

SUNSTONE

JAMES ADEN, LYNN ENGLAND, MURIEL CORNWELL ON WISDOM BEYOND GATES
By Lynn England "Widely Admired Not Far From Right"

THIRD WORLD STRATEGIES TOWARD ZION
 WARNER WOODWORTH



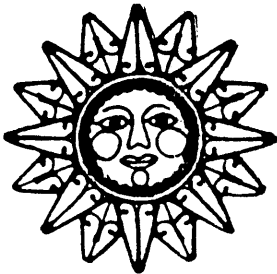
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Cover *Brian Bean*

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READERS' FORUM

CORRECTION

OPS. IN OUR list of the six published volumes of the planned sesquicentennial Church history, we only listed four ("What Became of the Sixteen-volume Church History?" (SUNSTONE 14:3). All six volumes in chronological order are: *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* by Richard Bushman (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1984); *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio* by Milton V. Backman (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1983); *Establishing Zion: The Mormon Church in the American West, 1847-1869* by Eugene E. Campbell (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988); *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* by Thomas G. Alexander (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1986); *Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture* by F. Lamond Tullis (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987); and *Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific* by R. Lanier Britsch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1986).

TALKING ABOUT THE TEMPLE

TWO ITEMS IN recent issues have given me reason to wonder about the line between appropriate and inappropriate talk about the temple ceremony. One was the news report, "Comments on Temple Changes Elicit Church Discipline" (SUNSTONE 14:3) The other was the article by Keith Norman on popular misunderstanding of "blood atonement" in the church, in which he alluded to the endowment ritual ("A Kinder Gentler Mormonism: Moving Beyond the Violence of Our Past," SUNSTONE 14:4).

Church leaders are legitimately concerned about conduct of members, and an interview to ask for an accounting is surely appropriate. It is only when the interview implies or involves an adverse judgment that a real issue arises. Such a judgment may be based on correct or erroneous perception of motive or conduct.

The newspaper quotations SUNSTONE reported, expressing pleasure at the changes in the ceremony, appear to have been intend-

ed as positive comments. If I had been asked by a reporter for comment, I might have said much the same thing. It would be unfortunate if comment were left to only critics and official spokespersons.

It would be sad if adverse judgment were based on some notion that pleasure at change equals criticism, because the fact of change establishes that the Presidency also believed there was room for improvement. It is in the nature of the Church to expect and welcome change, since the Church is a living institution, not a static one, and the endowment will continue to be reshaped under inspiration to suit time and place.

It is not disloyal to suggest that the Church might benefit from changes. Neither leaders nor practices are perfect. That is evident from our history. And I have never known a leader who would say otherwise. Indeed, the existence of an appellate process for Church discipline acknowledges the fallibility of our best efforts to be just. Our ultimate loyalty is to God; loyalty to leaders and organization is derivative. "Supporting the brethren" is not to cease thinking or making suggestions, but to have as one's attitude a humble desire to be helpful.

Sometimes ideas for change come to the leaders directly, sometimes they come from the followers. I recall asking President Kimball about how the consolidated meeting schedule had come about and he said, "We received a letter from a man in Iowa. . . ." Indeed, it is a responsibility of the people to continue to communicate their best, most creative thoughts, so long as they can avoid a spirit of haughty self-assurance. All ideas will not be of equal value, nor will they necessarily be adopted even if good, since many factors must be considered. I have made my share of suggestions, any one of which were received in friendly fashion. Most of them seem to have been politely ignored—but for all I know they were carefully weighed and found wanting. In any event, I felt entitled to express a view, because my motive was to help.

Now, to the specific subject of the uncertainty about what can properly be said about the temple ceremonies. In my view, the Saints are left without clear guidance. There is no doubt that specific symbols are not to be divulged, but beyond that there is only a

general sense that one ought not say much. I have heard people I respect say more than I am comfortable with and heard others be much more guarded than I thought necessary.

I believe that overall we talk too little about the temple, rather than too much. I was heartened when a general authority visitor to our stake conference expressed the same view, emphasizing that people should go to the temple more knowledgeable about what they would find there.

As bishop I felt an obligation to help persons going for their endowment be better prepared than I was. The temple ceremony was so far removed from anything I had experienced in the Church that I had very great difficulty assimilating it. And I know others have had similar reactions. I also found myself expected to make covenants that I had not anticipated.

As bishop I explained that the temple ritual is highly symbolic and quite different from the mode of worship church-goers had experienced. Most of it would be left unexplained, requiring individual meditation to seek out meanings and after many years I continue to struggle for understanding. I also explained the covenants one must be prepared to make. We covenant generally to

live the gospel, but some aspects, such as the law of chastity, are made explicit. The one covenant that goes beyond most people's understanding of "living the gospel" needs to be anticipated so that it can be made earnestly and not lightly. That is the covenant to commit all one has to the kingdom. Few if any of us keep that covenant fully, but at least we are expected to hold that as our firm objective.

For those who had little experience in the Church, I explained about the garment. I did not feel I needed to talk much about temple clothing, but I would not have hesitated, since the clothing is on display in the open casket at the funeral of any faithful Latter-day Saint.

There is no real secret concerning details of the temple ceremonies—baptism, endowment, sealing, washing, anointing, temple garments, signs, tokens, and key words—they have all been published and republished. I explained, however, that it is much preferable to learn those details through experience rather than by reading unauthorized accounts.

The dilemma of knowing how much it is proper to say is heightened by the fact that although discussion of the ceremony is said to be proper inside the temple, there is no real opportunity for that. The temple is a place for ordinances and there is no private place in

the temple for individuals to engage in discussion or even prayer. A whispered conversation in the celestial room is the extent of opportunity for ordinary Saints, and that is an awkward time and place for such discussion. It is my understanding that temple presidencies no longer engage in question and answer sessions, as they once did.

Keith Norman, in his article, does not intend to disclose what he promised to hold secret, and I believe in a literal sense he has not, but he does give more detail than I am comfortable with. That points out the problem. The line is a difficult one to draw, and I believe the ultimate issue ought to be motive.

I am sorry that Norman's article may be seen only as one about the temple, because it is really the vehicle for making a legitimate suggestion—that the Church might benefit greatly by explicit renunciation of blood atonement as a doctrine.

It appears that Norman is unaware that something close to the renunciation he hoped for does exist. Unfortunately, it is not widely known. In 1978, at the request of the First Presidency, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote a letter for publication about blood atonement. The letter is quoted extensively in Martin Gardner's article, "Mormonism and Capital



"Another change in the temple ceremony. . . . You will consecrate and dedicate everything to her in case of a divorce"

Punishment" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12:1 (1979), 16-19). Elder McConkie wrote,

We do not believe that it is necessary for men in this day to shed their own blood to receive a remission of sins. This is said with a full awareness of what I and others have written and said on this subject in times past.

. . . You asked if the statements of our leaders of the past . . . represent the official stand of the Church. . . . [T]hey do not. The statements pertain to a theoretical principle that has been neither revealed to nor practiced by us.

I appreciate SUNSTONE's providing a forum for sometimes controversial ideas. I recognize that not everyone shares my attitude, but I believe your availability as a means of expression is important for the health of the Mormon community.

EDWARD L. KIMBALL
Provo, UT

TRANSCENDING HOMOSEXUALITY

ORSON SCOTT CARD'S "The Hypocrites of Homosexuality" (SUNSTONE 14:1)

remains a courageous and clearly expressed critique of current movements within and without the Church to mainstream homosexuality as an equally viable alternative to Heterosexuality. It is not! In spite of the rameumptomping letters by Marty Beaudet and others (SUNSTONE 14:3 and 14:4), homosexuality continues to be viewed by the leadership of the Church as a test to be transcended (see Elder Boyd K. Packer's 7 October 1990 conference address).

As one who has personally transcended same sex attraction and is happily married, I applaud the charge of disobedience that Card levels against the gay community. True, he does not make a clear distinction between orientation and behavior, but he clearly expresses his willingness to accept "repentant homosexuals" within the brotherhood of the gospel and society. It is not homophobic to eschew homosexual behavior and attempt to institutionalize that prohibition while still accepting the person who may have same-sex desires but doesn't act on them.

Arnold Loveridge's letter ("Inclining to Carving Acts," SUNSTONE 14:3) is commendable for its tolerance and thoughtfulness; however, he is misinformed. Homosexual orientation can be changed through reparative therapy, and I would encourage all members of the Church so inclined to avail themselves of the

opportunity to "repent" of homosexuality. As a member of the Evergreen Foundation, I witness changes in sexual orientation daily, and I am not the only one who has achieved complete freedom from same sex desires.

Chris Allen's review of the recent "You Don't Have to Be Gay" conference ("Conference on Changing Gay Orientation Stirs Controversy," SUNSTONE 14:3) was well written and conscientiously thoughtful, but his allegiance to the Gay Liberation view of homosexuality was transparently clear in spite of his efforts to include arguments from all sides. He refers to recovered homosexual presenters as "effeminate" and defines self-acceptance as the "task gay people are currently left with." Femiphobia lurks behind Allen's evaluations. Was this the only characteristic that he observed in the presenters? Does this mean that they were not changed as they claimed? Or willfully participating in fraud? As one of those presenters, I declare that this is not the case. My life has been vastly improved and blessed by congruence with the gospel; I hope others with similar life tasks may be so blessed.

Self-acceptance of one's sexual orientation is not the primary task; self-discovery, -congruence, and -actualization are the primary tasks. Ah, but then, we would all be out of the closet. You would find us as members of your ward and have to deal with us. Perhaps you would prefer that we distance ourselves from the Church and move to San Francisco. Be honest now, wouldn't that be more comfortable? Ah, but is this homophobic? Who are you really willing to personally know?

ALAN SEEGMILLER
Centerville, UT

SMALL GROUP POPULATION GROWTH

JOHN C. KUNICH'S article, "Multiply Exceedingly: Book of Mormon Population Sizes" (SUNSTONE 14:3), sheds insight regarding potential numbers of people that may have fought in wars, listened to speeches, and participated in other events. But there is one methodological flaw with serious implications.

The growth formula used by Kunich is very useful for describing trends in large populations. For example, it fits the growth of the LDS church after 1880 quite well. The formula is less useful, however, in describing small groups. One could start with a different set of assumptions that would be very



EVERY GARDENER A MISSIONARY

reasonable for a small group in a pristine environment with a rich food supply, little disease, and an abundance of land. Suppose, for example, that each of the seven couples (Kunich begins with seven couples) has six children which survive to adulthood, that the average age at which mothers bear children is 25, that all of the children marry, and that each successive generation does the same. Then the population would triple in each successive generation. The fourth generation (100 years later) would have 567 people, and the eighth (200 years later) would have nearly 50,000. These are much larger values than anything reported by Kunich, yet the assumptions are just as defensible as is the growth formula. The growth formula might become applicable after 200 years of rapid growth. By then, however, there is a large enough base to sustain the war losses that are reported.

The article also had little to say about periodic statements that Lamanites outnumbered Nephites. My own theory is that the Nephites, being agrarian rather than hunting/gathering, depended more on inheritance of land as a prerequisite to marry. As was common in preindustrial Europe, delayed marriage could have been a major deterrent to high fertility. In other words, Nephites put off starting a family for economic reasons.

Undoubtedly, other explanations for population size, differential growth, and other aspects of population structure, would shed further light on the Book of Mormon. The article by John Kunich is certainly a step in the right direction.

TIM B. HEATON
Springville, UT

WAR, RAPE, AND POPULATION GROWTH

IT IS REFRESHING to see that someone else has taken an interest in the demographics of the scriptures. However, John Kunich has fallen into the trap of other demographers to think that world population sizes evolved slowly from just a handful of people around 8000 B.C. to the 5 billion today; and that this growth was steady with just a few setbacks.

Kunich published a long paragraph on page 39 which theorizes that there is a loss in population growth from war, and he continues this theme throughout his article. We have definite modern proof that this is not the case.

Most people suppose that the limitation to the expansion of population has been natural

disasters and war. Over-population has often been considered the principal cause of war. The real reason was greed. Also the real reasons why war does not change the growth rate is due to the sexual activity of conquering soldiers and occupying troops. In some instances there is even a dramatic increase in population, as in the Korean and Viet Nam wars. This is because of rape and immoral acts by soldiers sent to the war zones. We can find this in accounts of the Roman legions, Assyrians, and Babylonians.

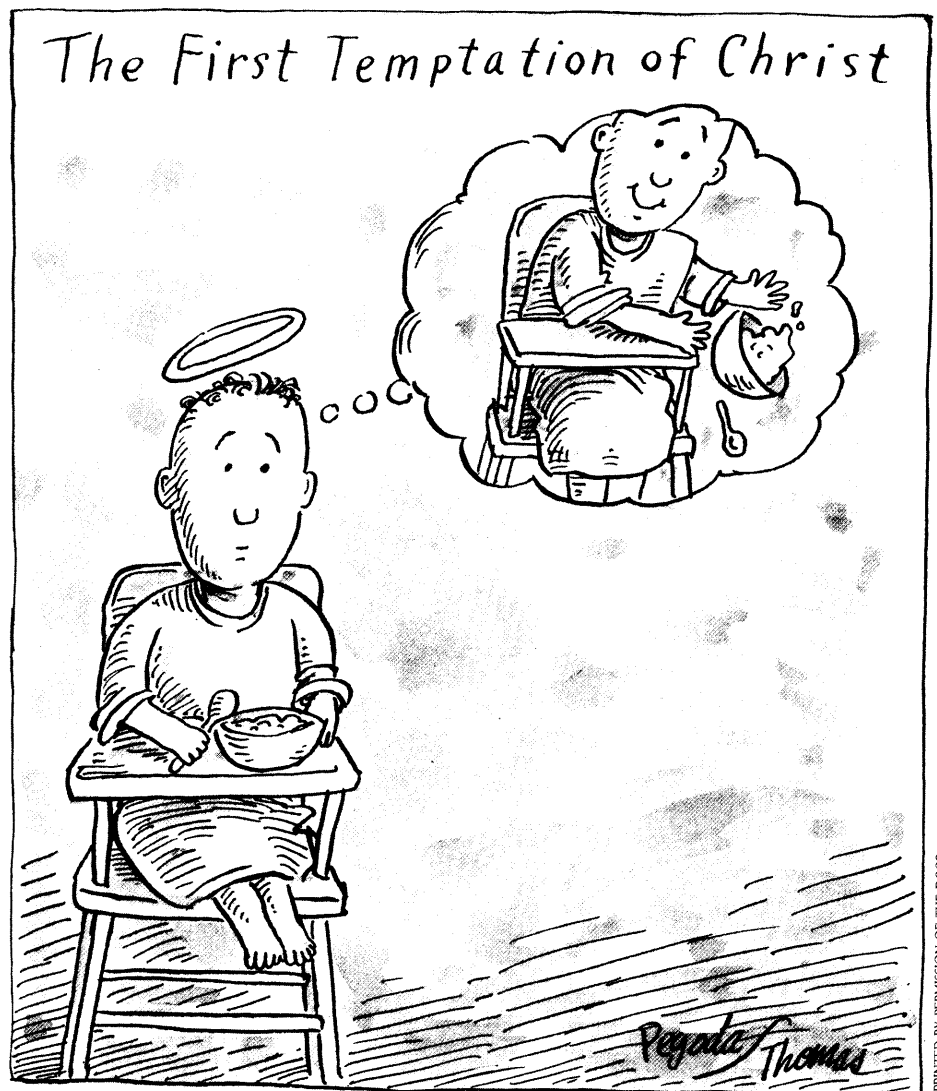
For example, the number of dead in World War II was approximately 15 million. Of this total, the Soviet Union lost 6,115,000 and Germany, 3,250,000. Civilians were probably killed in greater proportion to the total than at any time in history. And yet it is significant to note that the world's population growth rate between 1930 and 1970 didn't seem to miss a beat. It remained at approx-

imately a quarter of 1 percent per year. The Soviet population in 1930 was 152,060,000 and in 1950 it was 165,441,000. Even the years of Stalin's massive purgers (20 to 25 million) didn't affect the growth rate.

CLARE K. OLSEN
West Jordan, UT

John Kunich replies:

Heaton's "just as defensible" scenario, in which the Book of Mormon population triples every generation, might work for lab rats or pet rabbits, but not for people. No human population can expand at that rate for long, regardless of conditions. And the most likely settlement area for the Book of Mormon colonists, i.e., somewhere in Central America, was hardly a utopian, Edenic breeding ground. As indicated in "Multiply Exceedingly," there was much disease, famine, hard work to be done in clearing and farming the wilderness, and,



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from virtually the very beginning, frequent war. This was anything but an ideal reproductive hothouse capable of producing such unheard-of population growth, especially in hunting/gathering and agrarian cultures without the benefit of modern medicine and technology. Human beings just do not multiply that fast, particularly under the conditions described in the Book of Mormon.

Olsen's point that war's dysgenic effects are sometimes counterbalanced by the rape of enemy women is inapplicable in a closed system such as the one in the Book of Mormon. Instead of invaders from other lands, we have only a civil-war type of conflict between self-contained, finite populations. There was no infusion of new life from beyond the Nephite and Lamanite societies, only occasional, random, one-time couplings of peo-

ple who were already part of the Nephite and Lamanite groups. Thus, there was no compensatory counterbalance to the inevitable population-reducing effects of war: military and civilian fatalities, fatherless families, delayed marriage/reproduction, economic/agricultural disruption, and famine. Without an influx of vitality from beyond the Nephite-Lamanite gene pool, any war-related rape of enemy women would not have begun to counteract the enormous downward pull on the populations of the warring factions.

THE GATHERING TOGETHER OF ALL THINGS TRITE & TACKY?

DOES ELBERT PECK realize what he is suggesting when he celebrates the grass-roots revelation expressed in Proverbs' truisms and ponders whether we should have a similar latter-day collection ("Doubt in the Context of Faith," *SUNSTONE* 14:3)? We already have one, and its pearlettes are no great prize. Does Peck really want *Especially for Mormons* to be added to the scriptures, even if only the best of all volumes were distilled by prophet editors into one section in the Doctrine and Covenants?

COLIN CANNON
Chicago

TEMPTED FROM ANONYMITY

IN THE JUNE issue which I received in October, I surprisingly found my "Form Talk for High Councilors" (*SUNSTONE* 14:3). Since it is unlikely, except for my obituary, that my name or another article by me will find its way into print, my ego compels me to confess credit, or blame, for this creation.

For personal amusement, I wrote this Form Talk several years ago during a lunch period. Having received tolerant, if not rave, reviews from office critics, I considered compiling this article, together with other lunchtime compositions (my Muse is most active when I have a sandwich), into my written equivalent of a Calvin Grondahl collection. The literary community lost this contribution when I decided that I would benefit the world more by enhancing my own faith, hope, and charity. Some suggested, also, that numerous high councilmen might insist on royalties.

Nevertheless, through private channels, the talk received surprisingly wide distribution.

My stake president distributed it to the high council; colleagues delivered copies to friends and relatives; one friend delivered a copy to his father, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. I still receive comments and inquiries about the talk and was surprised and somewhat flattered to see the document attain a minor and narrow cult status.

Despite its age and rambling distribution, the talk hit the *SUNSTONE* pages remarkably intact. I confess ambivalence in seeing its publication. While I generally read *SUNSTONE* with interest, I often become impatient with some articles which I perceive to be derisive prejudice cloaked as "intellectualism" and, often, offensive to my deeply-held convictions. I would, therefore, be disappointed if some people, in that same vein, employ this Form Talk as ammunition for ridicule. I am pleased, on the other hand, when people perceive the talk as it was intended—an affectionate nose tweak.

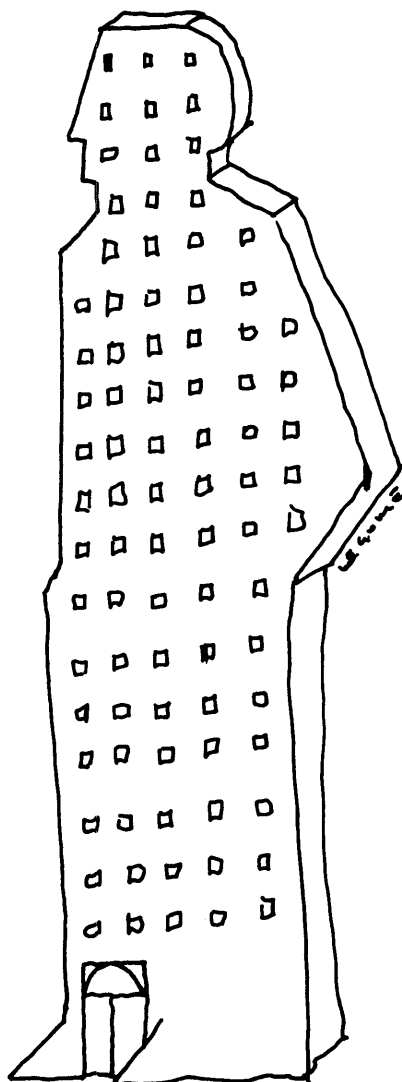
NEIL R. SABIN
Salt Lake City, UT

IN DEFENSE OF POLYGAMY

EUGENE ENGLAND continues to provoke my thoughts and causes me to reevaluate my beliefs and actions with his essays. However, beginning with his "On Fidelity, Polygamy, and Celestial Marriage" (*Dialogue*, 20 (Winter 1987): 138) and his latest article in *SUNSTONE* ("Are All Alike Unto God," 14:2), I find much of his logic concerning plural marriage disturbing.

I fully agree that much of "popular Mormon theology" concerning the issue he has raised is suspect and in many cases degrading. Typical Mormon inquiry ends with a casual perusal of Elder Bruce R. McConkie's *Mormon Doctrine*. Fortunately, England wants to move us beyond our stagnation in the water of authoritative orthodoxy, and he does so with such sincerity that I must respect his views and applaud them.

In England's current essay, many of his arguments are based on a strange logic. He wants us to believe that in the very beginning of the "radical restoration" (while Joseph was still alive), plural marriage is to be considered an unimportant, for-mortal-purposes system, a practice which he terms "sexist" yet liberating for many who practiced it. He writes that by "1852 the Church openly adopted a clearly sexist practice—polygamy—and then developed a semi-official sexist theology to



THE J. WILLARD
MARRIOTT BUILDING

support it" (23). Whether or not it was openly practiced in Joseph's life is of little consequence; the fact remains that the doctrine was certainly an important part of the "radical restoration," at least in Brothers Joseph's, Brigham's, John's, Wilford's and Lorenzo's minds. England seems to be trying to wash over that fact, though it's obvious he is aware of it.

Another example of this white-washing is his continued reference to the 1890 Manifesto as a "revelation." Has he failed to read the several recent papers on this issue showing conclusively, at least in my mind, that none of the prophets contemporary with the Manifesto considered it a revelation at all, including those who penned it? Even president Woodruff continued the practice of plural marriage after the Manifesto, as did many other general authorities. I mention these things not to pretend that this is new news to England, but to attempt to point out what I view as glossing over important evidence. In my mind, plural marriage has much the same status as the law of consecration: both are standing laws unto Israel as soon as we are prepared to receive them (as a people I mean, not as individuals). How else am I to understand the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants on the law of consecration, and the various revelations given to Wilford Woodruff and John Taylor on plural marriage? In my opinion, the current theology will remain unchanged until the Church's stance on plural marriage becomes clear. No prophete has ever taught that plural marriage was merely an Abrahamic test for those who practiced it (as if those early saints needed more tests than they had, or more than we), that it was ethically wrong and will never be lived again. Indeed, many prophets taught just the opposite.

That plural marriage is a clearly "sexist" doctrine is certainly debatable. England wants us to judge everything by our own system of ethics, but I must ask how we can capture God's system in our own? Could it be that polygamy is indeed (when lived properly) ethically superior to monogamy? Is it possible that our own theories about equality cause so many people find it offensive. Perhaps our system of ethics is somehow inferior to that of God's; perhaps religion is greater than the ethics which come from it.

It has been our wickedness and selfishness that has caused us to forfeit the blessings of consecration, plural marriage, second anointings, full participation in the true order of prayer, Adam-God, women giving blessings,

etc. No other word but *apostasy* seems to appropriately fit. Please do not misunderstand me. I do not believe change is bad, but castration of the laws and ordinances is. We, too, have changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant. I am not nor do I have to be an apostate fundamentalist to believe in the "radical restoration" doctrines. The only solution I can find is exactly where I started when I was first taught by the missionaries—repentance.

JOSEPH MICHAELS
Provo, UT

FEMINIST CALISTHENICS

DORICE WILLIAMS ELLIOTT'S column "Unto the Least of These"—Another Gender Gap" (SUNSTONE 14:2) says of women that "despite their 'special call' to compassionate service, [they] are not encouraged to take that service beyond their homes and immediate neighborhoods or to direct it toward any but a limited range of problems." Do we require priesthood leaders to design our range of service, or can we be self-initiated, "anxiously engaged in a good cause" (D&C 58:27)?

Elliott says Mormon women "rarely experience the spiritual stretching which major crisis situations tend to foster." I disagree. In this century, rank-and-file LDS women are dealing with innumerable cases in their own families and communities with drug and alcohol abuse as well as other

frightening crimes, with homosexuality and its medical consequences, with new infinitely more grotesque breeds of materialism and selfishness, and with the literal breakdown of the family unit.

I, too, have compared my role as leader, healer, and emissary with the roles of official priesthood leaders. I also know many women who feel the need to protect themselves or be protected from experiences which promote spiritual stretching. These attitudes are more a result of LDS women and their own problematic perceptions of themselves than of inherent and overwhelming injustice. While it is true that the attitudes are a result of sexist acculturation, women are free enough, smart enough, and capable enough to begin to look past the chip on our collective shoulder and constructively assume the spiritual stretching service roles that are our divine right and responsibility. Elliott should not need anything but initiative to prod her out of her comfortable life and into more meaningful service.

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SUNSTONE ENCOURAGES CORRESPONDENCE. LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO "READERS' FORUM." WE EDIT FOR SPACE, CLARITY, AND TONE. LETTERS ADDRESSED TO AUTHORS WILL BE FORWARDED TO THEM. ☐

PSALM

MY WILLFUL PRAYER IN THE FALL

O God—
I stray, yoked to warring passions.
Direct events to discipline me (almost against my will).
Make me master of myself—
My feelings and thoughts and actions.
Force me not to be a slave of desire and circumstance.
Give me the strength to will what I choose
That I may be free
To humbly choose to give what I will.
So, unfettered, I can singly submit to you
My heart and mind and service,
And have you as my mentor:
Leading me, your willing disciple,
In a straight path to purity and thee.
Through Christ.

—GEOFFREY ARTHUR JONES

FROM THE EDITOR

HOMEMADE GATHERINGS OF ZION

By Elbert Eugene Peck

Occasionally as a young child my brother and sisters and I would secretly huddle in the hallway by the living room to overhear the colorful stories and loud laughter of the adults when my parents hosted their study group. For almost twenty years my parents and this group would get together to study the gospel—they'd read through Joseph Fielding Smith's *Doctrines of Salvation* and other important tomes of the fifties and sixties. But really the group strengthened each spiritually through sociality, especially through eating, telling tales, and sharing feelings after the lesson. Over the years they became very close and still met once a month even when most couples had moved from the central city Salt Lake Third Ward to the more affluent suburbs. Every summer all of the families would go on a campout, an event that was always memorable in creating new stories to retell throughout the winter—funny ones like the woman who always forgot to bring a frying pan, and spiritual ones, like the child hurt in a Bear Lake boating accident and blessed by the priesthood.

My parents have now lived in Virginia for twenty-three years and only on occasional Utah pilgrimages do they meet with the group's alumni, yet these people are still very central to their spirituality. Through countless experiences and conversations they taught my dad (who converted to the Church primarily through the group) and my mom how to be Mormons. Mom learned how to cook, sew, dip Christmas chocolates, and diligently serve in Church callings. Dad adopted the pioneer heritage and learned priesthood government and service; both learned how to interpret life's events through our Mormon perspective. Each of them gets teary-eyed when they talk about individuals in the group. When I think about the good people and the invaluable things found in the Church, I almost always think of these people. And though I live in Salt Lake City, I never see them except when I accompany my parents to a rare reunion; still, I know that at three in the morning I could call any one of them for help and they would come.

At BYU a friend invited me to join a study

group. We met every other week and explored some Church topic. Sometimes we'd invite a professor to speak to us, other times we'd discuss an article from *SUNSTONE* or *Dialogue* (we had fifteen years of *Dialogue* to catch up on), occasionally one of us would read our own research paper or make a presentation. For me, in the long run, the extra-curricular group activities and the honest, vulnerable, open-hearted conversations prompted by the discussion topics were more important than the lesson material. This group no longer meets but I still have deep feelings for each member which I feel are mutual.

After school I returned home to Virginia and started forming my own study groups. Initially I was shy to ask others to join my group (we all fear rejection) but I soon discovered that most people crave intellectual discourse and community and want to belong. The first group I organized had generic topics and speakers. Then there was a one-year group which studied the temple, followed by a one-year group which studied the Old Testament (one of the most enriching educational experiences of my life), and there was one to intelligently discuss movies (this was when VCRs became popular). I organized one group to study my obsession: Zion. In retrospect, I overdosed on groups. They overlapped and I became exhausted with too much sociality and could not keep up with their combined homework readings and administrative chores. Still, I made strong friendships which remain and continue to bless my life. When I return for a visit, although I enjoyed many friendships from Church callings, most of the friends I see are members of these groups. There are friends of the road and friends for life. The first come and go as circumstances change, the second always remain.

The first Washington, D.C., Sunstone Symposium was organized by people from these groups. In fact that symposium, like others, is in itself a large group of friends. Even though most only see each other for one weekend a year, for many regular attenders of all six D.C. symposiums the

event is a reunion of good friends where matters of the heart are discussed, shared, and heard.

Recently I attended a group I currently belong to where a woman said, "I need to talk about my struggle to believe." She then shared with us her scary religious doubts and we had a tender moment when hearts touched and our love for her and others in the group grew. She said she appreciated having us to talk with because this was such a troubling topic that, in private, even she and her husband (who was sitting beside her) avoided confronting it. Only twice have I experienced similar events at Church.

When I dream about the possibilities of the Church, I hope for a religious community—the ward—where we "live together in love" celebrating the diversity in the members of Christ's body but whose differences don't grind on each other because we are fitly joined together through love, rejoicing in each other's successes, sorrowing in each other's heartaches, and bearing each other's burdens that they may be light. Only on rare occasions does this happen in LDS wards. Although I have felt tremendous love as a Church leader, it wasn't manifest among everyone. In fact, the social experience in wards often compels conformity rather than celebrating God's diverse creations among us: cultivating orthodox appearances instead of blossoming genuineness. And this brings censure and stifles the opening of our vulnerable hearts, something which I think Joseph Smith valued and preached.

I think a lot about how to recreate our wards to make them a more supportive community where we can completely live out our religious lives—intellectually, socially, and spiritually—but I fear they are increasingly becoming more of the opposite: an institution where we obtain the saving ordinances and are taught the gospel principles which we must practice privately.

On the other hand, in small groups I have found banquets of spirituality and community which have nourished me. And while I encourage everyone to organize such groups, I am also uncomfortable with the non-democratic nature of them. The individuals most in need of such Christian bonding, those who bishops and Relief Society and elders quorum presidents work and pray to help, are often the very ones not included. The constant prophetic chiding that the shepherds of Israel should feed the flock and not themselves should compel us to seek for better ways to bind us socially and spiritually at Church as well as independent of it. ☞

TURNING THE TIME OVER TO...

Eugene England

ON TRUSTING GOD, OR WHY WE SHOULD NOT FIGHT IRAQ



LANE J. TWITCHELL

The proper Christian response to the Iraqi/Kuwait contest is non-violent: to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us.

TO LAUNCH AN attack on Iraq (or even to continue to maintain a huge military force in the Middle East that threatens such an attack) is wrong on three counts: It would clearly violate the highest Christian ethic of meeting force with active, even self-sacrificing love, rather than counterforce. It would violate even the less exacting ethical conditions for a “just war” laid down in the Book of Mormon and by modern prophets for nations which cannot live up to that highest ethic. Finally, it would cost far more,

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in lives and suffering, destruction of oil fields, and permanent enmity with the Arab and perhaps the entire Muslim world, than any possible benefits.

