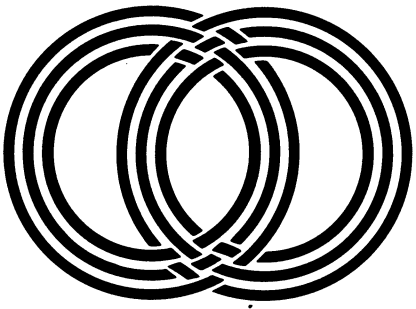
DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT



DIALOGUE

A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

is an independent quarterly established to express Mormon culture and to examine the relevance of religion to secular life. It is edited by Latter-day Saints who wish to bring their faith into dialogue with the larger stream of Judeo-Christian thought and with human experience as a whole and to foster artistic and scholarly achievement based on their cultural heritage. The journal encourages a variety of viewpoints; although every effort is made to ensure accurate scholarship and responsible judgment, the views expressed are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or of the editors.

DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT, Vol. 26, No. 2, Summer 1993

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Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought is published quarterly by the Dialogue Foundation, P.O. Box 658, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84110-0658, 801-363-9988. *Dialogue* has no official connection with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Third class postage paid at Salt Lake City, Utah. ISSN 002-2157. Regular domestic subscription rate is $30 per year; students and senior citizens $25 per year; single copies $10. Regular foreign subscription rate is $35 per year; students and senior citizens $30 per year; air mail $55 per year; single copies $15. *Dialogue* is also available on microforms through University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-1346, and 18 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 4EJ, England.

Dialogue welcomes articles, essays, poetry, fiction, notes and comments, letters to the editor, and art. Preference is given to submissions from subscribers. Manuscripts must be sent in triplicate, accompanied by return postage, and should be prepared according to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* including double-spacing all block quotations and notes. For the reference citation style, please consult issues from volume 26 on. If the submission is accepted for publication, an electronic version on an IBM-PC compatible diskette, using WordPerfect or other ASCII format software, must be submitted with a hard copy of the final manuscript. Send submissions to *Dialogue*, P.O. Box 658, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84110-0658. Artists wishing consideration of their artwork should send inquiries to the Designer or Art Director at the same address. Allow three to six months for review of all submissions.

FORTHCOMING IN

Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought

FALL 1993

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Marmot Mating Habits

Remember my little story "Out in Left Field" in the spring 1992 issue? It was the one where I thought my hairdresser said that her husband studied Mormons but she really said marmots. In the story I asked about the professor her husband studied with and she said that it was Professor Armitage, "he's world famous."

I sent the story to Dr. Kenneth Armitage and he wrote back. I thought your readers would enjoy what he said. Some of his letter follows:

"[It is most amazing] that a similar experience happened to one of my current students, Carmen Halsbury. She was getting some physical therapy when the therapist asked what she did and Carmen replied she studied marmots. You guessed it, the therapist heard Mormon and the confusion quickly mounted.

"Carmen was surprised and pleased that the therapist was so curious and interested so she continued to answer all her questions. The amazement grew when Carmen told her she followed the males to watch their mating habits and that she put radio transmitters in their abdominal cavity. The therapist was really taken aback at that and asked how Carmen got them to let her do it.

"Carmen replied 'no problem,' she'd just trap them, put them under with drugs and then let them go the next day."

Joleen Ashman Robison
Lawrence, Kansas

Fundamentally Christian

I found Tim B. Heaton's "Demographics of the Contemporary Mormon Family" (Fall 1992) interesting. It clarified some points and confirmed others. However, I noted one potentially large problem in his designations of various religious groups.

Heaton lists various Protestant groups and includes "Fundamentalists" as a separate group. Perhaps he is simply not aware of what Fundamentalism is.

Originally, the fundamentalist movement (which had at the time not yet been capitalized) was exactly that—a movement that spanned a large spectrum of Christian denominations. It did not seek to found churches or denominations, or to define any one church or denomination as "the only true church," but rather to call Christians of all denominations back to intelligent but confirmed faith in the Bible as the very Word of God. Although Fundamentalism today has lost some of the characteristics of this original movement, and taken to itself other characteristics that would have best been left alone (as well

as gained an uppercase F), its essential character is much the same.

I—a Southern Baptist—am a doctrinal fundamentalist. So are the Independent Baptists. Doctrinally, many Mennonites, members of the Assemblies of God, National Baptists, Bible Church people, charismatics, and others merit the label fundamentalist. Lorraine Beottner, an Orthodox Presbyterian; Charles Spurgeon, an English Baptist; John MacArthur, a contemporary nondenominational pastor; and Pat Robertson, the charismatic television personality have been or are all doctrinal fundamentalists. Indeed, some would place Mormons in the fundamentalist category, although I disagree with such a classification. But there is still no such thing as a "Fundamentalist Church."

Thus by using "Fundamentalist" as a separate category, Heaton has possibly skewed the results. He is either dealing with a denomination of purely mythical proportions or removing fundamentalist members of various churches and denominations from their proper perspective and placing them in an artificially constructed category. I suspect that if the "Fundamentalists" had been included in the various Protestant denominations to which they actually belong, Heaton's graphs would register different results than they do with the fundamentalists considered separately.

Robert McKay
Marlow, Oklahoma

Human Experience

I have resisted the urge to write to you many times, but the poem "The Book Handed Her" by Anita Tanner (Winter 1993) was so lively and well-crafted that I had to put my thanks in writing. Like so many others, I am eternally grateful to be LDS, but found myself feeling like the proverbial "round peg" that those around me tried to put in a square hole.

I believe what has been the most beneficial to me has been the idea that we are "not human beings having a spiritual experience, but spiritual beings having a human experience." Many of your personal essays embody this philosophy. That thought has put new life into what had become at times, even on my mission, a stifling experience.

I read Anita Tanner's poem on the way to work and found myself rejoicing at her brilliance in capturing the "oddness" of the human sexual experience. We all have those feelings and I will remember always the succinct and laughably-graphic manner in which she was able to achieve this.

Please pass my gratitude and admiration along to her.

Brian C. Allen
Murrieta, California

A Magazine Fan

Some of my member friends seem amused at the assortment of magazines fanned out on my coffee table: *Sunstone, Ensign, Dialogue,* and *The Friend.* I tell them I enjoy learning others' viewpoints and widening my perspective. I usually feel uplifted by the church publications and edified by the others. I was surprised at feeling both uplifted and edified after reading Clem Bear Chief's "Plucked from the Ashes." Thank you

for including this poignant conversion story in *Dialogue.*

Ann Craft
Tahoe City, California

Incomplete Revelation

I was intrigued with Barbara Elliott Snedecor's "On Being Female: A Voice of Contentment" (Fall 1992), in which she suggests that the Holy Ghost might be considered the female element in the Godhead. The same question about the existence of a Heavenly Mother has plagued me: if she exists why doesn't she appear in the scriptures?

In *Mormon Doctrine,* Bruce R. McConkie states, "In this dispensation, at least, nothing has been revealed as to [the Holy Ghost's] origin or destiny; expressions on these matters are both speculative and fruitless." Since Mrs. Snedecor's comments are not about the origin or destiny of the Holy Ghost, but about its attributes, I hope that Brother McConkie would excuse both of us for a bit of conjecturing. It seems to me that ancient writers of the early scriptures, believing that women should possess compassion, sensitivity, and the urge to be co-creators in the universe, wanted them to be protected, even cloistered—not fully revealed to the public. Is it possible then that the very absence of complete revelation about the Holy Ghost is another indication that the Holy Ghost is the female principle in the Godhead?

In any case, the idea that the Holy Ghost is my Heavenly Mother makes me feel good.

Shirleen Mason Pope
Logan, Utah

New Dimension

As I read Barbara Elliott Snedecor's "On Being Female: A Voice of Contentment" (Fall 1992), I was intrigued by her suggestion that our Heavenly Mother may in fact be the Holy Ghost. I too have contemplated this theory. More than one researcher has demonstrated that the early Israelite culture believed in the divine triad of the Father-Mother-Son (Eugene Seaich, *Ancient Texts of Mormonism,* 13).

Heavenly Mother has been called by many names in both canonical scriptures as well as non-canonical writings. Those names include Asherah, Ashtoreth, Anath, Ishtar, Inanna, Sophia, Panim, and Wisdom (Seaich, 20b). As Jerrie W. Hurd has noted, "In Proverbs, Wisdom is presented as a female deity, not just grammatically but literally as the goddess who is the companion to God the Father (*Sunstone,* July 1985, 23). And, she points out, "The Hebrew word for 'God' takes three forms: 'el, which is masculine' Eloah, which is feminine, and Elohim, which is plural. All three forms are found in the Bible . . ." (24). Several non-Mormon scholars have also noted the early belief in a Mother Goddess, as evidenced in David Noel Freedman's article, "yahweh [God] of Samaria and his Asherah [wife]" (*Biblical Archaeologist* [Dec. 1987], 241).

Although Snedecor laughs at the idea that Heavenly Mother's name is not mentioned because of its sacredness, the possibility does exist that Heavenly Father does protect her name from the same obscenities with which his name and his son's are blasphemed. Seaich adds yet another possibility: "Undoubtedly, the real reason why such things were kept secret, and even removed from Israelite dogma, was the ever-pre-

sent danger of immoral behavior with the veneration of the Female. As William F. Albright once pointed out, the Mosaic Reform was not so much aimed at polytheism, per se, but against sexual depravity connected with worship of the gods and their spouses" (126).

As to the connection between Heavenly Mother and the Holy Ghost we note one translation of an ancient agnostic text: "Through the Holy Spirit (Sophia) we are indeed born, but we are born again through Christ" (Seaich, 125). It is interesting that the term "born again" applies to the conversion through Holy Spirit.

Snedecor may be right. If Heavenly Mother is the Holy Spirit it adds a new dimension to our understanding of how the Holy Spirit communicates—through emotions, peaceful feelings, and the burning in the bosom. The nurturing tenderness of a mother toward a child must have a heavenly example. Development of this mother-child bond also might be viewed from a different perspective if this theory is correct. President Benson's admonition that women set their priorities upon their children may be sound and eternally progressive advice when viewed as direction for women seeking to emulate Heavenly Mother. If Heavenly Mother is the Holy Spirit we may have some understanding as to why, if our Heavenly Parents are supposedly flesh and bone beings, they give birth to spirit children. Of course this hypothesis may also renew the question of polygynous relations in the hereafter (a wife of flesh and bones and another of spirit—or maybe not).

Until the prophet reveals the Lord's will concerning details of either Heavenly Mother or the Holy Spirit, my convictions must rest on the firm foundation of revealed truths. I feel free to speculate, however, so long as my speculation does not presume to transcend the words of the Lord's anointed, and so long as my theories don't interfere with my spiritual progression or the progression of my brothers and sisters.

Michael R. Ash
Ogden, Utah

A Sense of Healing

The spring 1993 issue of *Dialogue* was wonderful. Lavina Fielding Anderson's courageous essay will, I am sure, make many members of the church feel less alone. My husband and I were particularly moved by the cover. Somehow it continues to bring a sense of healing, embracing in a very spiritual way what this whole issue is all about.

Our heartfelt thanks to all the contributors, and to the editors and staff of *Dialogue*.

Irene M. Bates
Pacific Palisades

To Think for Themselves

It has been some time since journal articles have stimulated me the way the articles did in the spring 1993 issue of *Dialogue*. I think it is wonderful that there is a journal that will carry critical, maybe even denunciatory, articles about church leaders from time to time. The basic strength of the church is individual testimony, testimony of the gospel, not of individual leaders. Consecrated leaders do bad things from time to time, and it is good to call attention to their mistakes so that people will not confuse the gospel with individual

personalities.

I know of a high general authority who shocked everyone present by his insistent demands for better treatment as he was traveling. I later learned, however, that he was seriously ill and would soon die, so I understood his distress. On another occasion a friend of mine was dressed down angrily and profanely by a high-ranking church authority for being "stupid enough to deliver ice cream to the wrong door of the church office building." That faithful high priest could not forget such a tirade from a man he had revered as his appointed leader. In my youth I saw a high-ranking church authority abusively scold his son in anger for not getting on a horse the way the man thought he should. A lawyer friend of mine was shocked in his legal practice when he had to contend with a high-ranking church authority who used questionable means to get his way.

In my BYU classes I contended with some points in speeches of some authorities who were taking stands that could not hold up under close examination. Students were shocked to think that a teacher would question an authority. I thought it was my duty to point out their errors without attempting to discredit them as people of integrity. If there is any church that teaches its members to stand on their own feet and to think for themselves, it is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

So I was pleased to read Lavina Fielding Anderson's compilation of acts by authorities that have distressed her. People could read malice into her writing, but her final three or four pages negated it. Here is a woman who has been offended, and I am glad *Dialogue* gave her a chance to express herself. Paul Toscano's complaint was more angry and perhaps intemperate as he called the general authorities to repentance.

Elbert Peck's response to Toscano was challenging and enlightening, and Eugene England's denunciation of "spectral" evidence, whether against members or authorities, was sound. But I think the best article in the whole issue was Richard Poll's response to Lavina Fielding Anderson. I hope Poll's essay will get the exposure his "Liahona and Iron Rod" essay has received. It is a masterful, sympathetic, and critical challenge to all who would venture into intellectualism.

As I read the complaints against general authorities, I thought of the authorities I have known on a personal basis. They didn't seem to measure up to the negative pictures that were painted. When I had occasion, as president of the board of directors of the BYU Credit Union, to contend with Dallin Oaks, then the school president, I couldn't change his mind, and he forced us to stop using BYU in our name, but in every way he was kind and rational. We had to agree to disagree, but neither of us had cause to have ill feelings toward the other.

I thought of Howard W. Hunter offering to carry our bags as we went to the airport to fly from New Caledonia to Sydney, and I thought of his response to a mission president who asked him about a knotty problem. He replied that he was glad it was the mission president's problem and not his, that the mission president had been called to solve such problems.

I thought of Bruce R. McConkie telling my wife and me after he had set us apart to preside over the Fiji Suva Mission that we would be far away from close church supervision and that would be good in that it would give us a free hand to run things the way we

thought they should be run. I thought of Jack H. Goaslind, a bright, friendly, compassionate man who was so open to suggestions and so eager to be helpful as our area director. I thought of Rex Pinegar, my former student, who shed tears as he married the first Papua, New Guinea, couple ever to be married in a temple. I thought of the kindness and friendliness of my fellow missionaries Robert L. Simpson and Glen L. Rudd who both became general authorities, of my colleague Spencer W. Condie who still serves and who is such a good man in every way, of my former student Loren C. Dunn, and of understanding counsel from Paul H. Dunn when he was a general authority.

There are others I should name, but the tale gets too long. The point is that general authorities I have known have been among the best of men. Of course, they make mistakes, and some of them may become arrogant and even mean at times, but the idea that men like the ones I have known would establish a "Strengthening Church Members Committee" with any intent other than to help people with problems or to prevent unfair criticism of the church is beyond my understanding. Yet I realize that it is possible that such a committee in certain circumstances could set up a damaging "inquisition" if improperly used, and sometimes even good men can confuse righteousness with zeal.

Wilford E. Smith
Provo, Utah

Editors' Note

The spring 1993 issue of *Dialogue* has elicited considerable commentary, some favorable, some not. To date, most of the discussion has centered on the cover art: Trevor Southey's triptych "Prodigal." The response to "Prodigal" clearly shows that *Dialogue*'s readership is diverse, as we hoped it would be. Reactions have ranged from positive and supportive to negative and angry. We did not intend to be provocative, nor did we expect that some readers would not look beyond the cover. Apparently we overestimated the maxim, "You can't judge a book by its cover," since a few readers seem to have done just that.

Both of us enjoy art—as students, teachers, and artists. We have long been familiar with and respectful of the artistic career of Trevor Southey, whose works evoke and inspire thoughtful meditation on the dilemmas of the human spiritual condition through use of powerful symbolism dependent on tender, soulful portrayals of unadorned bodies. Southey's nude and partially nude depictions, reminiscent of the work of Renaissance artists such as De Vinci and Michelangelo, have for decades graced the galleries of the Harris Fine Arts Center at Brigham Young University and the LDS Church Museum, as well as other religious and secular institutions nationwide. We see his work as a modern reinterpretation and extension of a time-honored artistic tradition. We are perplexed and a little disappointed that some readers have apparently gleaned from Southey's art meanings never intended by the artist himself (as he explained in his introduction) or by us.

We saw in "Prodigal" the pain but eventual comfort of a son being reconciled to his father. Others saw a man praying beneath a hovering spirit. Some saw in the naked and anguished posture of the figures, the mix of agony and joy experienced by those who, stripped of encrusted layers of all types, come fi-

nally to deal with their essential selves. Other readers saw other things and thus made certain assumptions of our intent. We regret if the art gave offense to anyone. Still we are pleased that many readers found it moving and inspiring (to the extent that they have asked for the collector's edition poster of "Prodigal" advertised in this issue). Finally, we are grateful for the many words of encouragement and support for the issue, including the contents. If brisk sales and requests for new subscriptions are any indication, the spring issue was vital and valuable for most readers.

We believe that works of art, including "Prodigal," are rarely self-interpreting. As "beauty is in the eye of the beholder," so is the meaning of art given to personal interpretation based on the background, attitudes, and predispositions of its viewers. We are reminded of President David O. McKay's response to one of his colleague's criticism of a bathing suit-clad "Day's of '47 Parade" beauty queen: "I don't see anything that is not beautiful. Do you?"

Decoration Day

Jillyn Carpenter

No funeral today, but the town
has business at its cemetery.
Dust leads the procession;
handles of rakes and hoes protrude
from pickup beds, trunks of cars.
Hardened hands grip steering wheels
jounced by the washboard road, stabilize
Mason jars filled with bridal wreath,
peonies, forsythia, iris—called flags.
New this year: coat hanger wreaths
made of pastel tissues.

A coyote evacuates; rabbits
and desert rats crouch in burrows
made precarious, while boots
and sturdy shoes make a day of it.
Front-aproned women, some
with bargain names already carved,
bend and fuss at mounds
as if their dead are sick or on a trip;
weathered men hoe tumbleweeds,
scratch at dirt, lean on tools,
pull handkerchiefs from back pockets,
blow and snuffle.

Death is so dry. Dusty children
drink from the single tap,
wipe their mouths, trudge the perimeter,
wrestle through stories of loss
in childbirth, orphans, drowning,
choking. They hear the syllables
of influenza, consumption, meningitis.
They stop for a shooting accident,
a man who tripped on his shoelaces.
At lightning, one looks at the black cloud
growing above fifty-mile mountain.

Ezra Taft Benson and Mormon Political Conflicts

D. Michael Quinn

FROM THE 1950S TO THE 1980S Ezra Taft Benson was at the center of a series of political conflicts within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1943 he became a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. With church president David O. McKay's permission, he served as Secretary of Agriculture to U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953 to 1961. Benson's autobiography and official biography openly present the national controversies involved with his service as Secretary of Agriculture.[1]

Less known is the quiet conflict between Secretary Benson and politically conservative LDS administrators and general authorities in Utah. As early as 1953, First Presidency counselor J. Reuben Clark said he was "apprehensive of Bro Benson in Washington." By 1957 Clark and Apostle Mark E. Petersen agreed to instruct the church's *Deseret News* to "print the adverse comment" about Benson's service as Secretary of Agriculture.[2] The

1. *Time* 61 (13 Apr. 1953): cover, 13; *Time* 67 (7 May 1956): cover, 30; "GOP Committee Members Propose Benson Resign," *Arizona Republic*, 13 Dec. 1959, Sect. 2, 1; "Irate Benson Says He's Not About To Quit Job," *Arizona Republic*, 15 Dec. 1959, 3; Ezra Taft Benson, *Cross Fire: The Eight Years with Eisenhower* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1962); Sheri L. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987), 253-359; also Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, "Eisenhower and Ezra Taft Benson: Farm Policy in the 1950s," *Agricultural History* 44 (Oct. 1970): 369-78; Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, *Ezra Taft Benson and the Politics of Agriculture: The Eisenhower Years, 1953-1961* (Danville, IL: Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1975); Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, "Religion and Reform: A Case Study of Henry A. Wallace and Ezra Taft Benson," *Journal of Church and State* 21 (Autumn 1979): 525-35.

2. Henry D. Moyle diary, 24 Mar. 1953, archives, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS archives); J. Reuben Clark ranch diary, 29 Oct. 1957, Clark Papers, archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. In citing manuscript sources, I give priority to public availability. For manuscripts in restricted archives, my typed transcriptions and photocopies are also sources.

next year several general authorities and church administrators expressed personal opposition to Benson. In March 1958, Apostle Harold B. Lee said that Benson needed "humbling" to serve "properly . . . as a member of the Council of the Twelve."[3] In July Ernest L. Wilkinson, Brigham Young University's president, wrote that Benson "espouse[s] certain principles which are utterly inconsistent with the feeling of the Brethren."[4] During the next several months Apostle Hugh B. Brown actively (and successfully) campaigned for the Democratic candidate in Utah's U.S. senatorial race, and against Benson's support of the incumbent Republican.[5]

Criticism of Secretary Benson even included the First Presidency. In 1958, Counselor Clark said, "I did not think the Secretary of Agriculture would yield to argument," in conversation with the chair of the Utah Cattlemen's Association and the chair of the National Wool Growers Association. By 1960 Clark complained that "Sec'y Benson's policies have about extinguished the small farmer and small cattleman."[6] Clark's view was shared by the other counselor in the First Presidency, Henry D. Moyle.[7] And in 1961 Wilkinson observed that "President McKay for the moment is displeased with some things that Brother Benson has done."[8] However, it is unclear whether Benson even knew that his fellow general authorities disapproved of his policies as Secretary of Agriculture. For example, J. Reuben Clark concealed his disapproval in public statements about Benson. In conversations and correspondence with Benson, he also muted his dissent.[9]

On the other hand, almost as soon as Ezra Taft Benson returned to Utah from Washington, D.C., in 1961, he became involved in a well-known

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3. Ernest L. Wilkinson diary, 7 Mar. 1958, photocopy, David John Buerger Papers, Western Americana, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

4. Ibid., 7 July 1958; other criticisms of Benson's politics are in entries of 13 Sept., 11 Dec. 1957, 12 Feb., 2 May, 21-29 June 1958, 20 Oct. 1959, 29 Nov. 1960, and 13 May 1963.

5. F. Ross Peterson, "Utah Politics Since 1945," in Richard D. Poll et al., *Utah's History* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 516.

6. Clark, memorandum of conversation with "Chairman Hopkin," Don Clyde, Lawrence Johnson, Hugh Colton, Howard J. Clegg, Ted Crawford, and Art Woolley, 18 Apr. 1958; Clark farm diary, 5 June 1960; also more of Clark's criticism of Benson's policies appears in Clark office diary, 11 May 1953, 1 July 1957, 31 Mar. 1958, Clark Papers.

7. Thomas G. Alexander, *The Forest Service and the LDS Church in the Mid-Twentieth Century: Utah National Forests as a Test Case* (Ogden, UT: Weber State College Press, 1988), 7-8, 20-21.

8. Wilkinson diary, 9 Aug. 1961.

9. Clark office diary, 9 Apr. 1953; Clark memoranda of his conversations with Benson, 21 Mar. 1955, 1 July 1957; Clark, remarks to special Welfare Plan meeting, 1 Oct. 1955; Clark to Benson, 21 Jan. 1953, 30 Sept. 1956, 19 July 1960, Clark Papers. I tried unsuccessfully to obtain Benson's perspective on the Mormon hierarchy's criticism of his service as Secretary of Agriculture. See n11.

conflict with senior members of the Mormon hierarchy. His official biographer declined to write about this controversy, and that silence is equally true in the biographies of every other general authority who was prominently involved.[10] Despite this conflict's significance for modern Mormonism and the national publicity it received, this story is either absent or muted in histories of the LDS church. Because these matters are significant to the internal dynamics of the operations of the LDS hierarchy, this essay examines at length Apostle Ezra Taft Benson's conflicts with other general authorities which began in the 1960s.[11]

Ezra Taft Benson and the John Birch Society

At issue was Ezra Taft Benson's anti-Communist[12] crusade and his unrelenting effort to obtain or imply LDS church endorsement of the John Birch Society. Founded in December 1958, the Birch Society was named for an American soldier killed by Chinese Communists ten days after the end of World War II.[13]

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10. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, viii. The various biographies of David O. McKay, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner, and Mark E. Petersen are also either silent about their participation in the Benson controversy or only indirectly allude to it.

11. Aside from Elder Benson's public addresses, his statements to the media, and a few comments to his friends or associates, my analysis lacks his perspective about his controversies with other general authorities from the 1960s to the 1980s. I tried unsuccessfully to obtain from relevant sources Benson's personal perspective in these matters. For example, Reed A. Benson decided not to share his and his father's perspective about the matters discussed in this essay. Likewise, prominent Utah members of the John Birch Society J. Reese Hunter and David B. Jorgensen declined to provide me their perspective. Also, D. Arthur Haycock, former First Presidency secretary and long-time associate of Ezra Taft Benson (see below), declined to give me an interview about the apostle's support of the Birch Society and about what Haycock described as "alleged differences between Brother Benson and the other Brethren." However, my study quotes views in defense of Ezra Taft Benson, his son Reed, and others, and quotes pro-Birch opponents to Benson's critics in the Mormon hierarchy.

12. I follow the practice in many of my sources of capitalizing "Communism" and "Communist," even though lowercasing is preferred. However, where the terms are lowercased in original quotations, I lowercase them.

13. Robert H. Welch, *The Blue Book of the John Birch Society* (Belmont, MA: Western Islands, 1961), vii; Welch, *A Brief Introduction to the John Birch Society* (Belmont, MA: John Birch Society, 1962); John H. Rousselot, *Beliefs and Principles of the John Birch Society* (statement to Congress, 12 June 1962) (Belmont, MA: John Birch Society [1962]); "What Is the John Birch Society? The Truth May Surprise You!" (paid advertisement), *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Dec. 1965, 18; Welch, *What Is the John Birch Society?* (Belmont, MA: John Birch Society, 1970); Robert W. Lee, "The John Birch Society At Age 25," in the Birch Society's *American Opinion* 26 (Dec. 1983): 1; Susan L. M. Huck, "Founding of the Society," and Robert W. Lee, "How Robert Welch Developed His Views on Conspiracy in America," *American*

Philosophical heir of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and of U.S. senator Joseph McCarthy, the Birch Society became the most significant grass-roots organization to express the "Great Fear" of Communist triumphs internationally and of Communist subversions in America after World War II.[14]

Opinion 28 (Mar. 1985): 16, 69-76, 153-72. For alternative views of John Birch's death, compare Welch, *The Life of John Birch* (Chicago: Regnery, 1954), with "Different Views on [John Birch's] Death," *New York Times*, 4 Apr. 1961, 18, "Who Was John Birch?" *Time* 77 (14 Apr. 1961): 29, and "How John Birch Died," *New York Herald Tribune*, 25 Nov. 1962.

The principal archival holdings on the John Birch Society are at its archives in Appleton, Wisconsin, which has official documents as well as the personal papers of Robert H. Welch, the society's founder. However, research access is limited at the Birch archives, and the Welch papers are presently unorganized for research. Therefore, the most important archival resource for independent researchers interested in the Birch Society is the Conservative/Libertarian Manuscript Collection, Special Collections, Knight Library, University of Oregon at Eugene. The University of Oregon's collection includes the papers of such prominent Birchers as Thomas J. Anderson, T. Coleman Andrews, Augereau G. Heinsohn, and E. Merrill Root. Also, see the Knox Mellon Collection on the John Birch Society, Special Collections, Research Library, University of California at Los Angeles; William J. Grede papers (restricted until 1999) and Clark R. Mollenhoff papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin at Madison; Sterling Morton papers, Chicago Historical Society.

14. For the general context of the domestic fears of Communist subversion, see David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978); also Robert K. Carr, *The House Committee on Un-American Activities* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1952); Samuel A. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties: A Cross-section of the Nation Speaks Its Mind* (New York: Doubleday, 1955); Ralph S. Brown, *Loyalty and Security: Employment Tests in the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1958); John W. Caughey, *In Clear and Present Danger: The Crucial State of Our Freedoms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); Herbert L. Packer, *Ex-Communist Witnesses: Four Studies in Fact Finding* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962); Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right* (New York: Doubleday, 1963); J. Allen Broyles, *The John Birch Society: Anatomy of a Protest* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965); Donald J. Kemper, *Decade of Fear: Senator Hennings and Civil Liberties* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1965); Earl Latham, *The Communist Controversy in Washington: From the New Deal to McCarthy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966); Michael Paul Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); Walter Goodman, *The Committee: The Extraordinary Career of the House Committee on Un-American Activities* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1968); Arthur V. Watkins [U.S. senator from Utah], *Enough Rope: The Inside Story of the Censure of Senator Joe McCarthy By His Colleagues: The Controversial Hearings that Signaled the End of a Turbulent Career and a Fearsome Era in American Public Life* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969); Allen J. Matusow, *Joseph R. McCarthy* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970); "The Era of the John Birch Society," in Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 249-87; Murray Burton Levin, *Political Hysteria in America: The Democratic Capacity for Repression* (New York: Basic Books, 1971); Athan G. Theoharis, *Seeds*

Benson described the Birch Society as "the most effective non-church organization in our fight against creeping socialism and godless Communism." He added, "I know their leaders, I have attended two of their all-day Council meetings. I have read their literature. I feel I know their program."[15]

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of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971); David Brion Davis, ed., The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion From the Revolution to the Present (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971), esp. 327-48.

Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1948* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972); Eric Bentley, *Are You Now Or Have You Ever Been?: The Investigation of Show Business by the Un-American Activities Committee, 1947-1958* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Richard O. Curry, *Conspiracy: The Fear of Subversion in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972); Cedric Belfrage, *The American Inquisition, 1945-1960* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973); Robert Griffith and Athan Theoharis, eds., *The Specter: Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974); F. Ross Peterson, "McCarthyism in the Mountains, 1950-1954," in Thomas G. Alexander, ed., *Essays On the American West, 1974-1975* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1976); Michael R. Belknap, *Cold War Justice: The Smith Act, the Communist Party, and American Civil Liberties* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977); Allen Weinstein, *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case* (New York: Random House, 1978); Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980); Victor S. Navasky, *Naming Names* (New York: Viking Press, 1980); Thomas C. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography* (New York: Stein and Day, 1982); Stanley I. Kutler, *The American Inquisition: Justice and Injustice in the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); Athan G. Theoharis, ed., *Beyond the Hiss Case: The FBI, Congress, and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982); Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, *The Rosenberg File: A Search for the Truth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1983); Peter L. Steinberg, *The Great "Red Menace": United States Prosecution of American Communists, 1947-1952* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985); Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate*, 2d. ed. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987); Thomas G. Patterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); M. J. Heale, *American Anticommunism: Combating the Enemy Within, 1930-1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Jeff Broadwater, *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Diana Trilling, "How McCarthy Gave Anti-Communism a Bad Name," *Newsweek* 121 (11 Jan. 1993): 32-33. As Secretary of Agriculture, Benson reflected that concern in his *The Threat of Communism [and] World Brotherhood*, published by the LDS church's Deseret Book Company in 1960.

15. Benson's first official public endorsement of the Birch Society appeared in "Reed A. Benson Takes Post In Birch Society," *Deseret News*, 27 Oct. 1962, B-5; "Reed Benson Takes Post With John Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Oct. 1962, 24; and was repeated in "Benson-Birch Tie Disturbs Utahans [sic]," *New York Times*, 4 Nov. 1962, 65; "Benson's Praise of the Birchers," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 14 Mar. 1963, 16; "Elder Benson Makes Statement," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Mar. 1963, 2; *The Pink Book of the John Birch Society* (Belmont, MA: John Birch Society, 1963); "The John Birch Society: A Report," *Advertising Supplement to Los Angeles Times*, 27 Sept. 1964, 14; and "Socialism Warning

On the other hand, even such well-known political conservatives and anti-Communists as Barry Goldwater, William F. Buckley, Russell Kirk, and Ronald Reagan described the Birch Society as "ultraconservative," "right-wing," "extremist," "paranoid," "fanatic fringe," or "lunatic fringe."[16]

Anti-Communist activism split and polarized American conservatives from the 1950s on. The Birch Society became an important manifestation of that conservative polarization.[17] In the early 1960s national officers, council

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Sounded: Elder Benson Hits Liberals," *Deseret News*, 12 Feb. 1966, B-1. His reference to attending Birch training seminars is in "LDS Apostle Backs Up Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Jan. 1966, B-14.

16. "Goldwater Disagrees With John Birch Theories, Is Impressed by Members," *Sacramento Bee*, 30 Mar. 1961, A-16; Russell Kirk's statement about "fanatic fringe" appears in his and Benjamin L. Masse, "The Birchites," *America: National Catholic Weekly Review* 106 (17 Feb. 1962): 643-45; Barry Goldwater introduced into *Congressional Record—Senate* 109 (1 Oct. 1963): 18453-55 a talk which lumped the Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan with the "so-called radical right" (18454); "Barry Disagrees With 3 Bircher Stands," *Sacramento Bee*, 22 Oct. 1963, A-6; William F. Buckley, Jr., "Real Responsibility Lacking Still With Birchite Members," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 6 Aug. 1965, A-4 [which dropped "paranoid" from his description of Birch "drivel" in his syndicated column]; "Bouquet for Buckley," *Christian Century* 82 (25 Aug. 1965): 1028; Buckley [with supporting contributions by Goldwater, Kirk, and others], "The John Birch Society and the Conservative Movement," *National Review* 17 (19 Oct. 1965): 914-20, 925-29; Ronald Reagan's statement about the Birch Society's "lunatic fringe" is quoted in "Reagan Criticizes Birch Society and Its Founder," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 Sept. 1965, Pt. I, 3, also quoted in Fletcher Knebel, "The GOP Attacks The John Birch Society," *Look* 29 (28 Dec. 1965): 74; Goldwater to Harvey B. Schechter, 31 Oct. 1966, endorsing Schechter's pamphlet *How To Listen To A John Birch Society Speaker*, photocopy in J. D. Williams papers (folder and box numbers not yet finalized), Western Americana, Marriott Library. These anti-Birch critics had already established their conservative, anti-Communist credentials in Buckley and L. Brent Bozell, *McCarthy and His Enemies: The Record and Its Meaning* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1954); Buckley, *The Committee and Its Critics: A Calm Review of the House Committee on Un-American Activities* (New York: Putnam, 1962); Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Shepherdsville, KY: Victor Publishing Co., 1960); Russell Kirk, *A Program for Conservatives* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1954); Kirk, *The American Cause* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1957); Ronald Reagan, with Richard G. Hubler, *Where's The Rest of Me?* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1965), 157-84, 192, 199-200, 297-312. The books by Buckley, Kirk, and Goldwater appeared in the lists of "Approved Books" following *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (July 1961) in *The White Book of The John Birch Society for 1961* (Belmont, MA: The John Birch Society, 1961).

