across the campus. We can’t review every process at once, but we can begin by identifying a few significant process areas, review their history, examine our record, plan for improvements, and then monitor our future progress. Just to take one example, as the Policy Summary suggests, the university has long since assigned high priority to concerns about gender and about men-women relationships. In what I hope will initiate our self-study on these issues, we recently asked the BYU Equal Employment Opportunity Office to summarize all of the recommendations that have been made in the last 20 years by university committees dealing with gender issues. When this summary was completed, we asked for a report on all of the action the university has taken to implement these recommendations during those same two decades. As Carolyn Lloyd-Henrie, Darlene Kelly, and Charleen Cutler helped us review our past record, we learned a great deal that was very helpful to us. Our analysis of this report is not yet completed, but we can already see that an approach of this kind will help us isolate specific needs we want to address.

A fifth observation—good planning at any level identifies the key current factors in an organization’s internal and external environment. For academic departments, these factors include such obvious things as what is happening with student interests, employment markets, the professions, and the academic disciplines. Institutionally, no environmental factor is more important than the historical development of the Church. Much of what we have done for years at BYU grows out of historical assumptions that may not always apply in the future, so we must examine the assumptions on which current programs are based to see if they are still relevant to the Church’s future.

For example, at a time of unprecedented Church growth, our BYU Board of Trustees has determined that it will maintain a 27,000-student enrollment limit here and it will not establish other campuses. As a result, the old Church academy model of educating all the young people who wish to attend a Church college is no longer relevant, not only here but throughout the Church Educational System. For years BYU was able to turn away student applicants who weren’t prepared to succeed in university work. But now we must turn away many who are fully prepared, spiritually and academically. This circumstance forces us to clarify the BYU mission. If the Church can have only one university as it enters the 21st century, what kind of university will help the Church most and why? Dean Clayne Pope has argued persuasively that this recent shift from an open university to a restrictive one heightens BYU’s symbolic role in demonstrating the consistency between religious faith and intellectual achievement. As Clayne put it, “We cannot fill this role if we are second-rate academically. What symbolic point do we make if we combine faith and second-rate scholarship?” Stated another way, Elder Neal A. Maxwell has stated that a mediocre university cannot help the

Church enter the nations of the world the way a superb university can.

Sixth, I wish to underscore the point made in the Policy Summary that we should be concerned above all with what our students experience here, especially our freshmen. John Tanner and Todd Britsch recently reported to the board of trustees on some initiatives we have been developing here to strengthen our programs for “the freshmen year.” You’ll be hearing more about that as time goes on. As John described for the board the incredible potential as well as the poignant vulnerability of BYU freshmen, I felt the entire board resonating deeply to our desire to improve the experience of those young men and women on our campus. In what was for me an especially tender moment at the end of this meeting, the Apostle who was called upon to say the closing prayer offered the Lord a heartfelt plea. He said something like this: “Please bless the BYU freshmen. And please bless the faculty and the staff that they will care about the freshmen.” I’m thankful that so many of you have caught this same spirit by joining our new freshmen mentoring program this fall and demonstrating what so many have long done so well at BYU in nurturing and reaching out to every student who comes here.

Seventh, we need to adopt a truly inclusive, comprehensive approach if we are to improve the quality of our teaching, our learning, our scholarship, and our working environment. I don’t know where to place this issue in a self-study instrument. It cuts across all the other issues on the list. For some years now I have felt, as I think many of you have, that too many of us at BYU are preoccupied with just one side of several narrowly drawn and often false dichotomies: teaching vs. research, elitism vs. populism, Church values vs. academic values, student interests vs. faculty interests, the interests of the academic areas vs. those of the support areas. After puzzling over the tensions so often created by these arguments and concerns

and the claims of mixed institutional messages about them, I believe it will help us if each member of the university community could look beyond his or her self-interested view toward a broader, institutional perspective.

In a related vein, as we undertake this significant exercise in constructive self-criticism, we must also learn to be both honest critics and loyal critics, rather than believing as some have seemed to do that we must choose between being honest about BYU and being loyal to BYU. Consider these lines from John W. Gardner: "Twentieth-century institutions were caught in a savage cross fire between uncritical lovers and unloving critics. On the one side, those who loved their institutions tended to smother them in the embrace of death, loving their rigidities more than their promise and shielding them from life-giving criticism. On the other side, there arose a breed of critics without love, skilled in demolition but untutored in the arts by which human institutions are nurtured and strengthened and made to flourish." I look forward to a self-examination this year and beyond that is both very honest and very loyal.

Eighth, we expect this to be an open, participatory process that will significantly influence future decisions. We plan to share with the campus community what is going on at each stage, and we ask each department to engage all its members in the year's discussions. In addition, please know that the administration is deeply committed to using the outcomes from this process in its policy and operational decisions. The administration has taken the initiative on this matter. This isn't something that others are trying to persuade us is worth doing. We think it's worth doing and have thought so for some time. This will not be a hollow exercise.