The Christian responsibility in the face of violence is stated clearly by Christ and clearly reconfirmed and applied to relations between nations by modern prophets. The “Prince of Peace” taught that the final test of whether we can be “perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” is whether we can obey the command, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you” (Matthew 5:44-48). However, even those who have tried to obey that highest ethic in relations with family and neighbors have tended to think it too difficult to apply in international relationships. But the LDS First Presidency,

in their 1981 Christmas message, proclaimed that this highest ethic holds in every situation:

To all who seek a resolution to conflict, be it a misunderstanding between individuals or an international difficulty among nations, we commend the counsel of the Prince of Peace, “Love your enemies . . . ; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” This principle of loving one another as Jesus Christ loves us will bring peace to the individual, to the home and beyond, even to the nations and to the world.¹

Though, as Mormons and U.S. citizens, we call ourselves Christian, we consistently deny Christ’s command and the counsel of our modern prophets. As President Spencer W. Kimball put the case to us in 1976, prophesying perfectly our response to Saddam Hussein:

We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. . . . We forget that if we are righteous the Lord will either not suffer our enemies to come upon us—and this is the special promise to the inhabitants of the land of the Americas . . . or he will fight our battles for us

What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative . . . : to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies.²

I understand this to mean, in the present situation, that God can fulfill his great central purpose, to take the saving principles of the gospel to all the world—if we will aid him by trusting him enough to live those principles ourselves and not interfere through promoting war and enmity. Now that Africa and the Communist nations are being opened up to the gospel, the last areas which have not received it are the great Muslim nations. War with Iraq, which would probably spread to include Israel, Iran, Jordan, Syria, and perhaps beyond, even involving sympathetic Muslim nations like Pakistan and Indonesia, would set back the possibilities for preaching the gospel in those areas for decades. A Muslim educator has

sadly put the case, "If the West uses force in the Middle-east, a Westerner will not be safe in a Muslim city for 200 years."

God's ability to work miracles if we will give him half a chance has been powerfully demonstrated in the recent ending of the Cold War and the opening up of Eastern Europe and Soviet Union to preaching the gospel. We have been counseled constantly to pray for the leaders of nations that their hearts would be softened so they would promote peace and open doors to the missionaries. I am afraid that many of us, like me, prayed with little faith, constantly afraid that the bitter enmities of the Cold War could never end except in terrible war. But, in fact, in miraculous ways that surprised us all, God has answered our prayers: In the stunningly short space of a year, peace has come. Already missions are organized throughout Eastern Europe and even branches in the Soviet Union itself.

As I look back now it seems clear that the way God worked was by inspiring U.S. presidents, from Eisenhower through Carter, not to respond to Soviet force with counterforce. Though Soviet paranoia about maintaining secure buffer zones around its huge nation led it to invade Hungary and Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, we did not respond with military threats, as we are doing now in the Persian Gulf. Cynics may say we only refrained because we couldn't win—and now we can—but the positive results of our not using force then are quite clear: Eventually God was able to raise up a Soviet leader he could inspire with patience and restraint. Gorbachev withdrew from Afghanistan, even apologized to the world for the earlier Soviet invasion, and last year refused to send military aid to threatened Communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

God was therefore able to inspire the devout Catholic people of Poland and the devout Lutheran people of East Germany and the artists and playwrights and filmmakers of Czechoslovakia to lead successful *non-violent* revolutions that brought hope for permanent change precisely because they were non-violent. (The only revolution that has not fully succeeded is the violent and revengeful one in Romania.)

Our lack of understanding of this miracle—and of what it means to trust God—seems to me reflected in the fact that I

have not yet heard one prayer or sermon, at any level of the Church, expressing thanks to God for answering our prayers. Nor do I detect, in the war-like positions of Mormons in Congress, of the *Deseret News*, and of many of the Saints I know, any trust that God could repeat this miracle and open the

God's ability to work miracles has been powerfully demonstrated in the ending of the Cold War and the opening up of Eastern Europe and Russia.

Middle East to the Gospel if we would pray and practice gospel principles rather than using force.

But, you might well ask, what if there is no basis for trust? What if we simply don't have the spiritual and moral force of a united Christian nation which might be able to practice the kind of effective and active love toward Iraq that would justify God's intervention on our behalf? Or what if Saddam Hussein is really what President Bush has called him, a Hitler, crazed with power and ambition, bent on taking over the whole Middle East, totally immune to peaceful overtures—a figure of evil which can be stopped only with force, as Hitler finally had to be?

God has clearly recognized that sometimes we are only capable of living lower laws and has given specific guidance for those times when, for what seem practical reasons, we need to retreat from the highest Christian ethic to the ethic of a "just war." The Nephites in the Book of Mormon were in exactly this kind of situation—attacked by Lamanites (led by ambitious dictators) who might have totally destroyed them and with them the scriptural records and Christian gospel that was the only means of salvation for either Nephites or Lamanites. As Hugh Nibley has constantly reminded us, this situation arose only because the Nephites were *also* wicked. (See "Good People and Bad People" in *Since Cumorah*,³ where he argues convincingly that the scriptures clearly teach that whenever there is war it is only because *both* sides are at fault; in war there are *no* good guys.) Nevertheless God was willing to help and

protect them in this situation of "just war," as long as they obeyed certain clear conditions. These conditions were taught constantly and insisted on scrupulously by both General Moroni and much later by General Mormon: (1) that they fight *only* defensively, in direct protection, on their own soil, of their families

and religion; (2) that they fight only so long as was necessary for such defense, never insisting on unconditional surrender (in fact, usually sending enemy armies home as soon as they would stop fighting); and (3) that they never shed blood in the spirit of revenge or bloodthirstiness.

WORLD WAR II, it seems to me, provides an important case study of how

God blessed us when we met those conditions and stopped blessing us when we violated them. The Allies could, I believe, have prevented World War II, with God's help, if we had lived the highest Christian ethic of active love; if we had helped to build Germany up economically and unite it with other nations after World War I, rather than revengefully taking reparations and isolating Germany in the depression and paranoia that brought Hitler to power. Even after that failure, because, led by Chamberlain, we genuinely tried every peaceful means to prevent war and because Hitler became insanely ambitious and impervious to all peaceful means, God helped us miraculously throughout the first years of the war. The victories in the Battle of Britain and Midway and Stalingrad and the cracking of the German code seem to me instances of such divine intervention.

However, by the summer of 1943 the war was essentially won, and a concerted effort for a negotiated peace could, I believe, have been blessed to success by God. An armistice could have prevented much of the holocaust, the wholesale slaughter of civilians by bombs over the next two years, the huge military casualties of the Pacific campaign and the invasion of Europe, and the legacy of a fearful and divided post-war world. Instead we insisted on unconditional surrender and increasingly talked of and practiced revenge. We did this especially in massive raids that purposely destroyed cities like Dresden and Tokyo and their populations, until we were capable of committing what President J. Reuben Clark in general conference called

"the crowning savagery of the war," killing hundreds of thousands of civilians with the atom bombs.⁴

Our failure to trust God and follow the controlled and merciful conditions for a "just war" led, I believe, not only to these terrible costs on both sides but to the continuing conflicts of the next forty years. But we have not learned our lesson from that failure or begun to trust in God, even after he has shown his power in finally ending the Cold War. We are using the same macho, violent, hate-filled and hate-producing rhetoric and unjustified violent means in the Middle East. Perhaps most appallingly we are arrogating to ourselves the role of world policeman and moral example when we have neither the power nor moral actions and aims to support those roles.

For instance, since World War II we have constantly violated our inspired Constitution (and Mormon politicians and voters have supported that violation) in allowing our presidents rather than Congress to exercise the war-making power. This has removed the caution and political debate that our Founding Fathers clearly recognized were necessary to curb the ambitious or angry violence of single leaders and their sycophantic advisers. Thus our presidents of both parties have constantly taken us into unjust wars, culminating in Viet Nam and Nicaragua, where we have clearly not enjoyed God's blessings.

In those wars we have directly violated the conditions for just war articulated by President David O. McKay in the April 1942 conference when, speaking for the First Presidency, he outlined—and limited—the conditions for the defensive war we were then entering: "Nor is war justified in an attempt to enforce a new order of government, . . . however better the government."⁵ Since the 2 August invasion of Kuwait, many government and military leaders have consistently stated (clearly reaffirmed by Vice President Quayle, speaking on Halloween) that our objective in our military buildup and any military action was not only to liberate Kuwait but to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. The arrogance, inconsistency, and naiveté about what such an effort would cost boggles the mind; but it is clearly the course on

which we are set and which will deny us God's blessings if we go to war.

FINALLY, then, we must consider those costs about which our tough-talking leaders seem ignorant or willing to ignore. They have

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set as their goals punishing aggression, protecting the world's oil supply and economy by stabilizing the Gulf region, and removing the major destabilizing force, Saddam's government and huge military with its chemical and possibly nuclear weapons. The costs of doing this through war are likely to include 30 to 50 thousand U.S. casualties, destruction of the oil fields, an all-out chemical and missile attack on Israel, and then a massive Israeli retaliation, possibly with nuclear weapons. If the war continues more than a few days, which is highly likely, Jordan and Iran would join with Iraq. Then, when Egyptian, Saudi, and other Muslim forces are increasingly faced with killing other Muslims, the coalition Bush has carefully formed would break down and we would be isolated, with possibly even a world-wide turning of Muslims against us. Inevitably our long-term goals of a stable, friendly, or at least divided Middle East, free of Soviet influence, would be lost.

It seems clear we have neither the moral position nor the military means to reach our goals through force without hugely disproportionate costs, including the loss of more important long-range goals. If we genuinely held the moral high ground and could invoke the blessings of God—or even the full support of other nations, the U.N., and the World Court—we might succeed in a "just war." But besides having an improper goal for such a war—the destruction of Iraq's government—we are guilty of completely ignoring the legitimacy of the Iraqi position, enough legitimacy to require that we

negotiate rather than going to war, and the illegitimacy of our own past actions, which undermines our self-righteous denunciation of armed aggression.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was absolutely wrong, a violation of international law and of civilized and religious ethics. It was also probably a miscalculation by Hussein under the pressure of war debts, Kuwaiti provocation, and taking the wrong signal from huge U.S. arms support in the past as well as the comforting signals from our ambassador right up to a few days before the 2 August invasion. But it was not a simple, insane act of aggression, detached from history or defensible purpose. Nor is there any good reason to believe that

the Iraqis intended to invade Saudi Arabia. (They could have simply moved on down the coast and taken over the main oil fields and cities in a few hours, long before the U.S. forces arrived, if they had intended simple aggression rather than taking something they could claim some reason for.

Prize-winning historian Bernard Lewis, in the September 1990 *Atlantic*, traces "The Roots of Muslim Rage" and helps us understand, apparently better than our leaders do, why there is a growing confrontation between Muslims and the rest of the world, especially the U.S., which is taking the place of the Cold War in prominence and danger—and why Saddam Hussein has broad popular support even in nations whose leaders have joined our military coalition against him. The main root of the rage is the continuing humiliation by Western imperialism, which in the past 300 years has encroached increasingly on a proud and once-great religious and military empire. This encroachment has focused in recent years on our political exploitation of the region to assure plentiful and cheap oil and our one-sided support of Israel as a visible and dangerous bridgehead of Western imperialism. Saddam is a hero to many Arabs because he is one of the very few Arab leaders to effectively stand up to the West, and in a shooting war will be able, I believe, to draw Muslims to his side.

Saddam's invasion of Kuwait and threats on Israel touch Muslim emotions and sense of justice directly. One hundred years ago Kuwait existed only as a vague sheikdom near the head of the Gulf. British attempts to contain German power extending into the

Ottoman empire (which included Iraq) and later to assure access to cheap oil, led it to create Kuwait as a protectorate and then, in the early 1920s, to draw the lines that set the boundaries of Kuwait, the Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq. They thus succeeded in preventing any nation from having a monopoly on the oil fields ("Divide and conquer" being the first rule of British imperialism) and also prevented the strongest nation, Iraq, from having access to the Gulf.

Saddam has some basis for claiming that at least part of Kuwait has always been part of Iraq and that what he did on 2 August was no different from what we did in reclaiming by force the seceded South in the Civil War. He also has

some apparently legitimate grievances that Kuwait could have negotiated, instead of, as they seem to have done, possibly relying too much on our protection, thumbing their noses at him. Though aware that Iraq was heavily in debt from its eight-year war with Iran (also apparently sparked by Hussein's need for a greater access to the sea), Kuwait apparently over-produced so as to drive Iraqi oil prices down. It even pumped much more than its share from the Rumayla oil fields pool, about nine-tenths of which lies in Iraq.

Certainly Iraq should have pursued its grievances through negotiation or submission to the World Court. But it couldn't seem other than grossly hypocritical to the Iraqis (or to much of the rest of the world) for the United States, and the Soviet Union, in the week following the invasion, to condemn armed invasion of a sovereign country as "uncivilized" and deserving of violent punishment. Each of those countries has itself quite recently committed exactly the same kind of aggression. The U.S. especially is being morally hypocritical and practically naive in asking for unified support of the "civilized" world against Iraq. We have done essentially what Saddam has done, not only in the Civil War, but many times in Latin America, in Viet Nam, in Grenada, with our raid on Libya, etc.

How would we have responded if, following our take-over of Grenada, the Soviet Union had rallied U.N. support for an embargo and an international military force arrayed against us, demanding we withdraw before there could be any negotiations?

Would we have backed down, as we expect Saddam to do, or would we have protected our pride and sovereignty, even at the cost of nuclear war—as Saddam is likely to do? Do we simply believe that, because we were powerful enough to get away with it—might makes right—we will use might to make

heavily in an Israeli homeland but doing nothing to establish an at least equally defensible Palestinian homeland. We can demonstrate that we will support U.N. resolutions against Israel as strongly as we do those against Iraq.

With these efforts, which will deserve the help of God, we can trust in his bringing us a window of opportunity, in which we can begin to practice the highest ethic of effective, loving pacifism: Then we can invest resources and people in helping to create a Palestinian homeland; we can help Iraq obtain a port on the Gulf (through negotiation, the way Jordan obtained a port on the Red Sea from Saudi Arabia); we can reduce oil consumption and dependence on Middle

We can trust God to bring a window
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ourselves right in the Gulf?

WHAT *can* the United States do then, given these complexities and that it is too late to start trusting God and start living the highest ethic in this situation? We can work with our Arab allies to arrange a withdrawal of our troops, in stages corresponding to replacement by their own troops and arrangements for negotiations. Then from the moral position of putting full effort into a negotiated regional settlement, with explicit recognition of Arab grievances, including their sovereignty over their oil and the need for a Palestinian homeland, we can marshal world pressure against Saddam, including not buying his oil. We can apologize for our refusal to recognize the World Court jurisdiction when it ruled against us over our mining Nicaraguan harbors and supporting armed rebels against the legitimate Nicaraguan government in 1985. Then we can push for an appeal for settlement to that Court and promise to abide by it even if it is not entirely to our liking. Similarly, we can pledge support for a settlement reached mutually by the Arab states, pushing for their leaders to take up the suggestions for negotiation made by Saddam Hussein on 12 August and removing our demand for Saddam's withdrawal as a pre-condition for negotiation.

We can renounce our past policies of condemning Arab terrorism and condoning Israeli terrorism, of calling for and investing

East oil. (Part of Muslim rage is surely connected to our having developed our affluent, industrialized economy, in which we use grossly disproportionate amounts of energy, on cheap oil and our now claiming the "right" to protect that exploitive economy through force.) In addition, through the successive Middle East crises over the past twenty years, rather than learning to conserve and to depend on our own energy resources, we have *increased* both oil consumption and dependency on Middle East oil—from 25 percent of our consumption in 1972 to over 45 percent today.)

Given such an opportunity, with trust in God, we can do the only thing that has ever stopped the naturally escalating cycles of human enmity, violence, and retribution; we can, in President Kimball's words, "carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies." ☪

NOTES

1. *Church News*, 19 December 1981, 2.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, "The False God We Worship," *Ensign*, June 1976, 6.
3. Hugh Nibley, "Good People and Bad People," in *Since Cumorah*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1988), 331.
4. J. Reuben Clark, *Improvement Era*, November 1946, 689.
5. David O. McKay, *One Hundred and Twelfth Annual Conference . . .* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1942), 72.

Plotting Zion

THIRD WORLD STRATEGIES TOWARD ZION

By Warner Woodworth

It is an experience of incomparable value to have learned to see the great events of the history of the world from beneath; from the viewpoint of the useless, the suspect, the powerless, the oppressed, the despised—in a word, from the viewpoint of those who suffer.

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

CONVENTIONAL RELIGIOUS THINKING IN UTAH proceeds from the assumption that because Salt Lake City is the headquarters of the LDS church, then this is where Zion is located. Unfortunately, reality suggests otherwise. The accumulation of excessive wealth, exploitation, deception, and financial ripoffs combine to create a framework of materialism. Scriptural notions of Zion—humility, love, equality, and a pure heart—are lost in today's obsessions. The dominant gospel practiced by many consists of time management, dress-for-success images, and free (unleashed) enterprise schemes which legitimize hoarding and glorify wealth and success.

The business environment in Utah is characterized by restructuring and "demassing," as workers suffer plant closings and "hollowing out" of industry. Companies pollute once pristine lakes and streams, while factory smokestacks belch tons of waste into the sky. Yuppie professionals exacerbate ecological destruction with emissions from their BMWs and Mercedeses. No wonder the Lord says he will contend with Zion "and chasten her until she overcomes and is clean before me" (D&C 90:36).

Financial institutions, real estate developers, and corporate executives enjoy lavish lifestyles while Zion's poor struggle to

survive. Salt Lake's growing homeless population invades the city's gleaming symbols of opulence—big banks, corporate office buildings, and Temple Square. The poor and the despised struggle to survive in the shadows downtown or under the freeway viaducts to the west. Their cries scream out in contradiction to the extravagant consumption patterns of East Bench residents. Well did Nephi foresee our day:

But wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world. For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures. . . . (2 Nephi 9:30.)

In contrast to scriptural admonitions to "impart of your substance to the poor" (Mosiah 4:26), and that those in power not "oppress" workers and laborers, modern Utah has gained a national reputation for financial ripoffs and fleecing the faithful. Arrogance, designer products, and materialism all combine to "get gain and grind upon the face of the poor" (2 Nephi 26:20).

State politicians slash programs to assist impoverished citizens, cutting back on most social services precisely when the need is greatest. They rationalize their actions by "operating government as a business," implying that Donald Trump, Michael Milken, and Frank Lorenzo are models to be emulated rather than repudiated. While the handicapped are abandoned and the elderly struggle to merely exist, the privileged of Utah rush to the growing number of area shopping malls. For "Ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel. . . ." (Moroni 8:37).

Why do we hold up profits instead of prophets? Why do we use big name Mormons as models for our youth—LDS pop personalities, millionaires, TV and movie stars, professional athletes? Where are the Church's Mother Teresas or Albert Schweitzers? Can we not learn service from the widowed and the suffering?

While Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Orson Pratt taught the need to be "equal in earthly things," Utah today is

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fraught by one of the nation's greatest discrepancies between the Haves and the Have-Nots. The state has the fifth highest per capita number of millionaires while ranking forty-eighth in overall per capita income. Unbridled greed, unethical business practices, and unscrupulous wheelers and dealers have become the "false gods" President Spencer W. Kimball warned the Church about in recent decades.¹ No wonder President Ezra Taft Benson's messages have emphasized the twin problems of pride and selfishness in our day.

In contrast to the status seeking and materialism of the Wasatch Front, poor Saints in "less developed" nations seem to reflect a more Christlike lifestyle. Instead of seeking bigger houses (with pool, hot tub, and tennis court), the emphasis is on simplicity. Sharing is valued over income brackets and the gifts of the Spirit over a Rolex watch. Yet there is also much suffering.

GLOBAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT

THE gap between Utah, or the United States for that matter, and the Third World is tremendous. U.S. citizens spend \$5 billion yearly on special diets to lower our caloric intake while 400 million poor people throughout the earth are severely undernourished. They suffer direct consequences of stunted physiques, mental retardation, and death. Some fourteen million children die each year of starvation or disease. The most deprived of the poor struggle simply to survive, eating from garbage dumps, sleeping in the streets. Well-to-do elites in the West pay big money to sip designer water from the Perrier bottling company, while nearly two billion people only have access to water contaminated by parasites and toxic chemicals.

During the past ten years some Americans greatly increased their wealth and today look back on a decade of low inflation, industrial productivity, and financial excess. While the rich become richer, the tragic reality is that the poor have suffered greatly. Third World nations presently stagger under \$1.2 trillion in debt to First World banks. Forty countries of the Third World began 1990 worse off than they were in 1980. Per capita income in Latin America is now 9 percent below that of a decade ago. The standard of living in many regions is presently lower than it was twenty years ago. Today's GNP per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa has dropped back to what it was in 1960, while Latin America has slipped from \$3,400 per capita in 1980 to approximately \$2,900 today.

Within nations, the discrepancy between rich and poor continues to widen. The richest fifth of U.S. households enjoy an income ratio of 12:1 compared to the poorest fifth. The wealthy in Mexico are estimated to have an 18:1 ratio, while in Brazil the well-to-do have 28 times the income of the poorest 20 percent. Joblessness, illiteracy, poor health, and infant mortality become signs of global injustice. During the 1980s life expectancy declined in nine countries in Africa.

The numbers below paint a gloomy picture of the world's poor.

TABLE 1
PEOPLE ESTIMATED TO BE LIVING
IN ABSOLUTE POVERTY, 1989

Region	Number of People (millions)*	Share of Total Population (percent)
Asia	675	25
Sub-Saharan Africa	325	62
Latin America	150	35
N. Africa and Middle East	75	28
World Total	1,225	23

*Estimates are best thought of as mid-points of ranges that extend 10 percent above and 10 percent below listed figures.

Source: Worldwatch Institute

Roughly speaking, absolute poverty is defined as the cluster of people in each region which only have per capita incomes of \$50-\$500 per year. These Third World societies are characterized by mass homelessness, malnutrition (meaning only one meal a day), squalid surroundings, a lack of formal education, and short life expectancy.

PLOTTING ZION:
ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO COMMUNITY

IN spite of so much misery among the world's poor, there exist many efforts to experience joy and love through collective application of the scriptures. What follows is a brief highlighting of intriguing efforts by various groups to enact the essence of true Christianity rather than a Sunday-only gospel shell:

Europe

- In Hungary there is a growing Bush Movement (from Moses' burning bush) in which groups of five to fifteen Christians live very simply and refuse to do military service, thereby forcing the fathers to spend years in prison. Members donate 20 percent of their income for Third World causes and live in unity.
- The Franziskus Community in Austria is a small St. Francis of Assisi community which holds "all things in common," as the Book of Acts reports about the early saints. They put all wages into a collective purse and take out about \$40 per month for personal living expenses. The emphasis is on giving, service, peace, and ecological living. Surviving on bare necessities, the group gives away half of its income to the poor. They raise sheep, spin wool, sell products, and grow gardens, meeting three times a day for worship.

Prospective members offer a third of their property at the outset when joining Franziskus. If all goes well, another third is donated after a year. If all parties agree after a second year of testing, the final third is turned over to the community.

- In Czechoslovakia and East Germany various small groups and households have attempted in recent years to reach back to their Reformation heritage of Mennonites, Moravian Brethren, Hutterites, and Quakers to create a more environmentally sensitive existence, a simpler lifestyle, a more integrated community of work and worship. Early Christianity, they feel, had everything in common as true communists. "Yes, they beat us to it," was the reaction of Hans Meier, Secretary of State for Religious Affairs of the German Democratic Republic. Descendants of the Hutterites now number 30,000 scattered throughout southern Canada and northern U.S. communal systems which are admired for their Christian virtue and economic success.
- In the Basque region of Northern Spain a fascinating movement toward economic democracy has developed since the 1950s. Centered in the town of Mondragon, fused by Catholic Social Doctrine and the ideas of Robert Owen and the Rochdale Pioneers, some 26,000 jobs have been created through a rigorous system of over a hundred worker-owned cooperatives. Our BYU research has focused on how labor representatives sit on each firm's board of directors, insuring a democratic, self-managed economy which is more or less equal, high tech, and widely empowering. Cooperative banks, supermarkets, housing, and schools round out this utopian venture which achieves significantly higher levels of productivity and profits than conventional capitalist firms in Spain.

Latin America

SINCE the 1960s, many Catholic priests and bishops, and some Protestants, have articulated a vision of Christianity as "liberation theology." The movement today involves millions of Latinos in what is perhaps the most profound religious transformation since the Reformation. Essentially, this new

perspective is a radical interpretation of the life and message of Jesus as seen through the eyes of the poor. Traditional Bible themes become action levers for society rather than mere doctrinal concepts. The emphasis is not on "What must I believe?" but "What is just?"

In liberation theology, Christian tenets are fused with personal and/or political activism, leading to praxis. Church leaders began to push for human rights, speaking out against local police and national armies which have slaughtered Latin America commoners, spirited away university students who were tortured and then killed as *desaparecidos*—the disappeared. Nuns, priests, and Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador died as martyrs for their views, usually at the hands of savage right-wing death squads. Such atrocities fueled the movement rather than silencing Christian reforms. Instead of looking the other way or aligning itself with elites, the new theology focused on *conscientizacao*—what the Brazilian Paulo Freire describes as consciousness raising. Aware of social and economic inequalities of society, church officials articulated a new critique of existing injustices and religious contradictions, leading to a dramatic change toward solidarity with the poor.

The vehicle for transforming the church from a passive institution which focuses on a future heaven for its people to a pragmatic set of strategies for action is the creation of *comunidades de base*, "base communities" of small lay-led groups of Christians. Consistent with Jesus' words, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20), groups of believers sit on barrio benches reading scriptures, often by the dim light of kerosene lamps. Rather than big cathedral gatherings in which elaborate rituals are conducted by luxuriously robed priests, the base experience emerges from ordinary men and women—farmers, workers, housewives, shopkeepers, peasants.

Liberation theology has given rise to various experiences of socio-political change: analysis of the structural causes of poverty and the development of new visions and pastoral strategies for transformation of the small Christian community. The form for such activity varies considerably but usually consists of a grassroots initiative to create small-scale groups or "living cells" within the larger institution of the church where warm personal relationships can flourish, injustice can be



BRIAN BEAN

Scriptural notions of Zion—humility, love, equality, and a pure heart—are lost in today's obsessions. The dominant gospel practiced by many consists of time management, dress-for-success images, and free enterprise schemes.

attacked, and ordinary people can innovatively muster their faith in constructive change.

This populist religious movement has mushroomed in the last two decades. Key voices from within the Catholic establishment include Archbishop Dom Helder Camara from the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Cardinal Silva Henriquez of Chile, Bishop Leonidas Proano of Ecuador, the martyred Archbishop Romero of El Salvador, and, of course, Pope John Paul II. Thousands of nuns and priests from the poor *barrios* and *favelas* throughout Latin America have taken initiatives as change agents working from the grassroots, practicing what is referred to as "Feet-on-the-Ground Theology."

By the mid-1980s it is estimated there were some 80,000 *comunidades de base* in Brazil alone, involving 2.5 million members. Throughout Central and South America, as a whole, are some 160,000 small Christian groups with over 6 million participants. In recent years, the movement has spread dramatically into Asia and Africa where another 15,000 communities have been formed as the church in nucleus. Currently the LDS church is experimenting with "Home Group Meetings" in several African nations in which eight to ten families meet in one home (or yard) weekly for prayer, scriptures, religious reflection and application. They gather with other groups in a chapel only every three months because of the prohibitive transportation costs and the need to simplify the institutional church experience. The result is more of a *comunidad de base* than it is a Wasatch Front Sunday with its various programs and organizational infrastructure.

The following several items suggest the range of Catholic liberation activities which function as tactics for utopian experimentation:

- Development of *Cursillos de Cristiandad*, church renewal courses, by which to build brotherhood and sisterhood and overcome alcoholism, infidelity, and drug abuse.
- Pedagogical dialogue with groups of poor illiterates through which they become aware of their own dignity and begin to learn to read and write in order to transform the economic oppression in which they have always existed. Rather than remain passive victims of injustice, they detect generative words (such as land, corn, hoe, machete) and develop tools for planning how to gain control over their land and crops.
- Liberation theology has served as a mechanism in many cases for political confrontation between the masses of the church and military dictatorships in Bolivia, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina, propelling those nations toward eventual democracy and the abolition of death squads.

More specific actions of particular base communities include the examples below:

- In Sao Mateus, Brazil, a small group of members tithe themselves in order to create a pool of money with which to purchase medicine for the sick and food for the children of the group, many of whom suffer from severe malnutrition.
- In Espirito Santo some forty black families meet weekly in

five study groups to study the Bible and reinterpret the pathological conditions of their poverty. In the process, they have formed new associations to overcome dependency on the rich: a medical station, health campaigns, a mothers' club, a newsletter, and so on.

- In the urban regions of Latin America, communities have been formed among squatters trying to survive in city streets and shanty camps, leading to mutual support rather than individual "eye-for-an-eye" competition and crime. Street schools are created for homeless children, and rudimentary shelters are built to protect families from heat or cold.
- In the rural areas, peasants have used church cells to organize cooperative farms, collectively purchasing seed and fertilizer and, upon maturation of their crops, marketing in order to reduce costs and thereby lift the overall economic well-being of the group.

OVER the years that I have been a professor at BYU, there have been several Latin American Catholic students and a U.S. nun who sought master's degrees in organizational behavior (MOB) so they could more effectively transform their societies back home. The experience of one student illustrates the viability of liberation theology.

Ernesto and a group of about a dozen high school friends in Mexico formed a soccer club and began some social/religious activity while in their teens. A local priest served as their counselor and resource. Upon graduation, most of the group went on to college and obtained professional degrees. Eventually they married, making six couples. They met weekly for discussion, exploring ways to apply the scriptures in their lives. On the job, they pooled their salaries, thereby being able to purchase a car and other items which were owned collectively.

The group agreed to fund Ernesto's MOB education at BYU in the hope that added training would later spill over into the group's general well being. After two years as a superb student, he finished and returned to the group in Mexico. Careful saving and new, additional revenues enabled the group to buy a large plot of land outside Mexico City among the poorest of the nation's Indian population. The cell members built housing facilities, planted crops, gardens, and fruit trees. They started a poultry co-op with the Indians, taught gardening and how to bottle fruit. They constructed roads and an irrigation system and taught these skills to the natives. A wood shop and handicraft program were established to educate and market products of the poor.

Collective Christianity, education, and outside employment by some members of the group combined to create a well-functioning religious praxis. Community members learned the real meaning of charity, having all things in common, and this served to lift their Indian brothers and sisters. Such utopian ventures usually do not lead to a clear-cut success overnight, but rather an ongoing struggle, a climate of experimentation, within the context of sweat, tears, and prayer.

MORMONS AND POVERTY

Mexico

CLEARLY there are parallels between the efforts of other churches to address economic injustices and the LDS experience. Joseph Smith's notion in the early days of the Restoration was that the Church which does not have the power to save its people in this life will never have the power to save them in the next. Among the early converts in this dispensation, most were from the poor working class of Europe or small farmers in America.

Even before the Church was organized, the Lord warned, "Seek not for riches but for wisdom" (D&C 6:7). Later people were condemned for having "eyes full of greediness" (D&C 68:31), and the Law of Consecration was given as a mechanism for building a de facto Zion society. However, it did not seem to work. Not unlike the Wasatch Front today, early Mormon history was a period of speculation, fraudulent business deals, and materialistic scheming. Kirtland, Ohio, was eventually fractured by the pursuit of Mammon, and Jackson County, Missouri, became a battle ground for bogus business practices. Later in Nauvoo, Illinois, things were not much different.

After emigrating west to the Rocky Mountains, the United Order was established by Brigham Young and was manifest in several different forms—joint stock companies, worker cooperatives, and communal systems. Egalitarian logic pushed for a system in which "the poor shall be exalted in that the rich are made low" (D&C 104:16), because "it is not given that one man should possess that which is above another" (D&C 49:20).