17. Of the labels given by mainstream conservatives to the Birch Society, I use "ultraconservative" and "right-wing" as the most neutral terms for a controversial movement. However, some Birch Society advocates resent being called ultraconservative or right-wing, even when these labels are used by conservatives like Buckley (see Buckley, "Birch Society Members Indignant at Buckley," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 17 Aug. 1965, A-4; *The John Birch Society Bulletin* [Dec. 1967]: 24-25; Medford Evans, "Welch and Buckley" in the John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 28 [Mar. 1985]: 89-106). For example, W. Cleon Skousen wrote: "Very often it is popular to resist any Constitutional reform by calling it 'rightist' or 'ultraconservative.' However, it is obvious that the elimination of socialist principles from the American system and the re-establishment of the American eagle in the

members, "Endorsers," and editorial staff of the Birch Society were also directors of the following conservative organizations: America's Future, the American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters, the American Security Council, Americans For Constitutional Action, the Christian [Anti-Communism] Crusade, the Christian Freedom Foundation, the Church League of America, the Citizens Foreign Aid Committee, the Committee of One Million (Against the Admission of Red China to the United Nations), the Conservative Society of America, the Dan Smoot Report, the For America: A Committee for Political Action, the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, the International Services of Information, the Liberty Lobby, the Manion Forum, the National Economic Council, the National Education Program, the Veritas Foundation, the We, the People organization, and the Young Americans for Freedom.[18]

Less than a year after the Birch Society's founding, Ezra Taft Benson was in close association with at least one of the society's highest leaders. In September-October 1959, Benson took Thomas J. Anderson with him as a member of his entourage on an official trip to Europe, including a visit to the Soviet Union. At that time, Anderson was publisher of *Farm and Ranch* magazine as well as an influential member of the new Birch Society. By the time he accompanied Benson on a trip to the Far East in November 1960, Anderson was a member of the national governing council of the Birch Society.[19] By 1961, Ezra Taft Benson had established an association with the

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balanced center of the political spectrum is neither right-wing extremism nor ultraconservatism" (Skousen, *What Is Left? What Is Right?: A Study of Political Extremism* [Salt Lake City: Freemen Institute, 1981], 22. See also Jerreld L. Newquist's specific denial that the John Birch Society is ultraconservative or right-wing in Jerrald [sic] L. Newquist, "Liberty Vs. Creeping Socialism: Warns Of Internal Threats," *Deseret News*, 21 Dec. 1961, A-12). See below for Ezra Taft Benson's association with Skousen and the Freemen Institute, and for Newquist's edition of Benson's talks, as well as Skousen's association with the Birch Society.

18. Douglas Kirk Stewart, "An Analysis of the Celebrity Structure of the American Right," M.S. thesis, University of Utah, 1962, 6, 11, 25-26; *The Patriots* (Cleveland, OH: Precis Press, 1963), 28; National Council of Civic Responsibility, Press Release, 22 Sept. 1964, 1-5, copy in Williams papers; Editors and Advisory Committee of the Birch Society's *American Opinion* (1961-64); also the files on the organizations cited in the text, on the Birch Society, and on other ultraconservative organizations in J. Bracken Lee Papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library. Although not technically a member of the Birch Society, Bracken Lee became a member of the society's Committee of Endorsers in 1961 and a member of *American Opinion*'s Editorial Advisory Committee until November 1966. See Lee to Robert Welch, 19 Jan. 1961, Lee papers; *American Opinion* 9 (Nov. 1966): inside front cover. Lee was Utah's governor (1949-57) and Salt Lake City mayor (1960-72).

19. "Benson Took Birchite on Tours," *Washington Post*, 12 July 1961, D-11; "The Council," *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Feb. 1960): 2. Neither Benson's *Cross Fire* nor Dew's *Ezra Taft Benson* says that Anderson was part of the secretary's entourage on these two trips. However, Benson prints (606-608) Anderson's account of their visit to Russia, and

Birch Society, and would soon refer to its founder Robert H. Welch affectionately as "Dear Bob."[20]

Benson's developing association with the Birch Society represented a reversal of the position he had taken during his early years as Secretary of Agriculture. In 1954 he publicly condemned "the hysterical preachings of those who would destroy our basic freedoms under the guise of anti-communism." This was generally understood to be Benson's attack on the excesses of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy.[21] But eight years later Benson wrote that McCarthy "rendered a service in emphasizing the insidious threat of the Communist influence in government."[22] Benson's odyssey from anti-McCarthyism to neo-McCarthyism is beyond the scope of this essay, but it is necessary to recognize that he made such a transition. Although Benson was never a member of record, his wife Flora and sons Reed and Mark all joined the Birch Society.[23]

Immediately after his official trip with the Birch council member in 1960, Benson proposed to Brigham Young University's president that his son Reed Benson be used for "espionage" on the church school campus. To Apostle Harold B. Lee, Reed explained that as a BYU faculty member, "he could soon find out who the orthodox teachers were and report to his father." After resisting Apostle Benson's proposal for Reed's employment, Ernest Wilkinson countered that "neither Brother Lee nor I want espionage of that character."[24]

Reed Benson had already organized student surveillance at the University of Utah during the 1959-60 school year. For example, he asked a conservative freshman to provide him with the names of students who were active in liberal causes on the state campus. This student also enrolled in a political science course taught by professor J. D. Williams in order to

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Dew quotes (344) part of that article.

20. Due to the partially processed condition of the Robert Welch papers, I was unable to obtain the dates of Benson's earliest correspondence with the Birch founder. However, they were associated by the end of 1961. See Ezra Taft Benson, "Biographical Notes," Dec. 1961, and Benson's "Dear Bob" letter, 10 Dec. 1970, Welch papers, archives, Birch Society, with photocopies in my possession.

21. "Benson Aims New Blast At M'Carthy," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 23 June 1954, 1.

22. Benson to H. Roland Tietjen, president of the Hawaiian LDS temple, 22 May 1962, archives, Lee Library.

23. My telephone interview with Byron Cannon Anderson, 18 Jan. 1993. As an undergraduate, Anderson became a member of the Birch Society through his association with Reed Benson.

24. Wilkinson diary, 29 Nov. 1960. Gary James Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 203, mention Reed Benson's offer but not his father's support of the "espionage" proposal. Wilkinson's diary indicated that Ezra Taft Benson first made the proposal which Reed later outlined to Harold B. Lee.

monitor this liberal Democrat's classroom statements. This student-spy adds that "I transferred to Brigham Young University, where I was involved in the same sorts of things."[25]

Apostle Benson's call in November 1960 for "espionage" at Brigham Young University reflected two dimensions of the national leadership of the John Birch Society. First, their long-time preoccupation with university professors as Communist-sympathizers ("Comsymps").[26] Second, the Birch program for covert "infiltration" of various groups.[27] Apostle Benson's encouragement for espionage at BYU would be implemented periodically during the 1960s and 1970s by members and advocates of the John Birch Society (see below for 1965, 1966, 1969, 1977).

As early as the fall of 1961 some rank-and-file Mormons learned that Benson's anti-Communism had created a rift in the Mormon hierarchy. Benson proclaimed to the October 1961 general conference: "No true Latter-day Saint and no true American can be a socialist or a communist or support programs leading in that direction."[28] Upon inquiry by a politically liberal Mormon, First Presidency counselor Hugh B. Brown replied in November that a Mormon "can be a Democrat or a Socialist and still be a good church member." Brown added that "he had just had a talk with Bro Benson" who was "on the carpet in regard to his political sallies of late."[29] In December 1961, however, the politically conservative president of BYU, Ernest Wilkinson, noted that Benson was privately criticizing "the socialistic tendencies" of Counselor Brown. Wilkinson added that the two general authorities were already in "a vigorous dispute" about anti-Communism.[30]

That same month the LDS *Church News* printed Benson's talk in which he affirmed that "the internal threat to the American way of life is in the secret alliance which exists between the more advanced Social Democrats

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25. Byron Cannon Anderson interview; *Directory: University of Utah, 1959-1960: Faculty, Students, Employees* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1959), 34. See notes below for Anderson's involvement in the 1966 BYU student spy ring.

26. For example, *Collectivism on the Campus: The Battle For the Mind in American Colleges* (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1955), by E. Merrill Root who became a founding member of the "Committee of Endorsers" for the John Birch Society and an associate editor of the Birch Society's *American Opinion*. For professors as "Comsymps," see Robert Welch, "Through All the Days To Be," *American Opinion* 4 (June 1961): 34-35.

27. Max P. Peterson, "Ideology of the John Birch Society," M.S. thesis, Utah State University, 1966, 116, 132; also "Birchers Infiltrate Police, Trigger Freedom Issue," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 17 Nov. 1964, 13.

28. Benson, "The American Heritage of Freedom: A Plan of God," *Improvement Era* 64 (Dec. 1961): 955.

29. Brown statements, as quoted and paraphrased in Frederick S. Buchanan diary, 27 Oct. 1961, photocopy in my possession. Buchanan walked in Brown's office just as Benson was leaving.

30. Wilkinson diary, 21, 29 Dec. 1961.

and the hard-core Communist conspiracy." He claimed that there was an "insidious infiltration of communist agents and sympathizers into almost every segment of American life." Benson added that "Social Democrats" in America were "in government, education, communications and policy making bodies. There they remain today, occupying some of the highest offices in the land."[31] Prior to the talk Benson also told reporters that current U.S. president John F. Kennedy was "very soft in dealing with the Communist threat."[32]

Immediately after press reports of Benson's talk, Counselor Brown asked the editor of the *Deseret News* to write him a detailed briefing on the John Birch Society.[33] Two weeks later Brown responded to an inquiry about the Birch Society by writing that "we [the First Presidency] are definitely against their methods." On the heels of Benson's widely publicized talk, Brown continued that "we do not think dividing our own people, casting reflections on our government officials, or calling everybody a Communist who do[es] not agree with the political views of certain individuals is the proper way to fight Communism." He added that LDS "leaders, or even members, should not become hysterical or take hasty action, engage in discussions, and certainly should not join these [anti-Communist] groups, some of whom, at least, are in for the money they can make out of it."[34] In

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31. Benson, "Is There A Threat To The American Way of Life?" *Deseret News "Church News,"* 23 Dec. 1961, 15, reprinted as *The Internal Threat to the American Way of Life . . . Talk Given at the Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles, California, December 11, 1961* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1961), 30-31, and in Roland L. Delorme and Raymond G. McInnis, eds., *Antidemocratic Trends in Twentieth-Century America* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969). Benson quoted portions of his recent talk in an official statement, "Speech Misinterpreted By King, Benson Says," *Deseret News,* 16 Dec. 1961, B-5; "Benson Rips King 'Challenge,'" *Salt Lake Tribune,* 16 Dec. 1961, 7. Although his newspaper disclaimer said this referred to the Social Democratic Party of Russia in 1903, the *Church News* publication of his talk showed that Benson's talk emphasized (15) the present American context: "Many people have wondered if the Marxist concepts of Fabian Social Democrats have deeply penetrated the United States. In truth they have. . . . There they remain today, occupying some of the highest offices of the land." He added that "the Communists and the Social Democrats don't want us to examine this internal threat, but I believe we should."

32. "Benson Says JFK Soft on Reds," *Los Angeles Herald and Express,* 12 Dec. 1961, A-3; also "Kennedy Aides Held Soft on Reds," *Los Angeles Times,* 12 Dec. 1961, Pt. III, 1; "U.S. Red Peril Emphasized By Elder Benson," *Deseret News,* 12 Dec. 1961, A-1, A-7; "Benson Warns of 'Secret Alliance,'" *Salt Lake Tribune,* 12 Dec. 1961, 3. However, Benson's talk itself made no reference to Kennedy.

33. O. Preston Robinson, editor and general manager of the *Deseret News,* to Hugh B. Brown, 14 Dec. 1961, "as per your request," in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society," box 48, Edwin B. Firmage Papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library.

34. Brown to Mrs. Alicia Bingham, 28 Dec. 1961, carbon copy in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

February 1962, Benson cancelled at the last minute his appearance on a television program titled, "Thunder on the Right." Some Mormons credited this to Brown's influence.[35]

Counselor Versus Apostle

In fact, this conflict between First Presidency counselor Brown and Apostle Benson became a running battle in the Mormon hierarchy. In rebuttal to the publicity of Benson's remarks the previous December, Brown instructed the LDS general priesthood meeting in April 1962: "The degree of a man's aversion to communism may not always be measured by the noise he makes in going about and calling everyone a communist who disagrees with his personal political bias." Then in a more direct allusion to his dispute with Benson, Brown said, "There is no excuse for members of this Church, especially men who hold the priesthood, to be opposing one another over communism . . ." In an obvious allusion to the Birch Society, Brown concluded: "Let us not undermine our government or accuse those who hold office of being soft on communism. . . . [or] by destroying faith in our elected officials under the guise of fighting communism."[36]

Brown's rebuttal to "soft on communism" came directly from newspaper reports of Benson's December 1961 talk. One Mormon wrote that "Bro. Brown certainly was talking to Benson when he warned the Priesthood Saturday about the dangers of extremism & of charging our leaders as dupes of the Communist conspiracy."[37] Of his April 1962 conference remarks, Brown confided: "While we do not think it wise to name names in our statements of Church policy, the cries which come from certain sources would indicate that somebody was hit by some of our statements and that was what we hoped would be the result."[38] Almost immediately after Brown's remarks at April conference, Benson renewed his public warnings about Communist influence in the United States.[39]

Because of this Brown-Benson dispute, BYU's president Wilkinson told President McKay in June 1962 that "President Brown is giving aid and comfort to the enemies of what should be sound basic Mormon philosophy."[40] In October, first counselor Henry D. Moyle said that second coun-

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35. Buchanan diary, 22 Feb. 1962.

36. Brown, "Honor the Priesthood," *Improvement Era* 65 (June 1962): 450.

37. Buchanan diary, 7 Apr. 1962.

38. Brown to Morley Ross Hammond, 25 Apr. 1962, photocopy in Williams Papers.

39. "We Must Protect U.S.: Ezra Benson Sounds Warning," *U.S. News and World Report* 52 (23 Apr. 1962): 20.

40. Wilkinson diary, 3 June 1962, described a memorandum of what he was going to say privately to McKay on 6 June.

selor Brown spoke to a Democratic convention in Utah only "because Brother Benson had given a political tirade that needed answering."[41] A few days after Benson publicly endorsed the Birch Society, Brown himself wrote in November 1962 that he was "disgusted" by Benson's activities "in connection with the John Birch Society," and if they did not cease, "some disciplinary action should be taken."[42]

Transcending personality, the Benson-Brown conflict reflected deep political divisions in the generally conservative LDS church and in the more diverse nation at large during the tumultuous 1960s.[43] Both men had a

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41. Wilkinson diary, 29 Oct. 1962, referred to a Democratic state convention "two years ago." However, in Buchanan diary, 27 Oct. 1961, Brown said that in response to Benson's conference address that month, "he'd be speaking to the States Democratic leaders in order to set them straight on the position of politics in the church."

42. Brown to Gustive O. Larson, 11 Nov. 1962, in answer to Larson's letter of 1 Nov., folder 12, box 10, Larson Papers, archives, Lee Library. The letter did not name Benson specifically, but his identity is clear from the circumstances surrounding the correspondence. Larson's "outline diary" notes (box 1, folder 19) for 1962 referred to "Bensonizing & Skousenizing" before Brown's letter, and "Pres Brown and Birchers etc" after the letter. A carbon copy of Larson's original letter to Brown on 1 Nov. 1962 is in Eugene Campbell Papers (folder and box numbers not yet finalized), archives, Lee Library. Larson's letter referred to an unnamed member of the "L.D.S. officials" who was associated by a recent newspaper article with the Birch Society. This obviously was the newspaper report of Benson's formal endorsement of the Birch Society which appeared in "Reed A. Benson Takes Post In Birch Society," *Deseret News*, 27 Oct. 1962, B-5; "Reed Benson Takes Post With John Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Oct. 1962, 24.

43. For the national context, see Kenneth Keniston, *Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1968); Benjamin Muse, *The American Negro Revolution: From Nonviolence to Black Power, 1963-1967* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968); Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1969); Philip Slater, *The Pursuit of Loneliness: American Culture at the Breaking Point* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970); David Burner, Robert D. Marcus, and Thomas R. West, *A Giant's Strength: America in the 1960s* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971); William L. O'Neill, *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the 1960's* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971); James A. Geschwender, *The Black Revolt: The Civil Rights Movement, Ghetto Uprisings, and Separatism* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971); Thomas Powers, *The War at Home: Vietnam and the American People, 1964-1968* (New York: Grossman, 1973); Alexander Kendrick, *The Wound Within: America in the Vietnam Years, 1945-1974* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1974); Tom Shachtman, *Decade of Shocks: Dallas to Watergate, 1963-1974* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1974); Donald D. Warren, *The Radical Center: Middle Americans and the Politics of Alienation* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976); Morris Dickstein, *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); Charles R. Morris, *A Time of Passion: America, 1960-1980* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988); Kim McQuaid, *The Anxious Years: America in the Vietnam-Watergate Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1989); Patrick Lloyd

political agenda—not uncommon in church leaders.[44] However, Benson was notable for the manner in which he tried to mobilize both the LDS church president and general membership behind his own political agenda.

In the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, Apostle Benson's son Reed became coordinator for the Birch Society in Utah. His announcement was coupled with his father's first public endorsement of the Birch Society.[45] Seven months earlier, a ward bishop (and future general authority) had complained that Reed violated the First Presidency's policy against political use of chapels by speaking to a stake meeting about the "currently popular, militantly anti-communist movement of which the speaker is the leading spokesman."[46]

Such activity infuriated both counselors to David O. McKay. "It is certainly regrettable," Brown wrote in November 1962, that Reed Benson "is permitted to continue to peddle his bunk in our Church houses. The matter was brought sharply to the attention of the President by Brother Moyle during my absence . . ."[47] That same month, Henry D. Taylor, an assistant to the Twelve Apostles, said that "in his judgment [Reed] Benson was the laughing stock of Salt Lake" for his Birch activism.[48] Someone even

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Hatcher, *The Suicide of an Elite: American Internationalists and Vietnam* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990); Charles DeBenedetti, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*, rev. ed. (New York: Viking Press, 1991).

44. Although Hugh B. Brown is not the focus of this essay, the dimensions of his own agenda as a church leader appear in Eugene E. Campbell and Richard Poll, *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975); and Edwin B. Firmage, ed., *An Abundant Life: The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988).

45. "Reed A. Benson Takes Post In Birch Society," *Deseret News*, 27 Oct. 1962, B-5; "Reed Benson Takes Post With John Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Oct. 1962, 24; "Ezra Benson's Son Takes Birch Society Post," *Sacramento Bee*, 27 Oct. 1972, B-7; "Benson-Birch Tie Disturbs Utahans [sic]," *New York Times*, 4 Nov. 1962, 65; "LDS in Capital Rap Reed Benson Talk," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 15 Dec. 1962, 7; "Reed Benson Replies to News Dispatch," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 Dec. 1962.

46. Richard P. Lindsay, on letterhead of Taylorsville Second Ward Bishopric, to David O. McKay, Henry D. Moyle, and Hugh B. Brown, 20 Mar. 1962, carbon copy in Williams Papers. Lindsay's handwritten note to J. D. Williams at the end of the carbon copy reads: "I'm sure this sounds soap boxish but the latter talk referred to cost me one whole night's sleep. Everyone seems to profit in the hard sell book business—One of these days write a sequel called 'Conscience of a Liberal.'" For Lindsay's later appointment to the Second Quorum of Seventy, see *Deseret News 1993-1994 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1992), 36.

47. Hugh B. Brown to Richard D. Poll, 26 Nov. 1962, in response to Poll to Brown, 20 Nov. 1962, photocopies in my possession.

48. Henry D. Taylor statement, as reported in Richard M. Taylor to Richard D. Poll, 7 Nov. 1962, photocopy in my possession. Assistant to the Twelve was a general authority

burned a Nazi swastika in the lawn of Reed Benson's house shortly after his appointment as state coordinator for the John Birch Society.[49]

Nevertheless, the Birch Society's Utah membership tripled in the next six months after Reed Benson's appointment as state coordinator. A year later Reed also became coordinator for the Mormon counties of southern Idaho. Two years after his initial appointment, the younger Benson left Utah to become the Birch coordinator in Washington, D.C. Eventually, Reed A. Benson became the national director of public relations for the John Birch Society.[50] In addition to introducing Birch beliefs to Mormons, Reed Benson also convinced the national Birch Council to open its meetings with prayer.[51]

Meanwhile, Ezra Taft Benson tried unsuccessfully to get President McKay's approval for the non-Mormon president of the Birch Society to speak at a session of LDS general conference.[52] Failing that, Benson endorsed the Birch Society during his talks at stake conferences and preached Birch themes in general conference sermons.[53] In fact, Benson's official

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calling from 1941 until it was absorbed into the newly formed First Quorum of Seventy in 1976. See below for Taylor's account of Apostle Harold B. Lee's rebuke of Benson in front of other general authorities.

49. "Vandals, Reds, Loaded Queries Plague Utah's Bircher Benson," *Portland Oregonian*, 19 May 1963, 16, with photo of Reed beside the swastika vandalism.

50. "Benson Son Leads Rightists in Utah," *New York Times*, 19 May 1963, 55; "Benson's Son Claims He Has Tripled Utah Birch Membership," *Washington Post*, 20 May 1963, A-1; T. George Harris, "The Rampant Right Invades the GOP," *Look* 27 (16 July 1963): 20; "Benson and Birch: Politics Or Religion?" *University of Utah Daily Utah Chronicle*, 3 Dec. 1964, 2; "Utahn Heads Birch Office in Capital," *Deseret News*, 16 Dec. 1964, A-13; Jules Witcover, "Bircher Benson," *The New Republic* 152 (8 May 1965): 8-9; "Washington Report . . . Birchers Settle In," *Life* 58 (18 June 1965): 43; "Birch Society Opens Washington Office Friday," *New York Times*, 14 Sept. 1965, 20; "John Birch Society Representative Reed Benson," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 19 Sept. 1965, A-6; "Mormons and Politics: Benson's Influence Helps Keep Growing Church on Conservative Track," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 Aug. 1966, 1; "Gets Birch Job," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 19 May 1967, B-4; Reed A. Benson to Dean M. Hansen, 22 May 1967, in Dean Maurice Hansen, "An Analysis of the 1964 Idaho Second Congressional District Election Campaign," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1967, 50, 221.

51. Reed A. Benson to Tom Anderson, "*PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL*," 3 July 1963, Anderson Papers, Knight Library, University of Oregon at Eugene.

52. Referred to in minutes, LDS archives, of meeting on 15 March 1966 of David O. McKay, N. Eldon Tanner, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Mark E. Petersen in Huntsville, Utah.

53. Byron Cannon Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," senior paper, University of Utah, June 1966, 8-13, photocopy in Western Americana, Marriott Library; Alison Bethke, "BF [Before Falwell], EB [Ezra Benson]," senior paper, Professor Marvin Hill's History 490, Brigham Young University, 9 Apr. 1984, 6, 8, photocopy in Williams Papers. This study refers frequently to Byron Cannon Anderson's 1966 paper, written while he was chair of a Birch Society spin-off group called Citizens for Honest Government. Anderson's interview, 18 Jan. 1993, states that he was a member of the Birch Society, and the organization was also led by such prominent Mormon Birchers as J. Reese Hunter and Mark E. Anderson. In

biographer calculated that during the decade of the 1960s "fifteen of his twenty general conference addresses [or 75 percent] focused on one or more of these [political] topics."[54]

By October 1962, Benson's partisan talks at general conference were resulting in public dissent by LDS university students. In response to Benson's conference statement that "No true Latter-day Saint can be a socialist or a communist," a University of Utah student from Norway countered that "more than half" of Norwegian Mormons vote for the socialist Labor Party. This student concluded: "I am glad the president of the Church has taken a stand against Communism. But I do not think it is the responsibility of any other speaker in the tabernacle to give his own political opinions regarding welfare states." In equally public responses, other LDS students attacked this Mormon undergraduate for criticizing Benson.[55]

The Benson-Brown controversy was less public at Brigham Young University, yet equally intense. By the fall of 1962 members of the Birch Society's national council and editorial advisory committee had been speakers at BYU's "Forum" assemblies which were attended by a majority of students. This reflected the pro-Birch sentiments of BYU's president. On the other hand, anti-Birchers on the BYU faculty formally complained to Hugh B. Brown that the administration had arranged for national leaders of the Birch Society to address the student body.[56] After giving a "political" talk to a multistake meeting of BYU students in November 1962, religion professor Glenn L. Pearson told one of his students that Benson's support

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1970, Hunter and Cannon became founding editor and assistant editor of *The Utah Independent: The Conservative Marketplace of Utah* which was written by and for Mormon members of the Birch Society. See Byron Cannon Anderson, "Open Letter to Utah Citizens," Mar. 1966, folder 5, box 184, Frank E. Moss papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library; "Young, But Eager, He Looks for Political Chance," *Deseret News*, 30 Sept. 1965, B-1; "Welch Raps 'Senseless' U.S. Policy," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Apr. 1966, B-1; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah"; "David O. McKay: Prophet-Patriot," and staff list, *Utah Independent*, 12 Feb. 1970, 1-2; "Birch Society PR Speaker," *Utah Independent*, 9 Apr. 1970, 1; "What Is The John Birch Society," *Utah Independent*, 28 May 1971, 6-7, 9; "The Communist Attack on The John Birch Society," *Utah Independent*, 21 Apr. 1972, 4-7; "Birchers Ask Economic Sanctions on Communists," *Utah Independent*, 19 May 1972, 4; and the regular column from Birch headquarters in Belmont, Massachusetts, which was officially named "The Birch Log" as of *Utah Independent*, 5 Aug. 1976, 3.

54. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 366-67. For an academic summary of Birch themes, see Peterson, "Ideology of the John Birch Society."

55. Kjell Nilsen, letters to the editor, *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 22 Oct. 1962, 2, and 26 Oct. 1962, 2, to which Allen Mickelsen and Jim Wanek responded in *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 24 Oct. 1962, 2, and 25 Oct. 1962, 2.

56. Richard D. Poll to Hugh B. Brown, 13 Dec. 1962, photocopy in my possession; "The Council," *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Feb. 1960): 2; John Birch Society's *American Opinion*.

of the Birch Society was a mission from God. Then, described by BYU's president as "the most untactful person I have heard," Pearson said that Brown was "a Judas in the First Presidency." The student concluded that a church court should excommunicate Counselor Brown.[57]

Such controversy on Utah's campuses appalled general authorities who did not want young Latter-day Saints to regard the Birch Society or its philosophy as a measure of one's faith. However, Benson skillfully created a public environment which left the First Presidency and his fellow apostles only five difficult options: remain silent, privately rebuke him, publicly endorse his views, publicly repudiate his views without naming him, or publicly repudiate him by name. On various occasions from the 1960s to the early 1980s, the hierarchy ambivalently adopted each of the five possible responses to Benson's political crusade.

In January 1963 the First Presidency broke its silence. Their announcement stated: "We deplore the presumption of some politicians, especially officers, co-ordinators and members of the John Birch Society, who undertake to align the Church or its leadership with their political views."[58] This was a not-too-subtle reference to Benson's son Reed, the Utah Birch coordinator. Three days after the First Presidency announcement, Elder Benson spoke at a rally endorsed by the Birch Society in Boston. Newspapers reported this as a defiant embarrassment to the LDS church.[59]

Some Mormon members of the Birch Society criticized the First Presidency for its January 1963 statement. For example, one pro-Birch Mormon informed President McKay that she loved him as a prophet, but that the

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57. Wilkinson diary, 4 Nov. 1962; conversation reported to me by the student in November 1962, during which time I was also enrolled in Pearson's missionary preparation course. The student supported the views of the Birch Society, of Benson, and of Pearson. Pearson's political tracts included *The Constitution versus the Bill of Rights* (Provo, UT: N.d.); *Freedom of Speech and Press* (Provo, UT: N.d.); *Socialism and the United Order or the Law of Consecration* (Provo, UT: 1962[?]); *The No-Plan Plan* (Provo, UT: [1967]); *Public School Philosophy—State Religion* (Provo, UT: 1967[?]); and also Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 196, about Pearson. Benson made a public allusion to Brown as Judas in general conference a year after Pearson's remark. See discussion of October 1963 general conference, below.

58. "Church Sets Policy on Birch Society," *Deseret News*, 4 Jan. 1963, B-1; also "Mormon Head Clarifies Stand on Birch Society: McKay Lashes at Those Who Try to Align Church With Group's Partisan Views," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 Jan. 1963, Pt. I, 5; "LDS Leaders Reject Any Idea of Link Between Church, Birch Society," *Sacramento Bee*, 4 Jan. 1963, A-10; "Birch Tie Flatly Denied By LDS," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 4 Jan. 1963; "Reprint of Statement From the First Presidency," *The Messenger: Distributed By the Presiding Bishopric of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah*, Feb. 1963, 1.

59. "Ezra Taft Benson Addresses Rally," *Deseret News*, 7 Jan. 1963, A-3; Drew Pearson, "Benson Embarrasses His Church," *Washington Post*, 22 Jan. 1963, B-23; "Church Embarrassed Over Ezra Taft Benson Stand," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 22 Jan. 1963, 4.

church president had inadvertently "given much aid and comfort to the enemy." She concluded that "this statement by the First Presidency regarding the John Birch Society and Reed Benson . . . might have an ill effect on the Missionary work."[60] Such letters stunned even the normally hard-crusted first counselor Henry D. Moyle, who wrote: "When we pursue any course which results in numerous letters written to the Presidency critical of our work, it should be some evidence we should change our course." Only five days after the statement's publication, the first counselor apparently now had second thoughts about the First Presidency's anti-Birch statement.[61]

Therefore, it is not surprising that President McKay (always sensitive to criticism) also expressed concern by 31 January that "the First Presidency probably went a little too far" in its Birch statement. McKay's personal secretary confided that he was disturbed by "at least 25 letters vigorously protesting the statement of the First Presidency on the John Birch Society—many of them very intelligent letters."[62]

Two weeks later, the church president instructed his secretary, Clare Middlemiss, to send a reply to Mormon Birchers[63] who criticized the First Presidency statement. The letter affirmed: "The Church is not opposing the John Birch Society or any other organization of like nature; however, it is definitely opposed to anyone using the Church for the purpose of increasing membership for private organizations sponsoring these various ideologies."[64] On the other hand, second counselor Brown felt the presidency had

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60. Nancy Smith Lowe to David O. McKay, 10 Jan. 1963, MS 5971 #1, LDS archives, photocopy in my possession.

61. Moyle to J. D. Williams, 9 Jan. 1963, Williams Papers. Frank H. Jonas, political scientist at the University of Utah, interpreted Moyle's words as the reasoning which led to the First Presidency's statement (Jonas, typed document, 83, in the John Birch Society section of a longer manuscript for which the first portion is missing and its title presently unknown, Jonas Papers [folder and box numbers not finalized], Western Americana, Marriott Library). It is true that liberal Mormons had long encouraged the First Presidency to issue a statement against the John Birch Society (e.g., Richard D. Poll to Hugh B. Brown, 22 Jan. 1962, photocopy in my possession). However, I have found no evidence that anti-Birch Mormons had "written to the Presidency critical of our work" for not issuing such a statement prior to January 1963. On the other hand, negative letters about this statement had reached the First Presidency's office before Moyle wrote this letter of 9 January.

62. Wilkinson diary, 31 Jan. 1963. Three weeks before learning this, Wilkinson had already written that "I think you ought not to read too much in the statement of the First Presidency" (Wilkinson to Richard D. Poll, 7 Jan. 1963, Wilkinson Papers, Lee Library, photocopy in my possession).

63. "Bircher" and "Birchers" are terms members of the Birch Society apply to themselves, as in *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Oct. 1992): 6, 14, 20.

64. Middlemiss to Nancy Smith Lowe, 15 Feb. 1963, MS 5971 #2, LDS archives, photocopy in my possession; also identical statement in Middlemiss to Robert W. Lee, 1

not gone far enough in its January 1963 statement.

The Birch Society's *Bulletin* for February 1963 gave Brown a reason to attack Benson's support of the group. The last "agenda" item was titled, "Write to President McKay." The *Bulletin* urged Mormon Birchers to write letters (in envelopes marked "Personal and Confidential") explaining why they had joined the society. The Birch *Bulletin* further suggested that the letters thank McKay for his own anti-Communist statements and praise "the great service Ezra Taft Benson and his son Reed (our Utah Coordinator) are rendering to this battle, with the hope that they will be encouraged to continue."[65] The Birch Society saw this as a defensive response to the First Presidency's recent statement. However, to anti-Birch Mormons the February *Bulletin* appeared as an effort to subvert the statement and to encourage continued criticism of the presidency by Mormon Birchers.

Benson added an ironic personal touch to the February Birch announcement. That same month he sent newly-called apostle N. Eldon Tanner a copy of Benson's *The Red Carpet: A Forthright Evaluation of the Rising Tide of Socialism—the Royal Road to Communism.* As a Canadian cabinet officer, Tanner had been a member of the Social Credit Party. He therefore fell under the book's blistering condemnation for "Social Democrats" and even moderate socialists like Tanner.[66]

Growing Polarization

Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner's uncle, did not appreciate what appeared as Ezra Taft Benson's snide humor toward Tanner. Nor did Brown like the Birch Society's effort to lobby President McKay on Benson's behalf. In March 1963 Brown told reporters that Benson was not "entitled to say the church favors the John Birch Society." Brown added that "we [the First Presidency] are opposed to them and their methods."[67] Barely a week later Benson published an acknowledgement that his support of the Birch

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Aug. 1963, in *Congressional Record—Senate* 109 (6 Aug. 1963): 14172; "Stand of LDS On Birch In 'Record,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Aug. 1963, A-2; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 11. Before becoming Reed Benson's assistant in Washington, D.C., Robert W. Lee served as a chapter leader, section leader, and volunteer coordinator of the Birch Society in Salt Lake City. See "S.L. Man Takes Capital Post With Birchers," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Nov. 1964, B-11.

