

Week Ending Friday, June 10, 1994

**Statement on the Death of Ezra Taft Benson**

*May 31, 1994*

It was with sadness that I learned today of the passing of Ezra Taft Benson, who served our country and his church with ceaseless dedication over a long life productively lived.

It is no accident that one of Mr. Benson's most famous books emphasized in its words and thoughts the three values his life best represented—church, God, and country. He was a leader of his church for five decades, he preached with passion for unity, solidarity, and responsibility within the family, and he served ably in the Eisenhower administration as Agriculture Secretary.

As we celebrate D-Day and the liberation of Europe, it is important to remember that Mr. Benson was the first representative of his church to reenter post-war Europe, where he distributed aid and lifted the spirits of thousands of survivors.

His friends and fellow believers remind us tonight that Ezra Taft Benson was a lifelong scout, a strong defender of the Constitution, the creator of the soil bank, a religious man who expanded the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and someone who believed and preached the idea that families come first.

We rejoice in his service, we remember his life, and we extend our heartfelt sympathies to his family, his church, and his admirers worldwide.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Text of Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by President Oscar Scalfaro of Italy in Rome**

*June 3, 1994*

Mr. President and distinguished guests, the British historian Trevelyan wrote of General Garibaldi that he would live on as “the incarnate symbol of two passions not likely soon to die out of the world, the love of country and the love of freedom.” As we commemorate this 50th anniversary of the events that returned freedom to your great country, I want to praise the work you have done, Mr. President, as also embodying your commitment to the freedom-loving Italian people and the democratic Italian state.

Italy's transformation over the past half century is a modern miracle. From the ruins of World War II, it has become one of the world's great economies, an anchor of transatlantic security, and a sturdy democracy, which, like our own, is renewing its strength by pursuing reforms.

As we gather this week to pay special homage to those whose courage, vision, and sacrifice helped to create and sustain a republican Italy and a Western alliance of democratic nations, the United States salutes you, Mr. President, for your past and present efforts to safeguard Italian democracy. Mr. President, on behalf of the American people, who share so many bonds of kinship and fellowship with the Italian people, I offer a toast to you and to your country: *Viva L'Italia!*

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