In spite of varying degrees of success and failure, the notion of building a Zion society was basically rejected in favor of the capitalism of the Gentiles. Still today, free enterprise is apparently perceived as a useful tool for preying upon one's neighbors. It also serves to sear one's conscience as with a hot iron while many pursue the "cares of the world" (D&C 40:12).

However, all is not yet lost. It may yet be that the principles of Zion can be attained, if not in Utah then elsewhere in the new converts of the Third World. Two sites with which I have been involved suggest the potential for a more egalitarian Mormon community today, at least among the poor.

AMONG the Saints in Mexico, a number of experiments have evolved with alternative approaches toward Zion. Back in the early 1980s, I was contacted by a group in Mexico City which had decided the pollution, crime, and economic stress was too unbearable. Some sixty LDS families were determined to apply for acceptance in the government's land reform program, known as the *ejidos*.

The request was granted and the group, including bishops and Relief Society leaders, men, women, and children moved to the next phase. About thirty families packed up and relocated to a parcel of land far out in the state of Tamaulipas, while the other thirty remained behind, agreeing to send approximately half of their monthly incomes to support the pioneers on the new *ejidos*. The plan was for the urban group to provide funds for the settlers during a period of transition, after which those who remained in Mexico City would quit their jobs and relocate to the *ejidos* as well.

The project worked remarkably well. The first group built simple houses, cleared the land, and planted crops. Although it was a tough, challenging struggle, others eventually joined them. Ultimately they established a

general store, started a community school, and secured heavy equipment donated by North Americans for clearing a road into the area.

Some of my graduate students served with them over a several year period, helping them set up an effective community organization and teaching a systematic planning process. The group drew upon Book of Mormon concepts of Zion as well as the Law of Consecration framework described in the Doctrine and Covenants. Contrasting themselves with Utah Saints, one of the group declared, "We who are descendants of the Lamanites take the Book of Mormon teachings seriously."

Our BYU group also exposed the *ejidos* participants to materials about the Basque cooperative system of Mondragon in Spain and the Israeli kibbutz. Beyond teaching and consulting, O.B. graduate students learned to clear fields, hoe and plant beans, and other practical skills. They lived simply and gained a better understanding of the struggles of the poor.



BRIAN BEAN

Why do we hold up profits instead of prophets? Why do we use big name Mormons as models for our youth—LDS pop personalities, millionaires, TV and movie stars, professional athletes? Where are the Church's Mother Teresas or Albert Schweitzers?

Mutual awareness and the interchange of ideas and methods enriched both parties. We were successful in obtaining not only travel money and a subsistence income for the students, but also donations from other Anglos which enabled the *ejidos* group to build animal sheds, corrals, and buy young farm animals and chickens with which to enjoy milk, meat, and eggs. Hardwood trees in the region, which had been cut for clearing, were burned to make charcoal which could then be sold in the nearest town.

This “plotting Zion” was an arduous task which evolved over a period of years. The Mexican Saints learned how complicated building a new community is, while the BYU group came to realize the limitations of outside intervention in the Third World. Some of the *ejidos* group eventually abandoned Tamaulipas and returned to the challenges of metropolitan life, having discovered that no utopia is easy. However, in the years since, other groups have launched their own experiments throughout Mexico with rural pioneering.

A mass movement of hundreds of thousands of LDS in Latin America has not yet occurred. But the experimentation and creation of prototypes during the 1980s has begun providing the seeds for a future Zion on a larger scale.

The Philippines

SINCE late 1988, I have been involved in a different approach to Zion building in the Philippines. There are a number of similarities with Mexico—historic domination by Spain, abject poverty, high unemployment and under-employment, numerous Spanish cultural influences, Catholic religious traditions, etc. Both nations have suffered tremendously from economic and political corruption.

Yet significant differences also exist. Instead of the Aztec ancestry of Mexico, Filipinos are largely descendants of Chinese/Malay and Islamic heritage. The Philippines consist of 58 million people scattered over 7,000 islands. There is a relatively high degree of literacy and education at least in the urban areas. English and Tagalog are the two main tongues along with nine other languages and eighty-seven dialects. The United States controlled the Philippines in this century until 1946, and it is still used for basing U.S. armed forces.

At current birth rates, the Filipino population will double in the next twenty-nine years. Two decades ago it was the number two economy of Asia; now it is second from the bottom. Today's minimum wages are officially \$2 a day for agricultural workers. Through the 1980s, 12 million Filipinos joined the ranks of the absolute poor. One third of Manila's 8 million residents are squatters. The “informal economy” of underground businesses became the primary way of survival for millions of Filipinos.

With this context, the condition of LDS converts suggests major challenges for the Church. Missionary work only began there in the 1960s, and by the early 1970s the Church projected the number of members would reach 35,000 by 1990. Today the total LDS population exceeds 220,000, seven

times the prediction. Recent surveys of the Filipino Saints reveals that they are poorer than the general population. Twenty percent are squatters and 60 percent have no running water in their houses. The Saints' political sentiments vary: some favor Marcos and the military, a few are sympathetic to the New Peoples' Army of leftist guerrillas, and many voted for Corazon Aquino and her centrist policies.

A group of graduate students and I have been attempting to understand why LDS Filipinos suffer so much, and we have begun exploring possible economic alternatives. As in many other Third World situations, our members are trapped in a societal web of structural imbalance. A small but wealthy elite control most land and capital while the masses have only their labor. The economy is characterized by declining productivity, limited resources, and inappropriate technology. Many LDS achieve only seasonal employment, and large numbers lack access to basic services—electricity, health care, phones, water, sufficient caloric intake, and garbage disposal. Quantitative Church growth has been phenomenal, yet qualitative improvements in one's way of life are largely missing. Many experience high expectations after baptism about new gospel blessings, yet the destitution continues. If Gandhi was correct in saying that “poverty is the worst form of violence,” Mormons in the Philippines are suffering greatly.

In our field research, however, we learned that in the past several years a number of local member initiatives have begun as strategies for a Zion-like economy.

- A Chinese merchant and regional representative owns several handicraft stores. Approximately one-third of the items he sells are made by Church members in cottage industries—carvings, shells, dolls, and so on.
- One stake has created a consumer co-op to purchase food wholesale and distribute it to the membership.
- A group of fifteen saints in Cebu has raised 37,000 pesos and set up a stone cutting operation, subcontracting work from a larger company.
- A marketing co-op was started in Paranaque, a Manila suburb, to sell products made in members' cottage industries.
- Some members collectively bought land in the 1970s to create a communal system, but they could not agree on rules to govern the system and the idea collapsed.
- A group of employees from the Presiding Bishop's Office, the temple, and the Church Education System have formed a credit co-op, pledged 500 pesos each to join, and now contribute 2 percent of their monthly gross income through payroll deduction. The idea is to encourage members to save, and they now have a pool of capital from which people can borrow at 5 percent interest.
- Two American members belong to a U.S. women's club in Manila that is encouraging Filipinos to start up micro enterprises in which they will make crafts and ship them to one of the women's fathers who owns a U.S. company.
- The mission president in Davao is planning to remain in that part of the Philippines after his release and help new co-ops such as the pineapple fiber co-op in Cagayan de Oro.

The group has started making paper and fine material for kimonos to market in Japan.

- Many members are very poor and have little, if any, income. In a number of cases they function only in the informal economy and make ends meet by bartering goods and services. Some pay tithing and fast offering in kind only and Church leaders have come to accept such donations.
- Pasay First Ward began a program two years ago to help poor members. A resource committee was established to work on welfare needs. All employed members were asked to bring a handful of rice to church each Sunday, and when they shopped for food, to buy an extra can of goods to also donate. The unemployed were also invited to sacrifice, bringing old clothes, broken toys, or whatever. Everyone was asked to go through their home and take to the chapel everything they no longer used. Members without jobs would go to the church, repair, and paint these used items. A record was kept of time spent. With earned credits they could then take out what they needed from this storehouse of goods. The result? Within a year no more members needed fast offering support; those without jobs had started micro businesses. The idea is now spreading to other wards and stakes in a program called *Isang dakot na bigas*—a handful of rice.
- One bishopric arranged for a \$600 loan with which to hire sixty Relief Society sisters to make shell lamp shades.
- The district presidency in Tuguegarao have established a Welfare Assistance Foundation “by inspiration of the Holy Ghost after a long and prayerful consideration by the leaders.” Their feeling is that the present economic crisis in the Philippines is affecting the members adversely and severely and that something has to be done by the Church. The presidency is appealing for funds from United States members to provide livelihood ventures and employment for needy Saints. “What is pulling us back is the severe dearth of capital to keep the foundation a viable pillar and instrument of the Lord,” says their letter, “Time is of the essence.”

WHERE FROM HERE?

THE experiences of Church leaders in Mexico and the

Philippines suggest fascinating implications for “plotting Zion” as we enter the twenty-first century. Various forces seem to be pushing for change within the kingdom at this time in history, perhaps more than ever before. Some of these include:

(1) an outpouring of the Spirit on Church leaders which is manifest through a more sensitive tone in conference talks and official policies—such as missionaries spending one day each week in basic Christian/community service;

(2) media coverage of the wretched conditions of the world’s poor as evidenced by extensive press and television programs on the plight of America’s homeless, and starvation in Ethiopia;

(3) pressure from the rank and file members who pleaded that Church headquarters do something to help Africa during the famine of the mid-1980s (not only letters flowed to Salt Lake but some sent their tithing to Catholic Relief Services or CARE and still expected temple recommend renewals);

(4) the inability of the old Church welfare system to provide comprehensive service even along the Wasatch Front these days (costing \$40 million annually and still not doing the job);

(5) Mormonism has arrived at the end of carrying the gospel into the “easy” countries of the West; in the future it will be a challenge to get the Church into non-aligned and Third World nations. Salt Lake must now do things to show that Mormons really care, to change old stereotypes, and move beyond direct proselyting to confront the question of what the Church is willing to do to make a contribution for societal improvement;

(6) the changing demographics of the Church during the next twenty years clearly suggest that the LDS membership will be between 12 to 15 million members, leaving the U.S. membership but a small minority of that total (and Utah a mere drop in the bucket).

All the above factors propel Church officials to see and prepare for a very different picture of Mormonism around the globe. Wasatch Front culture, politics, mores, and values will be discarded as a more international approach to Church policy becomes imperative.

Table 2 (next page) captures the flavor of contrasting paradigms within the Church as this shift toward LDS globalization deepens in the next several years.

This changing paradigm, parts of which are already explicit



The experiences of Church leaders in Mexico and the Philippines suggest fascinating implications for “plotting Zion” as we enter the twenty-first century.

while other aspects remain subtle, holds significant implications for the emergence of Zion in the Third World. Evidence is beginning to mount that these changes are already occurring. For example, the problems of tens of thousands of LDS blacks in Brazil brought the issue of priesthood for all worthy males to a head in 1978, and since then numerous international and mixed racial leaders have been called to prominent positions of authority. A number of efforts to plan and increase temporal welfare projects (business ventures, stake farms, etc.) out of Salt Lake for overseas Saints have been abject failures. Now such projects are being implemented at the grassroots levels, often through contracts with non-LDS private voluntary organizations such as Africare, Technoserve, and Katalysis.

Area presidencies, after receiving insufficient help from Church headquarters, are developing their own strategies. For instance, Church leaders in the Philippines see parallels between Saints in the early history of Utah and the destitute condition of LDS Filipinos today—factors which prompt the leaders in Manila to encourage cooperative economic programs like those of the Mormon pioneers. In early 1990, a

proposal from officers in Frankfurt, Germany, was approved by the First Presidency, allowing them to design and conduct a humanitarian effort in Romania through voluntary donations by LDS members in Western Europe.

Such moves are not without problems, however. The new budget program for wards and stakes which began this year has met with considerable resistance by some bishops and wealthy U.S. leaders who want to retain favored status through their own stake and ward funds so they can buy the highest quality organ or send their youth to Disneyland or on expensive river rafting trips in Colorado. As soon as the policy was announced, some stake officials in Provo raced to clean out their accounts by purchasing luxurious brass chandeliers, Persian rugs, and expensive sofas and wing-back chairs for chapel foyers. Other members were offended that fancier Utah foyers would take priority over the building of much needed rural chapels in the Third World.

Personal attitudes are even more problematic. I know one stake president in Provo who makes over \$100,000 a year, yet openly brags that he never gives money to beggars in the street

TABLE 2

ASPECTS OF MORMON GLOBALIZATION

<u>Traditional</u>	<u>Emerging</u>
Church is to primarily preach the gospel and do temple work.	Church has a basic responsibility to serve others.
Exclusive care for the temporal needs of our own (such as earthquake relief).	Brother's keeper; missionaries provide community service, vocational and educational training, broader relief.
Concerns emphasize white American middle class—nuclear family, male head of home with a job and decent education.	New concern for realities of black and brown cultures—the poor, uneducated, female head of home.
Means of building the kingdom: door-to-door tracting, high technology (satellites), expensive look-alike Utah designed chapels.	New means include community organizing, low technology, informal economy, and inexpensive rural chapels.
Key values: percentage of attendance and growth, symbols of success, appearance, status, self-perpetuation, American flag.	New values: public service, charity, humility, equality, the heart rather than appearance, less ethnocentric.
Instrumental motives—do good things in order to heighten the Church's reputation and gain more converts.	Altruistic—do good for the sake of virtue itself.
Top-down planning and implementation: Utah-called and based experts who design the program, pull the strings, and run it all accompanied by a big budget and much fanfare.	Bottom-up, grassroots decentralization: Let local members in various regions of the world develop their own approach using indigenous methods and native skills; work quietly in a low cost, trial and error approach, one step at a time.
LDS church goes it alone, avoiding association with other groups or churches.	Commonality—interfaith collaboration on various causes (such as with Catholic Relief Services in Africa).
Offerings: all monies flow into ecclesiastical programs—tithing for missions, chapels, Utah member welfare, etc.	New channels for Humanitarian Fund—volunteer donations from special fasts to build a parallel stream of resources for community service.

“unless rarely prompted by the Holy Ghost” or his wife. Elsewhere, an older couple wanted to retire and join the Peace Corps to help the world but were berated by their bishop for not going on a mission instead. A student recently told me that her M.D. father was attempting to quit his private practice and go help LDS members in the Third World. Since the Church was not responsive, the doctor has begun to explore how he and his wife could serve under the auspices of a Seventh Day Adventist program.

In spite of such difficulties, improvements will come. In contrast to the top down, hierarchically-based official programs which emanate from Utah, Third World paths to Zion emerge from below, stress the good of the community, and can be characterized best as a movement rather than an edict. The outcome of such activities reflect the validity of Mother Teresa’s observation that there is deep happiness and peace to be experienced in abject poverty, for “the real poor know what is joy.”

By getting involved, Saints in Utah may yet learn from our humble brothers and sisters in the Third World how to really grasp a vision of Zion as a system of love. Their voices may help us overcome the cultural milieu of competition, selfishness, power, and arrogance in which we now exist. Perhaps we can come to esteem others as ourselves and become less insulated from the unfortunate. If we can change the premises of acquiring and achieving, we just might be able to create an authentic Zion society here in the future.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

GIVEN the grassroots efforts of serious Christians in the Third World to apply scriptural injunctions to their lives, families, and communities, the kinds of developments reviewed above will likely continue to multiply. Feet-on-the-ground theology, pragmatically moving toward having all things in common, experimenting with collective economic systems in order to build religious solidarity and lift the well-being of the group—all are likely to increase regardless of the Utah church.

However, conventional Wasatch Front thinking still needs to change: especially the assumption that if one serves a mission at age nineteen, goes to college, marries in the temple, pays tithing, serves in various callings, and helps out on the

stake farm, one’s mortal purpose is thereby fulfilled. These acts may be necessary but they are not sufficient conditions for complete gospel living. We need to look beyond our own provincial circumstances to the great needs of the poor—the bare survival situation in which millions within the Church lack basic housing, food, and jobs. A few suggestions for building a Zion community follow.



In contrast to the top down, hierarchically-based official programs which emanate from Utah, Third World paths to Zion emerge from below, stress the good of the community, and can be characterized best as a movement rather than an edict.

Third World students. For instance, imagine the possible impact of 2,000 Latin American students returning from a BYU education to their home countries and what that could mean after ten to twenty years of building a critical mass of expertise and influence in politics, education, and the economy. Then consider the same for Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia.

All this could be further leveraged through a serious BYU effort to expand programs for U.S. students in international development, agriculture, community organizing, and small business. The Marriott School of Management, for example, has 130 to 140 MBAs graduating yearly, 75 percent of whom speak a foreign language. Why not channel them into international careers as a leavening force throughout the world instead of sending them off to Fortune 500 corporations or Wall Street? Recently a number of Provo undergraduates have begun exploring the possibility of creating a BYU student peace corps through which Mormon youth might obtain six-month or one-year internships in Egypt, Greece, etc. Although

BYU’s Potential Role

GROWING numbers of voices raise concern about the Provo campus becoming an elite training ground for future American yuppies. An increasing debate is whether Church tithing funds should be used to educate a smaller and smaller part of the Church’s U.S. youth while international candidates cannot obtain entrance. The time may be ripe to create a target population from the lands of new Church growth, for young people unable to obtain quality higher education who could be sent to BYU on scholarships, trained, and prepared to return to their native lands and have a real impact in home governments and corporations, as well as build a skilled cadre of Church leaders. Undergraduate and masters programs could allocate a certain proportion of slots for qualified

it would take careful planning and cultural preparation, such a venture makes much more sense for the Church than the current distortion of the motto at the campus entrance: "Enter to learn, go forth to earn."

A further extension of changes at BYU would be to utilize the Church's satellite system for more than twice-a-year conference instruction by harnessing that technology for BYU professors to teach courses and offer degrees in remote regions throughout the earth. Imagine converts in Ghana, Guatemala, or a Navajo reservation studying through televised courses until they obtain a bachelor's degree from BYU.

The Institutional Church

LDS leaders at various levels undoubtedly need to become more sensitive to the problems and potential for building Zion globally. Bishops, stake presidents, Relief Society presidents, regional representatives, mission presidents, and area presidencies can and should become more involved in searching for new models. The bulk of innovation throughout Mormon history has come from the trenches, not the headquarters. Sunday School, Primary, Mutual, the welfare plan, stake missions, seminary and institutes were all grassroots experiments before becoming legitimate policies. They grew out of particular needs and circumstances which served as catalysts for creative problem solving. Today, globalization and greater diversity of the Church make bottom-up innovation an even greater imperative.

Church headquarters can do much in facilitating the movement toward Zion. Certain policies and programs, such as the new more equitably distributed financial system, have already begun. The Humanitarian Services Fund, begun in the mid-1980s, is another useful step in this direction. It has provided critical material aid in cases of hurricane, drought, floods, earthquakes, and starvation. Volunteer services to channel teaching, medical services, nutrition, employment counseling, and refugee assistance have been attempted with mixed success throughout much of the past decade. Some ninety long-term Third World development projects have also been launched—digging wells, small farming, credit co-ops, and so on. Collaborative efforts with government and private organizations, other churches and foundations have led to much good.

Yet the opportunities to do much more engulf the Church of the 1990s. A greater effort with even a few professional staffers could geometrically heighten the impact of such programs. Why not a Mormon soup kitchen in every major U.S. city? What would the impact be of 10,000 older American couples volunteering a year or two in the Third World—serving in educational institutions, rural medical clinics, and so forth? I have a sixty-three-year-old friend who is semi-retired from his construction business. He puts up a couple of homes each season and spends the rest of the year watching sports on ESPN. If the Church were to mount a "service mission" program, he and his wife could help returned missionaries in Chile or Mexico start small construction

co-ops. We have hundreds of thousands of potential volunteers who would respond if invited.

Even now, Humanitarian Services could do more but most of the Church is unaware that the fund even exists. Some of us have donated money to the Armenian earthquake victims only to later discover our contributions ended up in a ward budget because the local bishopric did not know where to send it. A simple letter to all ecclesiastical officials and a new donation form with a Humanitarian Fund designation would alleviate the confusion. Many inactive LDS would donate, even though they might not pay tithing for temple or missionary work, because they could be confident the funds would go to the needy in other lands.

Private Organizations

ANOTHER strategy for strengthening the Third World would be for the Church to launch its own private voluntary organization to help the poor, an idea which is now being seriously developed in Salt Lake. But even after that happens there is much we can do as members to labor with non-LDS institutions doing work in various regions of the globe. Many Mormon professionals now hold significant positions in such organizations as Laubach Literacy International, Choice, the InterAmerican Foundation, the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development, and other programs. Several new nonprofit foundations based in Salt Lake City have been started to serve the poor in Latin America (the Andean Children's Fund) and Africa (*Ouelessebouyou*).

In some cases these charitable groups have been initiated by U.S. returned missionaries who, being able to speak native languages, desire to return to the countries they once served and donate time and educational or medical skills. Working through such organizations allows service to be done independently from the Church, thereby avoiding tax and legal liabilities which would otherwise be problematic. These institutions also free the new organization from the control and red tape of LDS bureaucracy.

New institutions for helping Saints in the Philippines are illustrative. One was started by an M.D. mission president in 1988 who desired to perform reconstructive surgery for poor Filipinos and enlisted other skilled physicians to help. Called Mabuhay Deseret Foundation, this organization has blessed the lives of many not only medically but has given people a new, more positive self-image and, in some cases, vocational training and new jobs as well.

Another organization, the International Enterprise Development Foundation, grew out of the work of a BYU project we started over a year ago in the Philippines. To strengthen the life quality of Filipino people, we created a technical assistance center in Manila to help street vendors, family firms, and small businesses grow and become more productive. Business councils, cooperatives, and other new structures will strengthen the Saints and create more employment, providing spillover benefits to the larger Filipino society. Two more centers will be

created in other islands of the Philippines in 1991-92. They hold great promise for creating sustainable economic systems which utilize indigenous technologies to empower the poor. Within four to five years we plan to create similar centers in Africa, South America, and other regions which will ensure long-term self reliance and community transformation.

Ventures such as these reflect the spirit of Doctrine & Covenants 58:26-29: "It is not meet that I should command in all things . . . men [and women] should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will . . . for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves."

The Individual Level

ULTIMATELY, moving toward Zion ends up in the realm of the personal, the self; rather than waiting for the institutional Church to adopt a contemporary version of the United Order. One hundred fifty years of Mormon history reveals a pattern of hesitation if not resistance to communitarian endeavors. Yet within the humble corners of the kingdom are Saints who live the essence of consecration and who willingly share what little they have with others—not only in the Third World or on tribal reservations but even within the center stakes of the Church. Over the last decade I have met a number of unassuming people who continually pray for a restoration of the practice of consecration and stewardship. In addition to international Saints, I think of certain LDS graduate students around the United States, and farmers in central Utah who strive to raise their families with a practice of having "all things in common."

In my own experience, every day becomes an explicit choice point. Do I head to the mall and purchase designer clothes or another suit? Should I buy an expensive new car, or a bigger high status home? Or can I live with what we have and give the money to the poor? I know a number of families who have experienced a great joy through rejecting the conspicuous consumption patterns so rampant around us and live more simply. Such a lifestyle is not a sacrifice but an opportunity, a real satisfaction. I have found that personal commitments along this line grow out of a lifetime of Zion values and the promptings of the Spirit to act consistently with the scriptures. It all leads to a sense of genuine liberation.

There is a deep inner fulfillment that occurs as one writes to a bishop communicating a willingness to consecrate

everything one has and/or owns to the Church. We can realize a certain peace by consecrating our time, talents, and services to the Lord and actually carrying it out in everyday life—not just stating a readiness if one is called to resettle Missouri.

It may be that the Church will never demand the institutional practice of Zion-building, but the practice can still be carried out on an individual or family level. Zion building derives from a voluntary, personal offering to strengthen the poor. Such actions come from within rather than an official assignment or a Church manual. In the end, it becomes not an intent to maneuver or scheme for changes within institutional Mormonism, but the alignment and dedication of oneself to the disenfranchised, the poorest of the poor.

Through my life's experiences I have come to understand the words of the hymn "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked" to signify something quite different from the occasional Mormon interpretation—we ought to take an expensive, BYU-sponsored tour to the Holy Land and retrace Christ's travels in ancient Palestine. I see a different idea. To walk "where Jesus walked" is to step into the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, to assist squatters in Calcutta, to labor among the residents who struggle to survive

on Smokey Mountain, a huge, overflowing dump on the outskirts of Manila.

Plotting Zion at this point in Church history thus becomes a process of individual commitment. Perhaps Brigham Young's prophetic utterance back in 1855 best captures the present situation.

[The Law of Consecration] . . . was one of the first commandments or revelations given to this people after they had the privilege of organizing themselves as a Church, as a body, as the kingdom of God on the earth. I observed then, and I now think that it will be one of the last revelations which the people will receive into their hearts and understandings, of their own free will and choice, and esteem it as a pleasure, a privilege, and a blessing unto them to observe and keep most holy.² 43

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 40-42.
2. *Journal of Discourses*, 2:299.



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Pillars of My Faith

IN THE GARDEN GOD HATH PLANTED: EXPLORATIONS TOWARD A MATURING FAITH

By *Lavina Fielding Anderson*

WHEN I WAS TEACHING FRESHMAN ENGLISH AT the University of Washington in 1969, I had a very bright Chinese-American student who uncharacteristically missed two classes in a row. When he showed up for the third class, I asked where he'd been. "I was in my room," Garry said. "I couldn't think of a good reason to come out."

I spent the rest of the afternoon with him just talking, trying to understand why this bright, competent, hitherto motivated young man was suffering an existential crisis of enormous proportions. He had experienced no triggering trauma, but he had been overwhelmed by the meaninglessness of life. He literally could not find any good reason to continue living, though he was not particularly suicidal. As we talked, I caught a glimpse of his universe, a black hole that pulled into it all sparks of awareness, remorselessly extinguishing them one by one. I sensed the crippling and crushing that happens to someone who looks out into the universe and sees, not the face of a loving Father and Mother, but blackness whirling toward oblivion.

And I wondered about myself. Why, despite my glib graduate school discussions of angst and existential despair, had I never taken either seriously? Why, even as I saw Garry's universe, did I sense, beneath my feet and at my back, as solid as granite, a loving and attentive presence? Whatever I identify as my consciousness is anchored in and shared with a consciousness of God—inseparably connected with that attentive, loving presence. I cannot remember a time when this has not been so. My patriarchal blessing, bestowed upon me at age eleven, told me, "You have received a testimony of [the gospel], knowing within your heart that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ and the Savior of all mankind." I do know. I accept

that gift of faith as pure grace.

I grew up in a devout and loving home with five brothers and sisters on farms in southern Idaho and central Washington. Ours was a household of faith and miracles: miracles of healing, miracles of protection, miracles of adverse weather controlled. Ours was also a household committed to the Church. My father was a bishop twice and built two chapels. My mother taught Primary for forty-five years. Both were returned missionaries. All of us children married in the temple; two of my brothers and I went on missions; the grandsons are following suit.

Furthermore, I had the immense good fortune to be persecuted for my religion when I was growing up. My family moved from a solidly Mormon community in Idaho when I was about twelve to the Columbia Basin in Washington, where construction of the Grand Coulee Dam had made it possible to bring thousands of acres under cultivation. One side effect was to upset the existing agricultural base of dryland farming, much of it by families who had been in the area for more than a generation. The only church in town to that point had been a comfortable little Congregational Church. Since many of the new farmers came from Mormon areas of Idaho and Utah, the economic differences coincided with religious differences. The Congregational minister responded by preaching openly anti-Mormon sermons that were, for a time, quite popular with his parishioners. The natural problems of integrating newcomers with old and well-established families were thus exacerbated by religious suspicions.

I have to admit that the persecution amounted only to mild social ostracism and very mild name-calling ("carrot-snappers," for Mormons). Our school was too little to turn up its nose at the husky Mormon athletes, and you didn't have to have a date to go to anywhere except to the junior prom. Thus, with very little inconvenience or distress to me, I chose Mormonism and its values as my own, solidifying my already firm Mormon identity and bonding culturally with my own community. The most important predictive fact about me then

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was that I was a Mormon. It explained me, summarized me, justified me. As I grew into consciousness of myself as a person, it was as a *Mormon* person, identified wholly with what I perceived to be the major values and norms of the Church.

My mission in France, graduating (twice) from BYU, and spending seven and a half years on the staff of the *Ensign* were all experiences that both deepened and challenged my simple one-to-one identification with the Church. I still am a Mormon, a committed believing Mormon. I never considered marrying outside of the Church, and Paul's own strong testimony and active family were both attractions to me when I married. He has been in a bishopric and on the high council. He resigned from that position to teach our son's Primary class. We pay tithing. We have temple recommends. We attend church weekly, study scriptures, have family home evening, and family prayers. I subscribe to and read all of the Church magazines. I have taught Primary since age fourteen, with a few gaps, and currently teach Sunbeams and run a den of Cub Scouts. I have been a visiting teacher since age nineteen. We feel deeply blessed with a loving family life, stimulating work, good friends, good health. We acknowledge the Lord's hand in these blessings.

IN short, there are many ways in which the word *Mormon* summarizes the most important things about me. But *Mormon* is not the only adjective I would use today. Two others are *intellectual* and *feminist*. These are aspects of myself that the Church does not approve, reinforce, or encourage. Instead, the message that I hear is one of denial, repression, or suspicion.

Intellectually, the Church, through BYU, gave me what I consider to be a first-rate education and reinforced a powerful hunger for learning; but I now find the official attitude toward scholarship in general and Mormon studies in particular to be quite dismaying.

As a woman, I feel deeply alienated from the structure of the Church. Theologically, it offers a vision of godhood that includes the feminine principle in the form of a Mother in

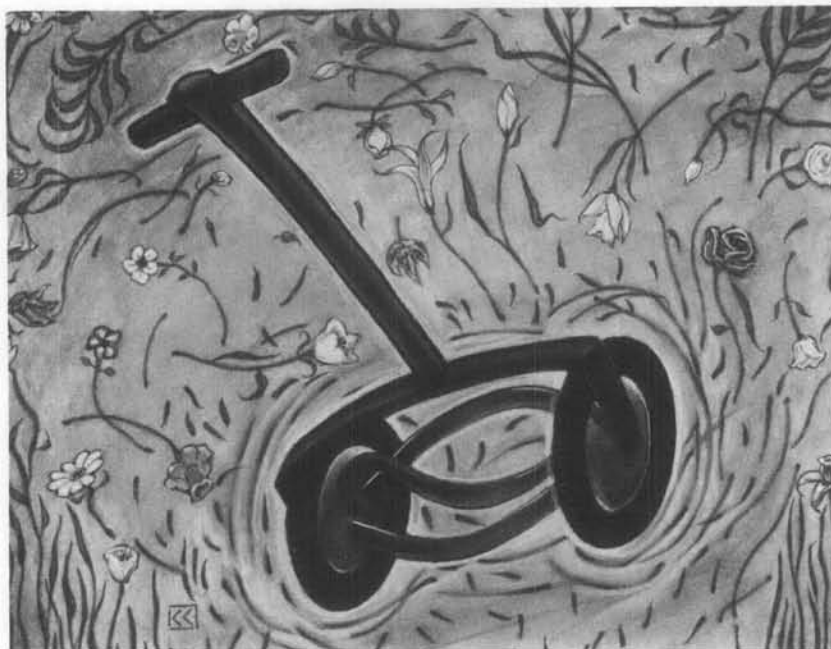
Heaven who is, like our Father in Heaven, divine. But as a practical matter, the Church defines women primarily as child-rearers and husband-nurturers, steers women into supportive roles organizationally, uses their labor to operate important programs but withholds from them the final financial and managerial authority it grants to men, and gives men an apparently preferential relationship with God through their ordination to the priesthood.

I know many other intellectuals and feminists, with whom I share much, who have become disaffected and disappointed with the Church. Some have "drifted away," as the saying is. Others have marched out, slamming the door behind them. Neither is a viable choice for me. God does not speak to me *only* through the Church, nor does God speak to me in *everything* the Church says; but I still hear that divine voice in many of the Church's messages. I accept the beauty of its community, the authority of its ordinances, its shaping of the vessel from which we may drink the waters of life.

Over the years, as I have found my own identity taking shape in a pattern different from what the Church prescribes for women, I have also found my understanding of God developing in some noncorrelated ways. Two aspects of God's character that I am searching to understand most keenly right now are diversity and free agency.