65. *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Feb. 1963): 28-29; also summarized in George Rucker memorandum, 17 June 1963, folder 5, box 636, Moss Papers.

66. Benson, *The Red Carpet*... (Derby, CT: Monarch Books, 1963), inscribed to "Eldon" on 2-12-63, copy in Special Collections, Lee Library; G. Homer Durham, *N. Eldon Tanner: His Life and Service* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982), 57-89. Benson's book was originally published during 1962 in Salt Lake City by Bookcraft.

67. "'LDS Oppose' Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 Mar. 1963, 5; "Brown Says Church Opposed To Birch Society, Methods," *Provo Daily Herald*, 5 Mar. 1963, 12.

Society was "my personal opinion only." Benson's statement went on to quote the church president as being "opposed to anyone's using the Church for purposes of increasing membership" of the Birch Society or other anti-Communist organizations.[68]

Benson was obviously under orders from the First Presidency to publish this March 1963 statement. Aside from second counselor Brown's well-known criticism, two months after Benson's statement first counselor Moyle said Benson "just didn't have any reason" in his anti-Communist crusade.[69] Benson's March 1963 disclaimer ran counter to his efforts before and after that date to align the church with the Birch Society. A week after his letter, newspapers reported that more than a thousand LDS members of the Birch Society had written church headquarters with complaints or requests for clarification. The media may have obtained that information from McKay's secretary, Clare Middlemiss, who supported the Birch Society.[70] In fact her pro-Birch orientation became the source of complaints by rank-and-file Mormons to the First Presidency.[71]

By March 1963 most Utah Mormons knew that Ezra Taft Benson was at the center of a controversy with both of the church president's counselors. This disturbed church members who were accustomed to reassurances of the harmony and unity among general authorities. Public evidence of this conflict was especially confusing to Mormons who shared Benson's enthusiasm for the Birch Society. As one of Brown's biographers wrote, "[I]n the minds of quite a number of the Church members the goals of the Church and the John Birch Society were identical and they joined the John Birch Society feeling that they were in a religious crusade against communism and had the blessing of the President of the Church and other Church leaders in so acting."[72] For example, bishops and other local LDS officers who were members of the Birch Society had circulated petitions in LDS meeting houses in support of the Birch Society's proposal to impeach Chief Justice Earl Warren and remove him from the U.S. Supreme Court.[73]

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68. "Benson Declares His Birch Society Support Has No Bearing on Church, *Sacramento Bee*, 14 Mar. 1963, A-2; "Elder Benson Makes Statement," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Mar. 1963, 2.

69. Wilkinson diary, 13 May 1963.

70. "Benson Clarifies Views On Birch Society Stand," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Mar. 1963, A-11; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 10-11; U.S. senator Frank E. Moss to U.S. representative Ken W. Dyal, 2 Mar. 1966, folder 5, box 184, Moss Papers.

71. "CROSS REFERENCE SHEET," Mrs. Joyce M. Sowerwine letter, 25 Nov. 1966, "re: Claire Middlemiss & John Birch Society," in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

72. Eugene Campbell's typed draft of Hugh B. Brown biography, chapter titled, "Responsibility Without Authority—The 1st Counselor Years," 11, Campbell Papers.

73. "The Movement to Impeach Earl Warren," *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Aug.

By April 1963 the Benson controversy was also creating dissent among European Mormons. An LDS bishop visiting from Scotland was "shocked at Ezra Taft Benson's attack on socialists" in his conference talk. "If socialists are the same as communists, then all we're left [in Britain] is the Tories." The bishop vowed "to tell the people in Scotland about Ezra's comments."[74]

Although Mormon Birchers later became famous for "espionage" at Brigham Young University, anti-Birch Mormons were also involved in similar subterfuge. LDS bishop and political scientist J. D. Williams referred in May 1963 to "one of my 'spies' in the local Birch Society in Salt Lake City." He felt justified in this approach toward "the Birchers, who hate me . . ."[75] For Mormons on both sides, the Birch controversy had become poisonous. One of the directors of an LDS institute of religion wrote: "May a dumb spirit possess Bro. E.T.B."[76]

In September 1963 Benson gave a talk in Los Angeles praising Birch Society founder Robert H. Welch. Unlike his earlier praise for Welch, Benson delivered these remarks to a meeting officially sponsored by the Birch Society and attended by 2,000 Birchers.[77] He began his talk by

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1961): 5; George T. Boyd (associate director of the LDS Institute of Religion in Los Angeles) to the First Presidency (with copy to Benson), 14 Dec. 1961, photocopy in my possession, regarding "'Hang Earl Warren' Then—an Apology," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Dec. 1961, A-4. In answer to Boyd's similar letter to Brown, 22 Sept. 1961, about Mormons promoting the Birch Society in church meetings, Brown replied to Boyd on 6 October that the entire First Presidency "hope some action can be taken to reduce or control the unwise actions of some of our people there [in Los Angeles] and in other parts of the Church." Copies of both 1962 letters are in Mormon Americana M208, Ala #44, Special Collections, Lee Library, also MS 2260, LDS archives.

74. Quoted in Buchanan diary, 10 Apr. 1963.

75. J. D. Williams to James M. Whitmire, 21 May 1963, carbon copy in Williams Papers. Reed Benson had already targeted Williams for classroom surveillance at the University of Utah.

76. George T. Boyd, associate director of the LDS institute of religion in Los Angeles, to "Dick" [Richard D. Poll], undated but written ca. 18 Oct. 1961 and answered 24 Oct., photocopy in my possession.

77. Benson, *"Let Us Live to Keep Men Free": An Address . . . at a Patriotic Testimonial Banquet for Robert Welch, sponsored by Friends and Members of The John Birch Society at the Hollywood Palladium, Los Angeles, California, September 23, 1963* (Los Angeles: N.p, 1963); "2000 Hail Welch As 'Great Patriot,'" *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 24 Sept. 1963, A-18; "Birch Society Dinner: Elder Benson Hits A-Treaty," *Deseret News*, 24 Sept. 1963, A-4; "Benson Extols Founder of John Birch Society," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 Sept. 1963, 2; "Birch Chief Applauded by Benson," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 24 Sept. 1963, 4; Richard Swanson, "McCarthyism in Utah," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1977, 138-39. For an earlier example of Benson's public endorsement of Robert Welch, see his remarks to students at the University of Washington in "Ezra Taft Benson Sees Reds 'Everywhere,' Lauds Birchers," *Seattle Times*, 1 May 1963, 15.

announcing: "I am here tonight with the knowledge and consent of a great spiritual leader and patriot, the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President David O. McKay."[78]

Welch had just published his most controversial book, *The Politician*. It accused former U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower of being "sympathetic to ultimate Communist aims, realistically and even mercilessly willing to help them achieve their goals, knowingly receiving and abiding by Communist orders, and consciously serving the Communist conspiracy, for all of his adult life."[79] Benson publicly implied endorsement of the allegation. Privately, he had already sent copies of Welch's anti-Eisenhower book to general authorities like Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith.[80]

Benson's public praise for the Birch president brought the church controversy into national attention in September 1963. An LDS congressman from Idaho publicly condemned the apostle. Representative Ralph R. Harding told Congress in September that Benson was "a spokesman for the radical right." The congressman charged Benson with using his apostleship to give the false impression that the church and its people "approve of" the Birch Society.[81] Not satisfied with this public rebuke, Harding also privately lobbied liberal Mormons to "let President McKay and the other leaders of the Church know of your opposition to Ezra Taft Benson's activities on behalf of the Birch Society."[82] Dwight Eisenhower then entered the controversy by praising the congressman's criticism of the former

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78. "Benson Urges Americans: 'Stand Up For Freedom No Matter What The Cost,'" *The Freedom Press*, 9 Oct. 1963, 7-8, reprint (Belmont, MA: The John Birch Society, 1963), copy in folder 4, box 245, Moss Papers. The Birch Society reprinted Benson's talk.

79. Welch, *The Politician* (Belmont, MA: Belmont Publishing Co., 1963), 278; William P. Hoar, "Welch and Eisenhower," in the John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 28 (Mar. 1985): 54-55. Eisenhower never sued Welch for libel or defamation of character, but for a libel suit against the Birch Society, see Elmer Gertz, *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.: The Story of a Landmark Libel Case* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992).

80. Benson to Smith, 31 July 1963, in copy of Welch's *The Politician*, Special Collections, Lee Library; Hansen, "Analysis of the 1964 Idaho Second Congressional District Election Campaign," 50.

81. Harding speech, *Congressional Record—House* 109 (25 Sept. 1963): 17208-209, reprinted as *Ezra Taft Benson's Support of John Birch Society Is Criticized* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963); "Idaho Congressman Hits Benson Speech," and "Birch Official Gives Statement on Benson Talk," *Deseret News*, 26 Sept. 1963, A-3; "Legislator, a Mormon, Scores Benson for Birch Activities," *New York Times*, 26 Sept. 1963, 29; "Mr. Harding's Risk," *Idaho State Journal*, 27 Sept. 1963, 4; "Idaho Congressman Hits Benson Speech," *Deseret News*, 26 Sept. 1963, A-6; "Ezra Benson And The Mormon Church," *Lewiston (Ida.) Morning Tribune*, 29 Sept. 1963, 4; Hansen, "Analysis of the 1964 Idaho Second Congressional District Election Campaign," 51; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 11-12, 54.

82. For example, Ralph Harding to Richard Poll, 30 Sept. 1963, photocopy in my possession.

president's cabinet member. Benson's support of the Birch Society was now a national issue.[83]

Anti-Birch Mormons were not comforted by the fact that President McKay confirmed to the media that he had given Apostle Benson permission to speak at the Welch testimonial.[84] BYU's former student body president wrote in September 1963 about the difficulty of separating Benson's partisan statements from his church position. Rex E. Lee observed, "It is regrettable, however, that Brother Benson has detracted from his effectiveness as a Church leader through his active support of the John Birch Society." This future president of Brigham Young University continued, "I have found myself periodically called upon to remind my friends, usually without success, that when Elder Benson acts to promote the ends of extremist organizations and leaders he is not declaring Church doctrine." The following month a BYU professor of English wrote: "Even my conservative friends on the faculty are disturbed by Elder Benson's Birch activities . . ."[85]

With all the national publicity, the conflict intensified at BYU. In October the Missionary Training Institute president (a son-in-law of Apostle Harold B. Lee) expressed concern about covert efforts to convert LDS missionaries to the Birch Society. He indicated that "he will resist efforts on the part of some of the young zealots among the missionaries to indoctrinate their colleagues in political extremism."[86] A month later a BYU student criticized the Birch Society while he was getting a haircut and was verbally attacked by Birchers who happened to be in the barber shop. Afterwards, they reportedly harassed him with phone calls in the middle of the night and vandalism of his apartment.[87]

Elder Benson next used the October 1963 general conference to defy his Mormon critics. Immediately after Brown was sustained as first counselor, Benson's conference sermon relayed a covert subtext to both supporters and detractors. On the surface, the talk referred to the excommunication of

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83. Eisenhower to Harding, 7 Oct. 1963, photocopy in folder 2, box 4, David S. King Papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library, and in folder 22, box 5, Buerger Papers. Eisenhower's letter was first quoted in "Ike, LDS Leaders Thank Harding For Anti-Birch, Benson Speech," *Idaho State Journal*, 20 Feb. 1964, 1; "Ike Praises Idaho Solon For Benson Criticism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-4.

84. "Birchers Reply to Harding On Benson's Coast Talk," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 Sept. 1963, A-3.

85. Lee to Ralph R. Harding, 30 Sept. 1963, and Ralph A. Britsch to Ralph R. Harding, 8 Oct. 1963, photocopies in folder 2, box 4, King Papers.

86. Reported in Richard D. Poll to Ralph Harding, 31 Oct. 1963, photocopy in my possession.

87. "Harassment Campaign Follows Political Argument," *Provo Daily Herald*, 24 Nov. 1963, 10. For the Bircher tactic of harassment phone calls, see Peterson, "Ideology of the John Birch Society," 115.

early church leaders and warned of the need to detect error today: "For even the Master followed the will of the Father by selecting Judas." In warning current Mormons not to be deceived, Benson quoted Brigham Young against deception by persons "speaking in the most winning tone, attended with the most graceful attitudes." Benson warned against those who "support in any way any organization, cause or measure which, in its remotest effect, would jeopardize free agency, whether it be in politics, government, religion, employment, education, or any other field." He then concluded with a long plea against the threats of socialism and Communism.[88]

BYU's Ernest Wilkinson felt that the "Judas" reference specifically referred to Benson's "running controversy with President Brown." Brown was known as one of the most eloquent speakers in the church and as a defender of liberalism and socialism. Brown also recognized Benson's subtext. "I don't think I'm going to be excommunicated," the new first counselor told Wilkinson right after the conference session ended. Wilkinson saw Benson's October 1963 talk as further evidence of the animosity between Brown and Benson. "The feeling is very intense between them," BYU's president recorded; Brown wrote of being "surrounded by enemies or opponents."[89]

Then Benson went on to urge his conference audience to "come to the aid" of anti-Communist "patriots, programs and organizations." Three weeks later the First Presidency announced they were assigning Benson to preside over the church's European mission in December. The media immediately described this as a "reprisal" or "exile" for Benson's virtual endorsement of the Birch Society at general conference.[90]

Mission-Exile

In fact, Hugh B. Brown gave the public good reason to regard the 1963 mission call as linked with Ezra Taft Benson's support for the Birch Society.

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88. Benson, "Be Not Deceived," *Improvement Era* 66 (Dec. 1963): 1063-65. Compare with the "Judas" reference to Brown by a BYU religion professor, cited above.

89. Wilkinson diary, 4 Oct. 1963; Brown to Gustive O. Larson, 2 Oct. 1963, copy in folder 15, box 11, Larson Papers, also copy in Campbell Papers. Aside from Benson, Brown resented the influence on President McKay by Clare Middlemiss and Thorpe B. Isaacson who shared much of Benson's philosophy.

90. "Elder Benson To Direct Europe Mission," *Deseret News*, 24 Oct. 1963, A-1; *Improvement Era* 66 (Dec. 1963): 1065; "Mormons To Send Benson Overseas," *New York Times*, 25 Oct. 1963, 18; "Apostle Benson Denies Being Sent Into 'Exile' for Political Views," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 29 Oct. 1963, A-7; "Mormon Church Sends Benson to Europe," *U.S. News and World Report* 55 (Nov. 1963): 12; "Mormon Church Is Gaining in Strength Despite Tensions," *New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1965, 18; Hansen, "Analysis of the 1964 Idaho Second Congressional District Election Campaign," 52; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 372.

The day after the announcement of Benson's mission assignment on 24 October, Brown warned a BYU audience against "extremists and self-styled patriots who label all those who disagree with them as Communists." Then in a more obvious allusion to Benson, he said that the First Presidency "deplore any attempt made by individuals to ascribe to the Church personal beliefs which they entertain." Newspapers observed that Brown's "remarks were taken as a rebuff to Mormon apostle Ezra Taft Benson who has repeatedly expressed his admiration for the John Birch Society and its founder, Robert Welch."[91]

Two days after Brown's published criticism, Benson publicly reasserted his support for the Birch Society. In an address to southern whites of the New Orleans Stake on 27 October, he condemned U.S. presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy for sending federal troops to aid school integration of African-Americans in the South. Then the apostle praised the Birch Society to the Louisiana conference.[92] A few days later, the Idaho representative who had repudiated Benson in Congress now gloated to the press: "The leadership of the Church was inspired in this calling. I think he'll make a wonderful mission president if he can get away from the Birch Society."[93] Privately Congressman Harding wrote that "prospects in the Church do look brighter with the assignment of Ezra Taft Benson to Europe."[94]

This 1963 foreign mission added to the controversy swirling around Benson. He told reporters that the assignment was not a "rebuke." President McKay eventually released an official denial that this mission was "because of Elder Benson's alleged activities with the John Birch Society."[95] However, leaders at church headquarters revealed that the intent of this mission was in fact to remove Benson from the American political scene.

McKay's son was the first to indicate Benson's mission was a censure. When his father privately told Benson of the mission assignment on 18 October Robert McKay wrote to Congressman Harding: "We shall all be relieved when Elder Benson ceases to resist counsel and returns to a concentration on those affairs befitting his office. It is my feeling that there will be an immediate and noticeable curtailment of his Birch Society activi-

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91. "Church Leader Rebuffs Self-Styled Patriots," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 26 Oct. 1963, 9; also "President Brown Supports U.N., Hits Extremists," *Deseret News*, 26 Oct. 1963, B-1.

92. "Stake Conference Assignments," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 19 Oct. 1963, 4; "Benson, Graham Rip Wheat Sale," *Deseret News*, 28 Oct. 1963, A-6; "Benson Says Black is Red," *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 29 Oct. 1963, 1.

93. "Harding Says Benson Move 'Wise,'" *Idaho Daily Statesman*, 1 Nov. 1963, 20.

94. Ralph Harding to Richard D. Poll, 6 Nov. 1963, photocopy in my possession.

95. "Benson Says: New Duties Not 'Rebuke,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Oct. 1963, A-4; "Church Denies Mission Rumors," *Deseret News*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-8; "Letter Denies Rebuke in Benson Call," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1964, C-11.

ties." Robert McKay was his father's secretary during trips to stakes and missions outside Utah, and would later read the ailing president's talks to general conferences.[96] "The letter in no way reflects my view that Elder Benson is not a good apostle of the church," Robert McKay explained after newspapers published his letter. His clarification added that "in my own opinion Elder Benson would be better able to serve the church when he is free of Birch Society ties."[97]

A week later, U.S. under-secretary of state W. Averill Harriman asked Hugh B. Brown how long Benson would be on this European mission. Brown reportedly replied: "If I had my way, he'd never come back!"[98] In introducing Harriman to BYU students, Brown also took a swipe at Reed Benson, who was employed by the Birch Society. The *Deseret News* published his comment: "A lot of this nonsense gets disseminated by the professional, self-styled anti-Communists who make a comfortable living scaring people all over the country and who have a financial stake in making the Communists look stronger than we."[99]

Joseph Fielding Smith then identified Benson's mission as intentional exile. The Quorum of Twelve's president wrote to Harding on 30 October: "I think it is time that Brother Benson forgot all about politics and settled down to his duties as a member of the Council of the Twelve." Smith concluded this letter, "He is going to take a mission to Europe in the near future and by the time he returns I hope he will get all of the political notions out of his system."[100]

The same day as Smith's letter, student conflict erupted at the Univer-

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96. Robert R. McKay to Ralph R. Harding, 18 Oct. 1963, photocopy in folder 2, box 4, King Papers, and in folder 22, box 5, Buerger Papers; quotes from letter first published in "Ike, LDS Leaders Thank Harding For Anti-Birch, Benson Speech," *Idaho State Journal*, 20 Feb. 1964, 1; "Ike Praises Idaho Solon For Benson Criticism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-4; also Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 12. Robert McKay's letter was printed in full in "Bill Hall's Political Scratchpad," *Idaho State Journal*, 23 Feb. 1964, 4. For 18 October as the date on which President McKay told Benson of his mission assignment, see Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 372. For Robert R. McKay, see Francis M. Gibbons, *David O. McKay: Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co. 1986), 333; *Improvement Era* 69 (Dec. 1966): 1131, 1152; *Improvement Era* 70 (June 1967): 22, 80, 109; *Improvement Era* 70 (Dec. 1967): 33, 87, 107; *Improvement Era* 71 (Dec. 1968): 34, 108; *Improvement Era* 72 (June 1969): 116; *Improvement Era* 72 (Dec. 1969): 24, 110.

97. "Ike, LDS Leaders Thank Harding For Anti-Birch, Benson Speech," *Idaho State Journal*, 20 Feb. 1964, 1.

98. Brown statement to Harriman and Richard D. Poll in Salt Lake City, 25 Oct. 1963, quoted in Poll's letter to D. Michael Quinn, 13 Aug. 1992. For the visit of Harriman, Brown, and Poll in Provo, see photograph in *Provo Daily Herald*, 27 Oct. 1963, 3.

99. "President Brown Supports U.N., Hits Extremists," *Deseret News*, 26 Oct. 1963, B-1.

100. Smith to Harding, 30 Oct. 1963, photocopy in folder 2, box 4, King Papers, and in folder 22, box 5, Buerger Papers.

sity of Utah over Benson's speech to the New Orleans Stake against federal integration of schools. One of Benson's defenders accused the university's newspaper of an "anti-rightist crusade." For almost a month the *Utah Chronicle*'s editorial page was dominated by the Benson controversy, until President John F. Kennedy's assassination in November finally superseded it.[101] On 22 November, Counselor Brown wrote that Reed Benson "is entirely out of order, does not represent the Church's position, although he claims to do so because his father has the position he has . . ."[102]

By the eve of Elder Benson's departure for Europe in December 1963, the controversy's bitterness was public property. Some rank-and-file Mormons threatened to picket Benson's farewell talk at the LDS tabernacle in Logan, Utah, because his remarks "will most likely be an attempt to again build up the John Birch Society."[103] When stake leaders "became skittish" about letting him use the tabernacle for this talk, Benson said he would "hold the meeting in a tent, if need be."[104]

As his critics anticipated, Benson's talk in Logan was an endorsement of the Birch Society. Early in his remarks, he referred to the "Communist attack on the John Birch Society."[105] A textual analysis also revealed that, without citing his source, 24 percent of Benson's talk quoted verbatim from the *Blue Book of the John Birch Society*, and another 10 percent paraphrased this publication.[106] Benson's talk also repeated such Birch Society themes as the American civil rights movement was "phony" and actually "part of the pattern for the Communist take over of America."[107] On the other hand,

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101. Clark King and Richard Littlefield in *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 30 Oct. 1963, 4, answered by Frank G. Adams and Gary Henrichsen (who used the phrase) in 4 Nov. 1963, 2, rebutted by King and Littlefield in 6 Nov. 1963, 4, who were in turn rebutted by Corydon Hammond in 8 Nov. 1963, 4, who was answered by King and Littlefield in 14 Nov. 1963,: 2. Editorially, the *Daily Utah Chronicle* published a cartoon (31 Oct. 1963, 4) which depicted Benson's mission assignment as a banishment by Uncle Sam, not the LDS church presidency, which Gary Henrichsen then criticized in his letter to the editor of 4 November. In response the editors published an even more insulting cartoon of Benson (21 Nov. 1963, 2).

102. Hugh B. Brown to Ernest Cook, 22 Nov. 1963, photocopy in my possession.

103. "Group Decides Against Picketing Benson Talk," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 3 Dec. 1963, A-7.

104. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 372-73.

105. Benson, "We Must Become Alerted and Informed: An Address by Ezra Taft Benson At A Public Patriotic Meeting," Logan, Utah, 13 Dec. 1963, 2, transcript, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

106. B. Delworth Gardner, N. Keith Roberts, E. Boyd Wennergren preface to an annotated typescript of Benson's "We Must Become Alerted and Informed," Utah State Historical Society. In the margins of this annotated typescript are the page numbers of the *Blue Book* from which Benson's talk quoted or paraphrased.

107. Benson, "We Must Become Alerted and Informed," 10; also, "Elder Benson Links

J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation had publicly stated: "Let me emphasize that the American civil rights movement is not, and has *never* been, dominated by the communists."[108]

Benson's statements against the civil rights movement worsened the LDS church's negative public image during the 1960s. Most Americans regarded Mormons as racists because of the church's policy of refusing to confer priesthood on anyone of black African ancestry.[109]

Benson's parting message at the Logan tabernacle in December 1963 also sounded inflammatory. The apostle predicted that within ten years the

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Reds to [Civil] Rights Furor," *Deseret News*, 14 Dec. 1963, B-5; "Communism Moving In on U.S., Benson Warns," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Dec. 1963, 28. Compare with Ross R. Barnett, governor of Mississippi, "The Rape Of Our Constitution and Civil Rights," in the Birch Society's *American Opinion* 6 (Sept. 1963): 20-23; John Rousselot, "Civil Rights: Communist Betrayal Of A Good Cause," *American Opinion* 7 (Feb. 1964): 1-11.

108. J. Edgar Hoover, remarks to the Pennsylvania Society in New York City, 12 Dec. 1964, in *J. Edgar Hoover on Communism* (New York: Random House, 1969), 130 (emphasis in original). He added, "*But there are notable exceptions*—dangerous opportunists and morally corrupt charlatans who would form an alliance with any organization, regardless of its nature, to advance their own power and prestige" (emphasis in original). Also see "Hoover Asks Vigil Over Extremists: Warns on 'Opportunists' in the Rights Movement," *New York Times*, 13 Dec. 1964, 79.

109. For publicity of this issue shortly before Benson's remarks, see "NAACP Calls S.L. Protest Over Rights," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 Oct. 1963, 32; "Give Full Civil Equality to All, LDS Counselor Brown Asks," and "Negro Group Lauds LDS Rights View," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Oct. 1963, 1, 6; Jeff Nye, "Memo from a Mormon: In Which a Troubled Young Man Raises the Question of His Church's Attitude Toward Negroes," *Look* 27 (22 Oct. 1963): 74-79. For studies of the historical background and 1960s controversy over the church's priesthood restriction, see Armand L. Mauss, "Mormonism and Secular Attitudes Toward Negroes," *Pacific Sociological Review* 9 (Fall 1966): 91-99; Dennis L. Lythgoe, "Negro Slavery in Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 39 (Winter 1971): 40-54; Brian Walton, "A University Dilemma: B.Y.U. and the Blacks," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 6 (Spring 1971): 31-36; Lester E. Bush, Jr., "Mormonism's Negro Doctrine: An Historical Overview," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8 (Spring 1973): 11-68; Ronald K. Esplin, "Brigham Young and Denial of the Priesthood to Blacks: An Alternative View," *Brigham Young University Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 394-402; William G. Hartley, "Saint Without Priesthood: The Collected Testimonies of Ex-Slave Samuel D. Chambers," and Newel G. Bringhurst, "Elijah Abel and the Changing Status of Blacks within Mormonism," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Summer 1979): 13-21, 22-36; Newell G. Bringhurst, *Saints, Slaves, and Blacks: The Changing Place of Black People Within Mormonism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981); Armand L. Mauss, "The Fading of the Pharoah's Curse: The Decline and Fall of the Priesthood Ban against Blacks in the Mormon Church," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 14 (Fall 1981): 10-45; Lester E. Bush, Jr., and Armand Mauss, eds., *Neither White Nor Black: Mormon Scholars Confront the Race Issue in a Universal Church* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1984); Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 297-303; Jessie L. Embry, "Separate but Equal? Black Branches, Genesis Groups, or Integrated Wards?" and Mark L. Grover, "The Mormon Priesthood Revelation and the Sao Paulo, Brazil Temple," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 23 (Spring 1990): 11-37, 39-53.

United States of America will be ruled by a Communist dictatorship which "will include military occupation, concentration camps, tortures, terror and all that is required to enable about 3% of the population to rule the other 97% as slaves." Benson promised such dire consequences "unless we join with those small but determined and knowledgeable patriots." He added: "Words will not stop the communists." Benson said that the U.S. government was becoming so Communistic that American citizens "can no longer resist the Communist conspiracy as free citizens, but can resist Communist tyranny only by themselves becoming conspirators against established government."[110]

Nationally-syndicated newspaper columnist Drew Pearson quoted that breath-taking phrase and interpreted it as Benson's invitation "for Americans to overthrow their government."[111] One newspaper editorial claimed that "Drew Pearson wronged the former agriculture secretary by misinterpreting what he said at Logan."[112] However, Pearson's quote was accurate and his interpretation fit the context of Benson's extraordinary missionary farewell talk which rallied Americans to battle Communism "even with our lives, if the time comes when we must... before the Godless Communist Conspiracy destroys our civilization."[113]

Utah's Democratic senator, a Mormon, described Benson's Logan address as "a disgraceful talk." Senator Frank E. Moss also complained to Counselor Brown that Benson had arranged for copies of the talk to be distributed from the apostle's office at church headquarters.[114] At the same time, other Mormons wrote the First Presidency with similar complaints that this "literature [is being] mailed from 47 East South Temple."[115]

As for the mission call itself, at a church farewell on 14 December Reed Benson complained that his father had been "'stabbed' in the back."[116] The Twelve's president was present to hear the younger Ben-

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110. Benson, "We Must Become Alerted and Informed," 8, 9, 10.

111. Drew Pearson, "Benson's Cure for Communism," *Washington Post*, 4 Jan. 1964, D-31, reprinted as "Ezra Taft Benson Hints: 'It Is Time To Revolt,'" in such newspapers as the *Times-Democrat*, 4 Jan. 1964.

112. "Setting The Record Straight," *Fullerton News Tribune*, 11 Jan. 1964, 24, quoted in Salt Lake City Citizens Information Committee, *Comments and Corrections*, No. 3 (15 Jan. 1968): 8. Fullerton is located in politically conservative Orange County, California.

113. Benson, "We Must Become Alerted and Informed," 10-11; also summarized in "Face Facts of Red Peril, Benson Asks," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 14 Dec. 1963, 6; "Benson Urges Vigorous Battle On Communism," *Logan Herald-Journal*, 15 Dec. 1963, 1, 3.

114. Frank E. Moss to Ray R. Murdock, 19 Feb. 1964, and Moss to Hugh B. Brown, 19 Feb. 1964, folder 3, box 122, Moss Papers.

115. "CROSS REFERENCE SHEET," Raoul P. Smith, Keith L. Seegmiller, and Ralph Harding letters, Feb. 1964, in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

116. Wilkinson diary, 14 Dec. 1963; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 372, gives a very different

son's remark that his father's mission call was a back-stab. Nine days later, Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: "I am glad to report to you that it will be some time before we hear anything from Brother Benson, who is now on his way to Great Britain where I suppose he will be, at least for the next two years. When he returns I hope his blood will be purified."[117] Two months later, in February 1964, newspapers printed Smith's caustic assessment, and the Quorum of Twelve's president made a public disclaimer which actually verified the political motivations for Benson's assignment to Europe: "I meant that when he returned he would be free of all political ties."[118]

Louis Midgley, a BYU political scientist, published an anti-Birch editorial in the school's *Daily Universe* in May 1964. He concluded: "It is little wonder that the First Presidency has taken steps to warn Church members not to try to align the Church or its leadership with the partisan views of the Welch-Birch or any similar monstrosity." This resulted in President McKay's instructions to stop future discussion of the Birch Society in the *Universe*.[119]

Mormon church leaders overestimated the foreign mission's moderating influence on Benson's political zeal. While on his European mission Benson authorized the Birch Society to publish a talk he had prepared as an endorsement of the society. In addition, he authorized the society to publish his photograph on the cover of its magazine in October 1964. This issue of the Birch organ also favorably reviewed Benson's just-published *Title of Liberty* and observed that he "is a scholar and a patriot, [but] he is primarily a man of God." Benson also authorized the Birch magazine to publish his "The Christ and the Constitution" in December.[120] At the same time, Reed Benson increased his role as his father's surrogate for the Birch Society and published full page ads in Idaho of Apostle Benson's endorse-

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view of the reaction of Benson and his family to this mission assignment.

117. Wilkinson diary, 14 Dec. 1963; Joseph Fielding Smith to Congressman Ralph Harding, 23 Dec. 1963, photocopy in folder 2, box 4, King Papers, and in folder 22, box 5, Buerger Papers. Apostle Smith's letter was first quoted in "Ike, LDS Leaders Thank Harding For Anti-Birch, Benson Speech," *Idaho State Journal*, 20 Feb. 1964, 1; "Ike Praises Idaho Solon For Benson Criticism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-4; also Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 12.

118. "Ike Praises Idaho Solon For Benson Criticism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-4.

119. "Birch Society Reviewed By Prof. Louis Midgley," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 22 May 1964, 2; David O. McKay to Earl C. Crockett, 4 June 1964, Wilkinson Papers, photocopy in my possession; Louis Midgley to Ray C. Hillam, 11 Aug. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, archives, Lee Library, and box 34, Buerger Papers; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 196-97.

120. Benson, *An Internal Threat Today* (Belmont, MA: American Opinion [1964]); the Birch Society's *American Opinion* 7 (Oct. 1964): cover page and 43-44, 97; Ezra Taft Benson, "The Christ and the Constitution," *American Opinion* 7 (Dec. 1964): 41-45.

ment of the Birch Society.[121]

Benson's other Bircher son also advanced his father's anti-Communist and pro-Birch crusade publicly during this mission-exile. In 1964, Mark A. Benson compiled a collection of his father's talks for a Deseret Book Company publication. Nearly every sermon referred to the threat of Communism, and the book also mentioned the Birch Society's president five times. By contrast, before their mutual involvement in the Birch Society, Reed Benson had compiled a book of his father's sermons which discussed Communism only three times.[122]

The November 1964 election in Idaho is one measure of the effect of the Benson controversy on the mass of faithful Mormons. U.S. representative Harding, who had condemned Benson in Congress, publicly praised his exile to Europe, and circulated the anti-Benson letters of church leaders, was defeated that fall for re-election. Harding and others saw his defeat as a result of Mormon voters' distaste for public criticism of LDS leaders and as evidence of Birch Society influence.[123]

To the contrary, an analysis of election returns from 1960 to 1964 shows that Harding overwhelmingly retained the support of Mormon voters. In fact, in Madison County with its 91.7 percent Mormon population, the number of votes for Harding actually increased from 1960 to 1964, despite his public criticism of Benson.[124] In other words, public criticism of Benson in the 1960s seems not to have alienated a large majority of faithful Mormon voters. They may have shared Harding's dismay at the apostle's endorsement of the Birch Society.

By January 1965 nationally prominent Mormon journalist Jack Anderson was reporting that the First Presidency was exasperated with Reed Benson's role as his father's surrogate for the Birch Society.[125] In response

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121. Jack Anderson, "Reed Benson Spreads Birch Gospel," *Washington Post*, 15 Jan. 1965, B-13.

122. Benson, *Title of Liberty*, comp. Mark A. Benson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), with references to Robert Welch on 1, 12, 36, 39, and 40. Compare to Benson, *So Shall Ye Reap*, comp. Reed A. Benson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1960), with references to Communism on 163, 208, and 328.

