

tempting to cast the theological and philosophical foundations of Mormonism into sophisticated terms and to redefine Mormonism in an appealing manner in the light of history and the humanities, the arts and the social sciences. These efforts go a long way toward making the Mormon intellectual feel at ease in his beliefs, if not in his church membership. A genetic history of the rise of Mormonism can be exciting and immensely satisfying to himself, but unsettling to the authorities. There cannot, in fact, be official dialogue about origins and ends, only about means.

From the point of view of the Church, the intellectual is himself a problem. The Church is fearful that his findings will loosen his loyalties and influence others to find a basis for their faith which is not simple and old-fashioned enough to be called religious. Work for the dead, the Negro question, the narrower proscriptions of the Word of Wisdom are matters where the Church would prefer not to have sophisticated answers because these might mean radical change. History is hard on Mormonism because Mormonism itself stakes so much on history, and if the evidence fails — if there really were no gold plates, if Joseph Smith really was more scoundrel than prophet — Mormonism faces a serious dilemma. Mormonism without a Book of Mormon as miracle is like Christianity without the Virgin birth. But the intellectual may, in fact, provide the mystery every religion requires and, with proper encouragement, give Mormonism its Sufis and Vedantists. When Mormonism can embrace both superstition and sophistication in the same fold, the intellectual will have found a productive place and may revitalize the professed doctrine of the glory of God as intelligence.

Meanwhile the Mormon intellectual faces a great test of humility to remain in an organization led by those who are not always in sympathy with the intellectual. If he is not to lose the name of action he must, like Hamlet, resolve his dilemma. If to remain within the Church means paralysis of will and denial of the deepest urgings of his thought, he must make a break for the open sea. In so doing, he leaves one haven, as every institution is a haven, but there waits, perhaps, the larger harbor of a more inclusive humanity.

THE CHICANO STUDENT UNION AND MIDDLE AGE

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I'm fifty. I'm not as perceptive about certain things in life as I was when I was a student; however in some ways I am more perceptive. When I was nineteen, during the depression, after pitching hay or working in the ore mill all day, I would enjoy looking at the sunset. I no longer see the black silhouetted skyline against the burnt orange of the California sunsets. At

least not like I did then. Nor do I see the light yellow of the sunrise as often as I would like to. Perhaps I don't see because I'm caught up in the swirl of the business day. In business — that's different — I'm more perceptive, more acute than at nineteen. Organization and design are not without certain rewards. I see these from a position not high in the business hierarchy. I'm a program manager for an electronics firm, middle management, middle aged, middle income, and time passing!

The business pyramid is tough climbing and it takes a lot out of a man. Although it has its rewards, I have often thought the field worker, the journeyman, and the miner might be aesthetically closer to the feel of the earth. The hoar frost of late fall, the dust kicked up by the harrow in spring, the smell of summer rain in the desert air, the thunder in the sky — all these belong first to the worker. At least that's the impression I have now from the days when I worked in the hay field, the mine, and the mill. The people, I remember, were genuine. They were lined with this simple but rugged backdrop of outdoor life. Good company. Not shrouded in company politics.

Then, during an evening in May 1969, I learned that the worker in the field, the migrant worker, is not happy. He's angry. He's striking back. This message came through during a lecture and musical program put on by the Chicano-American Student Union of San Jose State College held at De Anza Junior College. Spanish names — ironic! And ninety-five percent of what I heard came at me in Spanish, a language I neither speak nor understand.

Did I get the correct message? Were these people qualified to give me the correct message from the majority of Mexican-Americans? I only know what little I heard and what I saw. I saw and heard from an English-speaking, Anglo-Saxon, World War II veteran, bachelor of science, state university, depression of the thirties background. My Chicano-American brother (my Black-American brother) — where are you? What are you doing? How does the world look from your eyes? I'm still not sure. But something came through that night.

It came through like this: We came into the theatre early, my wife and I. We sat on the aisle. I looked around and saw Blacks, Mexican-Americans, long-haired whites. A mixture of ages, but mostly young. I recognized some of them from a class in Third World Books I had just started. I couldn't identify with the long-haired whites as easily as with the others. Just a feeling. Like they were there for different reasons than the others. But mostly I felt good, like these people were genuine. Or more explicitly, like when I was a boy back home, Mother said about our new neighbors: "The Bowens, they are common people like us." A good feeling. Like belonging. Still, I wondered as a child why the "high falutin' ones" were not so companionable. I secretly wanted to belong to all classes.

The performers were talented at singing and strumming on string instruments. Perhaps the instruments were authentic Mexican. I wouldn't know. The performers themselves were dressed in immaculate, yet faded levis, and work shirts. I got the impression these kids were well fed, washed, college drama students of second generation Mexican-Americans, dressed in the

garb of the Mexicano mixed with U. S. department store clothes, somewhat simulating the migrant worker, but too plump to be of the field. One gentleman, with a beard and long hair, seemed to be an expensive prototype of a hippie. And maybe hippies are like that, expensive I mean.

The music was moving, fast, bright and gay, and, again, I have every reason to believe, authentic. That Mexicano laughter, like the laughter in a street opera, rang out at just the right moments from the background. Happy! Enjoyable!

The music was intermittently spiced with satirical skits. It seemed that the Government of Mexico slept while a coyote beat upon hides of the community and *justicia*, personified by two actors. But Uncle Sam, who looked like Uncle Sam except for a pig mask on the back of his face, came in with troops and police and mace. He traded mace for grapes. He beat upon the hides of the community and *justicia*; he didn't seem to notice the coyote.

Then came the corker! One of the performers, a girl in blue denims and straight black hair, stepped brightly to the mike at the end of a song. She grabbed the mike and said in English, in good old understandable English, mind you: "Do you want to hear a joke?" Well, a lot of people didn't understand Spanish. And we weren't quite sure if we'd heard any jokes during the performance thus far. So naturally we'd be overjoyed to hear something in English. And everybody likes a joke. So she said, "Here's a joke: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands. One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

It had an effect! I looked at my wife. She was angry. Tears welled up in her eyes. She got up and started to leave. I didn't, so she sat back down. Well, they had reached us with shock! Imagine my reaction! Me, an Eagle Scout, ex-naval officer, and World War II veteran.

Were they saying that all these years I had been laboring under the illusion that we in the States were working toward all those things mentioned in the Pledge of Allegiance? What were they saying? Just shock? Or were they telling us we hadn't reached *them*? Them includes the well-fed San Jose students who link themselves with their kin the migrant workers.

The migrant farm workers, mostly Mexicano, work for less than minimum wages and have no protection under the National Labor Relations Act nor under the Taft-Hartley law. Well, that's not right. I'll stick with them in the boycott of grapes. But how many others will? Will the shock of seeing the American Flag mocked keep people from looking any further? It's hard to get past that barrier!

Can I ever understand the plight of the minority? I'm not a member of a minority race in this country, but I've seen enough of prejudice to believe that what those students portrayed that night might be true.

There are various kinds of prejudice, and one is the prejudice we have against ourselves. My early environment kept me from expecting much of myself. To rise from a mucker in the mines or from a janitor to a payroll