FIRST, diversity. Recently, I stood in a little meadow below our cabin in Lamb's Canyon, up to my waist in green plants. Slowly, I rotated in a circle, looking at what was growing within a three-foot radius. I counted twenty-three different varieties, none of them trees or shrubs, none of them flowering, all of them a different shade of green. To perceive each of those aspects of green, texture, and shape without being able to name them, describe them, or even remember them accurately, was an exhilarating revelation of how highly God values diversity in even little things.

God doesn't plant lawns. He plants meadows. But we belong to a Church that, currently, values lawns—their sameness, their conformity, the ease with which they can all be



KENT CHRISTENSEN

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cut to the same height, watered on schedule, and replaced by new turf if necessary. (And against which it is easy to spot dandelions.) All organizations are limited in their ability to handle diversity, but our Church seems particularly limited right now in its ability to cherish and nurture individuals as individuals—as wild geraniums, catnip, western coneflowers, or yarrow—not as identical blades of grass in a uniformly green lawn.

When Joseph Smith said he taught his people correct principles and let them govern themselves, I've usually assumed that this must be God's method, too. Now, I'm not so sure. I think rather that he expects us to identify those correct principles out of the floods and torrents of raw experience with which he drenches us daily—experiences of good and evil and every gradation in between. Some of those principles will make us more like him. Others will take us from him. Our choices relentlessly reveal the true desires of our hearts, no matter what our lips may say. When we find principles that work for us—principles that teach us “the manner of happiness”—then we naturally try to share them with others. When a group of us shares the same principles, we have a community. The Church teaches many of those principles, but I no longer believe that it teaches all of them, nor do I believe that the Church is the only place we should seek them.

I now believe, at this stage in my life, in the fundamental holiness of diversity. One of the results of this discovery (along with the humbling revelation of how easily I, myself, drift toward conformity) is an evolution in my understanding of revelation and how it comes. I grew up, probably like most of us, with the telephone model of revelation: The red phone rings. The prophet, who has been sitting there staring at it alertly, seizes it. God dictates a crisp sentence, the prophet scribbles it down, says, “Right, Chief,” and comes out into the room where we're all sitting on folding aluminum chairs holding our note pads and pencils. He announces, “Now hear this. The gymnasiums will get red indoor-outdoor carpeting with basketball courts printed on them.” (Or whatever the *message du jour* happens to be.)

I now feel that we get revelation from many sources, sometimes clearly, sometimes emerging from conflicting points of view, sometimes as personal discoveries, sometimes brought to us by other people. The model of revelation that now makes more sense to me is that all of us are working in a madhouse, a zoo. There are lots of phones and they're all ringing. People are talking into them as well as listening. They're also talking to each other. We say, “Just a sec, Joan. I've got a call coming in” or “Let me put you on hold, God. Somebody is waving a memo at me.” Sometimes the message on the telephone is, “Joan's got the memo you need.” Sometimes the messages contradict each other. There are also nonmessages going on. There's background music. There are word processors clicking, printers clacking, videos flashing. You can hear birds, cars, and helicopters from outside. Some people are slamming file drawers open and shut looking for last week's messages.

And these messages are all very important. They're about lunch. Lunch is free but the schedule is uncertain: who gets to go when, what the menu is, whom you get to sit by, how long you get. The hungrier you are, the more numbers you punch, files you search, people you ask. And quite frequently lunch appears on your desk while you're not looking because somebody ordered pizza on one of those phone calls. And even when you go to the skyroom where it's served on a lovely linen tablecloth, there are still phones, people at the same table talking, people at adjoining tables whose conversations you overhear, background music, birds, and an occasional colossal crash from the kitchen where somebody tried to enter through the exit.

Revelation is not an orderly, linear process. It can be a sunburst of insight, a glimmer of comprehension, the rethinking with understanding of long-past events, the testing of a beloved principle in an unforeseen crucible. But most important of all, it's *our* experience. Even if it begins with instructions from elsewhere, it must become *our* experience before it becomes *our* revelation.

THE second principle, free agency, is even more fundamental than diversity, since diversity could not exist without it.¹ As I grew up, I learned in Sunday School and seminary that free agency was a kind of true-false quiz or, at best, a multiple choice test—the freedom to make right choices as defined by the rulebooks in the hands of our teachers. I no longer believe in this view of freedom. We are far from understanding the absolute and deadly seriousness with which God regards our free agency. Contemplate, if you will, his profound reluctance to tamper with it, no matter what is at stake, his terrible patience as we make choices—sometimes stupid, sometimes irresponsible, sometimes downright dangerous. I believe that he suffers with us as we learn the consequences of some choices—suffers so profoundly that only the Atonement could preserve for us the continued ability to choose. Other decisions he celebrates with us.

Jesus did not say, “Read my mind.” He said, “Follow me.” That divine invitation sets us in motion. Freedom is a dance that we enter into, understanding only as we move that each gesture flings grace or grief to the far reaches of the universe. It is a dance with life, with death, and ultimately with the light that fills the immensities of space where no space exists without kingdom.

This view of free agency has developed in large measure from my struggle to understand why history in general and Mormon history in particular has taken some of the directions it has. Let's look at Joseph Smith for an example. Linda King Newell's and Valeen Tippet Avery's biography of Emma Hale Smith² was deeply disturbing to me for the documentation it provided about Joseph Smith and the origins of polygamy. Michael Quinn's examination of the termination of polygamy³ raised painful and poignant questions about intention and deception on the part of Joseph's successors. Richard Bushman,⁴ Jan Shipp,⁵ and Michael Quinn⁶ responsibly,

sensitively, and exhaustively examined the rather distasteful role of folk religion in the first decades of Mormonism.

I had to take this information seriously. You see, I love Joseph Smith. I do not feel betrayed and angry if Joseph was wrong or mistaken or misled—and I think that he sometimes was. Those times were direct results of his free agency. Certainly, God spoke to him. God speaks to everyone. But Joseph listened better than a lot of us and actually entered into a dialogue that lasted for the rest of his life. It is the listening and the dialogue that are the models for us, I believe, not whatever notes he jotted down in the course of that ongoing conversation.

Let me be more specific. I was shocked and disgusted to discover that Joseph Smith married a fourteen-year-old girl, fully consummated that marriage, and concealed it from Emma.⁷ My image of “prophet” did not accommodate this kind of behavior. I could not begin to find holy motives for such behavior. I also felt deeply guilty, naturally, to feel this way about a prophet—not just *a* prophet, either, but *the* Prophet. I took my indignation and guilt to the Lord in prayer over a period of time. I don’t recall being particularly sophisticated or eloquent in my petition. It was more along the lines of, “If Joseph Smith did this—and it looks as if he did—then he was a real jerk. What do *You* have to say about it?” You know, on some level, I wasn’t even expecting an answer. But I got one. From that attentive, loving Presence—gently, tenderly, and with finality—came the words, “Joseph is mine. He is in my hands.” God did not agree with me that Joseph was a jerk. He did not even agree that Joseph had made a mistake. He acknowledged my grief and upheld me in those same hands that were holding Joseph and that upheld Helen Marr Whitney, not only at age fourteen, but for the rest of her long life.

I have the feeling, though, that if I hadn’t acknowledged my outrage and hadn’t protested it to the Lord, that I probably wouldn’t have got that answer. As a result, my affection for Joseph Smith is, if anything, increased by this new information about him, and I want to know more. I want to know everything I can *because* I love him—not because I’m trying to decide whether he is worthy of my love. Freedom and diversity intersect—not in rules, not in regulations—but in relationships. The ultimate value of that experience for me was not what I learned about prayer or even about Joseph Smith, but what I experienced in that loving relationship.

WELL, these are discoveries that I am just now making. They are far from the final word in the divine dialogue that I hope will last the rest of my life. We belong to a church that, for the time being, enforces and rewards conformity, hierarchy, and obedience. I think that this direction is an experiment—the result of choices perhaps instigated by some leaders but in which we have cooperated. It happens to be an experiment which tacitly encourages adults to remain dependent and which exacts a particularly high price from its women. I think God is watching it with loving attentiveness

and with a terrible patience.

Patience is hard, but I plan to still be here when the Church stops experimenting with lawns and refocuses on the garden which the Lord hath planted. The glory of the Church, realized in many shining ways even now, is its ability to foster conditions in which richly loving relationships can thrive—with each other, with God. And ultimately it is these relationships that are our defense against the darkness of despair. Then shall the Lord “comfort Zion . . . and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody” (2 Nephi 8:3). ☞

NOTES

1. A hopeful note was sounded by Elder Boyd K. Packer, speaking at the Regional Representative Seminar on 30 March 1990. Titled “Let Them Govern Themselves,” he reiterated the importance of the announcement on tithes and offerings and its purpose in reducing “the overregimentation of the Church. This overregimentation is a direct result of too many programmed instructions” (p. 4). Acknowledging that “smaller budgets and fewer activities, fewer programs . . . will leave a vacuum,” he pled with the Regional Representatives to “absolutely resist the temptation to program that vacuum. . . . Please, for this one time, honor the agency of the members, the families” (p. 7). He also significantly in this context, points out that “the term ‘free’ agency is not found in the revelations. It is a *moral* agency” (p. 6).

2. Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith* (New York: Doubleday, 1984).

3. D. Michael Quinn, “LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriage, 1890-1904” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18:1 (Spring 1985).

4. Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

5. Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985).

6. D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1987).

7. Newell and Avery, 46-47.

WAITING FOR CRAZY HORSE

We wait for Crazy Horse to return,
the scar on his face, the bayonet wound.
Coyotes won’t tell where they buried him.

They never tell anything that matters.
They are as bad as those history buffs
who say everything matters, even the lies

they want to believe. We know how he took
his father’s name but would take no scalps
because of his dream. No sons were born

to him, and when war came he tied a stone
behind his ear, sprinkled his body
with dust to make the bullets turn.

He feared no one in battle. It was peace
he couldn’t handle: peace, and lies
in the mouth of a friend that did him in.

—DONNELL HUNTER

Implications of the Church's Recent "Course Correction"

TIGHTENING OUR BELTS AND STREAMLINING OUR PROGRAMS

Late in 1989 the LDS church announced that, beginning initially in the United States and Canada, operating expenses for local wards and stakes would be paid out of general tithing funds according to a formula based on sacrament meeting attendance. Understandably, the Saints welcomed not having to contribute to the ward budget in addition to paying tithing, fast offerings and other contributions such as supporting full-time missionaries. Few people, however, were aware that this action resulted from a dramatic reassessment of the role of the institutional Church and its programs in the lives of its members.

Apparently spurred in part by the challenges faced in providing the full array of Church programs in other countries and a desire for one world-wide Church organizational model, LDS leaders are lessening the Mormon collective approach to religious life, which had its roots in pioneer communitarianism and was manifest in the twentieth century through numerous auxiliary organizations and priesthood programs. Apparently in the future the principles of the Restoration will be increasingly lived by self-reliant families and individuals freed of many Church programs and activities.

This "new" direction is, of course, only the latest "course correction" of the Correlation Movement which is designed to consolidate, simplify, and regulate all essential Church affairs under the direction of priesthood line officers. In February 1990 the Church broadcasted a satellite fireside which featured general authorities

explaining the new changes. Among other points, Church leaders emphasized that the reduction in social activities as a result of the budget changes was intentional and desirable. These addresses were published in the May 1990 Ensign.

At the regional representatives seminar held on the Friday before the April 1990 general conference, Apostle Boyd K. Packer, a senior member of the overseeing Correlation Executive Committee, explained in more detail to senior Church leaders the guiding philosophy behind the changes. He titled his address "Let Them Govern Themselves," an obvious expansion of his satellite address, "Teach Them Correct Principles." Photocopies of his address have circulated widely within the Church and are available from his office.

The opening session of the Sunstone Symposium XII, held in Salt Lake City on 22 August 1990, featured a panel exploring the implications of the recent "course correction." As an introduction to the discussion, Elder Packer's regional representatives address was summarized; three BYU professors then spoke. Mormon historian James B. Allen gave some historical thoughts, sociologist J. Lynn England shared his views as a bishop on the changes, and sociologist Marie Cornwall discussed the dynamic between programs and faith development. The following articles originated from that session. Elder Packer's address is reprinted to provide a more informed context for their discussions.

ELBERT EUGENE PECK

LET THEM GOVERN THEMSELVES

*Address delivered by Elder Boyd K. Packer
Regional Representatives Seminar, Friday, March 30, 1990*

THE LORD SAID, "BEHOLD, I WILL HASTEN MY work in its time. And I give unto you, who are the first laborers in this last kingdom, a commandment that you . . . organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean." (D&C 88:73-74.)

In the last period of time, since the October conference, the Quorum of the Twelve has been following that admonition against the obvious hastening that is taking place; the unpre-

cedented, miraculous changing of the circumstances across the world. Nations, in a sense, are being born in a day and the invitation now is for our missionaries to move into countries where we have no members and to move into countries where we have had members who have lived under almost impossible circumstances. This hastening has been the source of sobering reflection and we of the Twelve, under the direction of President Hunter, have held many meetings, overviewing and calling into attention things

of the past; looking at our circumstances at the present, and looking into the future as is not only our calling, but our responsibility as prophets, seers, and revelators.

We have held meetings with the First Presidency and I think the theme that you have felt in this meeting and will feel from the conference and will see as the conference concludes with momentous events having occurred, that we need now to prepare ourselves and to put on the new man and the new woman, to change a mind-set and to move into that future that the Lord is preparing for us.

Recent letters announced the decision to fund the Church henceforth from tithes and offerings. As has been mentioned here two or three times today, other collections, assessments, and fundraising, with a few and perhaps temporary exceptions, are to be discontinued.

In a recent satellite broadcast that was viewed here in the United States and Canada, the principles and doctrines which should govern the change were presented. While three men spoke, it was a single message. Since those talks were distributed or will reach you where translation is necessary, I will present but a brief quote, one from each of the counselors in the First Presidency which embody the spirit of the instruction.

PRESIDENT MONSON

PRESIDENT Monson speaking:

- The budget allowance program was created to reduce financial burdens on members.
- Members should *not* pay fees or be assessed to participate in Church programs.
- Priesthood leaders should reduce and simplify activities wherever possible.

Let me repeat: "Priesthood leaders should *reduce and simplify activities wherever possible.*"

- Activities should be planned at little or no cost, should build testimonies and provide meaningful service to others.

And he added, "It is the desire that restraint be used in

programming youth activities and that consistency between young women and young men programs be achieved." (Thomas S. Monson, satellite broadcast, 18 Feb. 1990.)

PRESIDENT HINCKLEY

PRESIDENT Hinckley:

Perhaps we have *gone too far*—[this is the roller coaster

President Monson referred to earlier]—in providing for some beyond what is needed or what is best in terms of the individuals and their families.

It should be recognized that this Church is not a social club. This is the Kingdom of God in the earth. It is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Its purpose is to bring salvation and exaltation to both the living and the dead.

These officers and teachers, and these young men and women, are people of ingenuity who with faith and prayer can work out programs costing little in dollars that will yield tremendous dividends in wholesome recreation and faith-building activities. Perhaps we should

be *less concerned with fun and more with faith.* (Gordon B. Hinckley, satellite broadcast, 18 Feb. 1990.)

This change, announced for the United States and Canada, will, by successive steps, be implemented worldwide. I repeat, just as soon as the procedures can be worked out and some experience gained, it will be implemented across the world.

To many it is just a welcome relief, a change in procedure—a relatively small thing.

It was the prophet Alma who told us "that by small and simple things are great things brought to pass. . . . And the Lord God doth work by [small] means to bring about his great and eternal purposes" (Alma 37:6-7).

To me this "small thing" is among the major decisions that I shall have witnessed in my lifetime. I will attempt to explain



Elder Boyd K. Packer, whose apostolic vision for the Church reduces Church organization and expands individual responsibility.

to you why my conviction of its importance is so fixed.

LIKE A TEAM OF DOCTORS

IN recent years we might be compared to a team of doctors issuing prescriptions to cure or to immunize our members against spiritual diseases. Each time some moral or spiritual ailment was diagnosed, we have rushed to the pharmacy to concoct another remedy, encapsulate it as a program and send it out with pages of directions for use.

While we all seem to agree that over-medication, over-programming, is a critically serious problem, we have failed to reduce the treatments. It has been virtually impossible to affect any reduction in programs.

Each time we try, advocates cry to high heaven that we are putting the spiritual lives of our youth at risk. If symptoms reappear, we program even heavier doses of interviews, activities, meetings, and assessments.

The best answer, perhaps, is to withdraw all prescriptions and start over. The whole correlation effort, which took about twenty years, followed that course and much was accomplished. The habits for moral and spiritual health were defined. The scriptures were prescribed as the basic nourishment. The curriculum, loaded with spiritual nutrients, was developed but we did not allow time for it to work and we failed to close the pharmacy or even effectively control it.

We now have ourselves in a corner. For instance, we have reason to be seriously concerned about the lack of reverence in the Church. Perhaps this one thing, general across the world, is as much an interference with and a short-circuiting of inspiration as anything that could be pointed to. However, I dare not press for the correction of that issue because we do not seem to be able to solve a problem without designing a program with pages of instruction and sending it out again.

It is time now for you who head the auxiliaries and the departments and those of us who advise them, after all the repetitive cautions from the First Presidency, to change our mind-set and realize that a reduction of and a secession from that constant programming must be accomplished.

The hardest ailment to treat is a virtue carried to the extreme. We cannot seem to learn that too much, even of a good thing, or too many good things, like vitamins taken in overdose, can be harmful.

In recent years I have felt, and I think I am not alone, that we were losing the ability to correct the course of the Church. You can not appreciate how deeply I feel about the importance of this present opportunity unless you know the regard, the reverence, I have for the Book of Mormon and how seriously I

have taken the warnings of the prophets, particularly Alma and Helaman.

Both Alma and Helaman told of the Church in their day. They warned about fast growth, the desire to be accepted by the world, to be popular, and particularly they warned about prosperity. Each time those conditions existed in combination, the Church drifted off course. All of those conditions are present in the Church today.

Helaman repeatedly warned, I think four times he used these words, that the fatal drift of the Church could occur "in the space of not many years." In one instance it took only six years. (See Helaman 6:32, 7:6, 11:26.)

The announcement on tithes and offerings, which has been sent now, is of such *enormous* importance because, perhaps for one time only, we have an opportunity in one sweeping stroke, to correct much of what heretofore we have been unable to correct.

The revelations tell us that there are limits to what mankind will be allowed to do. When those limits are reached, then comes destruction. And, the patience of the Lord with all of us who are in leadership position, is not without limits.

REGIMENTATION

THE most dangerous side effect of all we have prescribed in the way of programming and instruction and all, is the overregimentation of the Church. This overregimentation is a direct result of too many programmed instructions. If we would compare the handbooks of today with those a generation ago you would quickly see what I mean. And Brother Hanks mentioned that the Melchizedek Priesthood Handbook is an amalgamation of several handbooks and a reduction of them all with, I think, nothing lost; much gained.

"Teach them correct principles," the prophet said, "and then let," *let*—a big word, "them govern themselves." (See *Messages of the First Presidency*, p. 54.) Our members should not, according to the scriptures, need to be commanded in all things. (See D&C 58:26.)

Local leaders have been effectively conditioned to hold back until programmed as to what to do, how, to whom, when, and for how long. Can you see that when we overemphasize programs at the expense of principles, we are in danger of losing the inspiration, the resourcefulness, that which should characterize Latter-day Saints. Then the very principle of character revelation is in jeopardy and we drift from a fundamental gospel principle!

"Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy." That much-quoted verse in the Book of Mormon is followed by this one:

Overmedication, over-programming, is a critically serious problem. It has been impossible to affect any reduction in programs.

“And the Messiah cometh in the *fullness of time*, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to *act for themselves* and *not to be acted upon*.” (2 Nephi 2:25-26.)

My feeling about our present opportunity with this change in funding is based on doctrine. For generations we have taught that the temporal salvation of the Saints depends upon independence, industry, thrift, and self-reliance. We would never stray from that in teaching about temporal things.

On the other hand, is it possible that we are doing the very thing spiritually that we have been resolutely resisting temporally; fostering dependence rather than independence, extravagance rather than thrift, indulgence rather than self-reliance.

We send two diverging signals and the Lord has told us: “If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand” (Mark 3:25).

It is not that any one thing we have been doing is wrong, for we have acted with the best of intentions. Some of us remember when President Kimball saw the outlay of curriculum and the vast display of printed material. He said he was frightened, “We have done it all with the best intentions.” It is just that we can do far too much of good things. One or two reports of inactivity or extreme behavior and we rush to make corrections across the whole Church with more programs, more interviews, more assessments.

RISKS INVOLVED

THIS change will cause a reduction in programs and activities; that we intended. I quickly admit that there are risks involved when we simplify instructions or loosen up on regimentation. It is no different than what we face when our own children begin to mature and venture out into the world. Wise parents loosen the apron strings and help children to leave the nest to start anew the cycle of mortal life.

If we teach them correct principles rather than overburden them with too many instructions and programmed activities, they can be both free and spiritually safe in any nation, among any people, in any age. If we indulge them too much, or make them too dependent, we weaken them morally, then they will be compelled by nature itself to find the wrong way.

The only safe course is to make sure that they know the gospel, that they are acquainted with the scriptures, with revelation, with repentance, with how the Holy Ghost functions, with the voice of the Spirit.

A knowledge of right and wrong does not automatically result from programmed activities. It must be taught.

WE NEED TO BE TEMPERATE

WE need a sensible balancing of and a careful withdrawal of this medication of overprogramming. It can begin simply by restraining ourselves from writing more prescriptions, and by counseling local leaders not to replace the ones we phase out. So, the problem, Regional Representatives! There will be the tendency, we have seen it already when we began to phase out and withdraw, for the local leaders, conditioned as they are, to want to use that time and build up more detailed programs on their own.

We must use great care and be temperate. There are always those who will go to the extreme and want to cancel all activities. That is not what I am talking about, not at all. I am talking about a careful course correction.

There are always those who cry for a lifting of all the rules and regulations and laws and restraints. Always they claim that the doctrine of free agency demands that.

MORAL AGENCY

THE agency the Lord has given us is not a “free” agency. The term “free” agency is not found in the revelations. It is a *moral agency*. The Lord has given us freedom of choice:

“That every man may act in *doctrine* and *principle* pertaining to futurity, according to the *moral agency* which I have given unto him, that every man may be *accountable* for his own sins in the day of judgment.” (D&C 101:78.)

There is no agency without choice; there is no choice without freedom; there is no freedom without risk; nor true freedom without responsibility.

This change in budgeting will have the effect of returning much of the responsibility for teaching and counseling and activities to the family where it belongs. There will be fewer intrusions into the family schedules and into the family purses.

It will set a better balance between families being assessed time and money to support Church activities, and Church activities complementing what families should do for themselves and backing away to an extent so they can do it. That is, if all of us will understand and will do it.

I repeat, perhaps for one time only we have the opportunity to adjust that balance so that Church activities sustain parents and families rather than the other way around.

Now, there will be smaller budgets and fewer activities, fewer programs. That will leave a vacuum. Nothing likes a vacuum.

We must resist, absolutely resist, the temptation to program that vacuum. That space belongs to families. When we cut down on Sundays to the block plan that consolidated our meetings and left some time open, you know what happened.

**It is time to
change our
mind-set and
realize that a
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a secession
from constant
programming
must be
accomplished.**

Now brethren, it is their time. Let them use it as they feel to do—for better or for worse. That is the risk. If we fail to teach them correct principles, teach them the doctrine, they will not know how to govern themselves.

If we do, then that vacuum will be filled with prayer and work and study, study for school, for instance, study the gospel. It will be filled with faith and reverence. It will be filled with the intimate love between husband and wife, with the tender love of parents to children. There will come a safe and virtuous dependency. Latter-day Saints will come to depend upon the Lord instead of upon the headquarters of the Church.

We are in mortality to receive a mortal body, to be tested, to prepare for Godhood. There is no testing without choice. Please, for this one time, honor the agency of the members, the families.

REORIENTATION OF THINKING

THIS change has given me renewed hope. It will require some considerable adjustment in our thinking and a change in deeply ingrained habits.

What we do we must do wisely, temperately. We can effect a course correction and we will see the Church delivered safely to the next generation. And then we can move into these developing nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is my personal conviction, I think it is obvious, that this change in budgeting will have *enormous* reactivating influence on those who have held back because they could not afford the cost of Church activities.

Stake leaders now *must* sponsor fewer activities, leaving most of the time and money to ward leaders. We have had reports, for instance, of stake presidents that, in one case, want to keep 65 percent of the allotment so that they can continue with their stake activities and leave the wards to themselves. Now, will you Regional Representatives watch that, to see that budgets are shifted down to the wards. It will need your attention. Ward leaders in turn, by this action, will be leaving more of both time and money to the families.

Another point. Some of us have missed the point that this is a reduction in both *time* and money. In fact, the letters that came out from the First Presidency over the last years, one of them issued five times, for instance, emphasize the reduction in the time required of Church members first, not just the money.

COMMERCIAL SUBSTITUTES

SOMETHING else we must watch; already there grows up

commercially oriented activities. Resourceful members of the Church saying, “Well, if the Church is going to back off on this, we can provide that” and you can see the obvious. Be careful of those. Be alert to them; beware of them.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

WHEN President Benson was a stake president, he wrote the First Presidency proposing that the Church be operated on tithes alone. It took him a little while to get it done. He said: “We will depend on tithing more than ever to finance the programs of the Church. That will be possible only as all our leaders and more of our membership are full-tithe payers.” (President Ezra Taft Benson, Regional Representative Seminar, 2 April 1982.)

There should not be the slightest hesitancy to teach and preach and emphasize the principle of tithing. Tithing is a principle with a promise. Read in Malachi. That statement “prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it,” those blessings come simply from bringing your tithes and offerings. And He said “neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.” (See Malachi 3:10-11.) This is a principle with a promise, and it is the door to the temple.

The scriptures speak of tithes and of *offerings*, they do not speak of assessments or fund raising. To be an offering it has to be freely given—not assessed or requested.

SPIRITUAL VS. TEMPORAL

TITHING is not so much a matter of money as a matter of faith. While the change in budgeting may seem at first to be a temporal matter, the effect of it will be spiritual.

The Lord said that not at any time has he given either a law or a commandment which is temporal. (See D&C 29:34-35.) Of course he has not! Temporal means temporary and, whether his laws govern the physical or the spiritual, his laws are eternal!

BISHOP'S INTERVIEWS

ANOTHER “small thing” has happened, something unprecedented. You know that the guides and handbooks prescribe so many bishop's interviews and regulate the frequency of them that it would be literally impossible for a bishop to conduct them all without him having to neglect other things. Because of that, bishops often end up feeling inadequate or guilty.

When we over-emphasize programs at the expense of principles, we are in danger of losing inspiration. Individual revelation is in jeopardy!

I will read a statement from the *new* Melchizedek Priesthood Handbook that Brother Hanks introduced to us. Listen carefully:

"In large wards, the interviews of Aaronic Priesthood young men and young women may become burdensome. Bishops, *acting with inspiration and wisdom*, may wish to *adjust their scheduling and frequency of interviews*." Can you see the loosening up? "For example, some young members may need added attention while others may need less frequent interviews *than are suggested*. The bishop should interview priests and young women of corresponding age and may assign other youth interviews to his counselors. When a counselor encounters serious matters, such as transgressions that require confession, he should refer the member to the bishop without delay. Parents should be encouraged to stay close to their children, allowing local Church leaders to act in a supporting role."

Yesterday in our temple meeting we were talking about this and talking a little about the other meetings that the bishop is scheduled to be to. Every time there is a graduation or a change in something, they prescribe the bishop to be at the meeting. President Monson mentioned that when he was a bishop he followed the practice that if the counselor had something to do with the organization, he said, "Well even though the handbook said the bishop should be there, you will be the bishop for that meeting!" There can be a delegation.

THE FAMILY

NOW, in conclusion, I once thought the family was unfairly neglected in the Church, particularly in the organization. We have Melchizedek priesthood quorums to foster the interest of men; the Relief Society for sisters. We have Aaronic priesthood quorums for boys, young women for girls, primary for the children, and so on. Each organization has general and local presidencies and quorums and boards.

But for the family there is no such thing, not so much as a committee. The family has been everybody's business. Everybody's business, as we know, is nobody's business. I used to worry as we designed programs to fit the weak, unstable family, scheduling for men, women, children, youth, young adults, singles, everything, with too little attention paid to the effect it was having on stable families.

I remember when some pressed for a written form so families could report their compliance with the family home evening program. We did not permit it. And to this day we have some who want to program formal interviews between parents and their children.

I once wondered if we should create an agency to represent the family. But on more serious reflection, I changed my view.

There are some things which cannot be counted and should not be programmed. Matters with deepest doctrinal significance must be left to married couples and to parents to decide for themselves. We have referred them to gospel principles and left them to exercise their moral agency. Serious problems often come voluntarily to the bishop. That is the best way.

We cannot program individual and family prayer, indeed all

of the basic human relationships, the emotions and feelings, the bonds that bind man to woman and parents to children, all of the quiet influences, the sacred things that are centered in family life. The family is apart from and above the other organizations and, under the sealing authority, more enduring than them all.

While the family may suffer both neglect and intrusion because of our penchant to program everything, nevertheless, at the same time, the family has been protected. Therein lies a testimony of the genius of Church organization.

I have but to ask one "what if" question to convince you of that. What if, in the correlation process, we had organized a general board of the family? The very thought of it sends chills of horror through my being.

Now, you know why I feel as I do about this change.

The world opens to us. We move now into developing nations and into nations liberated from slavery, not unlike the Israelites as they came from Egypt. Their wilderness will be one of poverty in both temporal and spiritual knowledge. We must not indulge them as we

have indulged ourselves. If we do as we should, wherever there is a Latter-day Saint family, there the Church stands organized.

Alma spoke also of miracles worked by small means, and he included a warning: "Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means it did show unto them marvelous works." But, "they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey." (Alma 37:41.)

Brothers and sisters, have *you* not heard that voice from the dust, the prophets of ancient times warning us, teaching us? Can we not now move into the future to meet the tremendous opportunities that are before us and take the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, leaving much behind, not neglecting those fundamental doctrines, those fundamental gospel principles and ordinances. Then we will have acted in the offices to which we have been called with all diligence and the Lord will bless us.

I bear witness that He lives, that this is His church, that it is led by inspiration and that His spirit is guiding us, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ☪

There will be smaller budgets and fewer activities. That will leave a vacuum. We must absolutely resist the temptation to program that vacuum.

Church leaders and ordinary members may look forward to future course corrections with confidence that those corrections will keep us on the path toward becoming truly Latter-day Saints in the most universal sense

“COURSE CORRECTIONS”: SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

By James B. Allen

ONE SUNDAY LATE IN 1989 I WAS SITTING IN A ward council meeting and, like everyone else there, was both astonished and delighted to hear the bishop read a letter from the First Presidency announcing that ward and stake budget donations would no longer be required from members of the Church, and that all operating expenses of local units would henceforth be paid from tithes and offerings. At first the policy would apply only to the United States and Canada, but it seemed clear that eventually it would extend to other parts of the world. Immediately everyone began to ask all the inevitable questions: What did this mean for ward budgets? What about taking up voluntary donations for various activities that would no longer be budgeted? Would youth activity be curtailed? Could we find other ways to use the money “saved” by not having to raise ward budgets? No one knew all the answers, and it was clear that it would take time to work out all the administrative problems. I remember leaving that meeting with an exhilaration that I believe was shared by the others—a feeling that I had witnessed another important step in the direction of both simplifying and universalizing Church policy and programs, and also in the direction of being more responsive to the ever-increasing financial burdens of the average Latter-day Saint.