123. "Solon Embarrassed By Letter Publication," *Deseret News*, 21 Feb. 1964, A-8; "'Release Unauthorized,' Solon Says of Letters," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1964, C-11; "Idaho Writers Say Letters Were Widely Circulated," and "Bill Hall's Political Scratchpad," *Idaho State Journal*, 23 Feb. 1964, 1, 4; "How Could He Lose?" *Idaho Daily Statesman*, 5 Nov. 1964, 1-2; Harding to Frank H. Jonas, 8 Dec. 1964, Jonas Papers; Jack Anderson, "Birch Society Influence Defeated Ralph Harding," *Blackfoot News*, 15 Jan. 1965, 4, also printed as "Reed Benson Spreads Birch Gospel" in *Washington Post*, 15 Jan. 1965, B-13; Lynn Broadhead to Dean M. Hansen, 15 June 1967; Swanson, "McCarthyism in Utah," 143.

124. Hansen, "Analysis of the 1964 Idaho Second Congressional District Election Campaign," 53, 57, 183, 185-86, 206-10.

125. Anderson, "Reed Benson Spreads Birch Gospel."

to an inquiry by a Mormon Bircher about this allegation, Clare Middlemiss replied that "neither Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve nor his son, Reed Benson, have been rebuked by the church." Barely concealing her own pro-Birch sentiments, the church president's longtime personal secretary added: "Reed Benson, a member of the church in good standing, used his own intelligence and free agency in accepting his position with the John Birch Society." The Mormon Bircher almost immediately released this endorsement to the press.[126]

Although out-flanked by the church president's secretary in this instance, first counselor Brown resumed his philosophical battle with Benson a month later. "All of us are one hundred percent against Communism in all its phases," Brown wrote in February 1965, "but the leaders of the Church are not convinced that any conspiracy exists within our own country."[127]

In contrast, while visiting Utah in April 1965, Benson reemphasized to general conference that there was a national conspiracy focused in the civil rights movement. This was in obvious response to the call of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for a prayer march in Salt Lake City "to ask the LDS Church to use their influence for moral justice in regards to civil rights."[128] Benson told general conference:

> Before I left for Europe I warned how the communists were using the civil rights movement to promote revolution and eventual takeover of this country. When are we going to wake up? . . .
>
> Now, Brethren, the Lord never promised there would not be traitors in the Church. We have the ignorant, the sleepy and the deceived who provide temptations and avenues of apostacy for the unwary and the unfaithful.

Again, Benson continued to assert Communist domination of the civil rights movement, even though the FBI's director had publicly denied such domination just months before Benson's conference talk.[129] In addition, the

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125. Anderson, "Reed Benson Spreads Birch Gospel."

126. Clare Middlemiss to Kent Brennan (ca. 20 Jan. 1965), quoted in Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 14; also published in "No Church Rebuke Given to Bensons," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, and reprinted by the Salt Lake City Citizens Information Committee, *Comments and Corrections*, No. 3 (15 Jan. 1968): 8, which inaccurately dates the *Chronicle* article as 15 January 1965, three days *before* Brennan's original letter to McKay.

127. Brown to Mrs. W. E. Daddow, 23 Feb. 1965, LDS archives, photocopy in my possession.

128. "NAACP Calls March for LDS Appeal," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Mar. 1965, A-18; "Marchers Pray At LDS Doorstep," *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 8 Mar. 1965, 1.

129. J. Edgar Hoover, remarks to the Pennsylvania Society in New York City, 12 Dec.

last section of Benson's talk recalled his negative allusion to Hugh B. Brown at the October 1963 conference.

Newspapers also regarded Benson's April 1965 statement as a challenge to Brown's earlier endorsement of "full civil rights for any person, regardless of race, color or creed."[130] Asked about Benson's talk, Brown replied "tartly" to reporters that the apostle "speaks strictly for himself. My statement is the official Church position. It was personally approved by President McKay . . ."[131] The official publication of April 1965 conference talks deleted Benson's reference to LDS "traitors," as well as his assessment of the civil rights movement as Communist and revolutionary.[132]

While in Utah for general conference, Ezra Taft Benson also complained to BYU's president that "many of our political science and economics teachers are teaching false doctrine." This was a month after the Provo "section leader" of the John Birch Society began receiving reports from a Birch student majoring in economics about his "covert surveillance" of BYU's "liberal professors," including professor Richard D. Poll. BYU's Wilkinson concluded that Apostle Benson had received this information through his son Reed.[133]

However, Wilkinson was also receiving separate reports from this same BYU-Birch student about Poll.[134] Professor Poll had already publish-

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1964, in *J. Edgar Hoover on Communism*, 130; *New York Times*, 13 Dec. 1964, 79.

130. "Give Full Civil Equality to All, LDS Counselor Brown Asks," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Oct. 1963, 1; Hugh B. Brown, "The Fight Between Good and Evil," *Improvement Era* 66 (Dec. 1963): 1058; Sterling M. McMurrin, "A Note on the 1963 Civil Rights Statement," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 12 (Summer 1979): 60-63.

131. "Benson Ties Rights Issue to Reds in Mormon Rift," *Washington Post*, 13 Apr. 1965, A-5.

132. "President McKay Emphasizes Individual," with subheading for Elder Benson's talk: "Restored Gospel," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Apr. 1965, A-5; compare with *Improvement Era* 68 (June 1965): 539. However, in 1968 Deseret Book Company published (and reprinted in 1969) Benson's *Civil Rights: Tool of Communist Deception*, 3, which stated: "The so-called civil rights movement as it exists today is used as a Communist program for revolution." The addition of "used as" softened his original words.

133. Wilkinson diary, 7 Apr. 1965; Edwin B. Morrell (chair, Department of Political Science), John T. Bernhard (dean, College of Social Sciences), Ray C. Hillam (associate professor, political science), Larry T. Wimmer (assistant professor, economics), Louis C. Midgley (associate professor, political science), and Richard B. Wirthlin (associate professor, economics), "Events Related To the Covert Surveillance of Faculty Members, Subsequent Investigations of and Accusations Against Said Faculty, and Attempts to Resolve the Matter 'Within the Family,'" 1, folder 1, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers; John P. Sanders statement, 5 Aug. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers. See discussion of "espionage" at BYU for 1960 above, and below for 1966, 1969, and 1977.

134. David J. Whittaker and Chris McClellan, "The Collection: Description," 1, register of the Hillam Papers; Stephen Hays Russell to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 26 Apr. 1965, Wilkinson

ed a detailed critique of W. Cleon Skousen's anti-Communist book, *The Naked Communist*. Aside from skewering Skousen, Poll had also repudiated the American anti-Communist movement.[135]

Unknown to the public, Hugh B. Brown had encouraged Poll to prepare this published condemnation of Skousen's book "in the hope that we may stem this unfortunate tide of radicalism." This despite the fact that President McKay had already recommended *The Naked Communist* to a general conference: "I admonish everybody to read that excellent book of [Salt Lake City Police] Chief Skousen's."[136]

Poll had also joined with twenty-one other BYU professors in publicly condemning John A. Stormer's *None Dare Call It Treason* as "this piece of fanatacism." Poll was the one who publicly responded to complaints by BYU's ultraconservative students about this statement.[137] At the time Stormer's book was "in sales and in loans, the most popular book" within the Birch Society.[138] On 27 April 1965, Wilkinson wrote to Apostle Benson's

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diary also referred on 11 July 1965 to "papers" which were "proof of accusations against Richard Poll."

135. Richard D. Poll, *This Trumpet Gives An Uncertain Sound: A Review of W. Cleon Skousen's THE NAKED COMMUNIST* (Provo, UT: Author, 1962), 3, listed his objections to the book as "the inadequacy of its scholarship. The incorrectness of its analysis of Communism. The inaccuracy of its historical narrative. The unsoundness of its program for governmental action. The extreme partisanship of its program for individual action. The objectionable character of the national movement of which it is a part." On the ultra-conservative, anti-Communist movement, Poll wrote on pages 12-13: "Much of the market for *The Naked Communist* is in connection with "Anti-Communist Seminars," "Freedom Forums," and "Project Alerts," in which inaccurate history and negative programs are expounded in an evangelical blend of fear, hatred and pulse-pounding enthusiasm. Participants are admonished to study Communism, and they end up buying tracts by Gerald L. K. Smith and his racist cohorts, confessionals of ex-Communists, spy stories and other volumes which excite more than inform. They are aroused to *fight Communism*, and they end up demanding U.S. withdrawal from the UN and the firing of teachers who advocate federal aid to education. They are solicited to contribute to the Anti-Communist crusade, and they end up subsidizing pamphlets calling for the repeal of the income tax and the impeachment of Chief Justice Warren."

136. Brown to Richard D. Poll, 10 Jan. 1962, photocopy in my possession; Brown's role in this anti-Skousen publication also appears in Poll to George T. Boyd, 24 Oct. 1961, Poll to Hugh B. Brown, 18 Dec., 23 Dec. 1961, 6 Jan. 1962, photocopies in my possession; and Poll memorandum to Ernest L. Wilkinson, "Subject: Correspondence with President Brown on the Anti-Communist Problem," 23 Dec. 1961, Wilkinson Papers, photocopy in my possession; David O. McKay, "Preach the Word," *Improvement Era* 62 (Dec. 1959): 912.

137. "Faculty Members Deplore 'Fanaticism' of Booklet," *Provo Daily Herald*, 23 July 1964, 14; "None Dare Call It Treason Causes Sincere Concern," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 23 July 1964, 2; "Students Take Issue With 'None Dare Call It Treason' Critics," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 28 July 1964, 2; "Poll Answers Student Letters," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 30 July 1964, 2.

138. "Birchers Extend Membership Drive to East Coast," *New York Times*, 25 Oct. 1964,

son Mark for "any specific information that will be helpful to me respecting Richard Poll and his associates . . ."[139] This demonstrates Wilkinson's belief that Mark A. Benson (also a Bircher) was involved with his brother Reed in BYU campus espionage which their father had proposed five years earlier.

Benson's April 1965 conference talk created another outburst among students at the University of Utah. One LDS student wrote a letter to the *Utah Chronicle* that Benson "told a damned lie" when he instructed LDS general conference that Communists controlled the NAACP. This caused a predictable backlash of editorial letters by students loyal to the Birch Society or to Benson.[140]

A few weeks after April 1965 general conference Reed Benson publicly endorsed Robert Welch's accusation that U.S. president Eisenhower had been a Communist agent.[141] Then the loyal son probably consulted Apostle Benson in advance about his apparent plan to use the Birch Society to disrupt the next general conference with rumors of a violent demonstration by African-Americans. Ezra Taft Benson's official biography is silent about Benson's and his son's devotion to the Birch Society but observes that in 1965-66 Reed Benson "continued to be involved in the fight for freedom

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139. Ernest L. Wilkinson to Mark Benson, 27 Apr. 1965, Wilkinson Papers, photocopy in my possession; also Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 203, for other quotes from the letter.

140. Leon Johnson, "Benson Told A 'Damned Lie,'" *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 12 Apr. 1965, 2, which he admitted was "too intemperate," in 16 Apr. 1965, 2, but then reaffirmed by asking, "did Elder Benson violate the Ninth Commandment when he said the civil-rights movement is being used by the Communists?" The *Chronicle* did not print a response to Johnson's letters but did publish in 14 Apr. 1965, 2, two long letters by Larry Langlois and Norman P. Jessee in defense of Benson's recent speech. For Benson's remarks which sparked this controversy, see "President McKay Emphasizes Individual," with subheading for Elder Benson's talk: "Restored Gospel," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Apr. 1965, A-5, and discussion below.

Among general histories of the NAACP available to Benson at this time was Langston Hughes, *Fight for Freedom: The Story of the NAACP* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1962). Benson maintained this view despite the previously published findings of Wilson Record, *Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1964), 170, that the Communist party "continued its ambivalent attitude toward the NAACP, sometimes eagerly seeking support, at other times bitterly attacking the Association and its leaders. The NAACP increasingly has regarded the party not as a challenger but as an irritant and a source of embarrassment. Particularly has this been the case since 1955." See discussion below for Benson's continued assertion of Communist domination of the American civil rights movement, despite public statements to the contrary by the director of the FBI.

141. "Reed Benson Says Welch Was Correct in Calling Eisenhower Communist," *Provo Daily Herald*, 22 Apr. 1965, 2.

which his father supported . . ."[142]

Race-war Rumors during October 1965 General Conference

Three factors led to Reed Benson's apparent plan to disrupt the October 1965 general conference of the LDS church. First, he wanted to demonstrate the truth of his father's censored statement about the civil rights movement. Second, the annual convention of the NAACP in July 1965 passed a unanimous resolution asking all Third World nations "to refuse to grant visas to missionaries and representatives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . . until such time as the doctrine of non-white inferiority is changed and rescinded by that church and a positive policy of support for civil rights is taken."[143] To father and son this proved the civil rights movement was evil because it was anti-Mormon. However, in May the Salt Lake City chapter of the NAACP had called for the national resolution in apparent response to Apostle Benson's statement a month earlier that the civil rights movement was Communist and revolutionary.[144] As the final catalyst for Reed Benson's plan, the Watts riot of African-Americans erupted in Los Angeles in mid-August 1965.[145]

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142. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 391.

143. "Critical of Church: NAACP Studies Action," *Deseret News*, 2 July 1965, A-6.

144. "Benson Ties Rights Issue to Reds in Mormon Rift," *Washington Post*, 13 Apr. 1965, A-5; *Seattle Times*, 5 May 1965, 13; "NAACP Asks Foreign Bar of Missionaries," *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 6 May 1965, 1, 3, 4; Journal History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 May 1965, 6, Microforms, Marriott Library. I could not find any reference to this in *Deseret News* or *Salt Lake Tribune* for May.

145. For discussion (some of it hysteric) of the African-American riot at Watts in 1965 from various perspectives, see California Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, *Violence in the City: An End or A Beginning? A Report* (Los Angeles: Governor's Commission, 1965); Jerry Cohen, *Burn, Baby, Burn! The Los Angeles Race Riot, August, 1965* (New York: Dutton, 1966); David O. Sears, *The Los Angeles Riot Study: The Politics of Discontent: Blocked Mechanisms of Grievance Redress and the Psychology of the New Urban Black Man* (Los Angeles: University of California at Los Angeles, 1967); Robert E. Conot, *Rivers of Blood, Years of Darkness: The Unforgettable Classic Account of the Watts Riot* (New York: Morrow, 1968); U.S. Congress, *Subversive Influences in Riots, Looting, and Burning: Hearings Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Ninetieth Congress, First (Second) Session*, 7 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968-69), vols. 1 and 3 on the Watts riot; United States, Kerner Commission, *Report* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968); Lillian R. Boehme, *Carte Blanche For Chaos* (New Rochelle, New York: Arlington House, 1970); Ralph W. Conant, *The Prospects for Revolution: A Study of Riots, Civil Disobedience, and Insurrection in Contemporary America* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1971); David O. Sears, *The Politics of Violence: The New Urban Blacks and the Watts Riot* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); James W. Button, *Black Violence: Political Impact of the 1960s Riots* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978).

Reed Benson escalated both the Birch conflict and racial tensions in Mormonism with a memorandum to all Birch Society chapters in Utah on 2 September 1965:

> It is common knowledge that the Civil Rights Movement is Communist controlled, influenced and dominated. . . . Our founder and guide, Mr. Robert Welch, has instructed us that when necessary we must adopt the communist technique in our ever present battle against Godless Communism. It is urged that in the coming weeks the Utah Chapters begin a whispering campaign and foster rumors that the Civil Rights groups are going to organize demonstrations in Salt Lake City in connection with the forthcoming LDS conference. . . . A few well placed comments will soon mushroom out of control and before the conference begins there will be such a feeling of unrest and distrust that the populace will hardly know who to believe. The news media will play it to the very hilt. No matter what the Civil Rights leaders may try to say to deny it the seed will have been sown and again the Civil Rights movement will suffer a telling blow.[146]

President McKay's nephew, Quinn McKay, recognized the letter's signature and regarded it as genuine. During a four-month period, he attempted several times to get a statement from Reed Benson denying that he was the author of this September 1965 letter: "Two-and-a-half weeks ago I wrote a third letter, stating that if I heard nothing from him I could only arrive at one conclusion. I have heard nothing."[147]

Reed Benson's instructions to the "Utah Chapters" of the Birch Society were only one part of the society's effort in August-September 1965 to use the Watts riot as a way to undermine the American civil rights movement. On 17 August the society's "Major Coordinators" sent instructions to all the Birch officers in California to take "immediate action" to "expose the so-called Civil Rights Movement." On 1 September 1965, the day before Reed Benson's letter, a follow-up letter instructed Birch Society leaders in Los Angeles County to "take advantage of the current situation" as a means of repudiating civil rights activism.[148]

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146. Reed A. Benson, "Memo to the Utah Chapters," 2 Sept. 1965, on letterhead of the John Birch Society, photocopy in Williams Papers; Quinn G. McKay to J. D. Williams, 20 May 1966, Williams Papers.

147. Quinn G. McKay statement, 25 Apr. 1966, in J. Kenneth Davies, *Political Extremism Under the Spotlight* (Provo, UT: Young Democrats and Young Republicans of Brigham Young University, 1966), 21. McKay did not name Reed Benson specifically in his talk but described the rumors of September 1965 and paraphrased the letter that "all who belong to this group do all they can to foster a whispering campaign that there would be a racial demonstration at General Conference." McKay named Reed Benson specifically in his letter to J. D. Williams, 20 May 1966, Williams Papers.

148. D. Richard Pine and Charles R. Armour to "All Coordinators, Section Leaders and

Reed Benson's instructions were also consistent with the cover story of *The John Birch Society Bulletin* for September 1965: "Fully expose the 'civil rights' fraud and you will break the back of the Communist Conspiracy!" Robert Welch concluded the article: "And we repeat once more: It is on the 'civil rights' sector of their total [Communist] front that we now have the best chance there has been since 1952 of setting them back with some really effective blows. Let's put our best into the job."[149]

The strategy of Reed Benson and the Birch Society succeeded in creating near-hysteria in Utah during September 1965. One study observes that "hysterical rumors swept the Utah community, concerning the imminence of demonstrations and riots" at the upcoming LDS general conference.[150] The biography of Harold B. Lee, then an apostle, notes that "there were rumors of blacks invading Salt Lake City to take vengeance upon the Saints and the Church."[151] The Salt Lake police got caught up in the rumors and telephoned Hugh B. Brown that "four carloads of negroes armed with machine guns and bombs were reported coming to Salt Lake City for the purpose of inciting a riot and particularly to destroy properties on the [Salt Lake] temple block."[152]

Soon rumors of September 1965 claimed that African-American terrorists had targeted all of Salt Lake City. Reflecting Reed Benson's instructions to Utah members of the Birch Society, one rumor claimed that "2,000 professional demonstrators and Black Muslims will be imported to this area under NAACP sponsorship." Other widely circulated stories were that "all plane flights from Los Angeles to Salt Lake are chartered by 'Watts Negroes,'" and that "3500 'transient Negroes' have already arrived in Salt Lake." As a result, the Utah National Guard began "riot control" maneuvers.[153]

Chapter Leaders in California," 17 Aug. 1965, and D. Richard Pine to "Coordinators, Section Leaders and Chapter Leaders—L.A. County," 1 Sept. 1965, in Harvey B. Schechter, *How To Listen to a John Birch Society Speaker*, 3d. ed. rev. (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1967), 25-26; Benjamin R. Epstein and Arnold Forster, *The Radical Right: Report on the John Birch Society and Its Allies* (New York: Random House, 1967), 12; Lipset and Raab, *Politics of Unreason*, 268. For the position of Major Coordinator, see Welch, *The Blue Book of the John Birch Society*, 152.

149. *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Sept. 1965): cover and 23. The October *Bulletin* (dated 30 Sept. 1965): 2, concluded its reminder about the Birch battle with the African-American civil rights movement: "And in setting out seriously on this gigantic endeavor, we have really stirred up the animals."

150. David Leslie Brewer, "Utah Elites and Utah Racial Norms," Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1966, 143.

151. L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet & Seer* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 378.

152. Campbell, "Responsibility Without Authority—The 1st Counselor Years," 8.

153. "NAACP Says 'Too Fantastic' Rumors of Demonstrations," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 27 Sept. 1965, 20; "Race Riots in Utah?" *Daily Utah Chronicle*, 28 Sept.

The NAACP issued an official statement which tried to instill calm in Utah but also accurately identified Birchers as responsible for the September 1965 race-war hysteria in Utah. "The NAACP deplores the malicious and totally irresponsible rumors circulating in many sections of the state to the effect that Negroes are planning a riot at the LDS conference," the statement began. Then the statement continued that the NAACP had "reason to believe the rumors started with certain right-wing societies that make a practice of scaring people."[154] The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith specifically condemned the Birch Society's "despicable actions" in seeking to inflame anti-black fears "while southeast Los Angeles was aflame in mid-August, 1965."[155]

Although there were no race riots or demonstrations at October 1965 general conference, the Birch Society's role in fomenting this race-paranoia turned some Mormons implacably against the organization. At the time, the Birch Society's official magazine made no comment about the effort to disrupt LDS conference. However, after giving its perspective on the Watts riot by Reed Benson, the Birch Society's October magazine referred to all black immigrants to the United States today as "Savages" in a separate article on current immigration.[156] *The John Birch Society Bulletin* for October 1965 also referred to civil rights activists and Martin Luther King as "the animals."[157] Later that month Utah's Republican U.S. senator, Wallace F. Bennett, publicly repudiated the Birch Society.[158] This was a significant change from Bennett's more sympathetic position two years earlier, when the conservative senator inserted into the *Congressional Record* the previously cited letter from President McKay's secretary: "The church is not

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1965, 5.

154. The first part of my quote is from the version of the statement in "NAACP Chapter Claims Riot Report 'Malicious,'" *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 28 Sept. 1965, A-6; the second part is from the version in "Rumors of Riot Hit By Area NAACP," *Deseret News*, 28 Sept. 1965, B-1; "NAACP Assails Rumors of Protest at LDS Meet," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Sept. 1965, 18.

155. Schechter, *How To Listen to a John Birch Society Speaker*, 24; also Barbara Hogan, *The Shake-Up America Campaign: Who's Who and What's What in the Massive John Birch Society Propaganda Effort to Fan the Flames of Racial Tension* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for American Democracy [1967]). The bias of these publications is as strident as that of Birch Society publications. Their value lies in the quotes from Birch writings to demonstrate the society's approach toward the American civil rights movement.

156. Reed Benson and Robert W. Lee, "The Federalist" (concerning Watts), and Robert H. Montgomery, "From the North," (concerning immigration), in the John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 8 (Oct. 1965): 65-66, 69-70; also Gary Allen and Bill Richardson, "Los Angeles: Hell In The City of The Angels," *American Opinion* 8 (Sept. 1965): 1-14.

157. *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Oct. 1965): 2.

158. "Birchers As Group, Unwelcome," *Deseret News*, 27 Oct. 1965, F-1; "Bennett Joins in Rebuke of John Birch Society," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Oct. 1965, A-4.

opposing the John Birch Society . . ."[159]

Return from Exile and Renewal of Birch Activism

Nevertheless, early in December 1965 McKay's secretary, Clare Middlemiss, endorsed Ezra Taft Benson's continued anti-Communist crusade. She wrote a church member: "President McKay has further instructed me to tell you that Elder Ezra Taft Benson has not been rebuked by the Church . . . and, since Communism is a definite threat to the eternal principle of free agency, it cannot be considered that he is 'out of line' when discussing it in talks."[160] That was all Benson needed to justify his renewal of strident, anti-Communist activism. According to a pro-Birch interpreter of the Benson controversy, "Ezra Taft Benson returned to Salt Lake and continued his conservative patriotic speeches and his close association with the John Birch Society."[161]

By the end of December 1965 other general authorities vetoed an effort by one of Benson's intermediaries to have the Birch Society's president speak at Brigham Young University. Those voting against the proposal were Apostles Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, Delbert L. Stapley, Marion G. Romney, and LeGrand Richards. That unanimous vote reflected First Presidency counselor N. Eldon Tanner's statement to a political science professor: "We certainly don't want the Birch Society to get a hold on the BYU campus."[162] Tanner had served as a counselor for the past two years since Henry D. Moyle's death.

In January 1966 Benson endorsed the Birch Society and its program at stake conferences and at the LDS institute in Logan, Utah.[163] This disturbed

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159. *Congressional Record—Senate* 109 (6 Aug. 1963): 14172; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 10-11.

160. Middlemiss to Russell F. Dickey, 8 Dec. 1965, photocopy in Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," appendix.

161. Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 15.

162. Board of Trustees, Executive Committee minutes, 16 Dec. 1965, archives, Brigham Young University, photocopy in my possession; Wilkinson diary, 21 Dec. 1965; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 197; N. Eldon Tanner statement in the mid-1960s to J. Kenneth Davies as reported in Davies interview by Gary James Bergera, 24 Dec. 1984, photocopy in my possession; also identical quote in Davies telephone conversation with me, 6 Jan. 1993. However, Apostle Delbert L. Stapley's vote against the Birch Society president as a BYU speaker should not be construed as evidence of his disagreement with Benson's political views. For example, Stapley wrote a woman that "we are drifting towards the socialized state," and sent her copies of Benson's conference talks on Communism (Stapley to Mrs. W. E. Daddow, 19 Feb. 1965, LDS archives, photocopy in my possession).

163. "LDS Apostle Backs Up Birch Group," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Jan. 1966, B-14; "Speak Up! Says Ezra to Save Your Soul and Maybe Your Country," *Fact Finder* 24 (28 Feb. 1966);

Utah's Republican senator, a devoted Mormon. Senator Wallace Bennett urged David O. McKay's son to persuade the church president to disassociate himself from Benson's "very clever statement about your father which would seem to give your father's endorsement" to the Birch Society.[164] At the end of the month the Birch Society released its *Bulletin* which announced that Benson would speak at a testimonial for Robert Welch in Seattle on 19 February "with the full approval of President McKay of the Mormon Church."[165]

A week before attending that Birch meeting Benson spoke about the Birch Society to a standing-room-only crowd at the Assembly Hall on Salt Lake Temple Square. He charged that "a minority bloc of American liberals [had] formed a propaganda coalition with the Communists . . . [and] drew the line of fire away from the Communist Conspiracy and to focus the heat of attack on the patriots." Benson added that this conspiracy of liberals and Communists "decided to level practically their entire arsenal on The John Birch Society."[166]

These remarks had already been published by the Birch Society's national headquarters two years before Benson delivered them on Temple Square. They were a verbatim restatement of a speech Benson had prepared for an Idaho "Freedom Forum" as he was about to depart for his European Mission presidency in December 1963.[167] By repeating these words about the Birch Society in his February 1966 talk on Temple Square, Benson indicated that his mission exile had not taken "all of the political notions out of his system," as the Quorum of Twelve's president had hoped.[168]

Benson then told this February 1966 meeting on Temple Square that he had read the Birch Society's *Blue Book*, Robert Welch's *The Politician*, and

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Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 6.

164. Wallace F. Bennett to David Lawrence McKay, 21 Jan. 1966, folder 3, box 24, Bennett Papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library; also Wallace F. Bennett, *Why I Am A Mormon*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964).

165. *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Feb. 1966): 30.

166. Ezra Taft Benson, "Stand Up For Freedom," address to the Utah Forum for the American Idea, Assembly Hall, Temple Square, Salt Lake City, 11 Feb. 1966, typescript, 9, 11, Vertical File, Special Collections, Marriott Library; "Benson Hits Liberals' 'Conspiracy': Assails Plots, Propaganda," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 12 Feb. 1966, 17.

167. Compare with the Birch Society's publication of Ezra Taft Benson, *An Internal Threat Today* (Belmont, MA: American Opinion, [1964]); also Benson, "An Internal Threat Today" (paid advertisement by Concerned Citizens and Treasure Valley Freedom Forum), *Idaho Statesman*, 19 Jan. 1964, B-7, and typescript of the address prepared for the Treasure Valley Freedom Forum, Boise, Idaho, 19 Dec. 1963, transcript, 6-7, 10, folder 1, box 122, Moss Papers.

168. Joseph Fielding Smith to Ralph Harding, 30 Oct. 1963.

recommended that the audience subscribe to the Birch Society's official magazine *American Opinion*. His talk even included the mailing address. Of his support for the Birch Society, the *Deseret News* added Benson's comment to the Mormons on Temple Square: "It has been very unpopular to defend this group," he said. "But I can remember when it was unpopular to defend my own church."[169]

Such equations of the Birch Society with the LDS church were part of what antagonized general authorities like Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and Mark E. Petersen against Benson. On 18 February, a week after Benson's Assembly Hall talk, the First Presidency decided that a picture "of Pres. McKay not to appear on cover of American Opinion Magazine."[170] Prior to his talk, Benson had obtained McKay's permission for the church president's photograph to appear on the cover of the April issue of this official magazine of the Birch Society. The First Presidency thought their mid-February decision would end the matter. It did not. (See below.)

During a visit at church headquarters the last week of February, Senator Moss found "a number of the Brethren boiling pretty good" about Benson's recent talk. These general authorities "decided that Brother Benson's Assembly Hall speech should not be printed in the Church News. This was the decision until it was found that President McKay had already approved its printing and his office had directed the Deseret News to print it."[171]

However, Benson's opponents in the hierarchy did manage to delete "without permission" the Birch Society references from the version of Benson's talk published in the *Church News* on 26 February.[172] Nevertheless, Hugh B. Brown and his allies were unable to prevent the television broadcast of Benson's Assembly Hall speech. This broadcast converted some Mormon viewers to assert: "No longer do we question the motives of

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169. Benson, "Stand Up For Freedom," 13-14; "Benson Hits Liberals' 'Conspiracy': Assails Plots, Propaganda"; "Socialism Warning Sounded: Elder Benson Hits Liberals," *Deseret News*, 12 Feb. 1966, B-1; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 385.

170. "Copy of First Presidency minutes digest 2-18-66," in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

171. Reported by U.S. senator Frank E. Moss to U.S. representative Ken W. Dyal, 2 Mar. 1966, folder 5, box 184, Moss Papers. Moss wrote that this assessment was based on conversations a week earlier with "the Brethren." However, his Daily Activity Log refers to meeting with only one current general authority—Hugh B. Brown on 22 February (box 713, Moss Papers).

172. "Stand Up For Freedom: Partial Text Of Talk Given to S.L. Group By Elder Benson," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 26 Feb. 1966, 10-12; Duane Price to D. Michael Quinn, 9 Aug. 1992, summarizing his meeting with Benson in April 1966. Price was a supporter of Benson's position on the Birch Society. Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 35n29, alluded to the censorship of the talk in the *Church News*.

the John Birch Society."[173]

To provide a context for the hierarchy's negative reactions to Benson's 1966 activities, the evaluation of two of his Mormon supporters may be helpful. BYU president Ernest Wilkinson had already attended three days of private indoctrination by the president of the Birch Society, and had resolved "to press forward for more training along this line at the BYU." Fellow conservative W. Cleon Skousen had already published a defense of the Birch Society and was an official speaker for the Birch Society in 1966, even though he was not formally a member of the organization.[174]

In April 1966, Wilkinson and Skousen conversed about the Birch Society: "We would probably agree with 90% of their principles but we both believe that Ezra Taft Benson has made some tactical or procedural errors in trying to vouch President McKay in on everything he has done . . ."[175] Even his biographer refers to Benson's "single-minded concerns and convictions."[176] These reservations by Benson's ardent Mormon supporters give better perspective for the position of those general authorities who did not share his views about the Birch Society.

The "Crisis" of April 1966 General Conference

The BYU president's reference to Elder Benson's "tactical errors" involved the apostle's coordinated effort to align the LDS church with the Birch Society during the April 1966 general conference. Early in the year, Benson had secured President McKay's permission for Benson to introduce the Birch Society president as keynote speaker in the church's Hotel Utah during general conference. This resulted in developments which shocked members of the First Presidency.

First, on 2 March they learned that the Birch Society's March *Bulletin*

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173. Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Luke, "Motives Unquestioned," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 Apr. 1966, A-16.

174. Wilkinson diary, 19-22 Aug. 1965; W. Cleon Skousen, *The Communist Attack on the John Birch Society* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Publishing Co., 1963), and list of speakers of the "American Opinion Speakers Bureau" in the Birch Society's *American Opinion* 9 (May 1966): 109. Skousen stated: "I am not a member of the John Birch Society and never have been," in *Behind the Scenes: A Personal Report to Pledged Freemen from W. Cleon Skousen* (Salt Lake City: The Freemen Institute, 1980), 1, photocopy in folder 25, box 17, Buerger Papers. This full publication citation is necessary whenever this source is used, because his other *Behind the Scenes* were monthly periodicals. By 1962 Skousen was at the center of a controversy with fellow Mormons over anti-Communism. See Richard D. Poll, *This Trumpet Gives An Uncertain Sound*, and Skousen's *My Reply to Dr. Richard D. Poll and His Critique of The Naked Communist* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Publishing Co. [1962]).

175. Wilkinson diary, 13 Apr. 1966.

176. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 374.

encouraged Birch members to write "Personal and Confidential" letters to President McKay and to his two new counselors, Joseph Fielding Smith and Thorpe B. Isaacson.[177] The next day Apostle Benson notified the Twelve's president that President McKay had approved the apostle's acceptance of all invitations to speak at testimonials for the Birch Society's president, Robert Welch. "I feel no compunction to make the Church popular with liberals, socialists, or communists. I do feel responsible to tell the truth," Benson wrote. Of the fact that Mormons were joining the Birch Society and Birchers were becoming Mormons, he added: "and those who love the truth will embrace it without compromise and that is exactly what is happening."[178] On that same day, the entire First Presidency decided that "Elder Benson to be told not to mention Birch Society."[179]

Less than a week later, on 8 March, J. Reese Hunter, chair of the Welch dinner meeting, mailed a "Dear Brethren" letter to stake presidents and bishops inviting them to attend "with your counselors and wives." Hunter had also introduced Apostle Benson's February speech on Temple Square.[180] Then the First Presidency learned that despite its mid-February decision the Birch Society's magazine was going ahead with plans to publish President McKay's photograph. In March, the Birch magazine sent a letter to all Utah subscribers that its upcoming cover photograph of McKay was intended "to favorably impress your Mormon friends."[181] It is not clear whether the First Presidency had instructed Apostle Benson to inform the Birch Society of this February decision or had notified the society directly. Either way, their decision was being ignored.

In early March, anti-Birch Mormons were outraged to learn of these Birch preparations for general conference. In response, some even circulated a proposal which urged anti-Birch Mormons to petition the First Presidency and the Quorum of Twelve's president for the "removal of Benson from the Quorum of the Twelve." According to this "OPERATION CHECKMATE" handout, Benson's transgressions were "flagrant insubor-

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177. *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Mar. 1966): 22-24; "CROSS REFERENCE SHEET," 2 Mar. 1966, in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

178. Ezra Taft Benson to Joseph Fielding Smith, 3 Mar. 1966, MS 4940, LDS archives. This was Benson's defense against the criticisms expressed in a letter to all general authorities from Ken W. Dyal, LDS congressman from California.