Now a final perspective, not only on the self-study initiative, but on life at BYU in general these days. If I might turn the phrase we heard from this pulpit recently from Justice

Sandra Day O'Connor: Now that I've given my talk, I'd like to say something. During the past year or so I have found myself in private conversations with many close BYU friends about the university and its future. Among other things, we have talked about the rumors and the news stories that have swirled around the campus and the Church. One friend captured a common theme of these conversations when he said to me, "All of my professional life I have believed in the possibility and in the blessings of building a truly first-rate university that is fully dedicated to the leadership and the values of the Church. But today I don't know if the idea of BYU can really work."

He and I exchanged glances that somehow reflected the weight of our both having invested so much of our careers, our time, our means, and our energy in this place we care about so much. Then in various ways we said to one another, I suppose that whether the idea of BYU works is basically up to us, to people like you and like me. The "grand experiment" of which President Hinckley spoke isn't going to happen all by itself. Sometimes it feels like there is some adverse force at work, trying to pull our dreams apart. Perhaps that is because we are often dealing with the contrary elements of a large and powerful paradox—elements in apparent contradiction and natural tension, elements like personal freedom and submission to authority, the life of the mind and the life of the spirit, an educational world colored red and a Church world colored blue. But when we actively wrap our arms around this paradox and lovingly but knowingly hold its forces together in productive equilibrium, the BYU idea works. We have seen it work time after time, and its blessings are worth every ounce of strength it takes to clasp our arms around the dream and hold on to it—if need be, when we "stretch forth [our arms] all the day long" (see Jacob 6:4).

Not long after this conversation, another friend asked how much I thought the BYU

administration could do to hold together our collective paradox. I told him I could see only a modest role for any administration in a university so large and so complex. Then he asked about my confidence in BYU's future, and immediately I saw a connection between his question and a strong impression I had had just the night before. I replied to him with honest serenity that I have never been more optimistic about the future of BYU. And then I described for him the idea that made me feel as I do. Leo Tolstoy called it "the spirit of the army."

For my late-night escape reading over the last several months I've been enjoying *War and Peace*. After several nights of following Napoleon's seemingly irresistible advances deep into Russian territory, the part I read the night before I saw my friend described a furious struggle not far from Moscow in which the Russian army battled the French army to what looked at best like a bloody draw. This was the Battle of Borodino, which Tolstoy saw as the turning point of the great 1812 war because it effectively broke the back of Napoleon's army, shifting the overall momentum to favor the Russians.

When the Russian commander, Kutuzov, was deciding whether to launch a new attack immediately after this battle, Tolstoy wrote about the old general: "When [he listened] to the reports it seemed as if he were not interested in the words being spoken, but rather in something else—in the expression of face and tone of voice of those who were reporting. By long years of military experience [Kutuzov] knew that the result of a battle is decided not by the orders of a commander in chief, nor the place where the troops are stationed, nor by the number of cannon or of slaughtered men, but by that intangible force called the spirit of the army, and he watched this force and guided it insofar as that was in his power."

Both armies had lost thousands of men at Borodino. Kutuzov's top advisors believed the battle was lost, and they pressed him to

retreat, as his men had done after every previous encounter with Napoleon. But Kutuzov, informed as much by intuition as by reports from the field, announced his intention to attack the next morning. He sensed that his men knew their backs were against the symbolic wall of Moscow, and he had felt them rally in some profound inner way. So Kutuzov stunned his military strategists with his order to attack the next day: "[The French] are repulsed everywhere, for which I thank God and our brave army! The enemy is beaten, and tomorrow we shall drive him from the sacred soil of Russia," said Kutuzov, crossing himself, and he suddenly sobbed as his eyes filled with tears."

Then, writes Tolstoy, "[B]y means of that mysterious indefinable bond which maintains throughout an army one and the same temper, known as 'the spirit of the army,' and which constitutes the chief sinew of war, Kutuzov's words, his order for a battle next day, immediately became known from one end of the army to the other.

"It was far from being the same words or the same order that reached the farthest links of that chain. The tales passing from mouth to mouth at different ends of the army did not even resemble what Kutuzov had said, but the sense of his words spread everywhere, because what he said was not the outcome of cunning calculations, but of a feeling that lay in [his] soul as [it did in the soul] of every other Russian.

"And on learning that tomorrow they were to attack the enemy, and hearing from the highest quarters a confirmation of what they wanted to believe, the exhausted, wavering men felt comforted and inspirited" (Norton Critical Edition, Maude Translation [New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1966], pp. 898–902).