The new policy went into effect the first of the year and on 18 February 1990, I attended the televised “Member Finances Fireside” where it was discussed in more detail. I was

particularly impressed with the talk by Elder Boyd K. Packer, the first speaker, who concluded his remarks with these words:

I could not express to you, my brethren and sisters, the depth of my feeling about what has been announced. *It is a course correction; it is an inspired move.* It will have influence upon the Church across the world, not just in our generation, but in the generations to come.¹

The term “course correction” was a particularly fitting metaphor. Anyone who has been in the Church for long should have learned to expect such changes frequently, especially in the wake of the rapid internationalization and interculturalization of the past few decades. The Church is moving swiftly toward becoming a truly universal Church, one that can more readily accommodate diverse cultures, nationalities, and language groups. This movement has been an important catalyst in bringing about change. A few statistics will emphasize what is happening. In 1950 Church membership was about 1,100,000. At the beginning of 1990 it was 7,300,000.² In 1950 there were 180 organized stakes, about 47 percent of them in Utah. Forty years later there were 1700, over half of which had been created in the past twelve years, and only about 23 percent of which were in Utah.³ In 1950 the Church was organized in less than fifty nations or territories, while today it is in 128 nations. In 1950 some 7.7 percent of the population of the Church lived outside the United States and Canada. By the end of 1987, this had changed to 34.5 percent.⁴ In 1950 most missionaries spent ten days or so in a mission home in Salt Lake City, where they received minimal training. Today they receive intensive language and missionary training in fourteen missionary training centers around the world, and 23 percent of all the missionaries who go to training centers go to those outside Provo, Utah. In 1950 the Church was operating eight temples, only one of which was outside the United States. Now it operates forty-four, twenty-three are outside the United States.

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Administratively, the number of general authorities of the Church tripled in four decades: about thirty in 1950 and ninety in 1990. In the 1950s there was no such thing as area and regional organizations. Today, after a rather complicated series of administrative changes, the Church is administered through nine area organizations outside North America, presided over by general authorities living in those areas, and eight areas in North America.

The process of administering the Church is becoming increasingly complex. Despite whatever course corrections are made, many old problems remain and new ones constantly appear. But I find reason for optimism as I begin to see attitudes change at all levels. Recent events suggest that we may anticipate even more course corrections as Church leaders continue to attempt to simplify programs, cut down burdensome costs and, above all, help increase the spirituality of the Saints worldwide. On 25 November 1990, for example, while sitting in sacrament meeting, I heard an announcement that delighted me just as much as the one I heard a year earlier. This time the bishop read a letter from the First Presidency, dated 20 November, announcing that beginning 1 January the contributions required to support missionaries called from the United States or Canada would be equalized at \$350 U.S. or \$400 Canadian dollars. Previously costs had varied from \$100 to \$750, depending on the mission. But the letter did not stop there. Evidently concerned with what missionary contributions could do for the spiritual well being of the Saints, the First Presidency emphasized that missionary service has always required sacrifice and that the sacrifices willingly made in the past must continue. As always, the costs are to be borne, first, by the missionary, second, by the family, and third, by ward members. Bishops will be required to provide to Church headquarters an amount equal to the cost of maintaining the number of missionaries from their wards and these funds, in turn, will be distributed to the respective mission presidents for distribution. In addition to conforming to recent I.R.S. rulings about deductions for supporting missionaries, this equalization is clearly a positive move which, among other things, will make it easier for families to plan ahead for missionary expenses. Beyond that, however, I cannot escape the feeling that a potential spiritual value will come as many Church members may feel not only an increased obligation but also an increased desire to donate to the ward missionary fund, whether or not they have sons and daughters in the mission field. More realistically than ever before, the missionary fund is a general fund, rather than a specific fund for specific individuals, and I believe many Saints will see it as a marvelous place to make continuing, tax-deductible, contributions to building the Kingdom.

Despite course corrections many old problems remain and new ones constantly appear. But I find reason for optimism.

REASONS FOR COURSE CORRECTIONS

THE “course correction” metaphor might well be thought of as comparing the progress of the Church to the progress of a ship at sea, an aircraft in the air, or a vehicle exploring space: they frequently encounter obstacles or unanticipated difficulties, and constant adjustments, both small and large, are needed to keep them moving toward their pre-determined destinations.

One objective for many of the recent course corrections may be to move more clearly and effectively in the direction of fulfilling Joseph Smith’s original ideal that one day the Church would fill the world, not just with token members here and there but with all the opportunities and advantages of the full Church program.⁵ President David O. McKay reaffirmed the vision in a general conference address in 1955, when he stressed the need “to put forth every effort within reason and practicability to place within reach of Church members in these distant missions every educational and spiritual privilege that the Church has to offer.”⁶ The Church was embarking upon an irreversible effort not only to convert people around the world but also, at long last, to induce them more effectively to remain in their homelands to build up Zion.

There were problems, however, that kept the Church from achieving the full potential of that vision. Among them was the priesthood policy which clearly inhibited missionary work among blacks in the United States and Africa and also among people in South America whose ancestry was uncertain. In addition, political realities made it practically unthinkable in the 1950s and 1960s that an American church, and one in which prominent leaders were speaking out strongly and frequently against Communism, could gain recognition or even approval to function in at least a third of the world.

The spirit, nevertheless, was there. During President McKay’s administration, stakes were organized in the South Pacific and Europe; temples were constructed in New Zealand, Switzerland, and England; missions were organized in several nations where they had never been before; and the physical gathering of the Saints to the “Utah Zion” was coming to an end. A constant theme in the 1960s and 1970s was that the essence of the gospel really crossed national and cultural boundaries. In the 1970s there was a noticeable decline, and finally a disappearance, of political utterances that could offend other governments, particularly socialist governments. In the 1980s the Church was able to gain recognition in some countries behind the “iron curtain,” and a temple was built in the German Democratic Republic. Then, as we all know, the dramatic revolutions of 1989-1990 opened many of the “iron

curtain” countries to the world. It suddenly became apparent that at last Mormon missionaries would be free to come and go—even, eventually, in the Soviet Union.

But the reasons for these course corrections went deeper than merely filling the world statistically: they were also concerned with the spirituality of the Saints. Elder Packer emphasized, for example, that the change in financial policy was designed not just to save the members’ money but also to save their time so that, without excessive Church programming, they could learn the principles of the gospel and then have time to apply them in their families.

Finally, many recent course corrections are related to what seems to be a renewed emphasis on universal brotherhood and sisterhood within the Church: an effort to adjust attitudes as well as programs and policies in order to meet the needs of people of all cultures without imposing on them certain “Wasatch-Front Americanisms” that were never a necessary part of the gospel.

AN OVERVIEW OF SOME OF THE RECENT COURSE CORRECTIONS

WHAT, then, have been some other “course corrections” made by the Church in recent decades? Most Church members probably could list a dozen or so almost without thinking; here are a few that have been particularly significant.

Organizational/Administrative Course Corrections

- 1950: An early morning seminary program was adopted in California, setting the stage for the rapid expansion of week-day religious instruction in areas outside those dominated by Latter-day Saints.
- 1956: Student wards and stakes were first organized, heralding the adaptation of Church programs more fully to the needs of college students.
- 1960s and 1970s: The Church Correlation program was adopted and expanded, and the Correlation Executive Committee was appointed. Correlation was designed to bring all Church programs and auxiliaries more effectively under a unified system, and to administer them through specific priesthood authority lines. It was an attempt to perfect the organization in such a way that essentials would be emphasized, duplication of efforts would be eliminated. According to Elder Harold B. Lee in 1961, “In the adoption of such a program, we may possibly and hopefully look forward to the consolidation and simplification of church curricula, church publications, church buildings, church meetings, and many other aspects of the Lord’s work.”⁷ This statement only foreshadowed much of what has happened in recent years.

One aspect of correlation was a more precise identification of the mission of the Church and of priesthood quorums. In 1964 the new *Melchizedek Priesthood Handbook* identified three major priesthood quorum objectives as (1) perfect the Saints, (2) missionary work, and (3) temple work. Later these were slightly reworded and popularized as the three-fold mission of the Church: perfect the Saints, preach the gospel, and redeem the dead. Perfecting the Saints included such responsibilities as home teaching and welfare service, and eventually this three-fold mission helped define how the priesthood was organized, from the general authorities down to quorum leaders.

In 1975, the establishment of the Correlation Department was a significant development. Today one division of the department oversees all curriculum developments to make sure they are correlated in every proper way. Another, the Research and Evaluation division, does extensive and sophisticated research into every aspect of the Church in order to provide hopefully reliable data as a base for future course corrections.

- 1961: Members of the First Council of the Seventy were ordained High Priests, and their responsibilities as assistants to the Twelve were expanded.

- 1965: Renewed emphasis was placed on family home evening—and a Church-wide “program” was adopted. The “program” aspect of it has receded since then, leaving families responsible for their own decisions, but the emphasis on the idea of family home evening

remains strong.

- 1970: The Aaronic Priesthood and Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association were merged.
- 1970s: The Church withdrew from many business enterprises, including the operation of Church hospitals. One reason was to save the time of many general authorities who served on boards.
- 1970s: The foundation was developed for the current area and regional organizations.
- 1971: The Church publishing program was consolidated: only three magazines (*Ensign* for adults, *New Era* for youth, and *The Friend* for children) were authorized and all others were eliminated. (An *International Magazine* was soon adopted, however, and its contents were drawn from the pages of the three basic magazines.)
- 1971: The office of assistant to the twelve was eliminated, and the First Quorum of the Seventy was organized. In 1989, the Second Quorum was also organized.
- 1973: A legally separate Social Services Corporation was organized to meet needs of people requiring special social services, such as adoptions, foster care, and specialized counseling.

There seems to be an increasing awareness that the “Wasatch Front” Church cannot be the model for the world wide Church.

- 1974: The former Mutual Improvement Associations became the Young Men's and Young Women's programs. All adult programs were taken over by the Relief Society and the Melchizedek priesthood quorums.

- 1977: General conferences were shortened to two days.

- 1977: The First Presidency made a distinction between ecclesiastical and temporal affairs of the Church. Ecclesiastical affairs were to be administered by the Quorum of the Twelve and temporal affairs by the presiding bishopric. One important result was that youth programs, formerly the responsibility of the presiding bishopric, came under the wing of the Twelve.

- 1979: The frequency of stake conferences was reduced to twice a year.

- 1979-81: New editions of the Standard Works, along with the "Topical Guide," integrated cross references and tended to enhance LDS scripture study.

- 1978: The annual general women's conference was inaugurated.

- 1978: The policy was adopted of placing some general authorities on "emeritus" status. In 1979 the Patriarch to the Church was put on emeritus status, and the office of Patriarch to the Church was effectively eliminated.

- 1980: The consolidated meeting schedule was inaugurated. The immediate catalyst was the need for energy savings because of a major energy crisis that year. But the First Presidency also declared that a more basic consideration was to give families more time for scripture study and other activities in the home.

It might also be worthwhile to note the changes in the new handbook of instructions as compared with that of ten years ago. For example:

- There are no more Church "courts": they were replaced by "disciplinary councils."

- The bishop's role in interviewing is more flexible. "In large wards, the interviews of Aaronic priesthood young men and women may become burdensome. Bishops, acting with inspiration and wisdom, may wish to adjust their scheduling and frequency of interviews."⁸

Doctrinal and Attitudinal Course Corrections

THE most important course corrections, however, may be those that cannot be quantified. In 1950, for example, it might have been possible to identify how many people of particular races were in the Church, not just through estimates but through membership records. It was Church policy, at least in some areas, to identify some racial groups with a special letter on their membership records. This only reflected the social realities of the time but today it would be impossible to identify race through official membership records. The Church identifies its members as brothers and sisters without

distinction as to racial backgrounds.

There have been other changes that could, and probably have, affected LDS attitudes and perspectives. The priesthood revelation of 1978 clearly had far-reaching doctrinal and attitudinal implications. I believe that general racial and cultural attitudes, especially among white American Mormons, has improved greatly. I see clear evidence of this when I compare attitudes of BYU students today with those I remember from twenty-five years ago. Attitudes toward women, particularly working mothers and career women, have improved to some degree, but not as much as many would like. There is, perhaps, a greater awareness of women's problems and needs. There has been a dramatic decline in political rhetoric and more acceptance of the idea that anyone, regardless of political persuasion, can have a testimony of Christ and be a good member of the Church. In addition, there seems to be an increasing awareness of other cultures and of the fact that the "Wasatch Front" Church cannot be the model for the world wide Church.

Many general authorities have tried to lead the way in these attitudinal changes. I particularly liked a statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer in 1985: "Now we are moving into those countries," he said,

but we can't move *there* with all the baggage we produce and carry *here!* We can't move with a 1947 Utah Church! Could it be that we are not prepared to take the *gospel* because we are not

prepared to take (and they are not prepared to receive) all of the things we have wrapped up with it as extra baggage.⁹

Observers must also be impressed with the fact that general conference addresses tend to define sainthood not in terms of Church membership as such but, more particularly, in terms of what Elder M. Russell Ballard called the "small and simple things" in his April 1990 address. Love, service, home, family, and worship of the Savior: these were the universals that constituted the essence of Mormonism so far as the message of that conference was concerned.¹⁰

Elder Packer emphasized the brethren's hope that the recent changes will reduce and simplify activities and, particularly, back away from the tendency to program everything. This does not mean that he wanted to get rid of all Church programs, but simply that he thought we have too many. He was appalled, in fact, at the idea entertained by some people that if certain required Church programs were reduced the apparent void could be filled by creating more local programs. We need to "change our mindset," he told the regional representatives in March, "and realize that a reduction of and a secession from that constant programming must be accomplished." I am

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encouraged by these comments, for perhaps *not* pressing for new programs is itself an important course correction.

The Process of Course Correction

COURSE corrections do not come easily or lightly. The process is complex, and certainly cannot be described adequately in a small space. In general, however, it involves a recognition of a problem, often because of input from various members of the Church. There is also considerable investigation, with data from various sources, including: the Correlation Department's Research and Evaluation Division; long hours of meetings and discussion by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve; prayer; development of a new policy or program with more input from a variety of sources; "beta testing" (i.e., often particular wards and stakes will be given the assignment to adopt a new program or policy, test it out for a certain amount of time, then evaluate it); more evaluation, data gathering, and prayer, accompanied by some assurance that the new plan is approved of the Lord; and, finally, the announcement of a new Church policy.

The Results of Course Corrections

AS might be expected, nearly all such course corrections carry with them both positive and negative results. With respect to the change in ward and stake financing, for example, along with the consolidated meeting schedule, one emphasis was on deprogramming so that families would have more time together and increase their unity and spirituality. Unfortunately, however, many active Latter-day Saints do not yet see much more time available. In addition to the three-hour Sunday block there are still a multitude of leadership meetings, preparation meetings, welfare assignments, home teaching assignments, visiting teaching assignments, temple assignments, stake leadership meetings, personal interviews, youth activities, and other Church-related responsibilities that take their time. More serious, however, is the possibility that even those who are less involved, and therefore have more time, may not have learned how to take advantage of it for the spiritual purposes Elder Packer envisioned.

At the same time, there are seemingly increasing numbers of people in the Church whose needs are not being met by de-programming. Some Latter-day Saints have expressed concern over the possibility that the elimination of money-raising activities may severely inhibit many of the opportunities for group involvement that once meant a great deal to the youth. But there are also people who are not members of families, or are converts who have come into the

Church without their families, who need something more than the traditional emphasis on Church family life. Single adults, both men and women, have special needs that are not always met within the traditional emphasis on family, and a variety of other groups have other special needs. I am not suggesting elaborate programming, but only that many people feel their needs have yet to be adequately addressed. Perhaps many of their needs are better met outside Church programs.

Even as he described the desired impact of the new member finance program, Elder Packer candidly recognized that there are still problems. He emphasized the need for balance between assessing families' time and money to support Church activities, on the one hand, and, on the other, having Church activities that complement what families should do for themselves. But, he said, "that is a difficult balance because some families need more support than others. Perhaps we have been over-programming stable families to meet the needs of those with problems. We must seek a better way."¹¹

VARIOUS people have also raised other questions, which may or may not be valid, but some of them are worth noting if for no other reason than that they have been widely expressed.

Have not the recent changes actually resulted in even greater centralization, some ask, and therefore greater control from Salt Lake City, at a time when growth and interculturalization really suggest the need for more decentralization and more opportunity for local determination? Is one result of de-programming actually more centralized programming, but of a different sort? All the tithes go directly to Church headquarters, local fundraising is eliminated, and Church units can function only on the basis of what Church headquarters sees fit to return. This, moreover, is based on percentage of Church attendance, which means that active Church members may suffer in areas where attendance is notoriously low for reasons not attributable to them. By comparison, wards in certain high-density LDS areas with better attendance at sacrament meeting will obviously benefit.

What will reducing financial and time commitments do to our sense of community? For example, I admit that I was as pleased as anyone when I found out that I would not have to donate anything extra for the construction of a new ward chapel. Recently, however, I drove by the spot where the new chapel I will attend next year is being built. Suddenly I felt a strange sense of loss as I realized that neither I nor the bishop had anything to do with planning it, that I will have nothing to do even with any tiny part of the construction, and that I put no money into it. The only involvement, so far as I can tell,

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was that the bishop is kept informed of what is going to happen. We will no doubt remain the close-knit, friendly ward that we now are, but, somehow, there will be something missing because we seemingly had no sacrifice to make on behalf of the building. But maybe another recent course correction will make up for that: our responsibility for much of the building's maintenance, particularly the outside maintenance, snow removal, and all the furniture moving that has come with the new custodial services policy.

Has the simplification of lesson manuals, and the effort to make them applicable to all cultures and to the newest, least experienced members as well as to long-standing members, made them too unchallenging?

Has the consolidated meeting schedule cut into the socializing that often went on before and after meetings, and did this former socializing help in unifying and consolidating a ward?

Will spontaneous, imaginative, and inspiring local public service programs, that often cost the Saints both time and money, be discouraged because of the prohibition on fundraising and organized activity? Many such activities have been carried out by various local Church units and resulted not only in inspiring Christian service—the thing the gospel is really all about—but also in cultivating greater unity among the Saints themselves.

On the other hand, there have been some positive results. Because of the financial course correction, many Church units now have greater budgets than ever before, and feel that they can now come closer to fulfilling their legitimate needs. At the same time, the more wealthy wards have been required to tighten their belts. While some find discomfort others are beginning to consider the new policy a form of the “law of consecration,” and seem willing to forgo expensive activities for the sake of seemingly greater equality within the Church structure.

As a result of other course corrections, the program of the Church is being carried more readily and more effectively into many different nations, and being adapted more realistically to diverse cultures. We certainly have not arrived at our goal, but the course corrections seem well taken. Statements from leaders, such as those cited above from Elders Packer and Ballard, seem most encouraging to me. The concern over the Saints' time and money is being dealt with, and, despite the problems suggested here, I personally believe the general direction is a positive one. With respect to the minor concern about Melchizedek priesthood manuals, for example, I am convinced that the real answer is in the nature of whoever is assigned to give instruction in Church classes. I have observed that the *topics* themselves are usually very important and extremely valid for discussion, and even though some might

criticize the manuals themselves, they provide the basis for an imaginative instructor to present some tremendously challenging and inspirational lessons. In addition, there is still room for flexibility because quorum leaders are instructed that they can pick and choose the lessons as they are applicable to their particular quorums, and they can provide whatever lessons they believe are needed at particular times. The opportunity for flexibility is certainly consistent with the goal of universalism.

The Acceptance of Course Corrections

I once heard someone wonder if the constant stream of changes in the Church might upset or undermine the faith of the Saints, for it might suggest that some programs or policies or teachings were not inspired after all. The answer to that, of course, is the fact that believing Latter-day Saints have faith in the principle of continuing revelation, and that principle itself has far-reaching implications for change. I was especially interested in the way Elder Bruce R. McConkie put it shortly after the 1978 revelation on priesthood. (In my mind, this was one of the most significant course corrections in the history of the Church.) Elder McConkie reminded Church Education System teachers of the various things that had been said in the past, even by general authorities, that were taken to mean that blacks would not receive the priesthood during this life:

I have said the same things, and people write me letters and say “You said such and such, and how is it now that we do such and such?” And all I can say is that it is time disbelieving people repented and got in line and believed in a living, modern prophet. Forget everything I have said, or what President Brigham Young or President George Q. Cannon or whomsoever has said in days past that is contrary to the present revelation. We spoke with a limited understanding and without the light and knowledge that now has come into the world.

We get our truth and our light line upon line and precept upon precept. We have now had added a new flood of intelligence and light on this particular subject, and it erases all the darkness and all the views and all the thoughts of the past. They don't matter any more.¹²

That attitude, it seems to me, is catching on in the Church. We don't take change lightly and, as Elder Packer observed to the regional representatives, “There are always those who will go to the extreme and want to cancel all activities. That is not what I am talking about. . . . I am talking about a *careful* course correction.”¹³ Church leaders may be slow to make changes, but when they feel the time is ripe they are not afraid to make

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is perfect,
despite all that
went into it,
with experience
various
adjustments
will be made.**

them, even if they seem to fly in the face of long and almost sacred traditions. And Church members have, for the most part, accepted them very well. There have been many exceptions, of course, including a full-page newspaper advertisement by some Church members protesting the change in priesthood policy. For the most part, however, I think the Latter-day Saints accept the principle of continuing revelation with all its implications, and also know that the inspiration that results in course correction usually does not come without long periods of painstaking research, evaluation, and even testing, in addition to prayer. The Saints are also sophisticated enough to recognize that not every new course of action is perfect, despite all that went into it, and that with experience various adjustments will continue to be made. The important thing, after all, is the long-range goal, not the particular program or policy itself, and I believe that most active Latter-day Saints will accept the frequent course corrections in that spirit.

In conclusion, let me comment on an experience I had several years ago. In 1973 I was asked by the *New Era* to submit an article on changes in the Church. I spent a lot of time on it, and the article did what I thought was a good job of comparing the Church in the 1970s with the Church of a hundred years earlier, but also emphasizing the inspired nature of the changes. The *New Era* liked it, prepared it for publication, and even paid me \$75 for it. Finally, however, on 27 February 1974, I received a call from the editor who said that the correlation committee had turned down the article, and there seemed to be two basic reasons: (1) the committee could not see any value in talking about change as such, and (2) it was fearful that in discussing so many changes we would leave the impression that everything was changing, and therefore raise questions in the minds of the *New Era* readers about whether gospel doctrines were changing and whether or not the Church was true.¹⁴ Naturally I was disappointed, but I mention the incident here only by way of contrast. I think the situation has changed and, in fact, five years later the *Ensign* even published a similar, though much stronger, article that I had been invited to write on the same subject!¹⁵ I am optimistic that while the attitude expressed in 1974 may not have totally disappeared, it has visibly receded, and Church leaders and ordinary members alike may discuss past changes and look forward to future course corrections not only without damage to faith but also with confidence that those corrections will be designed to keep us on the path toward becoming truly Latter-day Saints in the most universal sense possible. ☞

NOTES

1. Elder Boyd K. Packer, "Teach Them Correct Principles," address at the Member Finances Fireside, 18 February 1990, *Ensign* (May 1990): 89-91, emphasis added.
2. F. Michael Watson, "Statistical Report 1989," *The Ensign* (May, 1990), p. 22.
3. Watson, plus percentage estimate based on 1989-1990 *Church Almanac* figures.
4. The 1989-90 *Church Almanac* shows 2,243,000 outside North America, 118,000 in Canada, and 4,100,000 in U.S.
5. As Joseph prayed during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, "Remember all thy church, O Lord, with all their families, and all their immediate connections, with all their sick and afflicted ones, with all the poor and the meek of the earth; that the kingdom, which thou hast set up without hands, may become a great mountain and fill the whole earth"

(D&C 109:72).

6. *Conference Report*, April 1955, 25.
7. *Conference Report*, September 1961, 79.
8. As quoted by Elder Boyd K. Packer, address to Regional Representatives Seminar, 30 March 1990. (Reprinted in this issue, see pages 32-33).
9. Elder Boyd K. Packer, address to Church Coordinating Committee Meeting, 8 September 1987, as cited in Lee Copeland, "From Calcutta to Kaysville: Is Righteousness Color-coded?" *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Fall 1988): 97.
10. See the report of conference addresses in *The Ensign*, May 1990, and particularly the addresses of M. Russell Ballard, Rex D. Pinegar ("Home First"), Derek A. Cuthbert ("The Spirituality of Service"), Richard P. Lindsay ("Ye Have Done it Unto Me"), L. Tom Perry ("Family Traditions"), Joseph B. Wirthlin ("Personal Integrity"), Malcolm S. Jeppsen ("Who is a True Friend?"), Thomas S. Monson ("My Brother's Keeper" and "A Little Child Shall Lead Them"), Marvin J. Ashton ("Neither Boast of Faith Nor of Mighty Works"), Gordon B. Hinckley ("Blessed are the Merciful"), Dallin H. Oaks ("World Peace"). In addition, see the report of the October Conference in *The Ensign*, November 1990, and especially the address by Bishop Glenn L. Pace ("A Thousand times").
11. Packer, "Teach Them Correct Principles," 90.
12. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, "All Are Alike Unto God," Address given to CES Religious Education Symposium, BYU, 18 August 1978, 12.
13. Packer, address to the Regional Representatives, 30 March 1990. Underline added for emphasis. (see page 31 of this issue.)
14. Notes and observations written down at the time by James B. Allen, 27 February 1974.
15. James B. Allen, "Line Upon Line," *The Ensign* (July 1979): 32-37.

CRIB DEATH: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DESK

The lonely baby blue boy was
streaked past my desk in a blur
of paramedics and monitors,
knees squared out from his hips,
immovable like a plastic
resuscitation doll in CPR class.
Two nurses and a doctor joined
the race. But soon it was called.

My own child stretched lazily inside me
as I wrote the official time
of death in red by the white
blank where his name belonged.

The parents never came.

Wrapped in white, he was a lone peek-holed egg
balanced on a black rubber borrowed bed.
Vacant eyes slumbered, waiting to be cradled
one more time in familiar arms.

Slipping my hand under his neck and pulling
him to me, I rocked him on the ledge
of the unknown child inside.
I sang to both.

—JANICE REISEWITZ ANDERSON

As long as families don't fit the ideal two-parent, multi cooperative-child families, we're going to need extensive activities within the community

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAMS IN OUR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

By J. Lynn England

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I THOUGHT THAT I could successfully separate my roles as sociologist, Church member, father, and husband. The more I experience the more certain I become that all of those things have a way of blending and affecting what I see and say when I act in any one of the roles. So, although my original intention was to speak as a sociologist, I find that I'm speaking as a ten-year-old boy whose parents were relatively inactive in the Church; as a father who has children in his own family who are not perfect; as a bishop of an active middle class ward; and as a sociologist who doesn't have much data on this topic beyond his own personal experience. I'm going to take a conservative stance, where I'm used to taking relatively liberal stances. This doesn't bother me a great deal because these sorts of labels have come to mean less and less. For example, in the Soviet Union the liberals support a free market, and the conservatives push the socialist "Revolution."

The recent "Course Corrections" are part of a long sequence of corrections and refinements to programs and practices in the Church. The changes announced this past year are major and their importance is reflected by the ways in which they were introduced: through letters to local leaders; a satellite fireside in which members of the First Presidency demonstrated unanimous support for the changes as well as elaborating the details; and in a talk by Elder Boyd K. Packer to regional representatives in March 1990. In his talk, Elder Packer said that we are at a unique point in history because the Church is experiencing rapid growth, acceptance by the world, increased popularity, and greater and greater prosperity. Elder Packer points out that based on Book of Mormon history those

four conditions have always been accompanied by a fifth condition: apostasy. The challenge then is to maintain the four conditions and at the same time avoid the fifth.

The intention of the course correction is to assure that apostasy does not become a condition of the Church. It consists of returning to basic principles and eliminating traditions and programs that "over-medicate." The changes include funding of ward and stake activities through tithing rather than local fundraising and returning time to families instead of spending so much time in church activities. A great deal of Elder Packer's emphasis is focused on the idea that to avoid apostasy we must return responsibility to families, and we do that by returning to them their two primary resources—time and money. The basic idea is that, especially with time, when you reduce Church programming you create a vacuum. The local units are not to attempt to fill the vacuum so that the family will step in and fill it with its own activities and support.

BUDGET CHANGES

WHEN we talk about what is happening in the current course correction, speaking now not as a sociologist but as a bishop, one of the things I appreciate greatly is that I no longer have to do fundraising. The change allows me to do what I'm really supposed to: work on a personal basis with members of our ward. I no longer have to allow my favorite sweatshirt to be sold at an auction. A major part of our ward activities no longer consist of a fundraising component. We don't have to devote most of our bishopric meetings to figuring out how we are going to pay our obligations to the stake. Many of our ward members don't have to choose between family activities and paying into the ward budget.

In looking at the larger picture, beyond my own preferences and efforts in my church calling, this part of the course correction has two related consequences. Before the budget change, some ward and stake activities occurring in neighborhoods near my own were simply examples of conspicuous

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consumption. While the change has resulted in the reduction of some such programs, it has also had a very positive consequence for wards with severely limited economic resources. Some wards are now able to have worthwhile activities they did not have funds for under the former budgeting system.

FAMILY CENTERED ACTIVITIES

MY assessment of the expectation that families fill the time vacuum left by a reduction in Church programs is very different from that concerning the ward budget. Many of the course corrections that the Church has been involved in have been successful. Nevertheless, not all announced corrections have even been implemented by the membership. I was reminded of this not too long ago as I sat in my ward during a sacrament meeting, “that wasn’t a missionary farewell,” to say godspeed to a missionary: one of his parents, supposedly giving a “gospel message,” shared all kinds of embarrassing information about their son. The meeting, “under the control of the bishop,” lasted for two hours instead of an hour and ten minutes. At the end the young man stood up and announced that the family was having a “non-open-house” at their home. Some traditions die hard. There are several reasons why the reduction of ward activities and an increase in family activities will probably not work very well.

First, there’s a questionable assumption that lies behind this particular course correction model—an image of a particular kind of family. It requires a model family which has two parents and several children: one that is a well-functioning household with parents who have the energy and the resources to do the many things that are necessary; one where the children are cooperative and responsive to parental direction, and where the parents themselves have testimonies of the gospel and are actively involved in the Church.

In one of his comments, Elder Packer said, “I used to worry as we designed programs to fit weak, unstable families, scheduling for men, women, children, youth, young adults, singles, everything with too little attention paid to the effect it was having on stable families.”¹ As a result, the new course correction is based on this particular image of stable families with their abundant resources and abilities to accomplish particular kinds of Church missions.

Unfortunately, the model family doesn’t exist very often. Where it does occur, it is often a temporary condition. Further, if you look at the pattern of Church growth outside of Utah’s Wasatch Front, typically individuals join the Church; intact families converting is relatively rare. So if you have a model based on intact, ideal families, and you have very few such

families, you’re basically doomed to serious difficulties. In addition to these conversion patterns, we live in a world where many of the members of our individual wards are either single persons, single parents, children with inactive parents, parents with inactive children, parents with unruly children, and on and on. Today, many two-parent families are also two-career families where resources such as time and energy are reduced.

We live in neighborhoods where many families, even when the resources are there, simply don’t choose to fill the time vacuum. I fluctuate between being amazed and appalled at the discrepancy between how the extra time that’s given to be spent (taking our children to visit their grandparents, reading the scriptures, etc.) and how it is spent (parents taking a nap or watching the television while the children roam the streets).

Another problem occurs when we try to correct traditions that have genuine reasons for their existence. That is, many of the things that develop in communities and organizations emerge to address real kinds of needs and problems. Quite often the need is already present and activities are engaged to meet that need and eventually become tradition: the innovations that successfully meet the need persist. Some traditions are maintained beyond their useful lifetime, but in most cases they are maintained because they continue to serve certain purposes. Hence, as a Church leader sitting behind a mother who has just lengthened her five-minute talk to twenty, praising her young, soon-to-become-a-missionary son, and

deciding whether to push the button that launches the trap door to get her out of there, you also remember that part of what she’s talking about is nineteen years of love and struggle and hope and prayer. And that all of that is now getting bound up in her twenty-minute talk. There is a certain reason for that particular kind of thing occurring frequently within the community. Ward camp-outs, birthday parties, youth conferences, and other ward traditions are there because they successfully help the ward membership attain their spiritual and social goals.

A third problem arises because even though we talk about reducing programs, so far there has been very little program reduction in terms of time commitments. The Young Women are still expected to meet every week; the scouting program still carries the same responsibilities and requirements that were present before. The number and frequency of leadership meetings, training meetings, and interviews does not seem to have been modified. Perhaps one reason for the failure to reduce programs is that, as I have said, many of the programs and activities are still important because of needs.