179. "Copy of First Presidency minutes digest 3-3-66," in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

180. J. Reese Hunter to "Dear Brethren," 8 Mar. 1966, LDS archives, photocopy in Williams Papers; Utah Forum For the American Idea, "Program," 11 Feb. 1966, Williams Papers.

181. Philip K. Langan to "All Friends of *American Opinion* in Utah," Mar. 1966, quoted in Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 27-28.

dination," "pulpit misuse," and "demeaning the President of the Church by callously taking advantage of his advanced years."[182]

By 15 March 1966, the First Presidency defined the situation as "a crisis." Second counselor N. Eldon Tanner, the Twelve's president Joseph Fielding Smith, and Apostle Mark E. Petersen held an emergency meeting with David O. McKay at his home in Huntsville, Utah. Tanner read the Hunter letter and observed that "KSL, at the request of the John Birch Society, was rebroadcasting the address given recently by Brother Benson in the Assembly Hall, in which address he gave strong endorsement to the John Birch Society." The church president said that it was necessary to issue a statement disassociating the church from these activities. Then "President McKay suggested that Elder Benson might not be assigned to stake conferences if he referred to the John Birch Society. The President then said that Elder Benson should be instructed not to discuss the Birch Society in any meeting, and that he should not advocate this group."[183] First counselor Hugh B. Brown was not present at this meeting to express his views or direct its outcome.

Two days later the First Presidency published a denial of any sponsorship of the Welch dinner and emphatically stated that "the Church has no connection with the John Birch Society whatever."[184] McKay stopped publication of his photograph in the Birch magazine and withdrew his permission for Benson to introduce the president of the Birch Society at its meeting during April conference.[185] Undeterred, Benson had the Birch magazine

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182. "OPERATION CHECKMATE," original typed document, Williams Papers, also photocopy inscribed, "J D Williams, March 14, 1966," folder 2, box 124, Robert H. Hinckley Papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library. Although undated, this document was drafted after the J. Reese Hunter letter of 8 Mar. 1966 (which "OPERATION CHECKMATE" referred to) and before the First Presidency statement of 17 March, which was the kind of official statement recommended by "OPERATION CHECKMATE," 4.

183. Campbell and Poll, *Hugh B. Brown*, 259; minutes of meeting on 15 Mar. 1966 with David O. McKay, N. Eldon Tanner, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Mark E. Petersen in Huntsville, Utah.

184. "Church Tells Position On Dinner for Bircher," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 17 Mar. 1966, A-10; "Notice To Church Members," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 19 Mar. 1966, 2; "So Much For Mr. Welch," *Rocky Mountain Review*, 17 Mar. 1966, 4.

185. For other discussions of these events, see Wilkinson diary, 22 Mar. 1966; "Birch Dinner in Salt Lake City Vexes Mormons," *New York Times*, 8 Apr. 1966, 28; "Mormons and Politics: Benson's Influence Helps Keep Growing Church on Conservative Track," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 Aug. 1966, 1; J. D. Williams, "Separation of Church and State in Mormon Theory and Practice," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Summer 1966): 50; J. D. Williams, "Reply to Letter of Garn E. Lewis," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 1 (Winter 1966): 8; Epstein and Forster, *The Radical Right*, 200-201; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 15-16, 22-25, 27-29; Bethke, "BF [Before Falwell], EB [Ezra Benson]," 15-16; Gibbons, *David O. McKay*, 381-82, 383.

print a photograph of deceased first counselor J. Reuben Clark. The Birch organ stated that Clark was "one of the earliest and most outspoken 'alarmists' in America concerning the menace and the progress of the Communist Conspiracy."[186]

Benson attended the Birch Society dinner in April 1966 without speaking, although his name was on the program as a speaker. Others at the dinner gave him a standing ovation. The *Salt Lake Tribune*'s report included a photograph of Benson sitting next to the Birch president. BYU's president had declined the invitation to substitute for Apostle Benson in introducing Robert Welch. Even Benson's muted attendance at the Welch dinner infuriated anti-Birch Mormons, including the wife of Utah's incumbent Democratic governor.[187]

Robert Welch's talk praised Benson as "one of the really great men of our times." Also in describing the Birch Society's "recruiting efforts," Welch said that "we have no better members, or more permanently dedicated members of the Society, than those who owe their first loyalty to the Mormon Church."[188] Of this, newspapers reported that the Birch Society regarded Mormons as "a very good recruiting ground."[189]

To counter such a perception, McKay, at the emergency council meeting on 15 March, had authorized one of Benson's opponents in the Quorum of Twelve to publicly attack the Birch Society by name.[190] Mark E. Petersen (widely known as the unsigned editorial writer for the *Deseret News "Church News"*) had, in fact, criticized the Birch Society for years without actually naming it.

"From time to time organizations arise ostensibly to fight communism, the No. 1 opponent of the free world," Petersen had written in 1961, but concluded that "it is not good for citizens to align themselves with flag-waving groups which may bring them into difficulty." Three months later,

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186. John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 9 (Apr. 1966): cover page, and 112.

187. Wilkinson diary, 22 Mar. 1966; "Welch Raps 'Senseless' U.S. Policy," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Apr. 1966, B-1, with photo on B-2; "Birch Dinner in Salt Lake City Vexes Mormons," *New York Times*, 8 Apr. 1966, 28; Hugh W. Gillilan, "500 Misled Americans," and Mrs. Calvin L. Rampton, "JBS' Tasteless Violation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 Apr. 1966, A-16, with reply by J. Reese Hunter, "Answers Mrs. Rampton," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 13 Apr. 1966, 18; also Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 1, 16.

188. Robert Welch, "Dinner Meeting at Hotel Utah Introductory Remarks—April 7th, 1966 by Robert Welch," mimeograph, 1, Special Collections, Lee Library; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 25-26, 35n32, cites this as a publication of the American Opinion Bookstore in Salt Lake City.

189. "Birch Dinner in Salt Lake City Vexes Mormons," *New York Times*, 8 Apr. 1966, 28, published as "Welch Says Mormons Make Good Birchers," *Minneapolis Tribune*, 9 Apr. 1966.

190. Meeting minutes of 15 Mar. 1966.

he more directly alluded to the Birch Society:

> Some groups and persons have attacked certain Americans . . . by casting doubt on their loyalty . . . they have set themselves up as judges of who is loyal and who is "un-American." They [i.e., Robert Welch] have accused certain men [i.e., Dwight D. Eisenhower] of being "unconscious agents of communism" . . . they have attributed national blunders not to errors in judgment but to evil motives. . . . [B]y blaming our problems on certain scapegoats, they can keep us from manfully recognizing the real problems—internal as well as external . . ."[191]

Less known was the fact that Counselor Brown had collaborated with Apostle Petersen in the 1961 editorials of the *Deseret News* against the anti-Communist movement.[192]

Now in March 1966 Petersen's editorial proclaimed that the LDS church has "nothing to do with racists, nothing to do with Birchers, nothing to do with any slanted group." This 1966 editorial further warned Mormons to "avoid extremes and extremists."[193]

The response of Mormon members of the Birch Society was predictably negative to Petersen's 1966 editorial. A former LDS mission president and current "section leader" of the Birch Society hand-carried a letter to McKay that "many people are confused and shocked by the recent editorial in the Church News, entitled: 'Politics and Religion.'"[194] A Birch member in Ari-

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191. "Let Us Not Be Carried Away," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 29 July 1961, 16; "What Americanism Must Mean," *Deseret News*, 28 Oct. 1961, A-10; also "A Question For Americans," *Deseret News*, 30 Nov. 1961, A-18. Welch's views on Eisenhower circulated in manuscript until 1963 but were cited in the media as early as 1960. See textual reference to *The Politician* above. *Deseret News "Church News,"* 15 Jan. 1984, 3, said that Mark E. Petersen "had written the editorials since the beginning of the weekly publication in 1931." Peggy Petersen Barton's *Mark E. Petersen: A Biography* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 114, also noted her father's role in the church's editorials but made no comment about his editorial views on the Birch Society.

192. Richard D. Poll to Hugh B. Brown, 23 Dec. 1961, referred to their previous discussions of the "substantial involvement on your [Brown's] part in the *Deseret News* editorials and other aspects of this question."

193. "Politics and Religion," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 26 Mar. 1966, 16. Although opposed to the Birch Society, Apostle Petersen also warned Mormons against "creeping socialism and its companion, insidious, atheistic communism." See his "New Evidence For the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 65 (June 1962): 457.

194. Mark E. Anderson to David O. McKay, 5 Apr. 1966, MS 3744, LDS archives, photocopy in my possession; also Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 17. Mark Anderson did not mention the *Church News* editorial in his letter to the editor, *Deseret News*, 14 Apr. 1966, A-18, about church statements concerning the Birch Society. For Mark E. Anderson's role as a Birch Society "chapter leader," as a "section leader" over several chapters, and for his promotion to state coordinator four months after his letter to McKay,

zona wrote a letter to "all of the General Authorities," which said "Brother Petersen's article was a tragic and regrettable mistake," and added a few lines later that the "Communists and their dupes have directed their attacks and smear campaign against the John Birch Society . . ." Petersen's editorial was "a shocking smear I'm sure the Church doesn't condone," according to a "Letter to the Editor" which the *Deseret News* refused to print. This Mormon Bircher concluded: "Elder Petersen owes an apology to the readers of the Church News for the unwarrantable and unauthorized innuendos."[195]

Instead of an apology, Apostle Harold B. Lee continued the anti-Birch assault during the April 1966 general conference. Six years earlier, Lee had publicly endorsed Benson's campaign against "radical and seditious voices."[196] However, Benson's alignment with the Birch Society had turned Lee into one of the junior apostle's most determined critics in the Twelve. By 1963 Lee privately said Benson labelled as a Communist "anyone who didn't agree with Brother Benson's mind."[197]

In response to recent events, Lee's April 1966 conference talk was a thinly veiled assault against the Birch Society. Lee said, "We hear vicious attacks on public officials without the opportunity being given to them to make a defense or a rebuttal to the evil diatribes and character assassinations." He added "that the sowing of the seeds of hatred, suspicion, and contention in any organization is destructive of the purpose of life and unbecoming to the children of God."

Even more stunning to the Mormon audience aware of the controversy, Apostle Lee's general conference talk also publicly criticized Apostle Benson. Without naming his apostolic subordinate, Lee next told the April 1966 conference, "I would that all who are called to high places in the Church would determine, as did the Apostle to the Gentiles, to know and to preach

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see "Welch Raps 'Senseless' U.S. Policy," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Apr. 1966, B-1; Mark E. Anderson to Robert Welch, 5 June 1966, with copies to Ezra Taft Benson, Reed Benson, John Rousselot, and Frank Marisch, photocopy in Williams Papers; "Birch Society 'Signs Up' LDS Leader," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Aug. 1966, B-3; "Who Is Mark E. Anderson?" *Utah Independent*, 2 June 1972, 8. For description of the Birch Society's organizational structure, see Welch, *The Blue Book of the John Birch Society*, 151-52; "The John Birch Society: A Report," *Advertising Supplement to Los Angeles Times*, 27 Sept. 1964, 7-8; Gerald Schomp, a former state coordinator, *Birchism Was My Business* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1970), 158.

195. Joe H. Ferguson to "All General Authorities," 16 Apr. 1966, 4, with postscript to "Mark" (Mark E. Anderson), photocopy in my possession; excerpts from Blaine Elswood to the editor of the *Deseret News*, 29 Mar. 1966, files of the *Deseret News* offices, cited in Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 4-6, and in Frank H. Jonas typed document, page 81, in the John Birch Society section of a longer manuscript for which the first portion is missing and its title presently unknown, Jonas Papers. Also "Letters to the Editor," *Deseret News*, 28 Mar. 1966, A-18, 13 Apr. 1966, A-8.

196. Lee, introduction to Benson, *So Shall Ye Reap*, vii.

197. Wilkinson diary, 13 May 1963.

nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Then Lee darkly added: "The absolute test of the divinity of the calling of any officer in the Church is this: Is he in harmony with the brethren of that body to which he belongs? When we are out of harmony, we should look to ourselves first to find the way to unity." Apostles Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and Mark E. Petersen had already indicated that Apostle Ezra Taft Benson was not in harmony with his quorum.

Apostle Lee concluded this April 1966 conference address with a devastating assessment of the unnamed Ezra Taft Benson. "A President of the Church has told us where we may expect to find false leaders: First, The hopelessly ignorant, whose lack of intelligence is due to their indolence and sloth," Lee noted. Then he continued, "Second—The proud and self-vaunting ones, who read by the lamp of their own conceit; who interpret by rules of their own contriving; who have become a law unto themselves, and so pose as the sole judges of their own doings."[198] This "insinuation" (so described by Lee's biographer) was a far more direct condemnation of Benson than Benson's "Judas" allusion to Hugh B. Brown at general conference less than three years before.[199] Brown had immediately recognized the personal reference in Benson's remarks, and no doubt Benson was equally astute as he listened to Lee's April 1966 talk.

Within days after this controversial April 1966 conference, the son of a previous First Presidency counselor publicly called Benson "the most divisive influence in the church today."[200] A few weeks later, the nationally distributed *Parade* Sunday supplement observed: "Ezra Taft Benson has consistently supported the John Birch Society's recruiting drives among Mormons." Without exaggeration, *Parade* also informed its millions of readers that Benson's political activism "has introduced as a result a divisive element in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."[201]

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198. *April 1966 Conference Report*, 64-65, 66, 67, 68. Byron Cannon Anderson's pro-Birch, 1966 study, "Church and Birch In Utah," did not list Lee as one of the general authorities opposed to the Birch Society (31), nor was there any mention of Lee's conference talk in Anderson's extensive discussion of the controversies involving the Birch Society during April 1966 conference (15-19, 22-29). The day after Lee's address, Benson's April 1966 conference talk was on Jesus Christ and lacked the political content of his previous conference sermons. But Benson returned to political themes in future general conference sermons. In *Cross Fire*, 586-87, Benson said there was no difference between his religious beliefs and political convictions.

199. My telephone conversation on 7 Nov. 1992 with L. Brent Goates. He described his father-in-law's April 1966 conference address as "an insinuation" concerning Benson but declined to comment further on the differences between the two apostles. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, makes no reference to the dispute.

200. H. Grant Ivins, "Most Divisive Influence," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Apr. 1966, 18. His father was Anthony W. Ivins, First Presidency counselor from 1921 to 1934.

201. Walter Scott, "Personality Parade," *Parade*, 15 May 1966, 2, supplement to such

The Mormon hierarchy's divisions over the Birch Society were even the subject of a remarkable panel discussion at Brigham Young University on 25 April. A "standing-room-only audience" listened as David O. McKay's nephew referred to the recent Welch banquet as a "gathering of the clan," and referred to the "Dear Brethren" letter promoting it as "a deceitful device." Alluding to the controversies of the previous month, Quinn McKay observed: "What do we do when General Authorities do not see eye to eye on political issues? Which do we follow? If each of the General Authorities were to speak on 'The Contributions of the John Birch Society' you would no doubt hear some rather contrasting views. Then which apostle would one quote?" McKay's nephew then referred to the Reed Benson letter which had ignited the race hysteria preceding the October 1965 conference.[202]

The role of Benson and the Birch Society in the tense atmosphere of the two previous general conferences led to a blistering condemnation by a nationally known Mormon in May 1966. Robert H. Hinckley, former assistant secretary of the U.S. commerce department, chair of the Civil Aeronautics Administration, and vice-president of the American Broadcasting Company, criticized the Birch Society in an address to students of the University of Utah. He lambasted the society's "collective slander, which now seems to have become standard operating procedure for some Birchites," and also "the semi-secret chapters that parallel Communist cells, the use of front groups, the tactics of infiltration, [and] the use of the big lie." Hinckley also identified Ezra Taft Benson as part of the "leadership of the Right Wing" in America. The full text of this assessment appeared in the *Congressional Record* in June 1966.[203]

Apostle Benson simply shrugged off such criticism from regular Mormons and even from his fellow apostles.[204] President McKay's address at

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newspapers as *The Oregonian*, copy in Special Collections, Lee Library. *Salt Lake Tribune* was the only Salt Lake City newspaper that carried *Parade*, but the microfilm copy of the *Tribune* does not include this Sunday supplement.

202. Quinn G. McKay, statements in Davies, *Political Extremism Under the Spotlight*, 12, 19, 20-21. The "standing-room-only" reference is from the description of the meeting on the inside front cover.

203. Robert H. Hinckley, "The Politics of Extremism," in *Congressional Record—Senate* 112 (13 July 1966): 15584, 15583; Hinckley, *The Politics of Extremism* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah, 1966); "Hinckley Blasts Extremists," *Provo Daily Herald*, 25 May 1966, 14; "Says Birchers Copy Reds," *Deseret News*, 25 May 1966, A-12. For Hinckley's background in Mormonism, civil government, and business, see Robert H. Hinckley and JoAnn Jacobsen Wells, *"I'd Rather Be Born Lucky Than Rich": The Autobiography of Robert H. Hinckley* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1977), 1, 15-22, 75, 78, 125, 139; Billy Wayne Winstead, "Robert Henry Hinckley: His Public Service Career," Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1980.

204. He did not ignore such criticism, however. Benson to Robert H. Hinckley, 27 May

conference left church members "free to participate in non-Church meetings which are held to warn people of the threat of Communism."[205] The Birch Society's *Bulletin* later published this statement.[206] In Benson's eyes, McKay's April 1966 conference statement was a personal vindication by the only church leader who mattered.

Although Benson waited six months to respond to his critics in the hierarchy, some Mormon Birchers felt that the negative publicity of April 1966 conference required a rapid response. Members of the society in Seattle released a statement which addressed such questions as "Is the Church opposed to the John Birch Society?," "Has Brother Benson been rebuked by the Church?," "Is Brother Benson out-of-line in discussing communism in Church talks?," and "Has Reed Benson been rebuked by the Church?" To each of these questions, Seattle Birchers responded in the negative.[207] Two months before April conference, Benson had spoken at a Welch testimonial there "with the full approval of President McKay of the Mormon Church."

On the other hand, some liberal Mormons saw Apostle Lee's April 1966 conference talk as a sign of an approaching termination of Benson's political activism. "When Pres. McKay dies Ezra Taft won't last a year," a bishop from Logan, Utah, said. "Pres. Smith or Elder Lee will not hesitate to put him in his place if he continues his political preaching." "If this happens," the bishop predicted, "it may turn out that Benson will refuse to give up his Americanism campaign and will be dropped or resign from the Quorum."[208]

The 1966 BYU "Spy Ring"

Two weeks after the "crisis" in Salt Lake City over the dinner for Robert Welch, a Birch crisis of a different kind was developing fifty miles south in Provo, Utah. On 19 April 1966, BYU's Ernest Wilkinson asked his admin-

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1966: "I cannot believe that a man with your background and experience would make the errors attributed to you in the attached item from the Deseret News of May 25th" (folder 2, box 124, Hinckley Papers).

205. *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Apr. 1966, 7; *Improvement Era* 69 (June 1966): 477 as "nonchurch."

206. *Bulletin of The John Birch Society* (Jan. 1967): 24-25.

207. "Authoritative Answers To Questions Concerning Anti-Communism," mimeographed statement [after April 1966 from its references to general conference talks], Americanism Discussion Group, 3624 56th Avenue, S.W. Seattle, Washington, 98116, copy in Special Collections, Lee Library. Jerreld L. Newquist lived in Seattle during this period and may have been the source of this mimeographed statement. See Newquist to Richard D. Poll, 7 Mar. 1967, photocopy in my possession.

208. Quoted in Buchanan diary, 7 Oct. 1966.

istrative assistant to organize a group of "conservative" students to "monitor" professors who were regarded as Communist sympathizers. Nearly all of these BYU professors had publicly condemned the John Birch Society. Among them was political scientist Louis Midgley whose anti-Birch article in the *Daily Universe* had resulted in a muzzling of the student newspaper two years earlier. Several of these targeted professors had also signed the public condemnation of the Birch best-seller *None Dare Call It Treason*. For a year Stephen Hays Russell, student-leader of this "spy ring," had already been reporting to the local Birch Society chapter and to Wilkinson about some of these professors.[209]

On 20 April Russell organized a dozen other Birch students in a room of BYU's Wilkinson Center. A non-student chapter leader of the Birch Society acted as guard for this organizing meeting of the BYU spy ring, the only time all would be together at once.[210] These student-spies included the president of BYU's Young Americans For Freedom, three other members of YAF, and also Cleon Skousen's nephew. Academically, their majors included economics, political science, history, Asian studies, math, and zoology. What linked all these student-spies was their participation in the Provo chapter of the John Birch Society.[211]

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209. Whittaker and McClellan, "The Collection: Description," 1-2, register of the Hillam Papers; Stephen Hays Russell to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 26 Apr. 1965; Richard D. Poll to Wilkinson, 24 June 1965, defending himself against the complaints by Russell and E. Eugene Bryce, Wilkinson Papers, photocopy in my possession; Morrell, Bernhard, Hillam, Wimmer, Midgley, and Wirthlin, "Events Related To the Covert Surveillance of Faculty Members," 1-2; "Birch Society Reviewed By Prof. Louis Midgley," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 22 May 1964, 2; "Faculty Members Deplore 'Fanaticism' of Booklet," *Provo Daily Herald*, 23 July 1964, 14; "None Dare Call It Treason Causes Sincere Concern," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 23 July 1964, 2; also Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 207-208.

210. Interview of Ronald Ira Hankin by Ray C. Hillam and Louis C. Midgley, 17 Sept. 1966, Provo, Utah, transcript, 4-5, signed at the bottom of each page by Ronald I. Hankin, folder 5, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers; "Birchers Spied On Professors, Hialeah Student Said," *Miami Herald*, 3 Mar. 1967, A-32; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 208.

211. Stephen Hays Russell acknowledged choosing ten students to assist in the "monitoring," yet his reservation for the room was for twenty persons and chairs. Fellow-spy Ronald Ira Hankin consistently claimed that Russell selected fifteen to twenty students to monitor the BYU professors. However, less than fifteen student-spies have been identified: Stephen Hays Russell was the group's leader; Michel L. Call was YAF president; Curt E. Conklin, Ronald Ira Hankin, and Lyle H. Burnett [not Barnett] were YAF members; and the other BYU student-spies in 1966 included Everett Eugene Bryce, Lloyd L. Miller, Mark Andrew Skousen, Lisle C. Updike, and James H. Widenmann [not Weidenman]. Although not in published lists of BYU students in 1966, the following were also listed by BYU professors as part of this spy-ring: Byron Cannon Anderson, Ted Jacobs, and James C. Vandygriff. Anderson was a student at BYU in 1964-65 and summer of 1965. See Russell, "Y Center Activity Schedule," 20 Apr. 1966; Russell statement, 13 Mar. 1967, p. 4; Hankin

One of these Birch student-spies had been involved in the 1965 monitoring of Professor Richard Poll and had publicly accused Poll at that time of having a Communist subversive speak to his classes. Another member of the 1966 group had complained to Wilkinson in 1965 about Poll's negative reviews of Skousen's *Naked Communist* and of *None Dare Call It Treason*. Still another had recently complained to President McKay that Poll was "the most vocal leader of this opposition" to "Bro. Skousen and Elder Benson."[212] In 1966, this "covert surveillance" included efforts by these BYU-Birch students in correspondence, classroom questioning, and private meetings to extract "pro-Communist" views from their professors. Some students used hidden tape-recorders to record these statements as "evidence."[213]

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interview, 4, 14; Ray C. Hillam to Clyde D. Sandgren, 22 July 1966, "Re: Reports by Vandygriff and Russell"; Russell N. Horiuchi "To Whom it may concern," 11 Aug. 1966; Ray C. Hillam "To Whom It May Concern," 15 Aug. 1966; Hillam, "Complaints Against Jim C. Vandygriff," 16 Sept. 1966; Larry T. Wimmer statement, 30 Jan. 1968; Morrell, Bernhard, Hillam, Wimmer, Midgley, and Wirthlin, "Events Related To the Covert Surveillance of Faculty Members," 2; Ben E. Lewis, Earl C. Crockett, and Clyde D. Sandgren to Ray C. Hillam, 15 May 1969, 3, in folders 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers; *1966 Banyan: The Yearbook of the Associated Students of Brigham Young University*, 293, and "Student Index," 500-29; *B.Y.U. Directory, 64-65*; *B.Y.U. Summer School Directory, 1965*; *B.Y.U. Directory, 1965-66*; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 208.

Mark Skousen was a son of Cleon Skousen's brother Leroy B. See *1966 Banyan*, 523; *Skousens In America: James Niels Skousen and His Two Wives . . .* (Mesa, Arizona: Lofgreen Printing Co., 1971), 85, 87. Later he became the author of such publications as *Tax Free: All the Legal Ways to Be Exempt From Federal, State, and Social Security Taxes* (1982), and *Dissent on Keynes: A Critical Appraisal of Keynesian Economics* (New York: Praeger, 1992). Michel L. Call's 1973 master's thesis for BYU's political science department was "The National Education Association as a Political Pressure Group." A year later James Vandygriff completed a master's degree in BYU's Department of Church History and Doctrine.

212. E. Eugene Bryce, "Campus Speaker Affiliated With Subversive Groupings," *Provo Daily Herald*, 20 Apr. 1965, 10; Poll to Wilkinson, 24 June 1965, defending himself against the complaints by Bryce; Lisle Updike to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 5 May 1965, Curt Conklin to David O. McKay, 29 Jan. 1965 [1966], also referred to in Clare Middlemiss to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 3 Feb. 1966, Conklin to Wilkinson, 16 Feb. 1966, all in Wilkinson Papers, photocopies in my possession.

213. Whittaker and McClellan, "The Collection: Description," 2, register of Hillam Papers; Stephen Hays Russell to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 26 Apr. 1965; Morrell, Bernhard, Hillam, Wimmer, Midgley, and Wirthlin, "Events Related To the Covert Surveillance of Faculty Members," 5; Richard D. Poll to Ray C. Hillam, 12 Sept. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, also box 34, Buerger Papers; minutes of meeting of BYU administrative officers with Ray C. Hillam and Stephen Hays Russell, 16 Sept. 1966, 5, folder 4, Hillam Papers, also box 34, Buerger Papers; Hankin interview, 17 Sept. 1966, 30; "Birchers Spied On Professors, Hialeah Student Said," *Miami Herald*, 3 Mar. 1967, A-32; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 209. For similar tactics elsewhere, see "Hell Breaks Loose In Paradise: This 'Textbook' Hides A Tape Recorder To Trap a Teacher," *Life* 54 (26 Apr. 1963): 73-84.

The student-organizer of this 1966 surveillance emphasized his association with Ezra Taft Benson. "On one occasion, the head of the John Birch Society in Utah County took me to the Church Office Building at Salt Lake City to meet Apostle Ezra Taft Benson," Russell later wrote. "I was introduced to Brother Benson as a 'key conservative student at Brigham Young University.'"[214] At the group's initial meeting, Russell told his Birch associates that "the General Authorities" authorized this espionage. Later, he specified several times that "Brother Benson was behind this."[215] Russell even reported the BYU spy-ring's findings to Ezra

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214. Stephen Hays Russell, *Personal History of Stephen Hays Russell* (N.P., 1983), 99, photocopy in my possession.

215. Hankin interview, 17 Sept. 1966, 6-7; also David M. Sisson statement, 17 Sept. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers.

Stephen Hays Russell, the student-leader of this group, signed a 1967 statement which made no reference whatever to the John Birch Society or to Ezra Taft Benson, even though the Birch connection appears in other sources. See Stephen Hays Russell statement, 13 Mar. 1967, typescript, signed at the bottom of each page by Stephen Hays Russell, folder 9, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers. Also, Russell's "Statements By Stephen Hays Russell on 'The 1966-67 Student "Spy Ring"' Section of the Book *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* by Bergera," 23 Dec. 1986 (photocopy in my possession), does not challenge the book's assertion that the student-spies were connected with the John Birch Society. However, page 1 of this 1986 statement refers to Russell's association with the Birch chapter leader in Provo.

There are clear factual discrepancies in Russell's statements about the 1966 student "monitoring." During the official university inquiry on 16 Sept. 1966, p. 7 (folder 4, Hillam Papers, also box 34, Buerger Papers), Russell denied that he was a member of the John Birch Society. Ernest L. Wilkinson memorandum, 20 Sept. 1966, 3, photocopy in my possession, also shows that Russell told Wilkinson he had resigned from the Birch Society, whereas he told Wilkinson's assistant that he had never been a member. In demonstration that all his above statements were false, Russell's 1983 *Personal History*, 99-110, acknowledges that he had been a Birch member since January 1965 and makes no reference to his alleged withdrawal from membership prior to the spy scandal. On page 5 of the September 1966 inquiry, Russell also denied that he was "part of an organized group of students," yet his 1967 statement, 1983 *Personal History*, and 1986 "Statements" describe how he organized this group for faculty "monitoring." Russell's 1986 "Statements" claimed that the student-spies submitted only two reports "within two weeks of each other," but his *Personal History*, 109, claimed "reports were submitted just once." To the contrary, Wilkinson's diary shows that he received the first report on 29 April, and his papers contain a written report, dated 24 May 1966, on Professor J. Kenneth Davies by student-spies Lyle Burnett and Stephen Hays Russell. Seven other professors were on the original list of targets.

Russell's 1967 statement acknowledged on page 3 that "if I 'got caught' at this, official university reactions would be that I was acting on my own," and on page 9 that Wilkinson expected Russell to be the "scapegoat" (also Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 211). Although he implicated Wilkinson and two of Wilkinson's assistants already named by fellow-spy Hankin, all of Russell's other statements about BYU espionage were obviously intended to shield others beyond the BYU administrators who were involved. For example, Russell's statements did not name the students he selected to help spy.

Taft Benson.[216]

On 29 April 1966, the diary of BYU's president acknowledged his receiving the first "voluntary report from certain students" about "certain liberals on the campus."[217] After discovering the details of this "Spy Ring" from its participants and from meetings with Counselor N. Eldon Tanner and Apostle Harold B. Lee, one of BYU's vice-presidents confided that "the real home of the group was ETB."[218]

By the end of September 1966 the BYU "spy ring" had unraveled as its principal members confessed their participation to BYU faculty, administrators, bishops, and general authorities.[219] Due to their belief that Apostle Benson was involved in this BYU "spy ring," general authorities like N. Eldon Tanner and Harold B. Lee declined to pursue the matter rigorously.[220] They rejected demands for Wilkinson's resignation and merely asked BYU's president to apologize privately to the professors targeted for this espionage.[221] Media coverage of the scandal was already embarrassing enough to the LDS church.[222] This was the best-known manifestation of

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216. My interview on 16 December 1992 with a person (name withheld by request) who was a highly placed official at LDS church headquarters in 1966. While I was asking about other matters involving Ezra Taft Benson, this source brought up the BYU espionage and volunteered Stephen Russell's name as the person who forwarded the "spy ring's findings" to Benson. The source provided this information without any prompting on my part. This forwarding of the spy ring information to Benson was also implied in Hankin interview, 17 Sept. 1966, pp. 6-7, and Sisson statement, 17 Sept. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers.

217. Wilkinson diary, 29 Apr. 1966. This verifies the statement of Ronald Ira Hankin and David M. Sisson on 17 Sept. 1966, folder 10, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers: "During the last week of April we visited Stephen Hays Russell in his dorm in Deseret Towers. . . . During our visit Stephen told us he would be visiting President Wilkinson soon. . . . Later the same evening Stephen told me, Ron Hankin, that he was going to turn the report over to the President within the next three or four days."

218. Louis C. Midgley to Ray C. Hillam, 11 Nov. 1966, regarding a conversation of Edwin B. Morrell, Richard B. Wirthlin, and Louis C. Midgley with Earl C. Crockett on 9 November.

219. See previously cited documents.

220. Midgley to Ray C. Hillam, 11 Nov. 1966, and comment on this letter in the inventory of Whittaker and McClellan, "The Collection: Description," register of Hillam Papers.

221. Whittaker and McClellan, "The Collection: Description," 5, register of Hillam Papers.

222. "Free Forum Filled With 'Charges,'" *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 1 Mar. 1967, 1; "BYU Denies Campus 'Spy' Story," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1 Mar. 1967, C-4; "Birchers Spied on Professors, Hialeah Student Says," *Miami Herald*, 3 Mar. 1967, A-32; "Wilkinson Admits 'Spy Ring' Existence at 'Y,'" *Provo Daily Herald*, 14 Mar. 1967, 1, 4; "Patriots On the Campus," *The New Republic* 156 (25 Mar. 1967): 12; "Spies, J[unior]. G[rade].," *Newsweek* 69 (27 Mar. 1967): 112; also "Y. Teachers Blast 'Spy Scandal Coverup,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 Dec. 1976, B-3; Ron Priddis, "BYU Spy Case Unshelved," *Seventh East*

Ezra Taft Benson's six-year-old encouragement of "espionage" at Brigham Young University. It would not be the last.

Elder Benson's Public Response to Critics in the Hierarchy

Ezra Taft Benson used October 1966 general conference to begin an extraordinary response to his hierarchy critics at the previous conference. "There are some who apparently feel that the fight for freedom is separate from the Gospel. They express it in several ways, but it generally boils down to this: Just live the gospel; there's no need to get involved in trying to save freedom and the Constitution or stop communism." Then in an obvious reference to himself and other general authorities, Benson said: "Should we counsel people, 'Just live your religion—there's no need to get involved in the fight for freedom?' No we should not, because our stand for freedom is a most basic part of our religion . . . " He added: "We will be given a chance to choose between conflicting counsel given by some," and he observed: "All men are entitled to inspiration, but only one man is the Lord's mouthpiece. Some lesser men have in the past, and will in the future, use their offices unrighteously. Some will, ignorantly or otherwise, use it to promote false counsel; some will use it to lead the unwary astray; some will use it to persuade us that all is well in Zion; some will use it to cover and excuse their ignorance."[223] A Mormon in the audience regarded Benson's conference talk as "referring to Hugh B. Brown."[224]

However, the First Presidency counselors and Twelve's president regarded Benson's October 1966 conference talk as a criticism of every general authority except David O. McKay. "From this talk," Counselor N. Eldon Tanner noted, "one would conclude that Brother Benson and President McKay stand alone among the General Authorities on the question of freedom." The Twelve's president Joseph Fielding Smith "agreed heartily with Tanner's objections to the talk in general." Counselor Brown added that Benson's October 1966 conference "talk is wholly objectionable because it does impugn the rest of us and our motives when we have advised the people to live their religion and stay away from extremist ideas and philosophies." Benson had asked for approval to "mimeograph his talk for wider distribution" which the First Presidency

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Press, 14 Mar. 1982, 1, 11-12; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 207-17; Robert Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, *America's Saints: The Rise of Mormon Power* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1984), 232-33.