Tolstoy's theory of history was that we "must leave aside kings, ministers, and generals, and study the common, infinitesimally small elements by which the masses are moved" (p. 920). Thus Tolstoy believed it was

not superior strategy or charismatic leadership but the all-pervading “simplicity, goodness, and truth” of the Russian people and their army—even amid their weaknesses—that “defeated a power that did not respect simplicity and that acted out of evil and falseness” (p. 1382, commentary by Nikolai Strakhov).

J. Reuben Clark reflected a similar conviction when he paid tribute to the Mormon pioneers in a classic address given in 1947—the hundredth anniversary of the pioneers’ entering the Salt Lake Valley. He spoke of those of “the last wagon,” who came to these valleys after 1847: “I would not take away one word of praise from the mighty men [who directed] the conquest of [this] wilderness. [But] the building of this empire was not done in a corner by a select few, but by this vast multitude flowing in from many nations. These humble souls measured to their calling and to their destiny as fully as Brother Brigham and the others measured to theirs, and God will so reward them.”

The pioneers had the spirit of the army. So do the faculty, the staff, and the students who are here and now coming to BYU—not just selected, but also self-selected, from among the Saints of the Most High all across the globe, moved by a heavenly power to gather to this educational Zion. Recently a non-LDS professor from a Japanese university spent a week on this campus, talking with, eating with, and watching our students and our faculty. As he left here he said to me, “I have never seen such a place. I must know the mystery behind all their shining eyes.” That mystery is the spirit of the army of Israel, a spirit of simplicity, goodness, and truth that animates this community every day. Those who criticize the Latter-day Saints for blindly following their leaders have no idea about the origin and meaning of this spirit. They simply cannot understand that those shining eyes are not “the outcome of cunning calculations” but are the fruits of intensely personal convictions developed through thousands of private stories and struggles.

When I read Tolstoy that late evening, I sensed that his description of the spirit of the army was a description of the BYU community, and I thanked God for my association with you. And when my friend asked me the next day for my feelings about BYU’s future, what I had read the night before rushed back to me. He probably wondered why I was so moved. My enormous confidence in the future of this place derives from my confidence in the individuals who form this community. As was always true at BYU, the most important things that happen here are not just the visible events and speeches; they also include the private, even sacred, experiences of individuals, often in interaction with one or two other people: moments of discovery, moments of meaning, moments of love.

Now that doesn’t mean that leadership is irrelevant at BYU—of course we need our leaders’ guidance. We need their support and institutional judgments. Especially from our board of trustees we need Church perspectives and divine revelation. But one of a leader’s primary tasks at BYU, I believe, is to be worthy of, to watch, to guide, and to sustain the spirit of the army—“insofar as that is within his [or her] power.” The new self-study project is just one way of trying to do that. I want you to know that I can understand and feel myself at times the mild skepticism that others feel about the limitations of organizational jargon and planning projects. But I am not skeptical about the ultimate purpose and opportunity of this process, which is to help build a better BYU, a place that is worthy of its association with the Latter-day Saints and the kingdom of God.

Whether the subject is strategic planning or some other institutional need, I agree with Tolstoy that “the differential of history” consists in “the individual tendencies of men” and women. And it is only in “finding the sum of these infinitesimals” that we will ever discover the community’s sense of direction (p. 918). Thus, in our self-study or anything

else, nothing matters more to me than simply discerning, developing, and wisely supporting the collective vision of BYU that already lies embedded within each of our souls. That was Kutuzov's hope, and it is mine.

We will always be buffeted by our communications failures, our personal weaknesses, and the influence of those who misunderstand what we're trying to build here. But, brothers and sisters, there really is a spirit that connects us. It is a powerful, deep, brooding, elevating spirit; and it is worth whatever effort it takes to discern and nourish it. I can't imagine Tolstoy's notion of the spirit of the army ever meaning more than it means right here. And when I consider everything I know about the sum of the personal parts of this community, I feel like singing for joy: "Hope of Israel, Zion's army, children of the promised day!"

When those familiar words come to mind, I also remember another source of support for whatever we try to do at BYU in righteousness—the spirit of that army that bolsters us from beyond the veil. You will recall the frightened young servant who asked Elisha, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" And Elisha answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And

Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (2 Kings 6:15–17).

Who are those horsemen? When do they come, and where do they go? Would they support the spirit of the army at BYU? They must not be very far away, for they have come again in the modern age. Not long before the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith's scribe saw "in a vision, the armies of heaven protecting the Saints in their return to Zion." The next day, the heavens were opened to Elder Sylvester Smith, and he exclaimed, "The horsemen of Israel and the chariots thereof" (*History of the Church* 2:381, 383).

I testify that as long as we individually with all our might hold the dream of BYU together in our arms, in simplicity, goodness, and truth, then in our personal lives and in the life of this community, the spirit of the armies of heaven will always be with us. Perhaps in part through them, may the Lord always "give us strength according to our faith" (Alma 14:26). I say this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.