WHAT all this means to me is that there are important

As a bishop, the change allows me to work with members. I no longer have to allow my favorite sweatshirt to be sold at an auction.

needs out there that families in isolation simply can't meet. One of the reasons for this—and sociologists took some time to rediscover this—is the extreme importance of community itself. It's not an isolated family that's striving for the salvation and exaltation of the members of the family, but it's the entire community. My own feeling is deeply colored as far as the Church is concerned by an early exposure to John Widsøe who expressed the notion that humans "must not be allowed to stand alone. Brotherhood is the prime principle on which the Church is based."² He stressed the "Supremacy of Community."

Sociologists during the 1930s and 1940s talked about the disintegration of community: that in urban centers people became isolated individuals in families without community support. A more recent reexamination of those studies suggests that that may have been true in large, middle-class, suburban areas, but in most large cities, and small towns as well, community still persists. There is still a kind of closeness that's there to provide mutual support, and it's there for important reasons.

I suspect the same is true of the Church and our own ward organizations. The reason for the existence of congregational community is because when your sixteen-year-old decides that this is his or her year to be rebellious and when mom and dad talk he or she walks away, there's an Explorer or Laurel advisor or a bishop who can step into the gap and get away from family issues that occur when you have a teenager struggling to gain space and independence. The extreme importance of the mutual support that occurs in those settings mustn't be overlooked. A significant reinforcement of parental and church values comes when an admired neighbor isn't only an admired neighbor but someone who takes a group of Young Men or Young Women into the mountains for a week-and-a-half, putting-up with all of the anti-social behavior that mom and dad can't possibly stand for any period of time.

These are the sorts of things that ultimately lead us back to local units resisting many program reductions—because the programs meet important kinds of needs that the family in isolation simply can't accomplish.

Now, some criticize programs because they *assign* people to heart-felt service. As I mentioned, there is a real problem in trying to separate our roles: when my neighbor who is also my home teacher shovels my walk, I might question if it is my neighbor shoveling my walk or my home teacher. Or when someone contracts cancer and the neighborhood rallies behind the person, the reality is that they are neighbors *and* elders quorum presidents and visiting teachers. I'm not sure that there is a way we can successfully say which service is "program" and which is based on love and spontaneity. The basic idea is that even programs themselves can be enacted in

a sensitive, flexible, and loving fashion; they don't have to be the kind of constraining endeavor that we sometimes experience. It's true that sometimes the division of labor in programs keeps us from service and involvement—"that's not my job."³ The other side of that, however, is if you have a neighborhood of fifty people and someone's in need, all the research on helping behavior argues that the fifty people generally disperse responsibility among them and no one acts.

Whereas, if you do have someone who feels a responsibility and a personal tie, then something highly productive will take place.

Of course, certain important things can't be programmed, but one of the things that often happens in programs is that individuals are placed in circumstances where relationships develop. For example, the visiting teacher who becomes involved with a family she is assigned to visit: she develops a relationship that grows out of the program process.

And so, as we talk about course corrections and think in terms of reduction of programs, it is my opinion that as long as we live with families that don't fit the ideal two-parent, multi-cooperative-child families, we're going to be in the situation of needing extensive activities within the community and the local unit regardless of official pronouncements to the contrary. ☞

**Ward camp-
outs, birthday
parties, youth
conferences are
there because
they help the
ward members
attain their
spiritual and
social goals.**

NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer. "Let Them Govern Themselves." Address delivered at a Regional Representative Seminar, March 30, 1990. (Reprinted in this issue, see page 33).

2. John Widsøe, *A Rational Theology* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965.), 161.

THE WORD WAS UNPERFECTED TILL MADE FLESH

The word was unperfected till made flesh:
With clay and spittle Christ restored the blind;
He laid his hands on those whom he would bless;
His body bled as he redeemed mankind.

As "Hamlet" issued forth from words and time
Or "David" was released from faulty stone,
So soul and body can become sublime;
The Spirit follows passion's path in bone.

Desired, fathered, and resired, then born
In blood that craves both earth and sky, we'd love
With heart, might, mind and strength; yet torn,
Abuse the means by which we'd rise above,

Refuse and swill and rut: damn the divine,
As devils still desire to enter swine.

—PENNY ALLEN

What religious programs do best is reinforce what is taught at home
by encouraging lasting friendships with people who reinforce
the religious story and demonstrate gospel living

THE PARADOX OF ORGANIZATION

By Marie Cornwall

WHILE ON MY MISSION, I MET AND TAUGHT A couple who were looking for a church that would help their family. They had three difficult children—all three had some behavioral disorder or another. They were desperate for help and thought they could find it in religion. The Mormon family that lived across the street seemed to have it all together. Perhaps Mormonism could do the same for them, they told me. We taught them the discussions and invited them to attend our church meetings. I was transferred within a few weeks, but I heard from other missionaries that they had spent many weeks associating with the Church, trying to decide whether to join. Finally, the ward mission leader had a plan: Challenge them to live like Mormons for one week. It was a disastrous plan. The husband went home teaching; the wife went visiting teaching. The children attended Primary, and the wife went to Relief Society. They even helped on a welfare project. They went to the ward activity on Saturday evening. This, of course, was before the consolidated meeting schedule. By the end of the week they were exhausted. No thank you, they said. We wanted a religion that would help us as a family. We haven't had an evening together all week. We just can't do it.

It was a great disappointment to me. I wanted them to come to Christ and to be a part of my religious community. I wondered what we might have done differently. What if we had simply asked the couple to forgive their trespassers, love the Lord, and join in fellowship with other Latter-day Saints? Or what if we had given them more help with parenting skills? What if we had taught them how God helps make our burdens light?

Several years later, I was party to another incident which fed my concern that the organizational imperatives of Church programs sometimes get in the way of the more personal and

eternal aspects of religion. One Sunday as I was returning home from church, I passed a friend, a Church member, in the parking lot. I could see she was upset and asked if I could help. She was on her way to the hospital—her granddaughter had been hit by a bus. I got into the car with her, knowing that her daughter was a single mother of two and that someone would need to care for the other grandchild. At the hospital, as my friend talked with her daughter and the doctors, I took the other child and helped by making some necessary telephone calls—my friend wanted someone to come give the child a blessing, and she wanted the bishop to know what had happened.

I was sitting in the waiting room when the missionaries arrived to give the child a blessing. I explained the situation to them. After a few minutes of discussion, one missionary asked if I was the visiting teacher. When I said no, he asked, "Then, why are you here?" I explained that I was the grandmother's neighbor, available to help when the emergency arose, and that I wanted to be there. That evening the Relief Society president called to apologize for not being on top of the situation. I assured her everything was taken care of, emphasizing that I was glad to help and had no ill feelings toward her. She felt guilty for not fulfilling her responsibilities. The next morning the visiting teacher called to apologize for not coming to pick up the other grandchild. I assured her that the child was well taken care of, that I wanted to help as a neighbor and Church member, and, again, that I had no ill feelings toward her for not fulfilling her duties. I realized that we were acting from two different paradigms. I wanted to respond as neighbor and friend, as part of the religious community. The Relief Society president and the visiting teacher wanted to magnify their callings, to live up to the expectations of their position in a religious organization. These two paradigms are always with us, sometimes to our benefit, sometimes to our dismay. I remember a friend's definition of a good ward: "The neighbors are there to offer food and help before the Relief Society president has time to organize it."

IN my sociological research I have focused both on the

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nature of organizations and the factors which influence the development of religious faith in individuals. I am constantly made aware of the inadequacy of bureaucratic rules and regulations with regards to nurturing individuals.

Mormonism grew up in a time when the bureaucratic form came to dominate the organizational landscape. The impersonal bureaucratic organization was far superior to more traditional and irrational forms which wallowed in nepotism and inefficiency. The bureaucratic form, it was thought, would introduce efficiency, control subordinates, and was consistent with the trend toward a more rational society. Today we know that while bureaucracies are very good at producing stable and controlled organizations, they also introduce unintended consequences. They alienate workers, they often misalign means and ends, and they always produce red-tape useful only to individuals who want to control.

Some people's frustrations with Mormon culture is the direct result of its bureaucratic tendencies. Mormonism's tremendous growth has encouraged these tendencies. The increase in Church membership during the 1970s was slightly more than the total population of the Church in the 1950s. Demographers project that by 2080 the Church will have 265 million members (that's assuming a 50 percent growth per decade—it has never had less since 1960). This growth means an increase in the number of local units. At the turn of the century there were 43 stakes, by 1950 there were 180, today there are 1700 stakes—that's 15,000 wards and branches. This growth has also been accompanied by expansion in the central administrative structure of the Church and the establishment of a new administrative level of area offices in many of the 128 countries and territories where Saints reside.

It is the irony of any charismatic organization that needed stability requires rationalization and bureaucratization, yet rationalization can destroy the charisma which animates the religious community. In addition, bureaucracies monopolize information, making it difficult for outsiders to determine the basis on which decisions are made. Bureaucracy is among the hardest of social organisms to destroy. As much as we dislike bureaucracies, we do not know how to organize with as much efficiency in any other way. No matter how we attempt to reorganize, we soon discover that for every reorganization or policy change with an intended consequence, there are any number of unintended consequences. Perhaps the most difficult issue confronting the leadership of the Church in the coming decade will be how to control bureaucratic growth and encourage personal and community relations. For example, how do you regulate the organization and also encourage agency and individual initiative? How do you respond to

economic inequities which exist across ward boundaries and international borders? The Boy Scout troop from an affluent Salt Lake Monument Park ward that plans a summer camp in Hawaii is not aware of the British ward that cannot raise enough budget to heat its building on Sunday mornings. Without some central regulation or policy, the inequities that exist across wards cannot be rectified. How do you gather information about the well-being and status of over 7 million

Church members without creating statistical reports that tempt leaders to focus on statistics and organizational goals rather than individuals?

Coordinating the work in the stakes and wards in so many countries obviously requires some bureaucratic organization, so the question is how to keep the bureaucratic tendencies to a minimum. One can hear these concerns in talks by the Brethren in phrases like "over-regimentation," people must "act for themselves" and "not be acted upon," "reduction of programs and activities," "simplify," return "responsibility for teaching and counseling and activities to the family," and "better balance between family support of Church activities and activities to support the family." And finally, "we cannot program individual and family prayer, indeed all of the basic human relationships, the emotions and feelings, the bonds that bind man to woman and parents to children, all the quiet influences, the sacred things that are centered in family life."¹

THE gravest problem facing the core of Mormonism will be how to nurture individuals using bureaucratic forms. We are just now realizing that we cannot create and sustain religious commitment in individuals if our focus is on position, duty, and responsibility. Rather, individuals are nurtured in communities where our focus is on relationships, where we create and recreate a religious story that motivates, improves, sustains, and encourages.

By definition, bureaucracies are not concerned with individuals or their personal growth; they are at best efficient, rational, impersonal systems of administration. In contrast, religious faith is created and sustained through relationships, and families must take responsibility for nurturing faith because families are the most influential of personal relationships. Of all social institutions, families have always been the best at nurturing—but even families have difficulty. So, where do families turn for help and nourishment? The quorums of the priesthood? The auxiliary organizations? Yes, but then we are back to programs, activities, and a complex organization that enlists all our time and energy and distracts us from gospel living. Is there something in between?

We have been handicapped as Latter-day Saints. Our associations and relationships have so centered around keeping the programs and activities of the Church functioning that we do

**Belief is nurtured
in relationships.
Programs
sometimes get in
the way of the
personal aspects
of religion.**

not know how to take action without them. We don't know how to create communities that are not program-centered. There are many things that the Church can provide for us, but the one thing that we need most—community—is something that you and I have to create ourselves. The bureaucratic Church cannot produce community. Community cannot be programmed.

In my professional research, I have examined how personal communities influence the development and maintenance of religious belief and commitment. By personal communities, I mean the networks of relations among family members, friends, and close associates, in contrast to the impersonal relationships in organizations. These personal communities or social networks are society's new form of *Gemeinschaft*—small communities, not necessarily geographically bounded, where everyone knows each other in regular face-to-face relationships. Networks are the personal connections by which society is structured and individuals are integrated into it. Sociologists have concluded that the cause of the continuing viability of religion in modern secular and pluralistic societies (a surprise to many scholars) may be primarily due to the persistence of personal moral communities that reinforce religious belief, commitment, and behavior. The survival of traditional religious commitment in modern America is because moral communities regularly integrate new individuals into their networks of personal relationships. For example, in a recent study of Latter-day Saints, I found that being embedded in a network of relationships with active Latter-day Saints is vital to maintaining one's religious belief and commitment. Furthermore, this research suggests that belief in and commitment to the normative order of the personal religious community may be more important in predicting religious behavior than sanctions existing at the institutional level. In other words, individuals follow gospel teachings because they believe in them, not because they are afraid of the punishments which might occur if they do not follow them. However, individuals believe the gospel teachings are worthy of their commitment *because* of their personal relationships with other Latter-day Saints.²

Obviously, the first and most important personal relationships are in the family. Every person develops a world view or meaning system by which he or she understands and interprets life's experiences. This process, the social construction of reality, depends upon symbols provided by others: parents, siblings, friends, and associates. For the most part, these symbols take the form of "stories" or "conversations." Within these stories are images which represent, resonate, and articulate religious experience. Fairy tales and folk tales, Bible stories and family stories are all equally "true" within the mind

of the young child seeking to understand the world and how it works. It is within the family where individuals begin to create their own religious world view. Hence, the more religiously oriented the family, the more likely that religion will be central to the child's personal construction of reality.

But the family is not the only institution that socializes. Until now, we have depended upon religious institutions to also play a significant role. However, experience shows religious institutions *by themselves* are almost completely unsuccessful at socializing children. Research among Jews, Catholics, and Mormons has demonstrated essentially the same result: It is parental religiosity, integration into a network of similarly religious peers, and church socialization that cultivate adult belief and commitment.³ Nevertheless, granting these social distinctions, "Parents socialize their children by channeling them into other groups or experiences [such as schools and marriage] which will reinforce [have an additive influence on] what was learned at home and will channel them further into similar adult activities."⁴

Research conducted among Latter-day Saints, for example, suggests that church and seminary attendance during the teenage years has little direct impact on adult religious belief and commitment. Interestingly, what did have an impact on adult belief and commitment was maintaining a network of religious peers during the teenage and young adult years. In that light, a religious home environment plus church and seminary attendance encouraged teenagers to have a network of actively religious friends. Hence, the primary impact of church and seminary attendance during the teenage years was that it facilitated friendship choices or communal relationships which reinforced what parents were teaching their kids at home.⁵ Now, this research is not definitive, but it does suggest that what religious programs do best is reinforce what is taught at home by encouraging lasting friendships with people who reinforce the religious story and demonstrate gospel living.

Similarly, adult Latter-day Saints depend on institutional involvement for their personal community relationships. Serving in a bishopric creates bonding relationships among the couples involved. Friendships form around auxiliary presidencies. Frequently these associations are temporary and not sustained after organizational responsibilities dissolve. Active LDS parents with large families often find it difficult to socialize outside of Church responsibilities. Hence, Latter-day Saints use their organizational meetings for sociability. Most do not particularly enjoy these leadership and planning meetings, but without them there would be fewer opportunities for creating our needed communal relationships.

THIS recent course correction in Mormonism involves

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new administrative procedures—an effort to reduce programs, and less budgetary freedoms—especially for affluent wards. U.S. Saints will feel the crunch the most because we will feel adrift from the community which was formerly sustained by programmed interaction. We will worry about our children because we do not understand that belief is nurtured in relationships, not programs. The creativity required to create our own religious communities may be more than we can abide, but if we continue to look to the Church to create community for us, we will surely be disappointed. The Church is most able to provide doctrinal instruction, ordinances, and moral direction. The nurturing comes only from ourselves. Those of us who resist the changes do so because what we really want is to be taken care of—to have things to do and places to be, to have direction and structure in our lives, and to feel secure.

In these changes we are witnessing a change of organizational emphasis. Those who long for June conferences, week-long MIA camps, and all-Church sports programs may feel lost in the new Church. The new Church will likely be less programmed, less activity oriented, less focused on large stake centers with stages and gymnasiums. We will have to build our religious faith around relationships created out of service to the poor and concern for our international brothers and sisters.

I am anxious that we get on with the work of creating our religious communities in different ways. We will know how much change has occurred and if we have been freed from the bonds of bureaucracy when we no longer evaluate our lives by the number of callings we have and the number of meetings we attend. I look forward to the day when the Christmas letters of Mormonism read:

We have mourned with those who mourn and comforted those who stand in need of comfort, we have discovered what it means to be in the fold of God and have willingly borne another's burdens.

NOTES

1. Boyd K. Packer, "Let Them Govern Themselves," Regional Representatives address, 30 March 1990, 10. (Reprinted in this issue, page 33.)

2. Marie Cornwall, "The Determinants of Religious Behavior: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Test," *Social Forces*, 68:2 (1989):572-592.

3. Marie Cornwall, "The Influence of Three Agents of Religious Socialization: Family, Church, and Peers," in *The Religion and Family Connection: Social Science Perspectives*, Darwin L. Thomas, ed. (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1988), 207-31.

4. Harold S. Himmelfarb, "Agents of religious socialization among American Jews," *Sociological Quarterly*, 20 (1979), 447-504.

5. Marie Cornwall and Darwin L. Thomas, "Family, Religion, and Personal Communities: Examples from Mormonism," in *Families in Community Settings: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Donald G. Unger and Marvin B. Sussman, eds. (New York: Haworth Press, 1990), 229-52.

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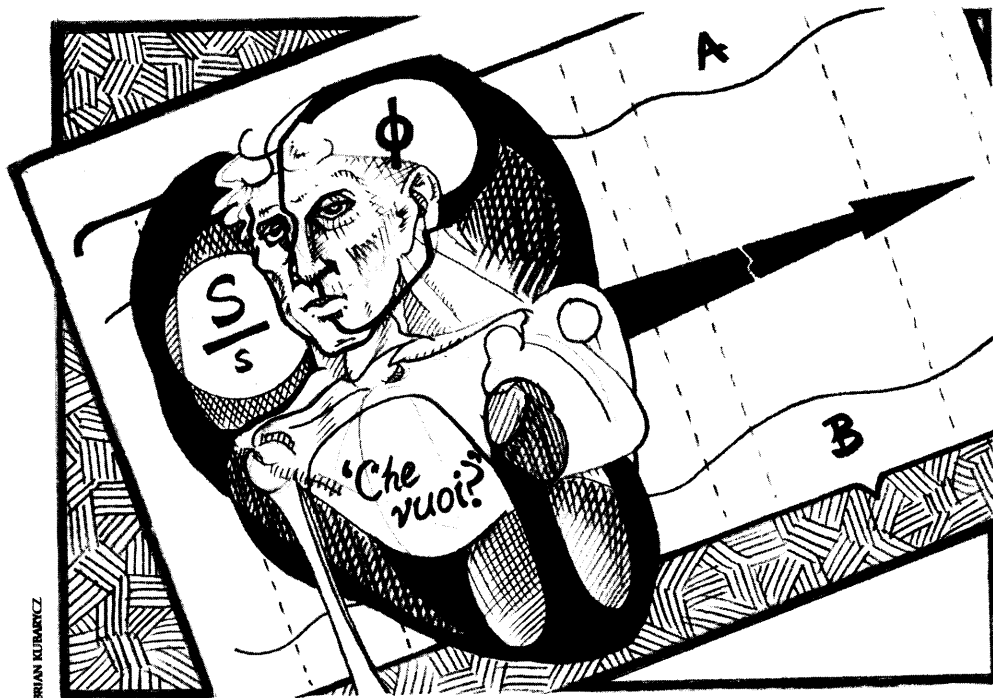


*Don't you know something else besides
"Put Your Shoulder To The Wheel?"*

STRANGERS AND FRIENDS

IF YE ARE NOT ONE . . . CONTRADICTIONS OF ORTHODOXY

By David Knowlton



It is difficult to develop the solidarity of oneness without forcing many people from the community

IN DARK, DRY, frustrated tones a friend revealed, while we sat in my car under balding sycamores, that he could never accept religion as long as it divides people. His sister had recently returned from Israel where she had adopted a militantly religious Judaism. In her zeal she subtly needled and attacked my friend for his openness, his secularity, his marriage to a gentile. She cruelly appropriated the symbolic high-ground of orthodoxy as the safe house from which to verbally strike her sibling. My friend hurt. His well constructed defenses would have repelled other people's sallies, but his sister's betrayal left a wounded solidarity that may never heal.

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Orthodoxy builds itself from betrayed solidarity. It constructs a closed universe, secure in self-righteous morality, because it claims to serve a higher law than those of earthly, human bonds. Within its ritual and social boundaries, symbolic barriers made firm from feelings of cosmic danger and fears of infernal pollution, orthodoxy builds a tightly committed world focused on some ultimate goal and wary of any external presence. From the inside it seems a warm and loving place of mutual support; but it walls itself with hurt.

Orthodoxy does carry out important functions. It provides people with a stable ritual and social order, requiring little thought or crises of consciousness, something quite rare in our modern world. It also forms the central core which keeps a

group from entirely acculturating. For example, ultra-orthodox Judaism, it can be argued, maintains a base which gives sense to other less closed Jewish movements.

Our Mormon orthodoxy, in its fears of sin, the world, and acculturation, and in its desires to teach, uphold the law, build Zion, and worship all that is good, also wraps itself in a cloak of stinging nettles. It divides families and creates deep wounds of hurt and anguish and suspicion. While attempting to build a righteous, solidary community within, it defies the gospel dictum of loving one another.

In my ward during the early seventies we were taught that no boy could have long hair and be righteous. The hair and clothing were signs of internal states of rebellion, they said. We were to seek good friends who would help us progress in the gospel, who would "uplift" us rather than influence us to rebel against God and society.

Many of us were angered by the silly association between style and righteousness and even more angered by the subtle, progressive ostracization of youths who began to question the illogic of what we were taught.

I strongly remember my horror in the Language Training Mission at the treatment of elders who for one reason or another did not keep all the rules. Young men who wanted to go on missions, who had made sacrifices to be there, were gradually turned into rebels by a system which established a firm line, not unlike that of how many steps one could walk on the Sabbath. Orthodoxy would push and pull at those who, for reasons of personality, culture, and upbringing, were near the line, until they could be situated clearly on one side or the other. Orthodoxy requires order, neat divisions and lines, to protect it from the inherent chaos of cultural and social difference, from the inherent disorder of cultural pluralism, individual experience, and mere ordinary existence.

After I left the LTM, I missed the solidarity, the community that I felt with the other Elders in my district and on my floor. But while I was there I filled my journal with my own struggles to accommodate myself to mission rules and schedules, to mission customs and identity. Often I felt imprisoned and would cry into my pillow at night because of my frustrations. Other times I would sneak away to read a contraband article in *Time* or *Newsweek* in order to maintain my own identity. Fortunately I was never caught.

A Native American elder shared the same

floor with me and was struggling to adapt to the cultural differences and the pressures of the LTM. Neither the institution nor the other elders of his district understood the profound nature of cultural difference and insisted on personalizing every frustration, making them a matter of individual righteousness or spirituality. One day when I was sick, the two of us were studying Spanish together in his room. Suddenly the door burst open and his district leader stormed into the room shouting, "Are you coming? No one but you is putting you out of this district." The elder sat there and went defensively silent. His leader waited for a response; getting none, he turned and yelled, "Do what you want but it is not the way of God!"

The LTM was gradually destroying someone with a different culture in order to enforce what it defined as "the way of God." Those who survive its harsh order go on into the mission field; those who do not return home branded as rebels and failures. While this may be socially necessary, it is a spiritual disaster.

Orthodoxy is particularly dependent on clear frontiers protected by the eternally vigilant watchmen of taboo and fear. Nevertheless, all social groups build boundaries, sometimes low, leafy hedges and other times thick stone walls prickly in their defensiveness. The barriers are necessary to create internal cohesiveness, they enable community. Groups differ in the tightness of their borders and in how they deal with marginal people who do not clearly fit inside or out. They vary in the harshness or compassion with which they separate insider from outsider given social relations that cross their divide.

But there is a contradiction between the gospel's expansive outreach to all humanity, its dreams of a city of Zion encompassing all humankind, and the Church's building a social support against the influences of the "world," against other social groups which might through competing loyalties weaken people's commitment to the ideals of the faith. The one view requires few and highly permeable boundaries while the other needs firmly defended battlements.

Our gospel is composed of many simple but contradictory statements and commands. Jesus tells us to love our fellows even as he loves us, to judge not lest we too be judged, to go the extra mile in service, to forget about social categories, like the good Samaritan, and freely give of ourselves to others. He also condemns the orthodox of his time as "whitened sepulchers," in part

because they built such rigid boundaries of belief and practice to define who the righteous were that "they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel." Jesus then warns against those who love father or mother more than he, thereby breaking social ties of potential solidarity, warmth, and love. He urges his followers to forsake the world and to form a community of the righteous, thus encouraging them to develop criteria of orthodoxy and membership.

The issue of boundaries is further developed in the Doctrine and Covenants. In part, membership in the community of Zion was to be determined by righteousness; the unrepentant sinner was to be cast out, banished, shunned, excommunicated. How do you continue to love, as per commandment, the ostracized, when the very act of open love defies the imposed separation and challenges the notion of community?

A resolution of the doctrinal contradictions and their social nature requires the most strained of casuistic reasoning. The terms of "love" and "community" must be redefined so that the paradox seems merely ostensible rather than real. Because people require social groups for survival, it is easier to redefine love than to challenge the orthodox community. Thus, we excommunicate out of "love," to encourage repentance, because salvation depends on it. But love is here and now. It depends on current actions of engagement and solidarity, of acceptance and warmth, not the coldly turned shoulder which aloofly and arrogantly proclaims, "it is for your eternal good that I shun you." This is especially so when a determination of righteousness and the indexes of "God's will" depend on social definition rather than any eternal awareness of individual condition.

Every spring along with the flocks of migrating birds and insects, ultra-fundamentalist itinerant preachers visit the University of Texas. They stand on the edge of campus and "witness" to passing students. To grab attention they warn people of their eternal condemnation because they are sinners. As people pass by they yell, "you are liars, thieves, adulterers, whore mongers, homosexuals." By offending them, they hope to cause them to recognize their abject abasement before God, which is required before they can accept God's saving grace and be uplifted. Inevitably a circus results. The entertainment of their harangue and the often irritated arguments the students throw at them attracts a crowd. Eventually someone will yell, "Doesn't God say to love your neighbor? How can you call yourselves

Christian when you preach such hatred?" They respond, "Because we love you we tell you the truth. You are sinners, and we have to witness that to you so you can accept Christ and be saved."

But if one accepts this logic, not unlike that used in Mormonism to justify Church discipline or even members warning one another about their sins, how do we ever distinguish between love and hatred? We enter a domain where words become twisted to mean their opposites, where there is no connection between signifier and signified—all because we need to protect from discussion our category of the orthodox community and its relation with God.

While there is the social and doctrinal necessity of establishing the community of believers, there is also the doctrinal requirement to maintain openness and acceptance of others. Currently we are struggling in our notion of the Church as a society and its ability to accept those who might not believe, but who still feel they belong to the social community of Mormons, or perhaps merely to our families. We are challenged to comprehend the vagaries of gender, which, while ideologically clear cut, are not at all clear in terms of actual individual identities and practices. Our collectivity includes those who break with many ideals of orthodoxy and yet still belong.

The contradictions challenge us. Somehow we need love and tolerance at the same time we build community with its inherent boundaries. One friend was wounded when his LDS friends abandoned him when they found out that his girlfriend was pregnant. The hurt from their ostracization when he needed solidarity, from their imposing order and taboo when he needed compassion and understanding, has made him wary of the truth claims of the Church and has weakened his sense of belonging, although this is his community, too!

It is difficult to develop the solidarity of oneness without forcing many people from the community, thereby defeating the purpose of unity. Yet, somehow we hope to learn to embrace the contradictions and develop a loving, open, and solidary community. Perhaps this is socially impossible, but like the other impossible contradictory command of being perfect, it forces us to stretch. We may never attain it, but we can surely strive for it, making Mormonism a more tolerant and loving society, an orthodoxy that judges not. ☐

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

THE EDITING OF A GENERAL AUTHORITY

When the news that Elder Ronald E. Poelman's October 1984 general conference address, "The Gospel and the Church," had been heavily edited, partially rewritten, and—horrors!—revideotaped to better conform with the views of his presiding Brethren, not a few Saints noted the eerie Truthspeak parallels to the year with George Orwell's *Big Brother* in his terrifying 1948 futuristic novel, 1984. At the time, *SUNSTONE* reported the events and excerpted the drastically changed paragraphs of the spoken address alongside the revised versions printed in the November 1984 *Ensign* (see *SUNSTONE* 10:1).

Prompted by numerous unsolicited requests during the past year for a complete parallel edition of both talks, I recently reread the offending address and compared it to the correlated edition. The distance of six years allowed the "Gee, ain't it awful!" temper of the earlier time to recede and the exercise in contrasts—especially with the more subtle changes—afforded insights into the institutional concerns of the editors.

The episode is still pregnant with numerous relevant issues: individual thought and conscience vs. organizational concerns about its official message; the sanitizing service of *Correlation* and *Curriculum*; censorship, honesty, and openness; and, not the least, the speech's topic—the relationship between the gospel and the Church. As friends and study groups revisit this incident, I am sure that a careful and charitable discussion can still benefit questing Saints.

In the following parallel texts, the italicized words were changed by the editors and the **bold** words were added or deleted.

ELBERT EUGENE PECK

THE GOSPEL AND THE CHURCH

By Ronald E. Poelman

The First Quorum of the Seventy

Speech

Both the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church of Jesus Christ are true and divine. However, there is a distinction between them which is significant and **it is** very important that this distinction be understood. Of equal importance is understanding the essential relationship between the gospel and the Church. Failure to distinguish between the two and to comprehend their proper relationship may lead to confusion and misplaced priorities with unrealistic and therefore failed expectations. This in turn may result in diminished benefits and blessings and, in extreme instances, even disaffections.

As I attempt to describe and comment upon some distinguishing characteristics of the gospel and of the Church, at the

Ensign

Both the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church of Jesus Christ are true and divine, and there is an essential relationship between them that is significant and very important.

Understanding the proper relationship between the gospel and the Church will prevent confusion, misplaced priorities, and failed expectations and will lead to the realization of gospel goals through happy, fulfilling participation in the Church. Such understanding will avoid possible disaffection and will result in great personal blessings.

As I attempt to describe and comment upon the essential relationship between the gospel and the Church,

Speech

same time noting their essential relationships, it is my prayer that a perspective may be developed which will enhance the influence of both the gospel and the Church in our individual lives.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a divine and perfect plan. It is composed of eternal, unchanging principles and laws which are universally applicable to every individual regardless of time, place, or circumstance. The principles and laws of the gospel never change.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a divine institution administered by the priesthood of God. The Church has authority to teach correctly the principles and doctrines of the gospel and to administer its essential ordinances.

The gospel is the **substance of the** divine plan for personal, individual salvation and exaltation. The Church is the delivery system that provides the means and resources to implement this plan in each individual's life.

Procedures programs and policies are developed within the Church to help us realize gospel blessings according to our individual capacity and circumstances. Under divine direction, these policies, programs, and procedures *do change* from time to time as necessary to fulfill gospel purposes.

Underlying every aspect of Church administration and activity are the revealed eternal principles as contained in the scriptures. As individually and collectively we increase our knowledge, acceptance, and application of gospel principles, we become less dependent on Church programs. Our lives become gospel centered.

Sometimes traditions, customs, social practices and personal preferences of individual Church members may, through repeated or common usage be misconstrued as Church procedures or policies. Occasionally, such traditions, customs and practices may even be regarded by some as eternal gospel principles. Under such circumstances those who do not conform to these cultural standards may mistakenly be regarded as unorthodox or even unworthy. In fact, the eternal principles of the gospel and the divinely inspired Church do accommodate a broad spectrum of individual uniqueness and cultural diversity.

it is my prayer that a perspective may be developed which will enhance the influence of both the gospel and the Church in our individual lives.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a divine and perfect plan. It is composed of eternal, unchanging principles, laws, **and ordinances** which are universally applicable to every individual regardless of time, place, or circumstance. *Gospel principles* never change.