223. Ezra Taft Benson reading copy of his general conference talk, 2 Oct. 1966, photocopy in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

224. Buchanan diary, 3 Oct. 1966.

disapproved.[225] Still, the presidency ultimately allowed the official report of conference to print Apostle Benson's talk virtually unchanged.[226]

Such publication was by no means certain when Benson addressed students at Brigham Young University's "devotional" meeting on 25 October. Because BYU devotional talks were separately broadcast and published, he decided to repeat his conference talk and expand upon its criticisms of the unnamed members of the LDS hierarchy.

At BYU Benson made it plain that the context for his remarks was the anti-Birch statements of anyone besides David O. McKay. "Do we preach what governments should or should not do as a part of the Gospel plan, as President McKay has urged? Or do we refuse to follow the Prophet by preaching a limited gospel plan of salvation?" Alluding to the disunity in the hierarchy, Benson affirmed: "We cannot compromise good and evil in an attempt to have peace and unity in the Church any more than the Lord could have compromised with Satan in order to avoid the War in Heaven." He then quoted the church president's April conference statement in favor of anti-Communist organizations, and observed: "Yet witness the sorry spectacle of those presently of our number who have repudiated the inspired counsel of our Prophet . . . It is too much to suppose that all the Priesthood at this juncture will unite behind the Prophet in the fight for freedom." Rather than ascribing this disunity about his anti-Communist crusade to honest differences of opinion, Benson described his church opponents as inspired by Satan:

> Now, Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet, and hence, keep the Priesthood off-balance, ineffective, and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means, including the use of perverse reasoning. For example, he [Satan] will argue: There is no need to get involved in the fight for freedom. All you need to do is live the Gospel. . . . It is obvious what Satan is trying to do, but it is sad to see many of us fall for his destructive line.

His next remarks tightened his reference more clearly to the church's presiding quorums. "As the Church gets larger, some men have increasing responsibility, and more and more duties must be delegated. . . . Unfortunately some men who do not honor their stewardships may have an

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225. N. Eldon Tanner to Joseph Fielding Smith, 31 Oct. 1966, Hugh B. Brown to David O. McKay, 9 Nov. 1966, with notation in Brown's handwriting of First Presidency decision on 16 Nov. 1966, all attached to Benson's reading copy of his October 1966 conference talk, and all in "Hugh B. Brown's File on the John Birch Society."

226. See Ezra Taft Benson, "Protecting Freedom—An Immediate Responsibility," *Improvement Era* 69 (Dec. 1966): 1144-46, and compare with the previous quotes from his reading copy.

adverse effect on many people. Often the greater the man's responsibility, the more good or evil he can accomplish. The Lord usually gives the man a long enough rope . . . There are some regrettable things being said and done by some people in the Church today."

After quoting to his BYU audience the warning by J. Reuben Clark about "ravening wolves" who "wear the habiliments of the priesthood," Apostle Benson made it clear he was referring to his fellow apostles: "Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings, and in our Church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth. This is especially true where freedom is involved." He concluded: "Some lesser men in the past, and will in the future, use their offices unrighteously. Some will lead the unwary astray . . ."

At the conclusion of his talk Benson let the BYU students know he was referring to general authorities immediately below the church president in authority. "Learn to keep your eye on the Prophet," Benson said. "Let his inspired words be a basis for evaluating the counsel of all lesser authorities." He concluded this remarkable assault on his fellow members of the hierarchy with the only understatement of his BYU talk: "I know I will be abused by some for what I have said."[227] Even the censored publication of this BYU talk retained many of Benson's critical allusions to presidency counselors and apostles.[228]

One professor called Benson's BYU address "a really violent anti-Lee talk," and even pro-Birch Wilkinson regarded the talk as "a little extreme."[229] However, this BYU address in October 1966 was not simply Apostle Benson's public response to Harold B. Lee's sermon "from behind the pulpit" of April 1966 conference. This was also Benson's answer to Mark E. Petersen's anti-Birch editorials "in our Church publications." It was a warning about first counselor Hugh B. Brown ("the greater the man's responsibility, the more good or evil he can accomplish"). In sum, this BYU address was Ezra Taft Benson's dismissal of the anti-Birch statements of any general authority "in our Council meetings" and against "the counsel of all lesser authorities" beneath President McKay. His counter-assault on his unnamed critics in the LDS hierarchy was even more extraordinary than

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227. Audio tape of Ezra Taft Benson, "Our Immediate Responsibility," devotional address to students of Brigham Young University, 25 Oct. 1966, available from BYU Media Services in 1992.

228. Ezra Taft Benson, "Our Immediate Responsibility," *Speeches of the Year* (Provo, UT: Extension Publications, Division of Continuing Education, Brigham Young University, 1966), esp. 8, 13-14.

229. Louis C. Midgley to Ray C. Hillam, 11 Nov. 1966, folder 12, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers; Wilkinson diary, 25 Oct. 1966. For Wilkinson's statements in support of Benson's political sermons and anti-Communist crusade, see his diary entries for 3 June 1962, 6 Apr. 1965, 25 Oct. 1966, 23 Sept. 1975, 18 Sept. 1976.

Harold B. Lee's conference talk against the unnamed Apostle Benson. Benson's BYU devotional talk in October 1966 was the clearest evidence that he saw himself and President McKay as fighting alone in a battle for freedom and anti-Communism against all the other general authorities who had fallen for Satan's "perverse reasoning" and "destructive line."

The Bid for the White House, 1966-68

With Benson's permission, three weeks after the April 1966 general conference a national committee announced that it was preparing a campaign to elect him U.S. president in 1968. As part of its ten-year plan, this "1976 Committee" nominated Strom Thurmond, conservative U.S. senator from South Carolina, as Benson's vice-presidential running mate.[230]

A former state coordinator wrote that Birch president Robert Welch "was the guiding light behind" this 1976 Committee.[231] National leaders of the Birch Society comprised 59 percent of this committee, including its chair and two vice-chairs. Most other committee members were probably lower-ranking Birchers.[232] Benson's 1976 Committee was a classic demonstration

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230. "Presidential Draft for Elder Benson?" in *Deseret News*, 3 May 1966, A-1; "Group Seeks Benson for Race in '68," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 May 1966, 6; "Benson Hints Door Open In '68 Race," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 May 1966, A-14; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 383. Also Epstein and Forster, *The Radical Right*, 53-55, 142; Bethke, "BF [Before Falwell], EB [Ezra Benson]," 16-17; "Mormons and Politics: Benson's Influence Helps Keep Growing Church on Conservative Track," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 Aug. 1966, 1.

231. Schomp, *Birchism Was My Business*, 159-60.

232. Of the thirty-four officers and members of this original "1976 Committee" at its formation in 1966, fourteen were members of the national council of the John Birch Society, its "top advisory body in matters of organization and policy." The Birch council members on Benson's election committee were Thomas J. Anderson, T. Coleman Andrews, John T. Brown, Laurence E. Bunker, William J. Grede, Augereau G. Heinsohn, Fred C. Koch, Dean Clarence Manion, N. Floyd McGowin, W. B. McMillan, Robert H. Montgomery, Thomas Parker, Robert W. Stoddard, and Charles B. Stone. In addition, K. G. Bentson, Robert B. Dresser, and Charles Edison were members of the 1976 Committee and also on the editorial advisory committee for the Birch Society's *American Opinion*. John W. Scott was a Birch Society member in 1966 and joined the editorial advisory committee in 1978. Bonner Fellers and Edgar W. Hiestand had been on the Committee of Endorsers in 1962, and continued to be heavily involved with the Birch Society throughout the 1960s. See The 1976 Committee, *The Team You Can Trust To Guide America, the Best Team for '68: Ezra Taft Benson for President, Strom Thurmond for Vice-President* (Holland, Michigan, [1966]), 12, and compare with list of national council members in Robert W. Lee to J. Bracken Lee, 17 Jan. 1966, on letterhead of The John Birch Society, folder 18, box 70, Lee Papers, and with editorial staff and advisory committee in *American Opinion* 9 (Jan. 1966): inside front cover; (May 1966): inside front cover; (Oct. 1966): inside front cover; 21 (Sept. 1978): inside front cover; John H. Rousselot, "Honorable Edgar W. Hiestand," *American Opinion* 8 (Nov. 1965): 113. *The Team You Can Trust To Guide America*, 15, noted that its list of books in support of this candidacy are available "from any American Opinion bookstore." Probably typical of

of Welch's philosophy of creating "fronts"—organizations that merely had the appearance of independence from the Birch Society which formed and directed them.[233] In effect, the Birch Society was nominating Benson for the White House. In August 1966, Hugh B. Brown told two BYU professors that Benson had "a letter from President McKay endorsing his candidacy." Brown said "it would rip the Church apart" if Benson released the letter to the public as part of the presidential campaign.[234]

Of this, Benson's biographer tells the following. As early as October 1965 Benson had asked the church president for permission to campaign as U.S. presidential candidate. McKay told him not to campaign actively but did not require him to decline the efforts of others to draft him as a presidential candidate. Benson decided to withhold knowledge of any of these discussions from his own quorum which learned of his possible presidential candidacy from the newspaper announcement in May 1966.[235]

In contrast to his private request of McKay which led to the draft movement, Benson told the *Boston Globe*'s religion editor: "It is strictly a draft movement about which I am personally doing absolutely nothing." The *Church News* immediately reprinted this.[236] Benson told newspapers in March 1967 that he regarded the draft movement as "almost frightening, yet humbling." He also told reporters in March 1967, "I have no desire to run for political office."[237] Coincidental with this Birch-led effort to elect Benson as U.S. president, a month later Apostle Mark E. Petersen wrote an editorial in the *Church News*: "Political extremists sow seeds of hate and discord. Extremism among them can hardly be less dangerous on one hand than on the other. Both can lead to dictatorship."[238] However, within a few months, Benson's supporters began circulating petitions to place his name on the ballot for the upcoming national election.[239]

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the 1976 Committee members who had no national Birch office, William L. McGrath was identified as a member of the John Birch Society in Group Research Reports, "Individual Index—Cumulative (7/1/63)," copy in folder 4, box 9, King Papers.

233. Welch, *Blue Book of The John Birch Society*, 73: "We would organize fronts—little fronts, big fronts, temporary fronts, permanent fronts, all kinds of fronts."

234. Brown interview by Richard Wirthlin and Ray Hillam, 9 Aug. 1966, 3, transcribed 11 Oct. 1966 "from Rough Draft Notes," folder 6, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers.

235. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 383-84, 386, 392-93.

236. "'Strictly a draft'—Elder Benson," [subheading] *Deseret News "Church News,"* 28 Jan. 1967, 6.

237. "Benson Finds Draft Crusade 'Humbling,'" *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 11 Mar. 1967, 9; "Benson Says No Interest in '68 Draft," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 12 Mar. 1967, C-6.

238. "Tendency Toward Extremes," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 15 Apr. 1967, 20. For Petersen as the author of these unsigned editorials, see n172 above.

239. "Group Acts to Draft Benson in '68 Race," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 1 Nov. 1967,

In the midst of these presidential "draft" activities, the First Presidency and apostles were critical of Benson's association with such ultraconservatives as Billy James Hargis. In an early report of the two men's joint participation in anti-Communist rallies, even the *Deseret News* had identified Hargis as one the nation's "segregationist leaders."[240] Counselor Brown informed a church member in May 1967 that "numerous others" had complained about Benson's continued association with Hargis and the apostle's implied endorsement of his segregationist views. The First Presidency "are taking it to the Twelve as soon as Brother Benson returns from Europe as we prefer to have him present when the matter is discussed." Brown gave the reassurance that Benson's "activities in this connection will be curtained [curtailed]."[241]

Benson continued to preach the Birch message. At a meeting in the Salt Lake Tabernacle in September 1967 he said that "the so-called civil rights movement as it exists today is a Communist program for revolution in America." He repeated that assessment in his general conference talk the next month.[242] The same year Benson also approved the use of a recent talk as the "forward" to an overtly racist book which featured the decapitated head of an African-American on its cover. The authors of *The Black Hammer: A Study of Black Power, Red Influence and White Alternatives, Foreword by The Honorable Ezra Taft Benson* wrote that the apostle "has generously offered this address as the basis for the introductory remarks to 'The Black Hammer.'"[243] Benson had given this talk to the anti-Communist leadership school of segregationist Hargis who had published it in his magazine.[244]

A-12.

240. "Ezra Taft Benson Addresses Rally," *Deseret News*, 7 Jan. 1963, A-3. For Benson's recent participation with Hargis and his Christian Crusade, see "This Week! 5 Great Nights of Christian Leadership Training: Christian Crusade Leadership School—Feb. 20-24," advertisement in *Tulsa Daily World*, 19 Feb. 1967, photocopy in Williams Papers. For background on Hargis, see John Harold Redekop, *The American Far Right: A Case Study of Billy James Hargis and Christian Crusade* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968).

241. Brown to Burns S. Hanson, 11 May 1967, carbon copy cross-referenced to "Hargis, Billy James," in "Hugh B. Brown File on the John Birch Society."

242. Benson address, 29 Sept. 1967, in his *Civil Rights: Tool of Communist Deception*, 3; "Mormon Leaders Heard By 25,000," *New York Times*, 2 Oct. 1967, 52; *Improvement Era* 70 (Dec. 1967): 35, softened Benson's restatement of his position about the civil rights movement. However that censored 1967 statement was almost identical to the *Deseret News*, 14 Dec. 1963, B-5, report of Benson's assessment of civil rights.

243. Wes Andrews and Clyde Dalton, *The Black Hammer: A Study of Black Power, Red Influence and White Alternatives* (Oakland, CA: Desco Press, 1967), 13, a copy of which is in the Church Library, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

244. Ezra Taft Benson, "Trade and Treason," *Christian Crusade* 19 (Apr. 1967): 22-24.

Although they did not identify themselves as Mormons, *The Black Hammer*'s authors (who lived in the San Francisco Bay area) referred on the dedication page to "all the Elders of the California North Mission for their interest and prayers." Their bibliography listed seven anti-Communist books including ones by Benson and W. Cleon Skousen. Two of *Black Hammer*'s pro-Communist sources were cited as reprints by the John Birch Society's *American Opinion*, and page 78 encouraged readers to "pass on your current copy" of that Birch magazine. Page 91 also encouraged "every Negro" to study the "conservative philosophy" of Robert Welch.

Consistent with Benson's own statements, *The Black Hammer* (which he now tacitly endorsed) dismissed as Communist-directed all organized efforts for civil rights. On pages 32 and 35, the book warned about "the violent revolt which is part of the 100 year-old Communist program for the enslavement of America," and about the "well-defined plans for the establishment of a Negro Soviet dictatorship in the South." On page 51, *The Black Hammer* said: "The media would have the American public believe that the Black Power movement, with all its 'militant overtones' (as the media so affectionately describes it) is frowned upon by the 'moderate civil rights leadership'—more specifically, Martin Luther King. This is pure hogwash." Page 83 referred to "the Negro's need for complete subservience to the Great White Fathers in Washington." However, the authors insisted on page 90 that they were "ready and willing to take any Negro by the hand and help him into an era of self-proprietorship that every deserving American can achieve."

It does not seem coincidental that Benson endorsed this book in the midst of the Birch Society's effort to put him on the 1968 presidential ticket. He may have endorsed *The Black Hammer: A Study of Black Power, Red Influence and White Alternatives* to provide leverage with another presidential aspirant, George C. Wallace, the segregationist governor of Alabama.

Not until President McKay specifically instructed him to do so in February 1968 did Benson report to the Twelve about the behind-the-scenes efforts on behalf of his presidential candidacy. This was more than two years after he began exploring this possibility with McKay and with the national leaders of the Birch Society who headed "The 1976 Committee."[245]

Benson redelivered this "Trade and Treason" address on 14 April 1967 to a joint meeting of Rotary, Lions, and Optimist clubs in Yakima, Washington. A transcript of this talk, with accompanying letter from Benson to Frank H. Jonas, 18 Aug. 1967, is in Jonas Papers; also printed after Benson re-delivered it at the Highland High School, Salt Lake City, 9 June 1967. See "Benson Talk To Close 'Idea' Series," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 June 1967, B-13.

245. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 397-98; The 1976 Committee, *The Team You Can Trust To Guide America*; Epstein and Forster, *The Radical Right*, 53-55, 142; Bethke, "BF [Before

This was consistent with an assistant Secretary of Agriculture's observation that as an administrator Benson "asked advice from no mortal person."[246]

It is unclear whether Benson informed fellow apostles on 15 February 1968 of the most recent twist of his aspirations regarding the U.S. presidential campaign. Lacking sufficient support from the Republican leadership, Benson had negotiated to become the vice-presidential candidate in George C. Wallace's third-party challenge. Wallace formally announced his third party candidacy on 8 February, but as early as November a vice-president of the John Birch Society's "publishing and distribution arm" had resigned that position "to actively campaign for George Wallace." The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that Apostle Benson also supported Wallace.[247]

On 12 February Wallace formally wrote David O. McKay for his "permission and blessings" and "a leave of absence" for Apostle Benson to be Wallace's vice-presidential candidate. Two days later McKay sent a "confidential" letter in response to Wallace's request for Benson to be the third-party's vice-presidential candidate. The church president denied Benson's request to be Wallace's running-mate and pointedly told Wallace that "you no doubt have received word from Ezra Taft Benson as to my decision . . ."[248]

Amid these efforts for Benson's presidential candidacy is the Quorum of Twelve's perspective. Almost as soon as he returned from his European mission in 1965 Benson began discussions leading toward his candidacy for the U.S. presidency. He never volunteered that information to a quorum meeting or to the quorum's president. Three weeks after the humiliation they knew he experienced at April 1966 conference, the apostles learned from the newspapers that Benson was a likely presiden-

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Falwell], EB [Ezra Benson]," 16-17.

246. J. Earl Coke, "Reminiscences on People and Change in California Agriculture, 1900-1975," 111, interviews by Ann Foley Scheuring, 1976, Oral History Center, Shields Library, University of California at Davis, with copy in Special Collections, Lee Library. While Benson was Secretary of Agriculture, BYU's president observed: "Apparently, however, Benson stands aloof from all his advisors, and they are afraid to tell him [what they think]" (Wilkinson diary, 13 Sept. 1957).

247. Willard S. Voit announcement, 17 Nov. 1967, in *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Dec. 1967): 26-28; "Wallace In Race; Will 'Run To Win,'" *New York Times*, 9 Feb. 1968, 1; "Benson Backs Wallace Stand," *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 Feb. 1968, 3, based on an undated interview with Benson by a reporter with Reuters news service.

248. George C. Wallace to David O. McKay, 12 Feb. 1968, and David O. McKay to George C. Wallace, 14 Feb. 1968, photocopies in Wilkinson Papers, photocopies in my possession; also Lewis Chester, Godfrey Hodgson, and Bruce Page, *An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968* (New York: Viking Press, 1969), 694; Dennis Wainstock, *The Turning Point: The 1968 United States Presidential Campaign* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1988), 164; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 221.

tial candidate. That stunning news inevitably appeared as Benson's defiant answer to Harold B. Lee's conference address. That impression was heightened by Benson's October 1966 counter-attack on his critics within the hierarchy.

Then Benson continued his remarkable silence with the other apostles for two more years of the effort to make him U.S. president. He attended their weekly meetings without once mentioning the efforts being made to propel him out of quorum activity and into the White House. What the apostles learned about Benson's candidacy, they read in the newspapers. When he finally informed a quorum meeting of those efforts in February 1968, Benson made it clear he did so only upon McKay's insistence. That was the day after the church president had privately ended Benson's political hopes by confidentially reaffirming to George Wallace that the apostle was unavailable as his vice-presidential candidate. It is difficult to see any deference or collegiality in these obviously strained relations of Benson with the rest of the Quorum of Twelve in the 1960s.

Two months after President McKay quashed Benson's hopes of being Wallace's vice-presidential running mate, a white man assassinated America's most famous black civil rights leader, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. In response to U.S. president Lyndon Johnson's designation of 7 April as a national day of mourning for Reverend King, Apostle Benson immediately prepared a statement for distribution which complained that "the Communists will use Mr. King's death for as much yardage as possible." Benson's hand-out continued that "Martin Luther King had been affiliated with at least the following officially recognized Communist fronts," and listed three organizations. Benson was simply repeating the Birch view of King.[249] Asked about this hand-out, Counselor

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249. Ezra Taft Benson, "Re: Martin Luther King," 6 Apr. 1968, photocopy in my possession; compare with Jim Lucier, "King of Slick," in the John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 6 (Nov. 1963): 1-11; Alan Stang, "The King And His Communists," *American Opinion* 8 (Oct. 1965): 1-14; Gary Allen, "America: How Communist Are We?" *American Opinion* 10 (July-Aug. 1967): 9. For a variety of perspectives on King, see Lionel Lokos, *House Divided: The Life and Legacy of Martin Luther King* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1969); William R. Miller, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: His Life, Martyrdom and Meaning for the World* (New York: Wybright and Talley, 1968); David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978); Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982); James P. Hanigan, *Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Foundations of Nonviolence* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984); David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: W. Morrow, 1986); James A. Colaiaco, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Apostle of Militant Nonviolence* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Richard Donald Ouellette, "The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr., 1965-1968," senior honors thesis, University of Utah, 1992. See discussion

Brown replied that Benson's "views do not coincide with the opinion of the majority of the General Authorities and we regret that they are sent out." The first counselor added: "However in President McKay's state of health we cannot get a retraction and must, I suppose, await a change in leadership before definite instructions can be given regulating such items of interest."[250]

Hugh B. Brown's Rebuttals

Mormons of the 1960s often witnessed Counselor Hugh B. Brown following Apostle Benson's talks with rebuttal sermons.[251] For example, in his talk to BYU's devotional in May 1968 Benson accused the U.S. Supreme Court of treason. He added that "a prerequisite for appointment to high government office today is one's past affiliations with communist fronts or one's ability to follow the communist line." Benson's address to BYU students also quoted three times from the Birch Society's official magazine, including references to "black Marxists" and "the Communists and their Black Power fanatics."[252]

In response, the father of one BYU student complained to the First Presidency that Benson had turned BYU's devotionals "into a sounding board for vicious, political interests."[253] In 1968 this father was typical of most LDS church members. A survey of more than 700 Mormons that year showed that 58 percent regarded the Birch Society as "not supporting Declaration of Independence principles."[254] First counselor Brown replied to the student's father: "We have had many such letters protesting the speech made at the B.Y.U. recently and we are trying to offset and curtail

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of Martin Luther King national holiday, below.

250. Hugh B. Brown to John W. Bennion, LDS bishop of the Elgin Ward, Chicago Stake, 29 May 1968, photocopy in my possession.

251. R. Tom Tucker, "Remembering Hugh Brown," *Sunstone* 12 (May 1988): 4; Gottlieb and Wiley, *America's Saints*, 108.

252. Benson, "The Book of Mormon Warns America," address at Brigham Young University devotional, 21 May 1968, transcript, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, Vertical File, Special Collections, Marriott Library, and transcript in Moss Papers; also "Road to Anarchy: Benson Blisters Supreme Court," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 22 May 1968, A-11; "Benson Warns on Commies in Talk at BYU Assembly," *Provo Daily Herald*, 22 May 1968, 24. I could find no reference to Benson's talk in the 21-22 May editions of *Deseret News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*.

253. Robert O. Trottier to David O. McKay, 22 May 1968, with copies to Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner, and Ezra Taft Benson, photocopy in Vertical File for Ezra Taft Benson, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

254. Afton Olson Miles, "Mormon Voting Behavior and Political Attitudes," Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1978, 164-65. Broken down by political affiliation, this anti-Birch view was shared by 86 percent of Mormon Democrats, 64 percent of Mormon independents, and 43 percent of Mormon Republicans.

such expressions."[255]

Brown then delivered a BYU commencement address which was a direct attack on Benson's sermon there only ten days earlier. "Beware of those who feel obliged to prove their own patriotism by calling into question the loyalty of others," Brown began. As a clear response to Benson's quotes to BYU students about African-Americans from the Birch Society magazine, Brown concluded: "At a time when radicals of right or left would inflame race against race, avoid those who preach evil doctrines of racism."[256] To many Mormons it was no doubt a disturbing situation for a First Presidency counselor to publicly advise Mormons to "beware" and "avoid" the unnamed Apostle Ezra Taft Benson.

Brown's general assessment of right-wing extremists merely restated the views of the FBI director. J. Edgar Hoover told Congress that "extremist organizations parade under the guise of patriotism, anticommunism and concern for the destiny of the country." However, "behind this veneer" the FBI director found deeply-felt racial hatreds and anti-Semitism. Hoover continued: "While pretending to formulate their own particular theories for improving our Government in solving complicated social, political and economic problems, the extremists merely offer emotionally charged solutions to the gullible and unthinking person who craves for the simple answer. They call for improved government, yet continually defame those in high office."[257] Although the FBI director did not name the Birch Society, Mormon political liberals like Brown and moderate conservatives like Utah's senator Wallace F. Bennett felt Hoover's description fit the Birch Society.

Despite the controversy, Benson continued to enjoy national respect as an "elder statesman." One of his 1968 talks on government was published by the influential periodical *Vital Speeches of the Day*. It was republished in an academic journal.[258]

Brown continued to "offset" Benson's political talks at BYU by follow-

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255. Brown to Trottier, 24 May 1968, photocopy in Vertical File for Ezra Taft Benson, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

256. Campbell and Poll, *Hugh B. Brown*, 259-60.

257. Hoover statement to the U.S. House appropriations subcommittee, 10 Feb. 1966, in *Congressional Record—House* 112 (27 Sept. 1966): 24028. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith analyzed Birch anti-Semitism in "The John Birch Society," *Facts: Domestic Report* 14 (Nov.-Dec. 1961). In the 1940s-50s J. Reuben Clark, Ezra Taft Benson, and Ernest L. Wilkinson were exchanging anti-Semitic publications and views (D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* [Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1983], 226, 321n24; Clark to Wilkinson, 5 Feb. 1949; Clark to Wilkinson, 9 Nov. 1955; Benson to Clark, 9 Dec. 1957; Clark to Benson, ca. 9 Dec. 1957).

258. Benson, "The Proper Role of Government," *Vital Speeches* 24 (15 June 1968): 514-20, also reprinted in *Agricultural Engineering* 49 (Aug. 1968): 469-71.

ing him with rebuttal sermons. While that gave grim satisfaction to some liberals, Ernest Wilkinson expressed a sentiment shared by Mormons of various political views: "If President McKay was vigorous enough to do it, I am sure he would call both of them in and talk to them about this, and especially President Brown for his critical personal [a]llusions."[259]

It is true that Brown barely concealed his antagonism for Benson in the rebuttal sermons the First Presidency counselor delivered in response to the apostle.[260] As cited previously, Brown's private statements and letters also showed his deep hostility toward Benson, which he even expressed to non-Mormons. Benson was more circumspect about expressing his personal views of Brown. One close associate affirms: "I doubt you could find anybody who ever heard Brother Benson speak negatively about Hugh B. Brown."[261]

Brown was also blunt about his frustration that McKay would not allow an official repudiation of Benson. After Benson described U.S. government "welfare-state programs" as a "Communist-planned program of deception" in his October 1968 conference talk, the Mormon director of a government welfare program complained to the First Presidency. Brown replied: "Others of us feel much the same as you do but the President has not seen fit to check or refute the statements by the person involved and our hands are therefore tied. Be assured, however, of this, that what this man said does not represent the position of the Church with respect to the subject of government aid, etc."

Counselor Brown concluded that Apostle Benson's "statements do not represent the position of the Church, but I am handicapped in that I cannot refute them because the President feels that each one should be free to express his own opinions. This seems to be unfortunate because, speaking from that pulpit and as one of the general authorities, each of us is supposed to represent the Church. There will be a change in this whole situation, we hope, before too long."[262]

However, Brown's hope for an official rebuke of Benson remained

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259. Wilkinson diary, 13 May 1969.

260. For example, in his rebuttal to the talk Benson had given at BYU, Brown clearly indicated that he did not think Benson had "maturity of mind and emotion and a depth of spirit . . . to differ with others on matters of politics without calling into question the integrity of those with whom you differ" (Campbell and Poll, *Hugh B. Brown*, 259).

261. My telephone interview on 8 December 1992 with Karl D. Butler who served as a special assistant to Ezra Taft Benson as Secretary of Agriculture. The two remained friends thereafter. See Benson, *Cross Fire*, 13-14, 23, 25, 38, 69.

262. Brown to Philip D. Thorpe, director of the Community Action Program in Provo, Utah, 18 Oct. 1968, carbon copy in Campbell papers, with attached copy of Benson's October 1968 conference address, "The Proper Role of Government," *Improvement Era* 71 (Dec. 1968): 51-53, with underlined passage on page 53.

unfulfilled even during the last, declining year of McKay's life. Benson's October 1969 sermon warned the LDS general conference against "Communist conspiracy, fellow travelers, and dupes." Those remarks appeared in the official report of the conference.[263]

Earlier that year Benson was involved in another effort at student espionage at Brigham Young University. In February 1969, W. Cleon Skousen instructed his niece to recruit BYU students as spies. As a student herself, she claimed that her uncle "had discovered there was an active communist cell on campus whose goal it was to destroy this university by 1970." She asked one student to infiltrate BYU's Young Democrats on Skousen's behalf. Anti-Birch professor Louis Midgley was also among the BYU faculty who "were 'high on the list' of suspects as being communist sympathizers on this campus and her words were that I was to 'talk with them and to try to get them to commit themselves.'" Cleon Skousen gave the information "to his 'superior' in Salt Lake City."[264]

Less than a year earlier, Apostle Benson had tried to make Skousen dean of the College of Social Sciences.[265] Skousen's efforts at campus espionage in 1969 collapsed after a faculty member wrote a memo urging him "to give *the lie* to this rumor . . . that you have organized a 'spy' ring to check on the alleged pro-Communist sympathies of professors."[266] Only one of these agent provocateurs, a political science major, confessed the espionage. This student stopped spying because he found no Communist sympathizers at BYU, and "I decided that I was involved in a questionable activity and that I should withdraw and cease to function as an agent in any way."[267] Again, this was not the last instance of Benson's support for student espionage on BYU professors.

Nothing in the generation since the 1960s can compare to the apostolic conflict involving Ezra Taft Benson. For supporters, his office as an apostle enhanced his Birch message. For detractors, this message diminished his apostleship. This situation continued unchanged as long as church presi-

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263. *Improvement Era* 72 (Dec. 1969): 69.

264. Phares Woods statement, 27 May 1969, 1-2, folder 16, Hillam Papers, and box 34, Buerger Papers. Daughter of Cleon Skousen's brother Ervin M., Cynthia Skousen was a first cousin of the 1966 student-spy, Mark A. Skousen. See *Skousens In America*, 86.

265. Ernest L. Wilkinson diary, 12 Apr. 1968; also Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 215. Benson had first suggested Glenn L. Pearson as dean. See discussion of Pearson, above.

266. Undated, handwritten memo from "M. G. F." [poss. Merwin G. Fairbanks, director of student publications] to "Cleon Skousen," with copies to ELW [Ernest L. Wilkinson], RKT [Robert K. Thomas], BEL [Ben E. Lewis], RJS [Robert J. Smith], and "Dan Ludlow," folder 16, Hillam Papers; emphasis in original.

267. Woods statement, 27 May 1969, 4; *BYU Directory, 1968-69*, s.v. "Phares Quincy Woods."

dent David O. McKay lived. For Benson apparently never actually asked McKay for permission to advocate the Birch Society but merely for permission to speak about "freedom." In Benson's thinking there was no distinction among the principles of freedom, the mission of the church, and the teachings of the Birch Society. He sincerely felt he had "a mandate from the prophet" for all of his political speeches.[268]

On the other hand, first counselor Brown regarded Benson's private meetings with McKay as manipulative. Brown's grandson and biographer notes:

> As President McKay became increasingly impaired by age, some church functionaries, with allegiances to the radical political right, tried to influence the president in ways that Grandfather [Hugh B. Brown], President [N. Eldon] Tanner, and Elder Harold B. Lee thought unwise and improper. These three men—Grandfather in particular—were often but not always successful in blocking those efforts to influence church policy.[269]

There is no question that Benson made what LDS authorities called "end runs" around the Quorum of Twelve and First Presidency counselors in order to obtain McKay's encouragement for his political activism. However, such "end runs" were common practice for general authorities and church bureaucrats during the McKay presidency.[270] Brown's perspective on Benson's lobbying was itself a partisan overstatement.

McKay's amenability to Benson's right-wing politics was not simply a result of the church president's physical and mental decline.[271] Less than a year after the organization of the Birch Society, McKay told general conference: "The conflict between Communism and freedom is the problem of our times. It overshadows all other problems. This conflict mirrors our age, its toils, its tensions, its troubles, and its tasks. On the outcome of this

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268. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 372, 385; Dew, "Ezra Taft Benson," in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5 vols. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 1:102-103.

269. Firmage, *An Abundant Life: The Memoirs of Hugh B. Brown*, 142.

270. Specific use of "end run" terminology for this feature of McKay's presidency appears in J. Reuben Clark office diary, 22 May 1961; Wilkinson diary, 25 May 1967; Neal A. Maxwell oral history, 1976-77, 24-25, LDS archives; also Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark*, 128, 141-42. "End runs" seems to have characterized the adminstration of virtually every LDS church president whose final years were attended by physicial and mental infirmities.

271. Eugene Campbell's typed draft of the biography of Brown likewise stated: "Unfortunately some of those who seemed to favor the John Birch Society were close to President McKay . . . [who] . . . with his mental difficulties at times was not always able to see the issues as clearly as he would have done had he been younger" (see chapter titled, "Responsibility Without Authority—The 1st Counselor Years," 13, Campbell Papers).

conflict depends the future of mankind."[272] From that perspective, there was no extremism in Benson's campaign against what he perceived as Communist influence in America.

However, as soon as the Birch Society became an LDS controversy in 1961 McKay felt torn between his strong anti-Communist convictions and his desire to avoid entanglement of the church with anti-Communist organizations.[273] Both Benson and his opponents in the hierarchy played upon that ambivalence in McKay for nearly nine years.

Ezra Taft Benson in the Smith-Lee-Kimball Presidencies

Nevertheless, Ezra Taft Benson's political activism went into decline in the years following McKay's death in January 1970. His successors as church president were two apostles who had privately and publicly expressed their criticism of Benson. Presidents Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee severely restricted Apostle Benson's political activism from 1970 through 1973.[274] This fulfilled the first counselor's hope in 1968 that "a change in leadership" would end Benson's ultraconservative crusade.[275]

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272. *October 1959 Conference Report*, 5; also David O. McKay, *Statements on Communism and the Constitution of the United States* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964).

273. McKay diary, 17 Aug., 24 Aug., 19 Sept. 1961, LDS archives; Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark*, 190, 216; *Deseret News "Church News,"* 16 Apr. 1966, 7; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 18-19; James B. Allen, "David O. McKay," in Ludlow, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 2:874. As early as May 1961 the *Deseret News* indicated the split developing among Mormons regarding the Birch Society. See editorial "How to Become a Millionaire: Start An 'Anti-Commie' Society," *Deseret News*, 2 May 1961, A-12, which Mark E. Petersen re-emphasized in "Let Us Not Be Carried Away," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 29 July 1961, 16; and contrast with Jerrald [sic] L. Newquist, "Liberty Vs. Creeping Socialism: Warns Of Internal Threats," *Deseret News*, 21 Dec. 1961, A-12. Also George T. Boyd to Hugh B. Brown, 22 Sept. 1961, with Brown's answer of 6 October, copies in Mormon Americana, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University. Contrast the 1961 views of Petersen and Brown against anti-Communist propaganda with the following announcement in the LDS church's official *MIA Stake Leader* 13 (Dec. 1961): 3 of anti-Communist publications that "may be obtained from the All American Society, P.O. Box 8045, Foothill Station, Salt Lake City, Utah." At that time W. Cleon Skousen was a director of this All American Society office. See Stewart, "Analysis of the Celebrity Structure of the American Right," 29; All American Society of Utah, "What You Should Know About the All-American Society of Utah," 3, in Williams Papers.

274. However, it did not cease altogether. The Mormon-Birch *Utah Independent* announced Benson's addresses at Boston rallies in 1970 and 1972, where all the other speakers were either staff members of the Birch Society's *American Opinion* or long-time authors of its articles. See "Benson, Skousen Speak at New England Rally," *Utah Independent*, 9 July 1970, 1, and "Benson Is Guest of Honor," *Utah Independent*, 30 June 1972, 8, and compare to table of contents pages of previous issues of *American Opinion*, also the list of the Birch Society's national council in "The John Birch Society: A Report," *Advertising Supplement to Los Angeles Times*, 27 Sept. 1964, 7.

Not surprisingly, this turn of events appalled ultra-conservative Mormons, some of whom were outraged by the First Presidency's official condemnation of Mormons who had formed "Neighborhood Emergency Teams" in Utah. Apostle Benson announced that he had "no comment" about this March 1970 Presidency statement.[276] Therefore, just a month before general conference, ultra-conservatives were convinced that an anti-conservative First Presidency had muzzled Ezra Taft Benson.

Shortly after the presidency's statement against the ultra-conservative NET organizations, all local LDS leaders received an announcement which began: "There are dangerous sinister trends developing within the church due to the liberal factions gaining control." The announcement urged all "those of the conservative mind" to "cast a dissenting vote against the liberal factions" of "the First Presidency with its social-democrat thinking" on 6 April 1970. This would remove from office the new presidency of Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and N. Eldon Tanner, all of whom were known as opponents of Benson's ultra-conservative activism. In their place, this proposal claimed that "Brother Benson will sound the trumpet [—] and thousands, yes tens of thousands, will heed his call and stand forth ready to sustain and support the fight for truth, right and liberty." Thus a general conference vote of Mormon ultra-conservatives would propel Benson into the office of LDS church president in place of the current president and ahead of other senior apostles.[277]

Rather than dismissing this document as the work of a lone crank and giving it no further attention, Counselor Harold B. Lee publicly denounced it two days before the sustaining vote of April 1970 conference. He told the general priesthood meeting that "there is one vicious story to the effect that one of our General Authorities is allegedly being urged to present himself to lead the Church contrary to the Lord's revelation and to make people think there is some division among the authorities of the Church." Lee indicated that this petition and its supporting documents "are finding their way into our Relief Society meetings, into priesthood quorums, firesides, institutes, and seminaries." That was an extraordinary acknowledgement by Lee of the threat to the LDS church he perceived from ultra-conservative Mormons.[278] By contrast, the First Presidency did not publicize anti-Birch

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275. Brown to Bennion, 29 May 1968.

276. "Shun Vigilante Groups, LDS Urges Members," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 Mar. 1970, B-1.

277. "TO ALL STAKE PRESIDENTS INTERESTED IN TRUTH AND LIBERTY THIS CALL IS MADE," photocopy of typed document, undated, in folder 22, box 5, Buerger Papers, with signed copies by J. Wilson Bartlett in MS 2461, LDS archives, and in folder 3, box 124, Hinckley Papers.

278. Lee, "To the Defenders of the Faith," 4 Apr. 1970, *Improvement Era* 73 (June 1970):

Mormons.[278] By contrast, the First Presidency did not publicize anti-Birch efforts four years earlier to have Benson expelled from the Twelve.

For supporters of this right-wing petition in 1970 it would have been more significant for Benson himself to publicly repudiate the circulation of this document and condemn the attitudes behind it. However, Benson remained notably silent about this widely circulated use of his name. "Despite continued threats of demonstrations," Harold B. Lee's biography observes, "not a single hand was raised in opposition" to the First Presidency on 6 April 1970. After the vote, Lee spoke against "the possibility of using political devices or revolutionary methods that could cause much confusion and frustration in the work of the Lord." The official photograph showing the Twelve's vote for the current First Presidency showed only three apostles, and the photograph centered on Ezra Taft Benson.[279] Rank-and-file Mormons noted that for the first time "in many years," Benson gave "his first non-political sermon" at this tension-filled conference of April 1970. They regarded this non-partisan talk as a result of specific instructions the apostle had received from the First Presidency.[280]

The newspaper published by Mormon members of the Birch Society was significant for what lay between the lines of its report of April 1970 conference. The *Utah Independent* began with the comment that church members will remember this general conference "for decades to come" and noted: "Despite persistent rumors to the contrary, no violence took place at the conference. No opposition was manifest by Church members when the names of general authorities were presented for sustaining." Of Lee's talk two days before this vote, the *Utah Independent* observed: "Special interest has centered around the talk given by President Harold B. Lee at the Saturday evening general priesthood session," and quoted excerpts. However, this Mormon-Birch newspaper made no reference to the part of Lee's talk which referred to the ultra-conservative proposal to vote against "the First Presidency with its social-democrat thinking," and to substitute Benson as new church president.[281]

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278. Lee, "To the Defenders of the Faith," 4 Apr. 1970, *Improvement Era* 73 (June 1970): 64.

279. Goates, *Harold B. Lee*, 414; Lee, "The Day in Which We Live," and photograph of "Council of the Twelve" vote in "The Solemn Assembly," *Improvement Era* 73 (June 1970): 28, 20.

280. Buchanan diary, 21 July 1970; Ezra Taft Benson, "A World Message," *Improvement Era* 73 (June 1970): 95-97, whose only political reference was prophetic: "The time must surely come when the Iron Curtain will be melted down and the Bamboo Curtain shattered."

281. Byron Cannon Anderson, "LDS General Conference Sustains Pres. Smith," *Utah Independent*, 9 Apr. 1970, 1, 4. Mormon Birchers had edited this newspaper since its founding in 1970. Its connection with the national society became obvious in 1976 when its

Not long afterward, the author of this article lost his job in the LDS Publications Department. His supervisor had told him that it was "inappropriate" for him to be a member of the John Birch Society and an editor of the ultra-conservative *Utah Independent*. When informed of this incident by the state coordinator of the Birch Society, Apostle Benson said he could do nothing to remedy it.[282]

While Harold B. Lee was in the presidency, he evidently even gave an embarrassing rebuke to Apostle Benson during a meeting of general authorities in the Salt Lake Temple. As reported by Henry D. Taylor, an Assistant to the Twelve, individual apostles were delivering formal presentations on various subjects to the assistants. Benson's assigned topic was the church's youth program, but he began presenting charts and quotes to show Communist influence in America and the need to teach anti-Communism to Mormon youth. Lee walked out while Benson was speaking, soon followed by the other apostles. Taylor and the other Assistants to the Twelve were the only ones who remained seated during Benson's presentation.[283]

Ernest Wilkinson and Benson both gave a less dramatic indication of the frustration felt by Mormon ultra-conservatives during the Smith-Lee presidency. BYU's president complained to Benson in April 1971 about not being able to establish "a chapter of the John Birch Society on our campus."[284] In April 1972 Benson told general conference listeners that "I would highly recommend to you the book *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* by Gary Allen." Allen was a member of the Birch Society and editor of its official magazine.[285] Benson's advice appeared in the report of his conference address by the Mormon-Birch *Utah Independent*, but the First Presidency deleted that recommendation from the official report of Benson's sermon.[286]

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regular column from national headquarters in Belmont, Massachusetts, was formally named "The Birch Log" as of *Utah Independent*, 5 Aug. 1976, 3.

282. Byron Cannon Anderson interview, 18 Jan. 1993.

283. Statement of Henry D. Taylor to his friend Mark K. Allen as reported in Allen interview, 3 May 1984, by Alison Bethke Gayek, photocopy in my possession. See above for Taylor's negative assessment in 1962 of Reed Benson's work with the Birch Society.

284. Wilkinson to Benson, 13 Apr. 1971, also follow-up letter of 4 May 1971, Wilkinson Papers, photocopies in my possession; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 190.

285. Gary Allen, *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* (Rossmoor, CA: Concord Press, 1971). For Allen's prominent role in the Birch Society, see his, "The Life and Character of Robert Welch," *American Opinion* 28 (Mar. 1985): 127, and Allen's permanent position as a "Contributing Editor" of *American Opinion* since September 1967

286. Benson, "Civic Standards for the Faithful Saints," *Utah Independent*, 14 Apr. 1972, 4; compare with censored version in *Deseret News "Church News,"* 8 Apr. 1972, 12, and *Ensign* 2 (July 1972): 59-61. On 12 December 1972, BYU professor J. Kenneth Davies reported

Three months later, President Joseph Fielding Smith died, followed in another seventeen months by the unexpected death of President Harold B. Lee. Hugh B. Brown had already been released as counselor. With the deaths of Smith and Lee, the First Presidency's most strident voices against Benson's ultra-conservatism were stilled.

Less than two months after Spencer W. Kimball became church president in December 1973, Benson's political crusade re-emerged. The two were ordained apostles on the same day, and Benson was now President of the Twelve and next-in-line to become LDS president. In February 1974 Benson resumed partisan warfare by announcing that the church might officially support political candidates. Then on the eve of the November election he publicly endorsed the ultra-conservative American Party and spoke at its rally on the Saturday before the election. This required the First Presidency to issue an immediate statement that "we take no partisan stand as to candidates or parties, and any person who makes representations to the contrary does so without authorization."[287]

Nevertheless, in 1974 there was a reversal of the policy against allowing BYU's *Daily Universe* to give any mention of the Birch Society. On 25 November the *Universe* published a favorable article about the Birch Society. The Smith-Lee administrations had continued the policy established by McKay in 1964 against "allowing" articles in the BYU newspaper about the Birch Society. In 1974 the student newspaper's content was still monitored by BYU's administration, but ultra-conservative partisanship no longer met the kind of First Presidency opposition that existed from Brown's appointment as counselor in 1961 to Lee's death in 1973.[288]

Still, there were limits to the Kimball administration's truce with ultra-conservative Mormons. For example, Benson's resurgent activism was unsuccessful during 1975 in obtaining approval for the Birch Society's

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that he had seen the original letter of Harold B. Lee, N. Eldon Tanner, and Marion G. Romney about this matter to Bishop Delbert Warner (to whom Davies was a counselor). The Lee Presidency stated that Ezra Taft Benson had requested that the published version of his conference sermon delete his endorsement of Allen's book (Duane E. Jeffery memorandum, 12 Dec. 1972, photocopy provided in Jeffery to D. Michael Quinn, 9 Dec. 1992). In my view, the more likely scenario is that in April 1972 the Joseph Fielding Smith Presidency (in which Lee was a counselor) had immediately asked Apostle Benson to formally request this published censorship of his ardently felt endorsement.

287. "Support for Candidate Possible Some Day, LDS Apostle Says," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1974, B-1; "Benson Tells Party Support," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 Nov. 1974, 29; "Church Says Elder's Speech on Third Party 'Unauthorized,'" *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 4 Nov. 1974, A-10; "American Party told, 'Stand Firm,'" *Deseret News*, 4 Nov. 1974, B-14.

288. David O. McKay to Earl C. Crockett, 4 June 1964, and Crockett memorandum, 11 Dec. 1965, Wilkinson Papers, photocopies in my possession; LaVarr G. Webb, "In John Birch Society[,] Fanatics Are Hard to Find," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe "Monday Magazine,"* 25 Nov. 1974, 4-6, 10; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 196, 262-63.

president to be a speaker at BYU.[289] Such a request would not have even been possible during the Smith-Lee presidencies. This most recent refusal to sponsor the Birch president at BYU echoed an identical decision during the McKay administration ten years earlier.

Nevertheless, Kimball's more relaxed approach to Benson's partisanship gave the apostle increased leverage at BYU. For example, in May 1976 Benson carefully questioned BYU's president Dallin H. Oaks whether BYU was "friendly to solid conservative constitutionalists." A few days later Oaks told fellow administrators about "BYU's tenuous position in the silent contest with extremists of the right wing."[290]

After a string of talks which echoed themes of the Birch Society,[291] Benson spoke at the dedication of W. Cleon Skousen's Freemen Institute at Provo, Utah, in September 1976.[292] Five years earlier, Skousen had organized the Freemen Institute which initially attracted Mormon members of the Birch Society. Skousen named the organization after the Book of Mormon's "freemen." He renamed it the National Center for Constitutional Studies and moved its headquarters to Washington, D.C., as an ecumenical effort to attract conservative non-Mormons who had been put off by the Mormon orientation of the Freemen. Within a few years the membership in this spin-off of Utah's Birch Society shifted from 90 percent Mormon to more than half non-Mormon.[293]

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289. President's meeting, 22 Jan. 1975, archives, Brigham Young University, photocopy in my possession.

290. Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 221-22.

291. Benson, "Problems Affecting the Domestic Tranquility of Citizens of the United States of America: Sovereign Remedies For Our Diseases," *Vital Speeches* 42 (1 Feb. 1976): 236-43; "Elder Benson Warns of Communism's Threat," *Brigham Young University Daily Universe*, 25 Feb. 1976, 2; "Inflation, Reds Pose Peril, Benson Warns," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5 Mar. 1976, B-5; "Ezra Benson: Will Mormons Go Political?" *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Apr. 1976, Pt. I, 5; "LDS Apostle Warns of Communism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 20 Apr. 1976, A-8; "Benson Attacks Welfare as 'Legal Plunder,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 June 1976, B-1; "Benson Deplores 'U.S. Support' of Communism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 June 1976, 18; "Pres. Benson Hits Detente: Policy Called Aid to Communism," *Deseret News*, 23 Aug. 1976, B-11; "Benson Lambastes Detente, Support of Communism," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Aug. 1976, Pt. II, 17.

292. Wilkinson diary, 18 Sept. 1976; "Pres. Ezra Taft Benson Speaks At Freeman Institute," *Utah Independent*, 23 Sept. 1976, 5.

293. "Freemen Institute a Burgeoning Political Force," *Deseret News*, 14 June 1980, A-7; *Behind the Scenes: A Personal Report to Pledged Freemen from W. Cleon Skousen* (Salt Lake City: The Freemen Institute, 1980), 2, photocopy in folder 25, box 17, Buerger Papers. This full publication citation is necessary, because his other *Behind the Scenes* were monthly periodicals. Also John Harrington, "The Freemen Institute," *Nation* 231 (16 Aug. 1980): 152-53; Linda Sillito and David Merrill, "Freemen America," *Utah Holiday* 10 (Feb. 1981): 34-43, 66-67, 70-75, (Mar. 1981): 33-40, 52-54; "Cleon Skousen: Humble Teacher or Apostle of the Right?" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 Aug. 1981, B-6; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 220-21, 454n88; "Cleon Skousen: Controversial Dean of Utah's Conservatives,"

Former BYU president Wilkinson gave the invocation before Benson spoke at this dedicatory service of the Freemen Institute on 18 September 1976. As previously discussed, Skousen, Wilkinson, and Benson had been allied as advocates of the Birch Society for more than a decade. Now, for the first time, all three participated at an ultra-conservative political meeting also attended by the secretary to the LDS church president. The evident news black-out of this meeting in all the regular newspapers of Provo, Salt Lake City, and Ogden, Utah, apparently resulted from the fact that newspaper reporters were excluded from this dedicatory service of the Freemen Institute. Even the Mormon-Birch *Utah Independent* reported only Benson's attendance at the dedicatory service.[294]

D. Arthur Haycock, President Kimball's secretary, specifically linked the Birch Society with this ceremony at the Freemen Institute in September 1976. After Wilkinson gave the prayer at the Freemen dedication, Haycock confided to him on this day that "nearly all of them [the general authorities] believed in the concepts of the John Birch Society." That may have been an overstatement, but more importantly it showed that the Birch Society and Benson in particular had a partisan friend in the First Presidency's office. Haycock had been private secretary to Benson as Secretary of Agriculture and was a confidant and significant influence on President Kimball.[295]

Deseret News Utah Magazine, 9 Mar. 1986, 4; "Commission Stops Selling Skousen Text," *Deseret News*, 6 Feb. 1987, B-2; "Skousen's Flock Spreading the Word on Constitution," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Apr. 1987, B-2; "Skousen Isn't About to Break His Ties to Rev. Moon," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Apr. 1987, B-1; "Skousen Stepping Down as President of Institute," *Deseret News*, 17 Sept. 1989, B-3; "Skousen Retires From Constitutional Studies Center," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 20 Sept. 1989, B-8; *Encyclopedia of Associations*, 27th ed. (Detroit: Gale Research, Inc., 1993), s.v. National Center for Constitutional Studies (#14805); also Freemen Institute papers, Western Americana, Marriott Library.

294. Wilkinson diary, 18 Sept. 1976; "Pres. Ezra Taft Benson Speaks At Freeman Institute," *Utah Independent*, 23 Sept. 1976, 5. There was no advance notice or news report of this Freeman Institute dedicatory service in the *Deseret News* (17-20 Sept. 1976), or in the *Provo Daily Herald* (17-19 Sept. 1976), even though the meeting was held in Provo.

"Benson Chides Fiscal Policies," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 19 Sept. 1976, B-2, and "Benson Calls For Sounder Fiscal Policy," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 19 Sept. 1976, A-10, referred only to "the opening of a private political research organization in Provo," failed to identify the Freeman Institute by name, to give the significance of the meeting to the organization, or to mention the presence of W. Cleon Skousen, Ernest L. Wilkinson, and D. Arthur Haycock. Since the reports of Benson's talk in the *Tribune* and *Standard-Examiner* were identical, they were obviously press releases. Benson's office, rather than the Freeman Institute, probably provided the media with the press releases in order to avoid identifying the meeting as a Freeman Institute gathering. This avoidance of publicity was not typical of Skousen, the Freemen Institute, or Benson.

295. Wilkinson diary, 18 Sept. 1976; also D. Arthur Haycock's identical statement in his interview with me, 3 Aug. 1979; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 262; Edward L. Kimball, ed., *The*

However, Kimball demonstrated that he was not always willing to turn a blind eye toward the ultra-conservative activism of senior apostle Benson and his Mormon allies. Undoubtedly, Kimball's opposition was behind Benson's non-acceptance of the U.S. presidential nomination from the Concerned Citizens Party in 1976. Involving former members of the American Party (which Benson had publicly endorsed) and LDS members of the Birch Society, the "Concerned Citizens party will be dedicated to individual rights under the Constitution," and proposed to bring God "back into government."[296] Also Benson declined as "impractical and impossible" efforts by "a resurrected 1976 Committee" for him as vice-presidential candidate with former Texas governor John B. Connally as candidate for U.S. president.[297]

The last known instance of "espionage" at BYU and its apparent promotion by Ezra Taft Benson as an apostle occurred in 1977. Some students in Brigham Young University's Washington, D.C., seminar were recruited to "spy" on professors there. One of the student reports of faculty surveillance intended for Ezra Taft Benson's office instead ended up on the desk of Mark E. Petersen. After being informed of this "spy ring" by Apostle Petersen, BYU's president Dallin H. Oaks angrily referred to "that Birch Mafia that surrounds ETB." Apostle Benson had put William O. Nelson in charge of this most recent effort at BYU espionage.[298] Nelson was Benson's secretary in the Church Administration Building.[299]

President Kimball resolved this "spy scandal" with a decisiveness lacking in the more famous episode of 1966. He made the following statement to the school's Board of Trustees in December 1977: "We understand that a member or members of the Board directly, or through others, have sought evidence about alleged statements made by faculty members in courses taught on the BYU campus and have stated or implied that such evidence is to be used by a Church official in a so-called 'hearing.'" The church president's blunt statement concluded with a clear

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Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball . . . (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), xvii; Jack Walsh, "D. Arthur Haycock: Aide to Four Prophets," *Ensign* 14 (Aug. 1984): 22-27; Dell Van Orden and Gerry Avant, "Secretary to Five Prophets Called As Temple President," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 19 Jan. 1986, 6, 11; my interview on 5 Sept. 1992 with Rodney P. Foster, assistant secretary in the First Presidency's Office from 1974 to 1981.

296. "Party Qualifies For Utah Ballot," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6 Mar. 1976, B-5; "LDS Official Says 'No' to Politics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 Mar. 1976, B-4, and "Party Clarifies Stand on Benson Selection," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Mar 1976, 38.

297. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 446.

298. Duane E. Jeffery memorandum, 26 Oct. 1977, folder 28, box 6, Buerger Papers.

299. "LDS Official Acknowledges Church Monitors Critics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Aug. 1992, D-1; "LDS Leaders Say Scripture Supports Secret Files on Members," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Aug. 1992, B-1.

disapproval of such "surveillance of BYU employees."[300] Although he did not name senior apostle Benson as the BYU trustee who instigated this unauthorized BYU "surveillance," it was consistent with similar espionage attempts involving Benson for the previous seventeen years.

Barely a year later Kimball and his counselors found it necessary to counter the now-familiar pattern of Mormon ultra-conservatives to imply church endorsement. In February 1979 the First Presidency published a statement against "announcements [that] have been made in Church meetings of lectures to be given by those connected with the Freemen Institute."[301]

After another series of political talks, Benson was sufficiently confident to authorize the Birch Society to publish one of his talks in its February 1980 magazine.[302] At a meeting of the Freemen Institute on 23 February Benson next gave a major address.[303] Then at BYU three days later he delivered a "devotional talk" which proclaimed the right of the LDS prophet to speak and act politically. The First Presidency immediately issued a statement that Benson was misquoted. However, it was difficult to finesse his words for the capacity BYU audience in the 25,000-seat Marriott Center or for the thousands of other Utahns who listened to the broadcast on radio and television of Benson's "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophets." To most observers, Benson's 1980 talk at BYU was a defiant announcement of his own future intentions as church president.[304]

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300. Minutes of Combined Boards of Trustees, 7 Dec. 1977, archives, Lee Library, photocopy in my possession; Bergera and Priddis, *Brigham Young University*, 223.

301. Spencer W. Kimball, N. Eldon Tanner, and Marion G. Romney to All Stake Presidents, Bishops, and Branch Presidents in the United States, 15 Feb. 1979, photocopy in folder 25, box 17, Buerger Papers.

302. "Free Enterprise Endangered, President Benson Warns," *Deseret News*, 17 May 1977, B-3; "Benson Hails Free Enterprise in 'Hill Cumorah Address,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 13 July 1977, A-9; "LDS Leader Offers Interpretation of Church and State Separation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 July 1977, 19; "Socialism Growth in US Rapped by LDS Leader," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 Sept. 1977, A-24; "Pres. Benson Defends Free Market," *Deseret News*, 10 Dec. 1977, A-9; "Nation 'Spending Into Oblivion,' Pres. Benson Warns at LDS Meet," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 Mar. 1979, D-2; "Benson Rakes U.S. 'Subversives,'" *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 4 July 1979, A-14; Ezra Taft Benson, "A Warning to America," address to the California Constitutional Crusade, 9 Oct. 1979, transcript in folder 23, box 5, Buerger Papers; "LDS Official Decries Spread of Marxism," *Deseret News*, 27 Oct. 1979, A-7; "Apostle Calls For Return to Gold Standard," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 20 Jan. 1980, A-12; Ezra Taft Benson, "A Moral Challenge," in John Birch Society's *American Opinion* 23 (Feb. 1980): 41-54.

303. "Benson Urges Monetary Step: Re-Establish Metal Standard," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 25 Feb. 1980, B-2; "Gathering of Freemen Institute Draws Crowd to Arizona Resort," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 25 Feb. 1980, A-12.

304. Benson, "Fourteen Fundamentals In Following the Prophets," transcript of his talk to BYU's devotional, 26 Feb. 1980, folder 24, box 5, Buerger Papers; *Devotional Speeches*

Predictably, the First Presidency was critical of Benson's 1980 BYU talk. On 5 March the presidency issued a statement that "we reaffirm that we take no partisan stand as to candidates or political parties, and exercise no constraint on the freedom of individuals to make their own choices in these matters."[305] However, the church's official spokesperson claimed that "there is no connection between this [First Presidency] letter and a speech by Apostle Ezra Taft Benson to Brigham Young University" a few days before.[306] Those connected with LDS church headquarters knew otherwise.

Kimball's son affirms that President Kimball bore no ill feeling toward his longtime associate but "was concerned about Elder Benson's February 1980 talk at BYU." The church president wanted "to protect the Church against being misunderstood as espousing ultraconservative politics, or—in this case—espousing an unthinking 'follow the leader' mentality."[307] A general authority revealed that Kimball asked Benson to apologize to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles who "were dissatisfied with his response." Therefore, Kimball required him to explain himself to a combined meeting of all general authorities the following week.[308]

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of the Year (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1981); "Prophet's Word 'Law' Benson Tells Group," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 26 Feb. 1980, A-2; "Benson Backs Prophet on Politics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Feb. 1980, B-3; "Mormon Leader's Word Is Law—Benson," *San Jose Mercury News*, 27 Feb. 1980, A-2; "Interpretation of Speech Not Correct, Church Says," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 27 Feb. 1980, C-1; "Mormon Professor Says Benson Speech Was Plea Anticipating Rise to LDS Presidency," *Idaho State Journal*, 28 Feb. 1980, A-2; "U. Teacher Replies To Benson" and "Savant Hits 'Theocracy' He Says Benson Wants," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 28 Feb. 1980, B-1, B-3; "Pres. Benson Outlines Way to Follow Prophet," *Deseret News "Church News,"* 1 Mar. 1980, 14; "No. 2 Mormon Says Leader's Word is Law," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Mar. 1980, Pt. I, 35; "Benson Speech Stirs Speculation on LDS Changes," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, 2 Mar. 1980, A-1, A-5; Sterling M. McMurrin, "Case for Vigilance," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 Mar. 1980, A-9; Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 468-69.

305. First Presidency statement, 5 Mar. 1980, *Deseret News "Church News,"* 8 Mar. 1980, 3; "Church Policies and Announcements," *Ensign* 10 (Aug. 1980): 79.

306. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 9 Mar. 1980, C-31.

307. Edward L. Kimball to D. Michael Quinn, 14 Aug., 20 Aug. 1992, concerning discussions with his father in 1980. In 1980 President Kimball's wife Camilla also described "his displeasure with the speech" to her brother-in-law George T. Boyd. Boyd to D. Michael Quinn, 24 Sept. 1992.

308. In 1980 a general authority reported to George T. Boyd the apologies which Kimball required of Benson. Boyd's letter to me, 24 Sept. 1992, requested that I not identify the general authority for publication. Boyd (an in-law of Spencer and Camilla Kimball) also reported this conversation to BYU professor Duane Jeffery early in 1980. Telephone interview of Jeffery in David John Buerger diary, 14 Aug. 1980, folder 4, box 1, Buerger Papers. These reproofs were also reported in "What Mormons Believe," *Newsweek* 96 (1 Sept. 1980): 71, in "Thus Saith Ezra Benson," *Newsweek* 98 (19 Oct. 1981): 109; in Allen interview (with Henry D. Taylor as a general authority source different from the above), 3 May 1984, by Alison Bethke Gayek; and in my interview on 5 Sept. 1992 with Rodney P.

The entire Benson family felt anxious about the outcome of this 1980 meeting. They apparently feared the possibility of a formal rebuke before all the general authorities. Benson's son Mark (a Bircher and the Freemen Institute's "Vice President in Charge of Development") wrote him a note that morning: "All will be well—we're praying for you and *know* all will be well. The Lord knows your heart." The meeting went well for Benson who "explained that he had meant only to reaffirm the divine nature of the prophetic call." Ezra's biographer indicates that the most effusively supportive general authority in attendance was Apostle Boyd K. Packer: "How I admire, respect and love you. How could anyone hesitate to follow a leader, an example such as you? What a privilege!"[309] A few months later, Benson wrote to his "Dear Friends" on the Birch Society staff.[310]

President Ezra Taft Benson

By the time Ezra Taft Benson himself became church president in 1985, he no longer acted as a standard-bearer of the anti-Communist movement. After all, at eighty-six, Benson was the second oldest man to become LDS church president and already suffered dizzy spells, memory loss, and difficulty in public speaking.[311] Besides, the widespread paranoia and political passion of the 1950s and 1960s had died. Although still active in promoting anti-Communism in the 1980s, the John Birch Society now seemed irrelevant.[312] In 1989 the Utah leader of the Birch Society reported 700 dues-paying members.[313]

Benson's ascension occurred in the middle of America's conservative "Reagan Revolution." The church president saw this as a personal vindication.[314] The former publisher of *American Opinion* and director of public

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Foster, assistant secretary in the First Presidency's Office from 1974 to 1981.

309. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 469. For Mark Benson's position in 1980, see "Mark Benson Becomes Our New Vice President in Charge of Development," *Behind the Scenes* (Jan. 1980): [4].

310. Benson to "John Birch Society Staff," 30 May 1980, archives, Birch Society, with photocopy in my possession. This was in response to a get-well card with messages from each Birch staff member.

311. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 486-87.

312. "John Birch: Beware the One-Worlders," *Newsweek* 99 (15 Mar. 1982): 17; "The Lonely McCarthyites," *Newsweek* 103 (28 May 1984): 11; "The Birchers After Welch," *Newsweek* 105 (21 Jan. 1985): 38; "Robert Welch, RIP," *National Review* 37 (8 Feb. 1985): 20; "Once a Red, Always a Red: For Birchers, No Peace," *Newsweek* 116 (17 Sept. 1990): 36.

313. "John Birch Society Is Out of Spotlight, But It's Still Alive and Well in Utah," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 July 1989, B-10. The BYU library continues to receive copies of *The John Birch Society Bulletin* and its new magazine, *The New American*.

314. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson*, 469-70. For the national context of the 1980s, see Robert Dallek, *Ronald Reagan: The Politics of Symbolism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,

relations for the Birch Society had already been appointed as one of U.S. president Ronald Reagan's special assistants.[315] Non-Mormon journalists astutely noted: "In the past [Ezra Taft] Benson's heavy-handed political maneuvering has antagonized numerous members of the [LDS] church, leading to fears of a major schism if he became president."[316] When he ascended to that office in November 1985, church officials insisted that Benson's political activism was "in the past."[317] Four months later, the *Salt Lake Tribune* noted that "President Benson's Fiery Conservatism Remains Quiet."[318]

Nevertheless, the Birch Society's new magazine immediately heralded the appointment of "the long-time Americanist patriot" as the new LDS president. "As in numerous past attempts to smear him and distract from his anti-Communist message, recent news articles have linked [Ezra Taft] Benson to The John Birch Society," the magazine noted two weeks later in its regular "American Hero" section. The Birch magazine then mentioned Reed Benson's affiliation and quoted President Benson: "I do not belong to The John Birch Society, but I have always defended this group."[319] The new

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1984); David G. Green, *The New Conservatism: The Counter-Revolution in Political, Economic, and Social Thought* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987); Gary Wills, *Reagan's America: Innocents At Home* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987); Sidney Blumenthal, *Our Long National Daydream: A Political Pageant of the Reagan Era* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America, 1978-1988* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Martin Anderson, *Revolution: The Reagan Legacy* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institute Press, Stanford University, 1990); Haynes Johnson, *Sleepwalking Through History: America in the Reagan Years* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991).

315. John H. Rousselot in *American Opinion* 7 (July-Aug. 1964): inside front cover, 10 (July-Aug. 1967): inside front cover; "Reagan's New Lobbyists to Business," *Fortune* 107 (30 May 1983): 36; Anderson, "Church and Birch In Utah," 21.

316. Bob Gottlieb and Peter Wiley, "Mormons to the Right," *San Jose Mercury News*, 1 Dec. 1985, 9; also "Possibility of Benson Heading Mormons Worries Some With Different Views," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Apr. 1976, Pt. I, 32; "Mormon Church Faces A Fresh Challenge . . . But Now, A Change of Leaders May Bring A Split In Its Ranks," *U.S. News & World Report* 95 (21 Nov. 1983): 61; "Conservative Seeking Leadership Worries Some Mormons," *Baltimore Sun*, 11 Dec. 1983, A-3; Gottlieb and Wiley, *America's Saints*, 247, 257; "Mormon Church Council Meets To Pick New Leader," *Dallas Morning News*, 11 Nov. 1985, A-4.

317. "New Chief of Mormons: Ezra Taft Benson," *New York Times*, 19 Nov. 1985, A-16; also Robert Lindsey, "The Mormons: Growth, Prosperity and Controversy," *New York Times Magazine*, 12 Jan. 1986, 46.