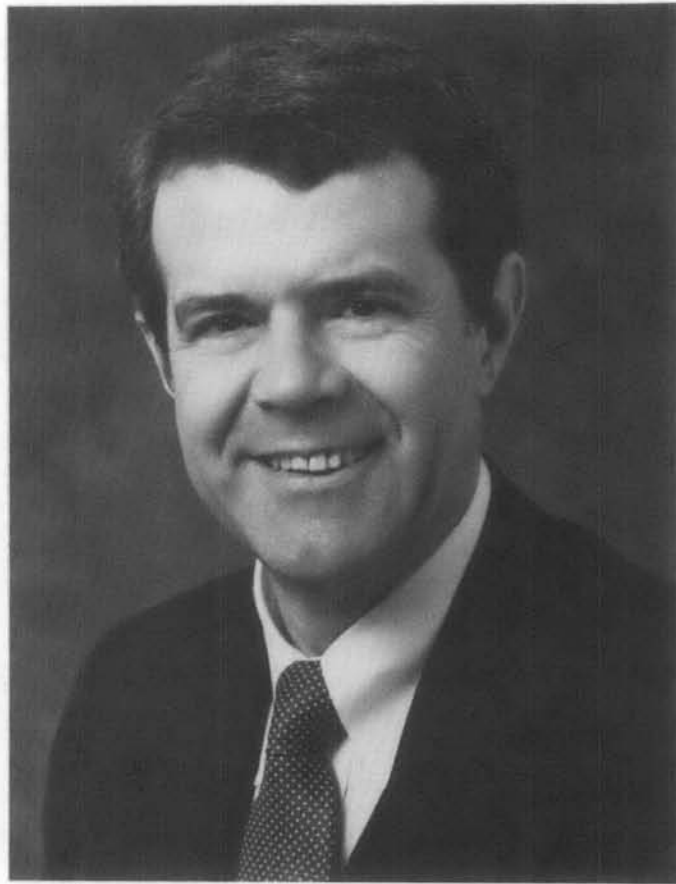
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is *the kingdom of God on earth*, administered by the priesthood of God. The Church has **the** authority to teach correctly the principles and doctrines of the gospel and to administer its essential ordinances.

The gospel is the divine plan for personal, individual salvation and exaltation. The Church is *divinely commissioned* to provide the means and resources *that* implement this plan in each individual's life.

Procedures, programs, and policies are developed within the Church to help us realize gospel blessings according to our individual capacity and circumstances. Under divine direction, these policies, programs, and procedures *may be changed* from time to time as necessary to fulfill gospel purposes.

Underlying every aspect of Church administration and activity are the revealed eternal principles contained in the scriptures. As individually and collectively we increase our knowledge, acceptance, and application of gospel principles, *we can more effectively utilize the Church to make our lives increasingly gospel centered.*

The eternal principles of the gospel *implemented through the divinely inspired Church apply to a wide variety of individuals in diverse cultures.*



Ronald E. Poelman, whose talk was revised from distinguishing "between the gospel and the Church" to noting the "essential harmony between the gospel and the Church."

Speech

The conformity we require should be according to God's standards. The orthodoxy upon which we insist must be founded in fundamental principles **and** eternal law, **including free agency and the divine uniqueness of the individual.** It is important therefore to know the difference between eternal gospel principles which are **unchanging, universally applicable and cultural norms** which may vary with time and circumstance.

The source of this perspective is found in the scriptures and may appear to be presented in a rather unorganized and untidy format. The Lord could have presented the gospel to us in a manual, systematically organized by subject, perhaps using examples and illustra-

Ensign

Therefore, as we live the gospel and participate in the Church, the conformity we require **of ourselves and of others** should be according to God's standards. The orthodoxy upon which we insist must be founded in fundamental principles, eternal law, **and direction given by those authorized in the Church.**

A necessary perspective is gained by studying and pondering the scriptures.

tions. However the eternal principles and divine laws of God are revealed to us through accounts of individual lives in a variety of circumstances and conditions.

Reading the scriptures, we learn the gospel as it is taught by various messengers at different times and places.

We see the consequences as it is accepted or rejected, as its principles are applied or not to **varying degrees and by many different people**. In the scriptures we discover that varying institutional forms, procedures, regulations and ceremonies are utilized, all divinely designed to implement eternal principles. The practices and procedures change; the principles do not.

Through scripture study we may learn eternal principles and how to **distinguish them from and** relate them to institutional resources. As we liken the scriptures unto ourselves we can better utilize the **institutional resources of the modern** restored Church to learn, live and share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A favorite scriptural source for me is the Old Testament Book of Leviticus. It is basically a handbook for Hebrew priests and contains many rules, regulations, rituals and ceremonies which seem strange and inapplicable to us. It also contains eternal principles of the gospel which are familiar and very much applicable to everyone.

It is interesting and enlightening to read the 19th chapter of Leviticus, noting both the principles and the rules and practices.

In the first two verses we read, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel. . . ." (Leviticus 19:1- 2.) Here is the principle of revelation. God speaks to his children through prophets. He does so today.

Continuing, the Lord says to Moses, ". . . say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." (Leviticus 19:2.) Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48.) Here is an eternal gospel principle.

There follow other eternal principles, some from the Ten Commandments. Also included are rules and programs intended to implement these principles among the

Reading the scriptures, we learn the gospel as it is taught by various prophets in a variety of circumstances, times, and places.

We see the consequences as *the gospel* is accepted or rejected **by individuals and** as its principles are applied or not.

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There follow other eternal principles, some from the Ten Commandments. Also included are rules and programs intended to implement these principles among the

ancient Hebrews in their particular circumstances.

For example, the divinely directed responsibility to care for the poor is taught. A program is presented, viz. providing food for the poor by leaving the gleanings of the crops and not reaping the corners of the fields. (Leviticus 19:9-10.) Current programs to care for the poor are much different. The divine law is the same. Yet another principle underlies both programs, ancient and modern, i.e. those being assisted are given opportunity to participate in helping themselves to the extent of their capacity.

In verse 13 the principle of honesty is taught accompanied by a rule requiring employers to pay employees for their work at the end of each day. Generally, today that rule is not necessary. The eternal principle of honesty is implemented by other rules and practices.

Verse 27 contains a rule about personal grooming, it is clearly not applicable to us. However, we also have standards of dress and grooming. Neither is an eternal principle; both are intended to help us implement and share gospel principles.

The principle of forgiveness is set forth in the same chapter of Leviticus, verse 18, concluding with the second great commandment, ". . . thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself:" with the added divine imprimatur, ". . . I am the Lord."

Every Church member has **not only** the opportunity, right and privilege to receive a personal witness regarding gospel principles and Church practices, **but has the need and obligation to obtain such assurance by exercising his free agency, thereby fulfilling one purpose of his mortal probation.**

Without such *assurance*, one may feel confused and perhaps even burdened by what may appear to be simply institutional requirements of the Church.

Indeed, it is not enough that we obey the commandments and counsel of Church leaders. In response to study, prayer and by the influence of the Holy Spirit we may seek and obtain an individual, personal witness that the principle or counsel is correct and divinely inspired. Then we can give enlightened, enthusiastic obedience, utilizing the Church

ancient Hebrews in their particular circumstances.

For example, the divinely directed responsibility to care for the poor is taught. A program is presented, *namely*, providing food for the poor by leaving the gleanings of the crops and not reaping the corners of the fields. (See Lev. 19:9-10.) Current programs to care for the poor are much different. The divine law is the same. Yet another principle underlies both programs, ancient and modern: those being assisted are given opportunity to participate in helping themselves to the extent of their capacity.

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We should obey the commandments and counsel of Church leaders; *but also through study, through prayer*, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit, *we should seek and obtain an individual, personal witness that the principle or counsel is correct and divinely inspired.* Then we can give enlightened, enthusiastic obedience, utilizing the Church **as a means**

through which to give allegiance, time, talent and other resources without reluctance or resentment.

Happy, fulfilling participation in the Church results when we relate *institutional* goals, programs and policies to gospel principles and to personal eternal goals. When we *understand the difference* between the gospel and the Church **and the appropriate function of each** in our daily lives, we are much more likely to do the right things for the right reasons. *Institutional discipline is replaced by self discipline. Supervision is replaced by righteous initiative* and a sense of divine accountability. The Church aids us in our effort to use our free agency creatively, not to invent our own values **and** principles, *but to discover and adopt* the eternal truths of the gospel. Gospel living is a process of continuous individual renewal and improvement until the person is prepared and qualified to enter comfortably and with confidence into the presence of God.

My brothers and sisters, by inclination, training and experience, most of my life I have sought understanding by the accumulation of facts and the application of reason. I continue to do so. However, that which I know most surely and which has most significantly and positively affected my life I do not know by facts and reason alone, but rather by the comforting, confirming witness of the Holy Spirit.

By that same Spirit I testify that God is our Father, the Jesus of Nazareth is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh and that he is the Savior and Redeemer of all mankind and each of us. Through his atoning sacrifice, redemption and exaltation are offered as a free gift to all who will accept by faith, repentance and sacred covenants.

May each of us continue to learn and apply the eternal principles of the gospel, utilizing fully and appropriately the resources of the divine restored Church.

In the words of the Nephite leader Pahoran, ". . . may (we) rejoice in the great privilege of our church and in the cause of our Redeemer and our God." (Alma 61:14.) In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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in our daily lives, we are much more likely to do the right things for the right reasons. *We will exercise self discipline and righteous initiative guided by Church leaders* and a sense of divine accountability. The Church aids us in our effort to use our free agency creatively, not to invent our own values, principles, **and interpretations**, *but to learn and live* the eternal truths of the gospel. Gospel living is a process of continuous individual renewal and improvement until the person is prepared and qualified to enter comfortably and with confidence into the presence of God.

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REVIEWS

FIFTY IMPORTANT MORMON BOOKS

By Curt Bench



A list of the books which have had a significant influence on the development of Mormon history, theology, and literature

THE IDEA OF DECIDING WHICH Mormon books are important is perhaps presumptuous, certainly difficult, but I hope useful. By important, I generally mean the work has had significant impact on or a major contribution in one of the five specific categories described below. "Important" does not necessarily mean best or the most well-written book nor the most informative or most inspiring. The books on this list have all had a significant influence on Mormon culture or the LDS church. Many have had a great effect on the development of Mormon historiography, the-

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ology, or literature over a sustained period of time.

To be included on this list of fifty each work had to be a book (or set of books) or pamphlet published between 1830 and 1980—the first 150 years of the Church. It is too early to measure the influence of a work printed in the last decade. We need the distance and added perspective that time, careful reflection, and judgment afford those individuals who ultimately decide—those who are affected by the work. Besides, 150 years is a nice round number.

The author of the work did not have to be LDS, but the item itself had to be generally concerned with Mormonism as it relates specifically to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and no other groups or churches.

Because of the great number of Church magazines and other periodicals and the variety of authors and subject matter they contain, they are not included on the list. This does not diminish the importance of such periodicals as *The Evening and the Morning Star*, *The Millennial Star*, *Times and Seasons*, *The Journal of Discourses*, *The Seer*, *The Juvenile Instructor*, *The Improvement Era*, *The Relief Society Magazine*, *The Ensign*, and the independent publications of recent decades: *BYU Studies*, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, and *SUNSTONE*.

Conspicuously absent from the list are the all-time most important and influential works—the LDS Standard Works: The Bible, The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price, (including the Book of Commandments and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible).

I have tried to be as objective as possible in my selections by seriously considering (where known) such criteria as (1) number of titles and editions of those titles by given authors, (2) approximate sales figures, (3) area of distribution, (4) size of the Church or other population at the time of publication, (5) use of authors' materials within the Church, (6) amount of reference to those authors' works by others both in and out of the Church, and (7) the amount of time books have remained in print and demand for them when "out of print." But such data are often difficult to gather, and I have not attempted an exhaustive study.

To help create this list, I wrote to thirty-eight people who have distinguished themselves in Mormon history or literature. I received and tabulated twenty-one responses, and their consensus is reflected in the list, but the selection process was subjective and ultimately mine.

I have divided the fifty books into five categories and I will briefly discuss and elaborate on a few of the titles in each category. Entries are arranged chronologically (not ranked in importance) and are referenced to their number on the complete list.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

THESE works have made significant impact and an important contribution to the study of Mormon history and the lives of Latter-day Saints.

Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith and His Progenitors . . . (#1) by Lucy [Mack] Smith, Joseph Smith's mother, 1853. Lucy Mack Smith's dictated memoirs were published by Orson Pratt in Liverpool in 1853. However,

according to Peter Crawley and David Whitaker, authors of *Mormon Imprints in Great Britain and The Empire, 1836-1857*,

Brigham Young objected to *Biographical Sketches* on the grounds that it contained too many significant errors and a large part of the edition . . . was ultimately destroyed. It seems clear that equally irritating to Brigham Young was Lucy Smith's favorable treatment of William Smith who had become an outspoken opponent of the Utah Church. Despite a small number of minor errors, Lucy Smith's history—the first Mormon biography—remains an invaluable source for the life of Joseph Smith.¹

This book has since been revised twice and is in print under the title *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*.

Essentials in Church History (#4) by Joseph Fielding Smith, 1922. This polemical history was written by the Church historian and member of the Council of the Twelve in an era when memories of public denunciation of the Church were fresh. It was a time of verbal and written attack and counter-attack. There were few friendly histories written by or about Mormons. There was no one-volume Church history for use by members. Elder Smith produced this volume in 1922 and painted a very positive picture of the Restored Church and a very dark one of apostates who left the fold and gentiles who persecuted the Saints. What the book lacks in historical accuracy and objectivity, it makes up for in fervor and longevity. This book, which has gone through many editions, was used extensively for over fifty years in various Church settings such as Melchizedek priesthood quorums, seminaries, and institutes, and was required reading for all missionaries for many years. One may dispute the book's value as an accurate Church history text, but one cannot discount the influence it had on Mormon historiography and on several generations of Mormons.

No Man Knows My History (#7) by Fawn Brodie, 1945. One respondent to my questionnaire suggested this be placed in the "Anti-Mormon" category. I'm sure many, if not most, in the Church would concur. The respondents, however, largely agreed that it's one of the most important books in Church history and biography. Kent Walgren, who produced an "important book" list of his own—"The Scallawagiana Hundred"—says "Whatever one's opinion of the merits of *No Man Knows*

My History, it is probably the most influential book printed about the Mormons in this century."²

Robert Flanders calls Brodie's work "a recognized standard work on Mormon origins and early history" and says in that respect it is "unparalleled in the field, and may remain so for some time, a guide to those who undertake less ambitious studies." However, he faults her for her own "anti-Mormon intellectual orientation" and "zeal to create the grand and ultimate exposé of Mormonism."³

For good or ill, Brodie's book has had an enormous and widespread impact on the perception of Joseph Smith and Mormonism within and without the Church. Published by a prominent national publishing house, the book has enjoyed brisk sales for nearly fifty years; remarkably, it is still in print and still only in a hardbound edition. Most people who know of any book about Joseph Smith know about this one.

Great Basin Kingdom (#9) by Leonard Arrington, 1958. This scholarly and objective treatment of Church history from its inception to 1900 was written by the man Davis Bitton called "the single most important Mormon historian of his generation."⁴ A scholar in economic history, Arrington expanded numerous articles and his dissertation and produced *Great Basin Kingdom*, the first substantive examination of the relationship between the Church's religious and secular concerns. Historian James B. Allen calls the book a "model of both thoroughness and scholarly integrity" and says Arrington "added a dimension to Mormon history that could never again be ignored or dismissed by those who would take that history seriously."⁵

In this book, Arrington set a new standard in Mormon historiography, one which has had enormous impact in that field. He has influenced new generations of historians and readers of Mormon history, including myself.

DOCTRINE AND THEOLOGY

THESE works have made a notable and lasting impact on the development and expression of Mormon doctrine, theology, beliefs, and thought.

Key to the Science of Theology (#16) by Parley P. Pratt, 1855. Few writers in the Church have had the long-term impact and popularity that Pratt has had. This book, which has gone through several editions—with changes being made by people other than Pratt, such as Apostle Charles Penrose—

has usually been in print during its 130 year life. In their fine bibliographic work, *A Mormon Fifty*, Peter Crawley and Chad Flake describe this "masterly work" as "Mormonism's earliest comprehensive syncretical work," saying "its scope is complete."⁶ They point out that it must have appealed to Brigham Young, for during the twenty-two years after it was published, a time when virtually no other LDS books were being printed, *Key to the Science of Theology* went through three additional editions.

The Articles of Faith (#19) by James E. Talmage, 1899. This book is an expansive treatise on the Articles of Faith—probably the nearest thing to a Mormon creed we have. Historian Thomas Alexander wrote, "The impact of *The Articles of Faith* on doctrinal exposition within the Church was enormous."⁷

B. H. Roberts and John A. Widtsoe also added several very significant doctrinal treatises which explored many theological areas in greater detail and with more authority than had generally been done before. I have featured Elder Roberts's *Seventy's Course in Theology* (#20), a series of five Seventy's Quorum manuals that were widely studied, and *The Gospel: An Exposition of its First Principles* (#18) which went through a number of editions. Elder Widtsoe's Melchizedek priesthood manuals *Rational Theology* (#23) and *Priesthood and Church Government* are included in the list.

A Marvelous Work and a Wonder (#27) by LeGrand Richards, 1950. If for nothing else, this book must be on the list for the countless copies printed and read. Many hundreds of thousands of copies have been sold, given away, and read by Mormons and non-Mormons. It has influenced countless conversions to the Church and is probably second only to the Book of Mormon in terms of copies distributed for missionary purposes.

The book, which contains a fervent evangelical testimony and a very basic description of the Restored Church and gospel principles, has been enormously popular with Church members.

One reason for its wide distribution has been its inexpensive price. Elder Richards had a contractual agreement with the publisher, Deseret Book, that as long as he lived the price would never exceed \$1.95. True to the agreement, during Elder Richard's long life Deseret Book sold countless thousands of books at \$1.95 or less, sometimes at a loss. After the author died, the price was raised to a modest \$4.95.

Mormon Doctrine (#31) by Bruce R. McConkie, 1958. By any standard, this is a landmark book. Never before has a book authored by any Mormon, especially a general authority, covered so many gospel topics in so much detail and with so much authoritative-ness and specificity. Besides the standard works, there are few, if any, books that have been referred to or quoted as often. For the past thirty years when an average Church member wanted to research any subject, however obscure or well-known, he or she turned to the encyclopedic *Mormon Doctrine*. Despite the author's obligatory assumption of "full and sole responsibility" for the contents of the book, thereby disclaiming any official Church authorization or connection, many Saints nevertheless use it as if it were the fifth standard work.

Given the enormous popularity and voluminous sales of the book, it seems ironic that reportedly the first edition was found by Church leaders to have many doctrinal errors and, apparently, it was decided that since the book was not authoritative or approved it would not be republished. However, eight years later, in 1966, a second edition appeared wherein Elder McConkie declared in the

preface, "experience has shown the wisdom of making some changes, clarifications, and additions."⁸

LITERATURE

THIS category includes fiction and poetry that have had significant impact on Mormon readers and lasting influence on Mormon letters.

This was by far the most difficult category to fill given the dearth of great literature in the Church. For various reasons, none of them clear, we have not produced many distinguished writers. But those we have had, have added to a small but growing body of Mormon letters.

The vast majority of survey responses gave enthusiastic approval to the selection of the works by Eliza Snow, Maurine Whipple, and Virginia Sorensen. They conceded that although Nephi Anderson's *Added Upon* (#35) is not an overly well-written book, it has enjoyed enormous popularity and wide readership for ninety years. Of course, we realize today that we may have Nephi Anderson and his *Added Upon* to thank for giving us *Saturday's Warrior*.

One respondent recommended including the hymnal (#33) (I'm counting as one entry all the various editions), which she says is "the most important poetry in the Church." It, of course, contains the works of such noted Mormon poets as Parley P. Pratt, William W. Phelps, Charles Penrose, Eliza R. Snow, and many others less well known. It would be difficult to measure the vast impact and influence the hymns have had on the membership of the Church. Put to music, much of this poetry has had a sublime and unifying influence on countless numbers of Mormons.

Vardis Fisher's *Children of God* (#36) is the best known Mormon novel outside the Church. It was the 1939 Harper Prize novel and sold well, achieving much critical acclaim. In an excellent survey of "Mormon storytellers" in 1946, Dale Morgan said Fisher's book was not "front-rank" but "will remain as a formidable barrier in its field to anything except a really front-rank novel."⁹

Morgan wrote that Maurine Whipple's *The Giant Joshua* (#37) "has claims to be considered the best Mormon novel so far published. . . ." He calls it "a law unto itself" and says the book "overflows with life" and is "richly rewarding."¹⁰ Later critics tend to

FIFTY IMPORTANT MORMON BOOKS

(Arranged chronologically within each category)

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

1. Lucy [Mack] Smith. *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations*. Liverpool: S.W. Richards, 1853.
2. Parley P. Pratt. *The Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt, One of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. New York: Russell Brothers, 1874.
3. Joseph Smith. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Brigham H. Roberts, ed., 7 vols. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1902-1932.
4. Joseph Fielding Smith. *Essentials in Church History*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1922.
5. B.H. Roberts. *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Century I*, 6 vols. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1930.
6. John Henry Evans. *Joseph Smith, An American Prophet*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1933.
7. Fawn M. Brodie. *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945.
8. Juanita Brooks. *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1950.
9. Leonard J. Arrington. *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958.
10. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard. *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976.
11. Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr. *Spencer W. Kimball*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1977.
12. Parley P. Pratt. *A Voice of Warning and Instruction to All People, Containing a Declaration of the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, Commonly Called Mormons*. New York: W. Sandford, 1837.
13. Orson Spencer. *Letters Exhibiting the Most Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Liverpool: Orson Spencer, 1848.
14. Orson Pratt. *A Series of Pamphlets, by Orson Pratt*. Liverpool: R. James, 1851.
15. John Jaques. *Catechism for Children, Exhibiting the Prominent Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Liverpool: F.D. Richards, 1854.
16. Parley P. Pratt. *Key to the Science of Theology*. Liverpool: F.D. Richards, 1855.
17. Franklin D. Richards. *A Compendium of the Faith and Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Liverpool: Orson Pratt, 1857.
18. B.H. Roberts. *The Gospel: An Exposition of Its First Principles*. Salt Lake City: The Contributor Company, 1888.
19. James E. Talmage. *The Articles of Faith*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1899.
20. B.H. Roberts. *The Seventy's Course in Theology*, 5 vols. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907-1912.
21. James E. Talmage. *Jesus the Christ*. Salt

agree with Morgan. In fact, this seems to be the unanimous choice of all I asked to name the best Mormon novel.

Equally well loved and certainly more prolific is Virginia Sorenson. Many respondents selected her *Where Nothing Is Long Ago* (#38) as her best book, with *The Evening and the Morning* as a close second. Though most of Sorenson's books are out of print, her work is still being studied and enjoyed today by many of her fans.

ANTI-MORMON BOOKS

THESE books have had the most significant and lasting impact on the negative perception of Mormonism.

Mormonism Unveiled [sic] (#39) by Eber D. Howe, 1834. This must be recognized as the most significant and widely known attack on Joseph Smith and Mormonism. It is the father of anti-Mormon books, most of which knowingly or unknowingly draw from its arguments and polemics. This widely distributed work greatly damaged the image of the early Church and caused Joseph Smith no end of grief.

The History of the Saints or an Exposé of Joe

- City: Published by the Church, 1915.
22. Joseph F. Smith. *Gospel Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1919.
 23. John A. Widtsoe. *Rational Theology: As Taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1915.
 24. John A. Widtsoe. *Priesthood and Church Government*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1936.
 25. Joseph Smith. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Joseph Fielding Smith, ed. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938.
 26. John A. Widtsoe. *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 3 vols. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1943, 1947, 1951.
 27. LeGrand Richards. *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1950.
 28. Joseph Fielding Smith. *Man: His Origin and Destiny*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954.
 29. Joseph Fielding Smith. *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols. Bruce R. McConkie, ed. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956.
 30. Joseph Fielding Smith. *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966.
 31. Bruce R. McConkie. *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958.

Smith and Mormonism (#40) by John C. Bennett, 1842. This devastating book was the first by such a high-ranking insider. Bennett had been Joseph Smith's close confidant and occupied several significant positions in the Church and in the city of Nauvoo. Bennett's book included a sensational exposé of polygamy and contained many other emotionally charged accusations of wrong-doing. After Bennett's lurid attack, anti-Mormon feelings reached a fever pitch, and two years later Joseph Smith was killed.

BOOKS BY SYMPATHETIC NON-MORMON AUTHORS

THESE are significant books written about the Mormons by authors who were not hostile to the Church and who were widely read. There have been several prominent authors in this category both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; six are included in the list.

Richard F. Burton was a world-famous English explorer and author among other esteemed professions. Like many authors who traveled widely, he visited several places in America including Salt Lake City. Fawn Brodie, Burton's biographer, said the "flour-

ishing Mormon Zion" in Utah drew him "like a magnet . . . and the resulting *City of the Saints* (#47) was the best book on the Mormons published during the nineteenth century." He "looked at everything with a friendly and generally unprejudiced eye."¹¹ His sympathetic treatment of the polygamous Mormons stood in stark contrast to the usual caustic treatment they had received in the nation's press and literature.

Wallace Stegner is one of the most distinguished Western American authors. He has written warmly, though not totally uncritically, about the Mormons in several works. He spent his teen and college years in Utah and once said that "if I have a home town, a place where my heart is, it is Salt Lake City."¹² In 1964 Stegner's excellent treatment of the Mormon exodus to Utah, *The Gathering of Zion* (#50) and *Mormon Country*, are critically acclaimed and are still in print today. This list is limited and arbitrary and cannot be considered the final word, but I think it can be argued that the books therein had significant impact on countless members and nonmembers of the Church and represent a valuable cross section of Mormon studies and literature.

32. Spencer W. Kimball. *The Miracle of Forgiveness*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969.

LITERATURE

33. *Hymns*. Various editions from 1835 on.
34. Eliza R. Snow. *Poems, Religious, Historical, and Political*, 2 vols. Vol. 1, Liverpool: F.D. Richards, 1856. Vol. 2, Salt Lake City: Latter-day Saints' Printing and Publishing Establishments, 1877.
35. Nephi Anderson. *Added Upon. A Story*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishing Company, 1898.
36. Vardis Fisher. *Children of God: An American Epic*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939.
37. Maurine Whipple. *The Giant Joshua*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1941.
38. Virginia Sorenson. *Where Nothing is Long Ago*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963.

ANTI-MORMON

39. Eber D. Howe. *Mormonism Unveiled*. [sic] Painesville: Printed and Published by the Author, 1834.
40. John C. Bennett. *The History of the Saints: or An exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism*. Boston: Leland and Whiting, 1842.

41. Maria Ward (pseud.). *Female Life Among the Mormons*. London: C.H. Clarke, 1855.
42. Mrs. T.B.H. Stenhouse. *Tell it All*. Hartford, Conn.: A.D. Worthington and Co., 1874.
43. Ann Eliza Young. *Wife No. 19*. Hartford: Dustin, Gilman & Co., 1875.
44. Sandra and Jerald Tanner. *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Co., 1964.

BOOKS BY SYMPATHETIC NON-MORMON AUTHORS

45. Thomas Leiper Kane. *The Mormons*. Philadelphia: King and Baird, Printers, 1850.
46. John W. Gunnison. *The Mormons, or, Latter-day Saints*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co, 1852.
47. Richard F. Burton. *The City of the Saints, and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861.
48. Hubert Howe Bancroft. *History of Utah. 1540-1886*. San Francisco: The History Company, 1889.
49. Thomas F. O'Dea. *The Mormons*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.
50. Wallace Stegner. *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.

NOTES

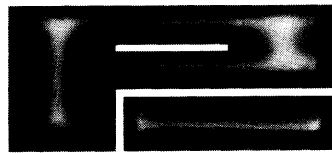
1. Peter Crawley and David J. Whittaker, *Mormon Imprints in Great Britain and the Empire, 1836-1857* (Provo: Friends of the Brigham Young University Library, 1987), 59-60.
2. Kent L. Walgren, *The Scallawagiana Hundred: A Selection of the Hundred Most Important Books about the Mormons and Utah* (Salt Lake City: Scallawagiana Books, 1982), 7.
3. Robert Bruce Flanders, "Writing on the Mormon Past," *Dialogue* 1 (Autumn 1966): 58.
4. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *New Views of Mormon History: Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), vii.
5. Bitton and Beecher, 415.
6. Peter Crawley and Chad J. Flake, *A Mormon Fifty* (Provo: Friends of the Brigham Young University Library, 1984), item #45.
7. Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine," in *Line Upon Line: Essays on Mormon Doctrine* ed. Gary James Bergera (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 60.
8. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), preface.
9. Dale L. Morgan, "Mormon Storytellers," in *The Rocky Mountain Reader*, ed. Ray B. West, Jr. (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1946), 409-410.
10. Morgan, 410.
11. Richard F. Burton, *The City of the Saints and Across the Rocky Mountains to California*, ed. Fawn M. Brodie (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1963), vii.
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WHAT MARY GOBLE PAY DID NOT SAY AT THE MOUTH
OF IMMIGRATION CANYON, DECEMBER 10, 1856

I shall take this wagon wheel as the icon for all my journeys, this sage white valley the hub of my wooden wandering and will them to you. You shall plant seven wheels in your front yard and stain them red with all-weather stain. They shall be your boundary, the iron and wood backdrop for your forsythia, your lily of the valley, your impatiens. These rusted bands will ring your walk and beckon every casual, unhearing passer-by, a rim of tough stock joined to the straight, the narrow.

I will erect a statue to chronicle my journey. Cast in bronze, heroic, it will freeze my walk—the buzzing fear the moment Momma stopped breathing but the wagon echoed on, the short words our captain spoke beyond fatigue, the fat time when I couldn't sleep the stars whispered so loud, the light dusting my eyes, the bland cake that tasted of earth, the sweet water cruel in its peace—all these things I shall freeze in a symbol and plant it there and there and there. And bid them blossom.

—SCOTT SAMUELSON



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NEWS

GRADUATION PRAYERS IGNITE CHURCH/SCHOOL DEBATE

RESIDENTS OF Rockland, Idaho, were stunned last year when two students and their families joined forces with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to challenge religious influence in the lone K-12 public school. Joey Long and her mother Carol Brown, and John Haynes and his mother claimed the constitutional barriers dividing church and state were being trampled. Besides objecting to seminary classes which were held in the school building during school hours and Church announcements posted on school bulletin boards, Long, an athlete, complained that her basketball and volleyball coaches required pre-game prayers. "I don't participate in these prayers. To me, prayer is a very personal thing. Besides, the prayers that the coaches and the students say are always LDS prayers."

The ensuing battle cut the small community, 85 percent of whose members are Mormon, into bitter religious factions. Many Mormons were deeply offended that their own townspeople would challenge traditional community practices. After the suit was filed, the plaintiffs claimed they were socially ostracized and branded "traitors." Long stated in a court affidavit that she lost her friends because of the issue. "I hate having the Church in my school. It leads to bad relations between me and my classmates and seems to separate us." Long says she was given the silent treatment by classmates. But a fellow classmate, John Howell, claims she was unharrassed. "Everyone pretty much leaves her alone," the seventeen-year-old Mormon said, though he believes she betrayed her school. He said he and his

friends refrain from discussing the suits with Long out of fear of being accused of bothering "or trying to convert her."

A similar eruption split Utah residents down religious lines last spring when the Utah chapter of the ACLU sent a letter to all forty Utah school districts threatening legal action if denominational prayers were offered at high school graduations.

The controversy became widespread with frequent reports, editorials, letters, and opinion columns in the media.

Although the Church remained silent on the specific cases, Apostle Dallin Oaks wrote an article for 23 May *Wall Street Journal* noting "a growing pattern of

hostility to religion in the United States" which was unintended by the 1962 school prayer decision and asserted that "religion should have place in the public life of our nation." The former University of Chicago law professor said the First Amendment would correctly be interpreted as neutral rather than hostile to religion. The Court's decision, he explained, "set in motion a chain of legal and public and education actions" that jeopardizes tolerance today.

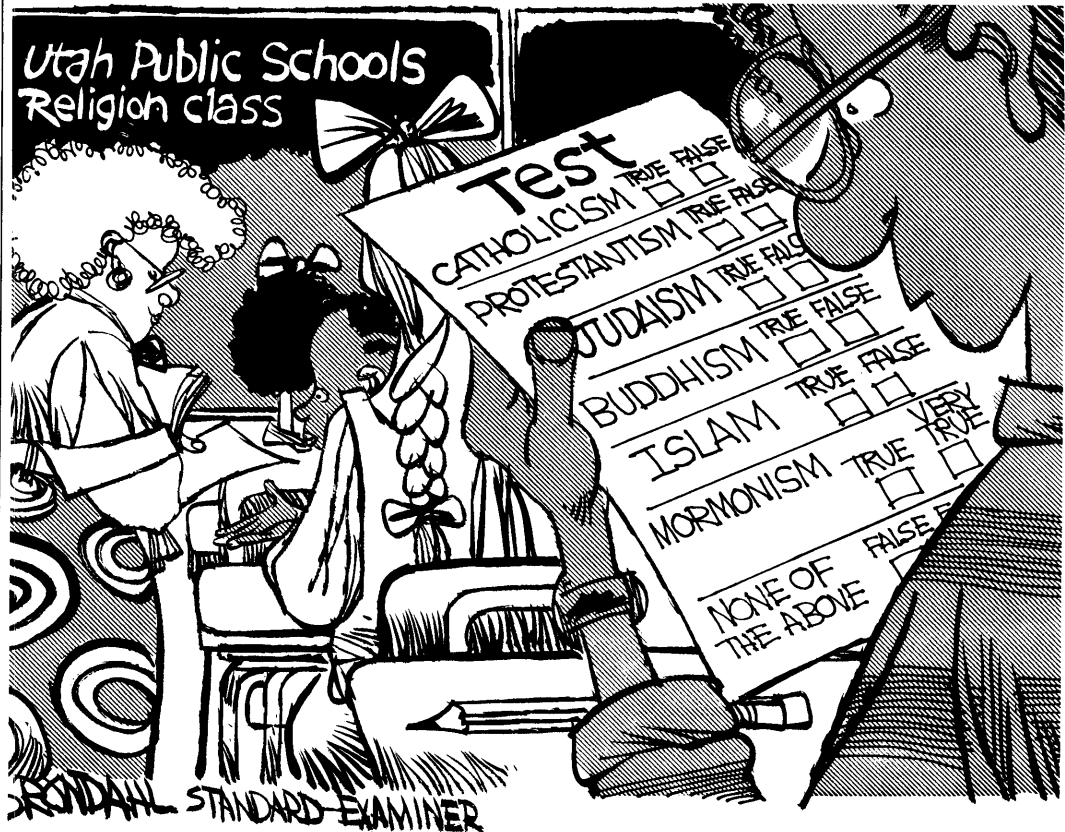
Citing a lawsuit brought against Utah Jordan School District in 1989 which accused some students' public prayers as being "denominational" because they mentioned Jesus Christ, Elder Oaks quoted the Supreme Court's 1962 ruling that "government had no power to write prayers." He then argued that "if it is not part of the business of government to write a prayer, then it is not part of the business of a court to censor a prayer."

Elder Oaks said religion "has become something that had to prove its right to remain in the

public square." He listed examples including the omitting of religious events from American history textbooks, the forbidding of all prayers in school (rather than prayers that were state-authored or -required), and attempts to ban prayers from government and other public adult gatherings even though the original reasoning behind banning school prayer was concern for the impressionability of young students.

"Immense resources have been devoted to thrashing out the constitutional limits of prayer," wrote Elder Oaks. He indicated his own agreement with a 1952 Supreme Court opinion that state encouragement of religious instruction "follows the best of our traditions. For it then respects the religious nature of our people and accommodates the public service to their spiritual needs."

He concluded: "Religion should have a place in the public life of our nation. To honor this principle with prayers in the graduation exercises of high-school students is to honor the religious plurality



of our nation and the religious liberty it was founded to protect." An expanded version of Elder Oaks's letter appeared in the July *Ensign*, and this fall the Church released an official statement on prayer in public life (see sidebar).

Elder Oaks's letter prompted a reply by Utah ACLU Executive Director Michelle Parish-Pixler. Her letter set off a chain reaction which ended when Boyer Jarvis, president of the board of directors at the ACLU, resigned.

In an unpublished letter to the *Wall Street Journal*, Parish-Pixler wrote, "What religious leader Dallin Oaks blithely disregards is that if there is any state government which should avoid even the appearance of an establishment of religion, it is Utah, where the patterns and practices of theocracy die hard; the only state where all non-LDS persons . . . are derisively known as gentiles."

Parish-Pixler also charged that students in Utah's public schools are unconstitutionally "subjected to formulaic LDS prayers, proselytizing and often the teaching of academically discredited LDS versions of history and anthropology."

Having been sent a courtesy copy of the letter, Elder Oaks complained in a letter to Boyer Jarvis, a Mormon. Jarvis then resigned his position saying he didn't disagree with the content of Parish-Pixler's letter but did with her style, which he called a mean-spirited personal attack upon his Church and state officials. "The fact that you have publicly drawn me into your controversy with Dallin Oaks makes it impossible for me to continue," he wrote in a letter to her.

Jarvis was replaced by University of Utah law professor John K. Morris who said he thought Elder Oaks was wrong and said the ACLU would continue to oppose prayer in public schools.

As school graduation approached, many Utah school districts attempted to duck the volatile issue by eliminating prayer from their ceremonies. Several others followed ACLU advice and



LDS Apostle Dallin H. Oaks, Utah ACLU Executive Director Michelle Parrish-Pixler, and Utah Governor Norman Bangerter. Participants in the dispute over students praying at graduation.

PHOTOS: DESERET NEWS

KEY RELIGION-SCHOOL COURT RELATED OPINIONS

FOLLOWING IS a summary of legal opinions compiled in part by the American Jewish Congress in a report addressing key religion-related issues facing schools in the United States:

•Prayer in the classroom

Given by either students or teachers is unconstitutional, according to the U.S. Supreme Court.

•Moment for meditation or silent prayer

The issue remains unclear with some states permitting meditation and others believing it is unconstitutional.

•Prayer at school-sponsored athletic events

Courts have ruled that prayer at such events is unconstitutional even if it is offered by a local ministerial association.

•Team prayers

While not ruled on in a precedent-setting court case, at least three state attorneys general said it is unconstitutional for coaches or players to offer prayers before, during, or after games.

•Prayers at graduation

As evidenced by the lawsuit filed by the ACLU against some Utah school districts, the issue remains volatile. Several states have banned prayer at graduation services after court challenges.

•Teaching about religion

The Constitution permits objective teaching about religion. Some states have approved curriculum that interjects religious history and issues into schools.

•The Bible as literature

To pass constitutional muster, any course on the Bible must be devoid of denominational bias.

•Religious symbols

In some states, courts have held that teachers can't wear religious garb in school. In one case, teachers were allowed to wear religious jewelry such as crosses.

•Use of classroom space for religious student clubs

In a recent decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that religious clubs must be provided space to meet in public schools if other clubs that did not relate to curriculum taught at the school are allowed to meet. For example, if a chess club were allowed to meet, and there was no class on chess at the school, the school would then be required to give a religious club equal access. (Congress recently passed the Equal Access Act which requires schools to provide religious clubs the same access to school facilities that they provide to any other non-religious club.)

•Religious beliefs vs. school text requirements

At least one court has held that there was no violation of First Amendment rights by a school that allowed children to leave class and read an alternative book when parents objected to the book being against their religious beliefs. In another case, the court sided with a school board that refused to allow children to use an alternate textbook when parents objected to the overall values of the text.

•Voucher systems

A case which will likely loom before the court is the proposed "voucher system." School districts will issue vouchers equal to the amount they would spend in a year for each student. Parents will be allowed to "spend" the voucher at the school of their choice. Most likely, the courts will have to decide whether parents will be able to "spend" the state funded vouchers at parochial schools.

allowed only non-denominational prayers although the ACLU called the constitutionality of such prayers shaky. Still other schools replaced prayers with a moment of silence, an inspirational message, or a "reflection of gratitude." The South Summit District turned the entire graduation program over to the Lion's Club. The Lion's Club then decided the program, ordered the invitations, and held the ceremony at their facility.

School districts like Granite, Alpine, and Cache, however, continued to allow prayers at graduation exercises. Cache graduation ceremonies board president Carol Funk said, "You have a majority faith here who believe in prayer and who want prayer at graduation. Yet, we are being told by a very vocal minority that we cannot have it." Proponents of prayer maintain that graduation ceremonies are extra-curricular and are student-initiated and student-sponsored. Alpine Board President Richard Gappmayer said, "We believe that allowing graduates to offer ceremonial prayers as a traditional part of graduation ceremonies is a form of free speech which is clearly protected by the First Amendment."

Mike O'Brien, ACLU attorney, countered proponents' arguments saying that regardless of a district's religious majority, the Constitution specifically states that religion will not be determined by majority but is a freedom open to every individual. The ACLU also main-

LDS CHURCH RELEASES STATEMENT ON PRAYER IN PUBLIC LIFE

The LDS church issued the following statement to its members in the United States:

PRAYERS IN PUBLIC LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has always emphasized the importance of prayer, including prayers offered in any public setting in which they are legal.

The Supreme Court of the United States has clearly forbidden any audible prayers in public school classrooms. We encourage all to observe that ruling.

The constitutionality of prayers in public school graduations and other high school events is still before the courts in a variety of cases of differing circumstances. This is a national issue. We welcome the opportunity for duly constituted authorities to examine the educational practices and religious traditions of the nation and to clarify the law on this important subject.

Where a prayer is legally permissible—and the Supreme Court has not outlawed prayers at legislative assemblies or other public meetings—we believe no one should be required to modify the content of the prayer he or she chooses to offer regardless of religious affiliation. Prayer is too sacred for its content to be the subject of a lawsuit.

In discussion of these issues, we need goodwill and considerate behavior on the part of all.

As the ruling principle of conduct in the lives of many millions of our citizens, religion should have an honorable place in the public life of our nation, and the name of Almighty God should have sacred use in its public expressions.

tains that students are "coerced into participating in prayers against their wishes" at graduation ceremonies.

In July, as promised, the ACLU filed suits against Granite and Alpine districts for allowing prayers at graduation. The suit alleged that prayers had been allowed at pep-rallies, before sporting events, at drama cast parties, as well as at graduation. Bud

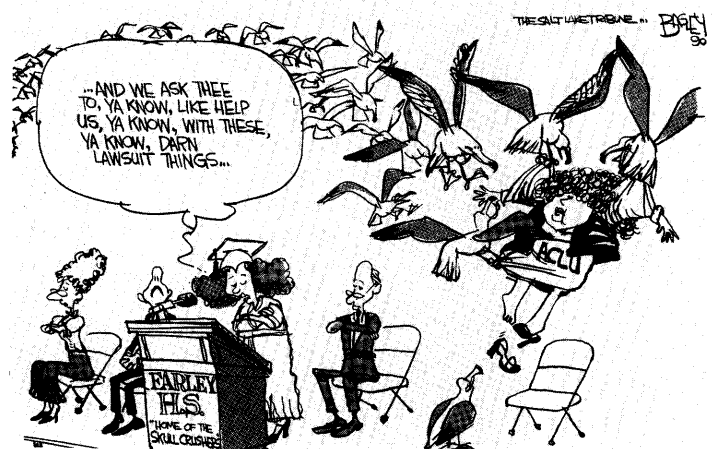
Scruggs, chief of staff for Utah Governor Norman Bangerter, acknowledged that prayers before such events as sporting competitions and cast parties have been ruled unconstitutional and personnel who encouraged such prayers reprimanded. He indicated that the suit would focus on the question of prayers at graduation.

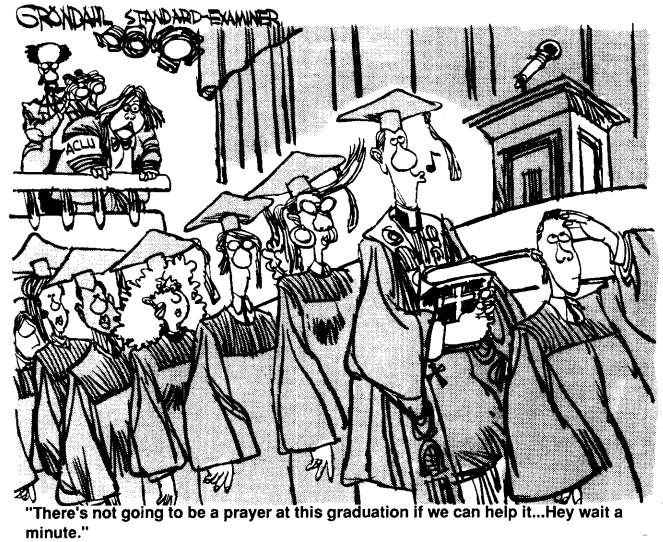
Governor Bangerter entered the debate by accusing the ACLU of

"swatting a gnat with a bulldozer" and burning up public funds in trivial court battles. But he pledged to sponsor a one-time supplemental appropriation package to help defray the costs the districts would incur by litigating the case. He said, "We don't want textbook and salary dollars being spent for litigation." However, after promising to support the school districts in their fight, Governor Bangerter said he would not oppose putting the lawsuit on hold until a Rhode Island case involving graduation prayers was settled. Douglas Bates, counsel for the Utah State Education Office, said the Utah ACLU suits were a waste of time since the Rhode Island case was likely to reach the U.S. Supreme Court before the Utah suits.

In early August the First U.S. District Court of Appeals upheld a Rhode Island ban on graduation prayer which the Providence School District appealed in late October. The Supreme Court will decide by January 1991 whether to hear the Rhode Island case.

Utah state officials plan to file a friend-of-the-court brief and to appropriate money to urge the Court to hear the case. They have asked the ACLU to suspend legal action until the Rhode Island case is decided. Parish-Pixler has refused to withdraw the case, however. "We tried to resolve this ahead of time out of court," she said. "All of our attempts were rebuffed. We didn't want to initiate litigation, but we've not heard any reason to stop." The ACLU has





doubts that the Court will decide to hear the Rhode Island case.

After the ACLU filed suit in July a fusillade of letters and columns dominated the editorial pages of Utah newspapers. High school senior Brady Young wrote that non-Mormons should be more tolerant. He believed that prayer at graduation was a "part of learning to understand fellow human beings, their beliefs, their convictions, those things that make them who they are." Speaking at an Independence Day celebration in Provo, Utah, Apostle Russell M. Nelson also criticized the campaign against graduation prayers saying, "That we should so disregard Deity who gave us freedom is indeed a pitiful parody."

Parish-Pixler asserted that many non-Mormons were afraid to oppose the issue because "they're afraid they'll lose their jobs or that their children will be retaliated against in schools."

Meanwhile, back in Idaho, officials in the Madison School District in Rexburg, Idaho, face similar antagonisms. Several families have filed suit against the district for allowing the lines between the Mormon church and state to blur. Families filing the suit through the ACLU say they object to prayer at graduation, holding graduation exercises at Hart Gymnasium on Church-owned Ricks' campus, and to being asked if they are Mormon or which ward they

belong to. The Madison School Board says, "those charges that dealt with one-time isolated incidents are easily corrected, but it takes longer to change habits of speech and mannerisms that have been developed over the years." The Board says it will continue to hold graduation on the Ricks campus because it is the only facility large enough to accommodate the graduating classes. But Madison officials have agreed to abide by the pending court decision in Utah regarding prayer at graduation ceremonies. They want to avoid their own costly battle because they say "the bitterness and expense of a legal battle to determine the issue would leave scars that would take years to heal."

And in Rockland, the community is currently trying to salve the injuries inflicted by their school/church battle. The case has been settled out of court, school officials admitting their practices were illegal. In compliance with the settlement, LDS residents have built a new seminary building on donated land across the street from the public school. Church announcements have been removed from school bulletin boards, and school officials have halted the practice of praying before athletic and other school-sponsored events. Graduation this year was held in the leaky school gym instead of what Cloyd Barker calls "the nicest building in town," the

LDS chapel. The ceremony did not include prayer. The objectionable religious practices have been removed from the school domain, but the hostility remains. School Board Member Cloyd Barker conceded his school had crossed the constitutional line. "I had no trouble with the fact that we were having prayer and apparently it was illegal. We decided we would no longer do that," he said. But he dismissed as "outright nonsense" that the school district fell under LDS control. "That's never been proven," Barker said. Barker, too, claims to have suffered from the legal controversy. "It's been extremely disruptive to me personally, to my wife, to the school board members," he said. "It's been very destructive because they [the plaintiffs] included us personally in the charges."

Carol Brown has had to close her beauty shop because her Mormon clients have quit patronizing the shop. Brown's daughter, Joey, will salvage her senior year of high school by transferring to American Falls, thirty miles north of Rockland. She says, "I just want to have fun again. I like the town, I just wish it wasn't so hateful." Responding, school board member Jon May insists, "We haven't run [them] out of town or anything, even though they tried to stab us in the heart." As the dust settles, Rockland's bishop has urged members to control their swelling animosity.

Eventually, the courts may rule that prayers are not allowed at government-related events, but all sides could use a little more prayer in their hearts. ☐

ONE FOLD

AUSTRALIANS PROPOSE END-OF-MARRIAGE CEREMONY

THE NATIONAL mission director for the Uniting Church in Australia, John Brown, says the church needs to develop an end-of-marriage ceremony to set divorced people free from their feelings of guilt and failure. Jim Palmer, of the Anglican Marriage Guidance Council in Melbourne, agrees. He says many Christians continue to feel guilty after the breakdown of their marriage "until they have formally and liturgically received release from their previous vows." Brown says the church still needs to emphasize marriage preparation and enrichment, but when all efforts have failed, it should encourage people to move beyond the breakdown of their relationship. (*Ecumenical Press Service*)

THE ASSOCIATION OF MORMON LETTERS will hold its annual symposium Saturday, 26 January 1991 at Westminster College, Salt Lake City. The deadline for submitting papers has passed, but nominations for annual awards are still being accepted. These awards are given for works of Mormon literature published during 1990 such as novels, short stories, poems, personal essays, criticism, and at times, for works outside of these categories. Current bibliographical information and, if possible, a copy of the item should be sent to the 1991 awards committee chair, Dennis Clark, 137 East 100 North, Orem, Utah 84057 (801/226-1789).

THE JOHN WHITMER HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION recently awarded Marvin S. Hill, history professor at Brigham Young University, the 1990 Best Book award for his book *Quest for Refuge: The Mormon Flight from American Pluralism*.

THE 1991 NEW TESTAMENT LECTURE SERIES sponsored by the Sunstone Foundation and the Student Religious Forum will host a monthly lecture on the second Tuesday of each month. The first will be on 8 January by the Reverend Barbara Hamilton-Holway of the South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society. On 12 February Ed Firmage, Jr., a Ph.D. candidate in Near Eastern studies at Berkeley, will discuss the nature of government in the New Testament. Both lectures will be held in room 101 of the James Fletcher Building at the University of Utah, \$2 donation. To receive a notice each month of the upcoming lecture send your name and \$5 to Sunstone, 331 Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1126 (801/355-5926).


1991 SALT LAKE SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held earlier than usual, on 7-11 August at the University Park Hotel. Proposals for papers or panel discussions are now being accepted. Send to Cindy Dahle, Sunstone, 331 Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1126 (801/355-5926).

THE SOCIETY FOR THE SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MORMON LIFE is having its annual lecture on Wednesday, 6 February 1991, at Brigham Young University. Lee L. Bean and Geraldine P. Mineau from the University of Utah will address the topic, "Demographic Characteristics of Women on the American Frontier." Contact Larry Young for information on the room and time (801/378-2107).

The following individuals were recently elected as SSSML officers: president, **Tim B. Heaton**, BYU; president-elect, **O. Kendall White**, Washington & Lee University; secretary/treasurer, **Kristen Goodman**, Research & Evaluation, LDS church. New board members: **Richley Crapo**, Utah State University; **Bron Ingoldsby**, Ricks College; **Gordon Shepherd**, University of Central Arkansas.

SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM WEST will be held in the San Francisco Bay Area on 1-2 March 1991. To submit proposals and for more information, contact: Steve Eccles, 1482 Winston Court, Upland, CA 91786 (714/982-4752).

THE WASHINGTON, D.C., SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held on 19-20 April 1991 at the American University Campus. Proposals for papers and panel discussions are now being accepted. Contact: Donald Gustavson, 413 Clearview Avenue, Torrington, CT 06790 (203/496-7090).

The Sunstone Calendar reports events and notices of Mormon-related organizations. Submissions are requested. 

TEMPLE RECOMMENDS TO BE REQUIRED FOR BYU FACULTY

EXCERPTED BELOW is item #6 from the minutes of the Deans' Council of 1 October 1990 at Brigham Young University.

6. Temple recommend requirement, termination for cause
Provost [Bruce] Hafen informed deans that after some research it has been verified that a temple recommend is a condition of employment at BYU. After discussions in President's Council and Academic Vice President's Council, it was agreed to appoint a committee to review how this should be implemented. A related issue is those who have temple recommends but undermine the faith. Deans should send committee nominations to Provost Hafen.

ACLU SEEKS OVERTURNING OF POLYGAMY LAWS

THE AMERICAN Civil Liberties Union says it plans to attempt a reversal of state laws forbidding polygamy. ACLU officials note that American society is becoming increasingly tolerant of alternative lifestyles and public opinion is probably ripe for such legal action. Says Utah ACLU executive director Michele Parish-Pixler, "I can't see that there's any rational justification for prohibiting [polygamy]. As long as it is between consenting adults, it ought to be permitted."

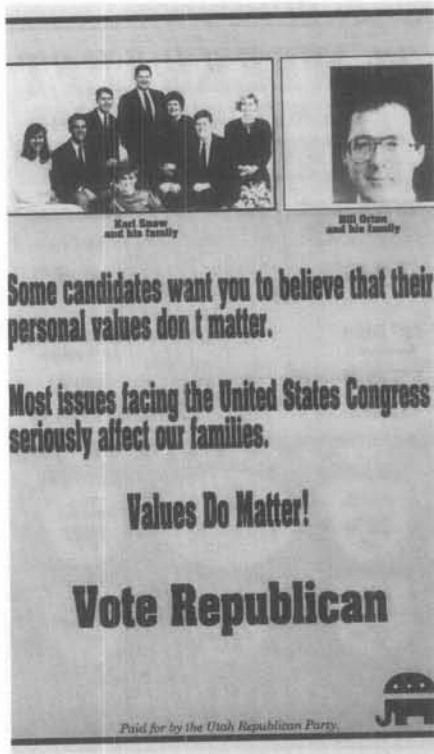
EX-MORMON PROTESTS VOTING AT CHURCH

AN EXCOMMUNICATED Mormon who objects to voting in his former ward building has declined Salt Lake County Clerk Dixon Hindley's offer to allow the person to vote by absentee ballot or to use a "curbside voting" service. Both absentee ballots and curbside voting services are provided to people who are unable to enter a polling place. "We have permitted such voting in cases of persons who have physical problems or other concerns about entering a particular polling place," Hindley said. Attorney Brian Barnard, who represents the ex-Mormon, finds Hindley's solution offensive. "Until such time as the law is changed, I'm not going to encourage my client to lie [about being disabled]," Barnard said his client has not yet decided whether to file suit. In a related case, a non-profit group calling itself the Society of Separationists Inc. has asked fourteen Utah counties to halt the "disturbing" and "unconstitutional" practice of using churches—Mormon and non-Mormon—as general election voting places.

"This use of churches is a significant constitutional problem since voting is one of our most fundamental civil rights," the group wrote to each county. Chris Allen, director of the society, rejects the argument that churches are used out of necessity to meet federal requirements for handicapped accessibility: "It doesn't really matter. As we read it, the law requires [voting outside of churches] and it seems most of the counties in the state are able to do that."

Speaking of LDS chapels, Merrilea Jones, Salt Lake County elections clerk, said the Church is very restrictive about such uses of its buildings, requiring the government "to show there's no other alternative."

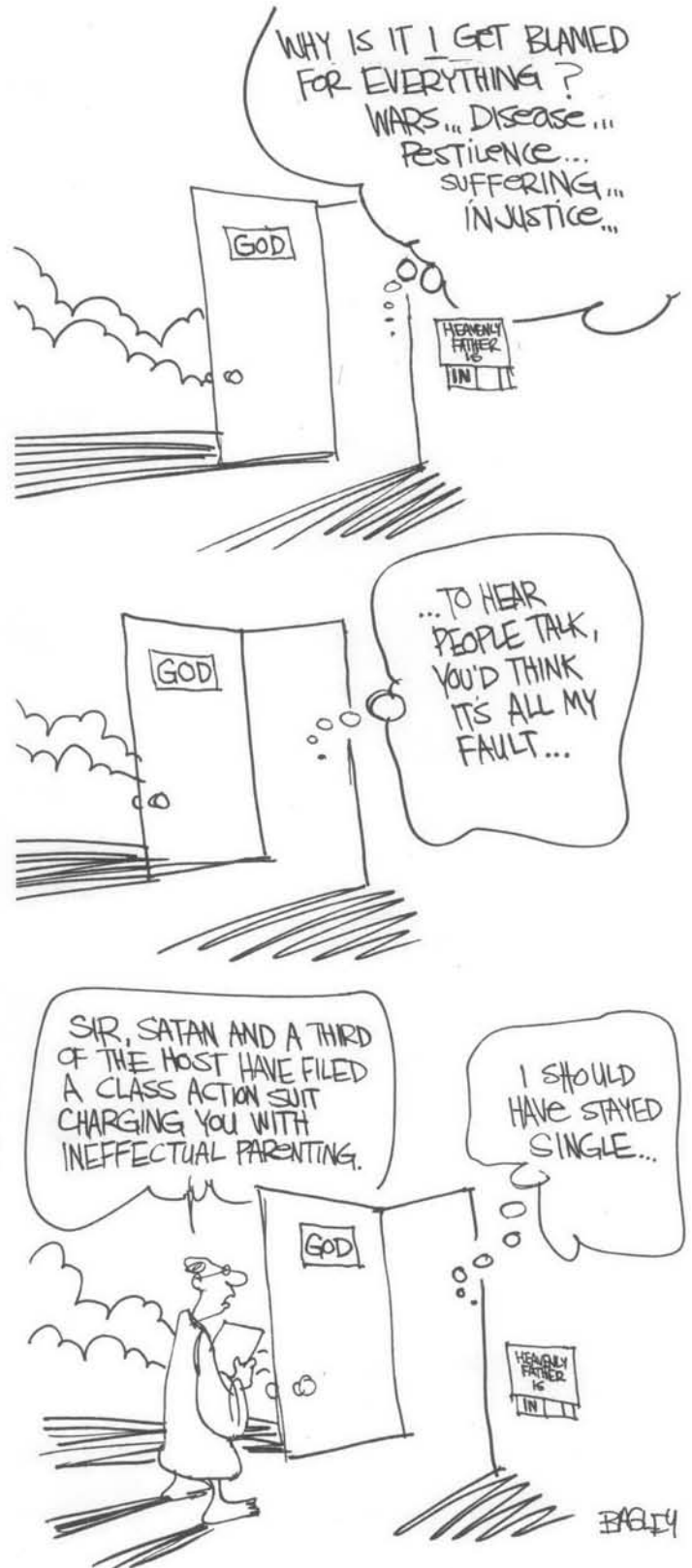
The Duchesne County Commission replied to the Society with an informal letter which said, "We would appreciate it very much if you would kindly mind your own business." (*Salt Lake Tribune*)

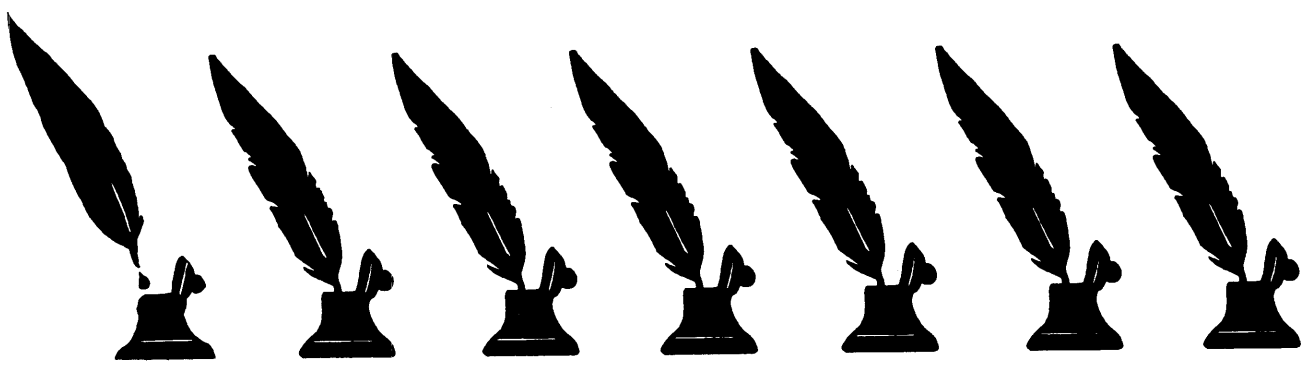


SNOW JOB CAUSES AVALANCHE

TWO DAYS before the recent election in Utah's Third Congressional District, the GOP ran an advertisement in the *Utah County Journal* which showed a picture of Republican Karl Snow, his wife, and six grown children with the caption "Karl Snow and his family." Next to it was a photo of Democrat Bill Orton's face, with the caption "Bill Orton and his family." The ad clearly insinuated that as a single man Orton doesn't hold family values and caused an uproar in the media and repulsed high party leaders. "I was totally offended," said Senator Orrin Hatch. "I've seen a lot of stupid things in politics, but this ad was the stupidest thing I've ever seen."

Although the ad was a last-ditch effort to save Snow's languishing campaign, it helped contribute to the unprecedented election of a Democrat from the "most Republican district" in the United States. When Orton won the election by a twenty-one percent margin, the *Utah County Journal* ran the cartoon below.





Choose the Write!

THE 1991 BROOKIE & D.K. BROWN MEMORIAL FICTION CONTEST

SUNSTONE's annual fiction contest is sponsored in memory of Brookie Brown and Donald Kenneth Brown, a nationally respected law enforcement officer and locally admired Arizona religious leader with a great love of literature.

SUNSTONE encourages all interested writers to enter. Submissions should relate in some manner to the experience of the Latter-day Saints. All varieties of form, theme, tone, and attitude are encouraged. Entries will be judged by a board of independent judges. Awards will be announced on 10 August 1991 at the Sunstone Symposium XIII banquet. Winning stories will be published in *SUNSTONE* magazine.

Up to \$1,000 in cash prizes will be awarded by the Brown estate to the winning entries in these categories:

SHORT SHORT STORY

Short short stories may not exceed 1,000 words.

SHORT STORY

Short stories may not exceed 6,000 words.

RULES

1. One author may submit no more than three stories. Each story must state whether it is an entry for the short story or the short short story category. Entries must be delivered to the Sunstone Foundation or be postmarked by 1 June 1991.

2. Stories must be typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of 8½ by 11 inch paper (not onion skin). Since manuscripts will not be returned, contestants should keep copies of their entries.

3. Each entry must be accompanied by a signed statement attesting that it is the author's work, that it has not been published previously, that it is not being considered elsewhere for publication, and that it will not be submitted elsewhere until the contest results have been announced. Only contest winners will be published in *Sunstone* magazine.

4. Each entry must be accompanied by a signed statement granting permission for the manuscript to be filed in the Sunstone collection at the University of Utah Marriott Library Archives (all literary rights are retained by the author).

1990 BROOKIE & D.K. BROWN AWARDS

FIRST PLACE	Kristin Smart Rogers	"Birth of the Blues"
SECOND PLACE	Kristin Smart Rogers	"What God Looks Like"
	Margaret Young	"In Search of Spilled Rootbeer"
	Larene Rowley Blaine	"Nightwatch"
SHORT SHORT STORY	Hodgson VanWagoner	"Our Palace of Green & Gold"