318. "President Benson's Fiery Conservatism Remains Quiet," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 Mar. 1986, B-2; "President Benson's First Year: Leader Stresses God, Not Politics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6 Oct. 1986, A-7.

319. "New Head of Mormon Church," *The New American* 1 (25 Nov. 1985): 9; Evans-Raymond Pierre, "The True Man of Principle: Ezra Taft Benson," *The New American* 1 (9 Dec. 1985): 56.

church president's son Mark A. Benson was still on the board of the Utah Birch spin-off, National Center for Constitutional Studies, and remained in that position through December 1986.[320]

Many faithful Latter-day Saints had disagreed with Apostle Benson's advocacy of the Birch Society for three decades, and some had openly opposed his political activism. Benson himself had publicly announced how one could disagree with one's supreme file leader and still loyally sustain such a leader. "The American people can respect their President, pray for their President, even have a strong affection for him, and still have an honest difference of opinion as to the merits of some of his programs," Benson once preached.[321] Politically that was certainly Benson's relationship with LDS presidents Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee, who had both criticized his advocacy of the Birch Society and restrained his partisan activities during their administrations. In addition, during the McKay presidency Benson had even publicly dissented from the "program" of his file leaders in the Quorum of the Twelve.

Most important for the hierarchy, however, during the 1980s-90s there were no political liberals for Benson as church president to combat in the First Presidency or Quorum of Twelve. The hierarchy had learned a lesson from the public controversy about Brown and Benson. If you appoint a political liberal as an apostle, you invite conflict within the politically conservative hierarchy, especially if it contains a firebrand like Benson. Therefore, following the appointment of N. Eldon Tanner as apostle in 1962, moderate church presidents McKay, Smith, Lee, and Kimball appointed no more political liberals to the Quorum of the Twelve. The only Democratic apostles, Boyd K. Packer and James E. Faust, were not known as liberals.[322] In addition, Benson's appointments to the Quorum of the Twelve, Joseph B. Wirthlin and Richard G. Scott, lacked any background in ultra-conservative politics. His counselors Gordon B. Hinckley and Thomas S. Monson were political moderates.[323]

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320. *The Constitution: The Voice of the National Center for Constitutional Studies*, Nov. 1985, 4, Dec. 1986, 3.

321. Benson, "An Internal Threat Today" (paid advertisement by Concerned Citizens and Treasure Valley Freedom Forum), *Idaho Statesman*, 19 Jan. 1964, B-7, 11th para.; also typescript of the address to the Treasure Valley Freedom Forum, Boise, Idaho, 19 Dec. 1963, transcript, 2, Moss Papers.

322. Conversation in 1980 with Wayne Owens, recently returned LDS mission president, Democratic leader, and former U.S. congressman from Utah. Packer became an apostle in 1970, Faust in 1978.

323. *Deseret News 1993-1994 Church Almanac*, 15, 19; "Benson Heads Mormons, Enlists 2 Key Moderates," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 Nov. 1985, Pt. I, 6; my interviews on 29-30 Aug. 1992 with Alan Blodgett, managing director of the LDS church financial department from 1969 to 1980 and managing director of the investment department from 1980 to 1985; my

One political loss Benson experienced during the Reagan years was federal adoption of Martin Luther King Day as a national holiday. In the 1960s Benson had identified King as a Communist.[324] After Reagan signed the law for King Day, Cleon Skousen's Freemen Institute observed that this national holiday honored "a man who courted violence and nightriding and broke the law to achieve his purposes; who found it expedient openly to collaborate with totalitarian Communism; and, whose personal life was so revolting that it cannot be discussed."[325] In deference to such views, conservative members of the Utah legislature in 1986 refused to allow the state to call this national holiday by King's name.[326] Although it is a state institution, the University of Utah's next academic *Catalog* officially called the holiday by Martin Luther King's name. By contrast, BYU called the holiday "Human Rights Day" until the fall of 1988.[327]

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interview on 2 Nov. 1992 with Lowell M. Durham, Jr., who was vice-president (and then president) of Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution (ZCMI) from 1982 to 1990.

324. "Benson Ties Rights Issue to Reds in Mormon Rift," *Washington Post*, 19 May 1963, E-1, E-7. Benson told BYU students that the American civil rights movement was "Communist inspired" and that its unnamed leader was a Communist sympathizer, if not an actual Communist. The publication of this talk identified King in the index as this Communist civil rights leader. See Benson, *An Enemy Hath Done This*, ed. Jerreld L. Newquist (Salt Lake City: Parliament Publishers, 1969), 310, 361. See also discussion above of Benson's response to King's assassination.

325. Willard Woods, "Martin Luther King Day," *Freemen Digest*, Jan. 1984, 23; also Skousen and R. Stephen Pratt emphasized King's association with Marxists and Communists in their two articles, "The Early Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.," and "Reverend King's Ministry: Thirteen Years of Crisis," *Freemen Digest*, Jan. 1984, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20. Aside from guilt-by-association, the concluding sentence of Skousen's and Pratt's first article (14) was guilt-by-similar-interest: "As the King program got under way, Gus Hall, head of the Communist party USA, declared: 'For us, by far the most significant development is the escalation of mass protest movements by the American people.'"

In his telephone conversation with me on 15 January 1993, D. Arthur Haycock brought up Martin Luther King day as an example of false historical perspective. He stated that the nation had chosen to dishonor two admirable presidents—Washington and Lincoln—by eliminating their holidays and by substituting in their place a holiday for "a man who had sex with three different women the day he died." See previous text discussion for the pro-Birch statement of Haycock while he was secretary to the LDS church president.

326. The state of Utah uses the name "Human Rights Day" instead of Martin Luther King Day. For the difficult passage and renaming of Martin Luther King day in Utah, see *Deseret News*, 14 Oct. 1985, A-2, 13 Feb. 1986, A-1; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Feb. 1986, A-1, 28 Feb. 1986, A-5, 18 Mar. 1986, B-1. For the Utah legislature's continued disrespect toward the national King holiday, see "Martin Luther King Holiday or Not, Utah Lawmakers Convene Today," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 Jan. 1993, B-1; also companion article "Utah's Mix of Church and State: Theocratic or Just Homogenized?" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 Jan. 1993, B-2.

327. *Bulletin of the University of Utah: General Catalog, 1987-88* (Salt Lake City, 1987), 4; *Brigham Young University Bulletin: General Catalog, 1987-1988* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1987), 18, listed it as "Human Rights Day"; *1988-1989 General Catalogue: Brigham Young University Bulletin* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1988), ix, listed

Like the Birch Society itself,[328] church president Benson continued to preach a conspiratorial view of American society into the late 1980s. "A secret combination that seeks to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries is increasing its evil influence and control over America and the entire world," Benson told October 1988 general conference.[329]

In view of his preoccupation with conspiracies, it is probably not surprising that President Benson's administration encouraged a special church committee to monitor and maintain surveillance files on academics, intellectuals, and others assumed to be critics of the church. William O. Nelson, a veteran of Benson's abortive 1977 BYU spy ring, became the executive secretary of this "Strengthening the Members Committee."[330] A man who served as assistant secretary in the First Presidency's office from 1974 to 1981 had never heard of this committee's existence during the Kimball presidency.[331]

In June 1989 the Birch Society held a dinner and meeting of its national council in Salt Lake City but without the controversy of two decades earlier. It was a sign of the times that the *Salt Lake Tribune* barely mentioned the Birch council meeting, the first of its kind in Utah. However, it published a long article titled, "Are We Hearing Death Rattle of Communism?"[332]

Two months later Republican U.S. president George Bush awarded

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it as "Martin Luther King's Birthday holiday."

328. For example, Thomas R. Eddlem, "Bolshevism With a New Name," *The New American* 6 (3 Dec. 1990): 22, said that newly non-Communist Czechoslavakia's president Vaclav Havel, formerly imprisoned as a dissident by the Communist regime there, was actually "a key actor in one of the greatest deceptions of all time."

329. Benson, "I Testify," *Ensign* 18 (Nov. 1988): 87.

330. "LDS Official Acknowledges Church Monitors Critics," *Salt Lake Tribune* (8 Aug. 1992): D-1; "LDS Leaders Say Scripture Supports Secret Files on Members," *Salt Lake Tribune* (14 Aug. 1992): B-1; "Secret Files," *New York Times* (22 Aug. 1992): 9. Previously, maintaining such files on church members were usually *ad hoc* activities of the First Presidency's office, Presiding Bishopric Office, Mark E. Petersen's special committee, Correlation Committee, the Special Affairs Committee, and Ezra Taft Benson's office. Only the Church Security Department has had an on-going responsibility to maintain information files on "disloyal" or "potentially dangerous" Mormons and to conduct physical and photographic surveillance. Such intelligence gathering is conducted through what Church Security calls its "Confidential Services."

331. My interview on 5-6 September 1992 with Rodney P. Foster, assistant secretary in the First Presidency's office from 1974 to 1981, and member of the Temple Department at LDS headquarters from 1981 to 1989. For Benson's promotion of "espionage" at BYU, see discussion above of 1960, 1965, 1966, 1969, 1977.

332. *The John Birch Society Bulletin*, May 1989, 30; "Birch Dinner in S.L.," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 June 1989, E-5; "Are We Hearing Death Rattle of Communism?" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 18 June 1989, A-3.

the Presidential Citizens Medal to Benson. This was another personal vindication of Benson's decades of political activism.[333] Benson was the first man who became LDS president after decades of polarizing Mormons with public controversy.[334] Mormon members of the Birch Society also felt personal vindication in Benson's advancement as church president in 1985.

Conclusion

In 1991 Utah membership of the John Birch Society mushroomed as a result of U.S. president George Bush's proclaiming U.S. participation in a "New World Order." As part of the United Nations successful Gulf War, President Bush adopted a phrase used by ultra-conservatives for decades to identify the "collectivist" goal of the international conspiracy. By May 1991, Utah had 1,000 members of the Birch Society, an increase of nearly 50 percent from two years earlier.[335] In 1990 apocalyptic-minded Mormon members of the Birch Society had also organized "the American Study Group" which grew to 1,400 members within two months.[336]

This revitalization of Mormon Birchers occurred while their presidential advocate was slipping deeper into the decay of old age. President Benson was physically unable to speak at general conference from April 1990 on. At his last public appearances in 1992 he was a frail shell of the

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333. *Deseret News 1991-1992 Church Almanac (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1990)*, 315. This information was omitted from the *1993-1994 Church Almanac*, 370.

334. Some might cite Brigham Young, Heber J. Grant, or Joseph Fielding Smith as examples. Young's unpopularity and divisiveness began with his ascendance to the church presidency in August 1844, not while he was an apostle for nine years. As an apostle, Grant was unpopular with many Mormons on a personal level because of his business activities and emphasis, but he did not polarize Mormons while he was an apostle. As church president, however, Grant did polarize Mormons. This was manifested by the wholesale disregard by Mormons for Grant's political pronouncements, even on "moral issues" like Prohibition. The other likely candidate, Joseph Fielding Smith, was unpopular with some Mormons because of his well-known theological dogmatism for fifty years before his church presidency in 1970. However, there was only a quiet tension within the modern LDS church about Smith compared to the decades of widespread public controversy about Benson.

335. John F. McManus, "'A New World Order' Means World Government," *The John Birch Society Bulletin* (Nov. 1990): 3-14; "Birch Society Lauds 'Fertile Soil' In Utah," *Deseret News*, 13 May 1991, B-2; "Utah's Birchers Organizing To Fight Bush 'Conspiracy,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 May 1991, B-1; "John Birch Society Skeptical of Communist Party Demise," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Sept. 1991, B-1; "'John Bircher' Recruits Join Fight Against New World Order," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 21 June 1992, B-1.

336. "Longtime Doomsayer Seeks 'Safety' Back in LDS Fold," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 Jan. 1993, B-6; also reference to the American Study Group in Malcolm S. Jeppsen, "We Shall Not Be Led Astray," 8, computer print-out, 25 Oct. 1992, photocopy in my possession.

strident partisan whom Mormons had known for decades.[337]

By the fall of 1992 Mormon advocates of Ezra Taft Benson's ultra-conservativism found themselves in a religious quandary. LDS church officers were suspicious of "those obsessed with the early speeches of LDS Church President Ezra Taft Benson and who believe the ailing, 93-year-old leader has been silenced because his opinions no longer are politically popular." Such ultra-conservative Mormons were being excommunicated or disciplined in Utah and surrounding states. One of them protested, "We support President Benson 100%," but "there are some brethren who speak 180 degrees against him."[338] Such anti-Benson influence had characterized the Mormon hierarchy in the 1960s, but the scales had tipped in a dramatic way by 1992. Based on the instructions of a general authority in October 1992, stake presidents prepared a list of twenty warning signs of apostasy. Third on this list was "John Birch membership or leanings."[339]

Such an indictment against the Birch Society was not possible even while anti-Birch men like Hugh B. Brown, N. Eldon Tanner, Joseph Fielding Smith, and Harold B. Lee served in the First Presidency. During those years, Apostle Benson was embattled within the Mormon hierarchy, but his influence was too powerful to allow a linkage of Birchism with apostasy. This 1992 "Profile of... Troublesome Ideologies" was the ultimate evidence that the incapacitated Ezra Taft Benson had ceased to be the administrative leader of the LDS church.[340]

By Gordon B. Hinckley's own admission at October 1992 conference, the presidency counselors had taken over the helm of the LDS church. He denied that "the Church faces a crisis," just because he and Counselor Thomas S. Monson were the "backup system" for the incapacitated President Benson.[341]

However, their caretaker presidency represented a crisis for many

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337. *Ensign* 20 (May 1990): 1, 20 (Nov. 1990): 1, 21 (May 1991): 1, 21 (Nov. 1991): 1, 22 (May 1992): 1, 22 (Nov. 1992): 1; photographs in "LDS Historian Says Benson's Right-Wing Beliefs Caused Infighting, Church To Censure Speeches," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Aug. 1992, A-7, and in "Age Taking Its Toll On President Benson," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Jan. 1993, C-1.

338. "It's Judgment Day for Far Right: LDS Church Purges Survivalists," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Nov. 1992, A-1, A-2. In "LDS Deny Mass Ouster of Radicals," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 Dec. 1992, 1, an official LDS spokesman denied only the estimate of "hundreds" of excommunications. See also "LDS Church Downplays Reports On Discipline," *Deseret News*, 4 Dec. 1992, B-1.

339. "Profile of the Splinter Group Members or Others with Troublesome Ideologies," photocopy in my possession. This list was based on instructions to stake presidents by Second Quorum of Seventy member Malcolm S. Jeppsen in his "We Shall Not Be Led Astray," especially on page 8 of his computer print-out, 25 Oct. 1992.

340. Also statements of Jack Lewis and D. Michael Quinn in KUER's broadcast of "All Things Considered," by National Public Radio, 4 Dec. 1992.

341. Gordon B. Hinckley, "The Church Is On Course," *Ensign* 22 (Nov. 1992): 53.

Mormon ultra-conservatives. Hinckley and Monson were philosophical heirs of President Harold B. Lee's conviction (expressed in 1970) that Mormon ultra-conservatives have schismatic tendencies because of their willingness to brand anti-Birch general authorities as "Judases."[342] The LDS church's "purge" of ultra-conservatives was an ironic thirty-year anniversary of Reed Benson's appointment and Ezra Taft Benson's first public endorsement of the John Birch Society in October 1962.

The perspective of James "Bo" Gritz, a Mormon, on this point is crucial. As the ultra-conservative presidential candidate in the national election of 1992, most of the support for Gritz was in the "Mormon Culture Region"[343] centering on the state of Utah which alone gave him 28,000 votes.[344] Concerning recent pressures against Mormon ultra-conservatives, Gritz observes: "The critics I'm talking about are not little people but church authorities [who] have said what Ezra Taft Benson says before he was a prophet doesn't count."[345]

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Mormon hierarchy wanted ultra-conservative Mormons to ignore what Apostle Benson was saying. They did not. Beginning in the mid-1980s, the Mormon hierarchy wanted ultra-conservative Mormons to forget what Ezra Taft Benson had said before he became LDS church president. They would not. One day the LDS church hierarchy will demand that Mormon ultra-conservatives abandon what their dead apostle-hero-prophet said about politics, Communism, and conspiracy. They never will.[346]

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342. See discussion above of the remarks by a BYU religion professor against second counselor Hugh B. Brown in November 1962, the identical allusion by Ezra Taft Benson on the day Brown was sustained as first counselor in October 1963, a similar assessment of Apostle Mark E. Petersen by Mormon Birchers in March 1966, and the ultra-conservative proposal in April 1970 to reject Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, and N. Eldon Tanner as the First Presidency. For Hinckley and Monson as proteges of Harold B. Lee, see Gottlieb and Wiley, *America's Saints*, 59, 61.

343. For this term, see Wilbur Zelinsky, "An Approach to the Religious Geography of the United States: Patterns of Church Membership in 1952," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51 (June 1961): 163-64, 193; D.W. Meinig, "The Mormon Cultural Region: Strategies and Patterns in the Geography of the American West, 1847-1964," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 55 (1965): 191-220; Samuel S. Hill, "Religion and Region in America," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 480 (July 1985): 137; D. Michael Quinn, "Religion in the American West," in William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin, eds., *Under An Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1992), 146, 160.

344. "Hero-Turned Heretic? Gritz May Be Leading LDS Flock Into Wilderness," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 29 Nov. 1992, A-2.

345. "Ultraconservative Gritz Remains as Bold as Ever," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Dec. 1992, B-2; also "LDS Zealots Muzzling Outspoken to Protect Tax Status, Gritz Says," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Jan. 1993, B-1.

346. In his letter to the editor, "Stand Fast For Freedom," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 22 Dec.

For more than two decades as an apostle, Ezra Taft Benson testified in the name of the Lord—and with the tacit if not always informed approval of David O. McKay—in support of the political views of the John Birch Society. He expressed this as his apostolic testimony. Also, while addressing various congregations of Mormons, Apostle Benson specifically praised Birch publications and endorsed membership in the Birch Society. He clearly defined all of this as his personal mission from God. On the other hand, Benson's opponents in the Mormon hierarchy defined his support of the Birch Society and of ultra-conservatism as personal opinion at best and as misguided at worst. For rank-and-file Mormons who supported his views, God resolved this controversy by making Ezra Taft Benson the church's prophet and president. Within the context of LDS faith and priesthood, it is difficult to argue with that logic. After all, the First Presidency never publicly repudiated Ezra Taft Benson while he was an apostle, and instead permitted the Deseret Book Company, *Church News*, and official conference reports to print most of the partisan views he expressed.

Despite their disssent, the politically moderate general authorities allowed Ezra Taft Benson to become an enduring hero of ultra-conservatives. It now seems uncharitable for the LDS hierarchy to punish Mormon "true believers" for emulating this apostle's thirty years of rejecting political moderation.[347]

1992, A-13, Ken Noorlander explained that "certainly we must not hold invalid the teachings of President Ezra Taft Benson, even if they were made a few decades ago. . . . President Benson's admonitions and warnings are as valid today as when they were given. It matters not whether they are politically correct or religiously controversial.

"Though we as individuals may be titled as 'fringe radicals,' 'ultra-conservatives,' 'super patriots' and 'freemen,' we should not be overly concerned. When has the truth ever been the popular thing to believe?"

347. "Mormon Church Has Begun To Expel Many Extremists," *New York Times*, 21 Dec. 1992, 10. For my use of the term, see Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951).

A Strange Phenomena: Ernest L. Wilkinson, the LDS Church, and Utah Politics

Gary James Bergera

Politics is a strange phenomena.
—Ernest L. Wilkinson, 1961[1]

FOR ERNEST LEROY WILKINSON, successful Washington, D.C., lawyer and seventh president of Brigham Young University, campaign politics was a game he could never master. From his rowdy youth in Ogden, Utah's notorious Hell's Half-Acre district, where blind eyes turned to cock-fighting and bootlegging, he had been fascinated by the nature and use of power.[2] By the time he was fifty, he had secured a string of hard-won national victories as a tenacious and intimidating legalist. But the lure of politics remained the one attraction, despite other professional and personal accomplishments, he could not resist.[3]

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1. Wilkinson to S. Lyman Tyler, 13 Feb. 1961, Brigham Young University Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; hereafter BYU archives.

2. This is Wilkinson's own characterization of the Ogden of his youth. See "[Auto]biography of Ernest L. Wilkinson for High Priests Quorum in 17th Ward of Salt Lake Stake," 27 Nov. 1977, privately circulated. For a more thorough history of Ogden, see Richard C. Roberts and Richard W. Sadler, *Ogden: Junction City* (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1985).

3. Wilkinson's life has been treated in considerable detail in Ernest L. Wilkinson, ed., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, Vol. 2 (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 497-723; Ernest L. Wilkinson and Leonard J. Arrington, eds., *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, Vol. 3 (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 3-789; Ernest L. Wilkinson and W. Cleon Skousen, *Brigham Young University: A School of Destiny* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1976), 429-759;

Even before Wilkinson accepted in late July 1950 the invitation to become president of BYU, a position for which he had lobbied ranking LDS leaders, his possible involvement with campaign politics had surfaced. While church officials, who doubled as school trustees, did not agree on the feisty lawyer until mid-way through the previous April,[4] word of Wilkinson's probable appointment had already reached the Provo campus. "I keep hearing rumors that you may be my new boss," wrote BYU treasurer Keifer B. Sauls on 5 April. However, "just about the time I am about convinced of the reliability of this rumor," he continued, "I meet someone who says that my rumor is all wrong, that you are to run for the Senate two years hence." Though "both are good ideas," he admitted, "from a selfish point of view I like the idea of your being in Provo better than in Washington."[5] The fifty-one-year-old Wilkinson hedged on both counts: "It would be extremely difficult for me to abandon my law practice," he tactfully wrote.[6]

Some Washington pundits believed that Wilkinson's reputation, based on an impressive chain of native American claims litigations, as a savvy behind-the-scenes congressional strategist could garner him a place in the U.S. Senate. But Wilkinson refused to consider seriously the possibility. He sensed that while he could safely navigate the turbulent waters of the federal bureaucracy, he had not mastered the social rules of political gamesmanship and, hence, was not convinced he would be victorious. However driven and ambitious, Wilkinson was not self-destructive: he would rather not run than risk losing and the resulting humiliation. Besides, he had spent the previous two to three years advising selected LDS leaders of his vision of BYU and was more interested in—and hopeful of—the prospects, and advantages, of serving in Utah than in the nation's capitol.

During the Cold War years following World War II the majority of general officers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were, like most Americans, anti-Communist. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., former U.S. ambas-

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and especially in his commissioned and privately published biography: Woodruff J. Deem and Glenn V. Bird, *Ernest L. Wilkinson: Indian Advocate and University President* (N.p.; n.d. [1978?]).

4. See nominating committee (Joseph Fielding Smith, Stephen L Richards, Joseph F. Merrill, John A. Widtsoe, and Albert E. Bowen) to the First Presidency, 14 Apr. 1950, BYU archives. With only one or two exceptions, members of BYU's board of trustees also served as high-ranking leaders of the Mormon church.

5. Sauls to Wilkinson, 5 Apr. 1950, Ernest L. Wilkinson Papers, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library. Copies of virtually all documents from the Wilkinson Papers cited in this essay are also in private possession, which is my source for them, and many are referenced in the sources cited in n3 above.

6. Wilkinson to Sauls, 19 Apr. 1950, Wilkinson Papers.

sador to Mexico, ardent Republican, and first counselor in the church's First Presidency, asserted in 1949, "Our real enemies are communism and its running mate, socialism."[7] Less than three years later, Mormon president David O. McKay stressed, "Only in perpetuating economic freedom can our social, political, and religious liberties be preserved."[8] The eighty-year-old patriarch recommended: "Every child in America [should be] taught the superiority of our way of life, of our Constitution and the sacredness of the freedom of the individual."[9] "I have generally felt," agreed one politically-minded general authority, "that a member of the Church could not be a true Latter-day Saint and be a Communist or a Socialist. . . . I think the principles of both are incompatible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."[10] "If we have in the Church any Communists holding to the views taught in Russia and which interferes or takes away from an individual his free agency," echoed another, "then I would feel that he has no place in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."[11] Finally, an unsigned editorial in the *Church News* section of the *Deseret News* subsequently announced: "It is as much a part of the religion of American Latter-day Saints to accept the Constitution of the United States, and defend it, as it is to believe in baptism or the resurrection."[12]

This pervasive concern among LDS authorities over the growth of Communism and what they viewed as allied economic and political evils manifested itself most dramatically in Ernest Wilkinson's appointment as president of the church's educational showpiece. A Republican convert and conservative critic of the federal government, Wilkinson in many ways personified the economic, political, and social beliefs of the majority of his ecclesiastical superiors. He needed little encouragement, for example, when LDS leader Stephen L Richards charged him at his 1951 inauguration as BYU president to "implant in youth a deep love of country and a reverential regard for the Constitution of the United States."[13] "This insti-

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7. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "America Faces Freedom-Slavery Issue," an address delivered to delegates of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, 14 Sept. 1949, in *Church News*, 25 Sept. 1949. For Clark's views on Communism, see D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1983), 188-92.

8. David O. McKay, "Education—A Freedom People's Best Investment," an address delivered in Founders' Day exercises, Utah State Agricultural College, 7 Mar. 1954, in *Church News*, 12 Mar. 1954.

9.David O. McKay, "Education for Citizenship," an address delivered at the inauguration of Henry Aldous Dixon as president of Utah State Agricultural College, 8 Mar. 1954, in *Church News*, 13 Mar. 1954.

10. Ezra Taft Benson to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 28 June 1961, Wilkinson Papers.

11. Joseph Fielding Smith to Ernest L. Wilkinson, 15 June 1961, Wilkinson Papers.

12. "The Doctrines of Men," *Church News*, 11 Aug. 1962, 16.

13. Stephen L Richards, "The Charge," in *Report of the Proceedings of the Inauguration of*

tution," Wilkinson had two years earlier promised Mormon authorities, "is definitely committed to a philosophy which is the antithesis of that espoused by the communists.... More than any other school, Brigham Young University has a better basis for teaching correct principles of government."[14]

What Wilkinson hoped to establish was an exemplary institution of higher learning where a loyal and patriotic faculty would "teach 'correct' economic doctrines—doctrines which would assist in salvaging the American system of free enterprise from threatened extinction."[15] To this end, he actively promoted a politically conservative image for himself and his university, while championing the appearances of anti-Communist crusaders and lobbying for the establishment of a curriculum and faculty that favored Republican party principles.

Advised at the outset of his tenure to curb his potentially divisive interests, Wilkinson moved cautiously to define politics as narrowly as possible. This afforded him considerable leeway in addressing issues others saw as political and in allowing him to invoke his interpretation of LDS teachings and the public statements of contemporary church leaders in support of his own beliefs. Indeed, criticism of his policies, he would explain, amounted to an "unwillingness . . . to follow the counsel of those [who have been] sustained as our leaders and whom we have promised to support and follow."[16] "I have observed the spirit of your desire," he wrote during the 1952 national fall campaign to David O. McKay, who had become president the previous year, "that the Church and this institution take no partisan stand in favor of one [political] party as against the other." Still, he added, knowing that the venerable McKay would concur, "at the same time, we do not hesitate to suggest certain L.D.S. concepts by which our members should judge the political issues."[17]

Earlier that day Wilkinson had outlined what those "certain L.D.S. concepts" included. In introducing outgoing U.S. president Harry S. Truman, in Utah stumping for Democratic presidential hopeful Adlai Stevenson, Wilkinson's distrust of Truman, his administration, and Democrats generally was evident. Which party, he rhetorically asked his student audience, better preserves "the ideals, principles and traditions of our

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Ernest LeRoy Wilkinson, 8 Oct. 1951, in *The Messenger,* Nov. 1951, BYU Archives.

14. Wilkinson to John A. Widtsoe, 13 Aug. 1949, Wilkinson Papers.

15. Wilkinson to J. Reuben Clark, Jr., and Howard D. McDonald, 11 June 1949, Wilkinson Papers.

16. Wilkinson, "The Decline and Possible Fall of the American Republic," a speech delivered to the BYU student body, 28 May 1965, 4, BYU archives.

17. Wilkinson to McKay, 6 Oct. 1952, Adam S. Bennion Papers, Archives and Manuscripts, Lee Library.

sacred constitution"; which better contributes "to public morality among our leaders and civic righteousness among all our citizens"; which better protects "our country, both from without and within, from the ungodly forces of Communism and other alien ideologies"; which better unites "our country by bonds of patriotism, civic responsibility and good will, making government the servant of all and not the instrument of favored classes or special groups"; which, "within the proper bounds of representative constitutional government," better promotes "the general welfare and do[es] justice to all, both rich and the poor, and not array class against class"; and which, "by a wise mixture of unselfish counsel, benevolence, and firm insistence on self-help and the assumption of individual responsibility by all peoples," gives "us the best in world statesmanship, so that the good people of all nations, not because we control the purse strings or have superior armaments at our command, but because of our genuine example as a Christian nation, will follow us in our search and quest for peace."[18]

Committing himself wholly to his duties as university president and, beginning in 1953, as administrator of the entire church educational system,[19] Wilkinson's impact on the previously bipartisan BYU community was almost immediate. "There had been some activity politically at the university before Ernest Wilkinson became president," remembered one longtime friend, "but not nearly as much as [after] his administration began. . . . There were many university professors who were Democrats, and some stayed on with the university after Ernest came, but they weren't very vocal Democrats."[20] In the mid-1950s one faculty member characterized the "professional radicalism" of his colleagues as extending "no further than [to a] belief in Social Security or Adlai Stevenson."[21]

But even these and beliefs like them could be enough to raise Wilkinson's ire. Until 1959 he refused to authorize commemorative activities honoring the United Nations because it competed with the "American form of republican government."[22] Nor would he tolerate liberal or leftist lectur-

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18. Ernest L. Wilkinson, introduction to "Address to the Brigham Young University Studentbody by President Harry S. Truman," 6 Oct. 1952, in *Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1952-53), 11-12. Wilkinson had earlier hosted Senator Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois, who spoke in behalf of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Wilkinson's preference for president.

19. See BYU Board of Trustees Meeting, minutes, 26 June 1953, BYU archives, for Wilkinson's appointment as LDS church schools administrator.

20. George S. Ballif, Oral History, 18 Feb., 8 Mar. 1974, 32-33, BYU archives.

21. In "Scope of Academic Freedom; Dogmatism is Only Real Threat," *Daily Universe*, 21 Apr. 1953; cf. Wilford D. Lee, Oral History, 12 Aug. 1975, 17, BYU archives.

22. See BYU Board of Trustees Meeting, minutes, 23 Nov. 1955, 3 June, 2 Dec. 1959; "Board of Trustees Reverses Stand on BYU United Nations Activities," *Daily Universe*, 10 Dec. 1959.

ers on campus. "There are certainly going to be no communists speaking to our students," he insisted, "[or] any fellow travelers who invoke the Fifth Amendment for the purpose of refusing to tell of their communistic affiliations."[23] Speakers who accepted Wilkinson's invitations challenged students to "become as indoctrinated in Americanism as Soviet children are in communism."[24] Not surprisingly, the accrediting team of the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools observed following their 1956 tour of the campus that "capitalism and the free enterprise philosophy appear to be given strong preference at the administrative level."[25] Wilkinson countered defensively, "This accreditation committee was composed of professors from other institutions, some of whom I feel were a little too much blinded by their ivory towers and not enough illuminated by the realities of life. . . . I do not believe that academic freedom requires that we put on the faculty of colleges of business individuals who are opposed to free enterprise—the very system which, together with our religious devotion, has made our country great."[26]

In response to the apparent politization of their school, especially evident in campus-wide assemblies, some students publicly criticized Wilkinson for his "unabashed partisanship." "The political speakers at university programs, with one exception, have been of one political party," wrote one student in 1954. "I believe that this has unconsciously influenced many students, and that by being so arranged, these programs have degenerated from an educational function into a political harangue."[27] Another noted, "[Selling] politics on the market of righteousness is repulsive to intelligent students and townsfolk alike. If this is to become a university, we must have fewer 'little' deeds from Big

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23. Ernest L. Wilkinson diary, 9 Sept. 1957, photocopy, David J. Buerger Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City; also in private possession; original in Wilkinson Papers. Wilkinson's voluminous personal diaries, like any first-person narrative, are their author's own best source and consequently should be consulted with some caution, especially when they are used as the primary and/or only reference for comments and motivations attributed to others. Aside from this, they are valuable and generally reliable resources for documenting Wilkinson's life and thought, as well as his interaction with others and their relationships with him. Unfortunately, the diaries and personal papers of many of Wilkinson's contemporaries, particularly ranking LDS church leaders, are unavailable for verification or clarification.

24. See "Crusader Tells Menace of Communist Program," *Daily Universe*, 24 Oct. 1960. One speaker predicted a communist takeover of the United States by 1970. See "Reds Plan to Take Over U.S. by 1970," *Daily Universe*, 30 June 1959, and "Reds to Take Over," *Daily Universe*, 21 July 1959.

25. "Re-evaluation Report on Brigham Young University," Nov. 1956, 30, BYU archives.

26. Wilkinson, Statement, 1956, BYU archives.

27. Roger A. Sorenson to Editor, *Daily Universe*, 2 Nov. 1954.

Brother."[28] Other students were soon joking that socialism should be redefined to mean "any plan for social change or betterment not cleared with . . . President Wilkinson"; that conscience referred to "a special sense of right and wrong which is possessed only by . . . a few Republicans of the extreme right, most of whom the students of Brigham Young University have been privileged to hear speak"; and that freedom of speech actually meant the "freedom to listen . . . to a defense of President Wilkinson's political philosophy."[29] "Most of us who have been around for a while realize that President Wilkinson is a conservative Republican," student editors later commented. "We know these things because he has told us many times."[30] Finally, one student added, "One need no especially acute perception to note that the weekly forum speakers tend to advocate the same political and economic philosophy. Can we claim intellectual honesty for ourselves . . . when we present only one side of an issue while the other is disparaged or at best neglected?"[31] Unfazed by but not oblivious to such criticisms, Wilkinson assured himself that his views and actions were endorsed by the president of his church, his board of trustees, and the majority of his faculty and students.[32]

Less than three years after coming to BYU, Wilkinson skirted the suggestion that he run for the U.S. Senate by explaining he "had burned my political bridges when I accepted my present position."[33] He later insisted:

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28. J. Smith to Editor, *Daily Universe*, 4 Nov. 1954.

29. See Maurice M. Tanner to Editor, *Daily Universe*, 23 May 1961, and James H. Bean to Editor, *Daily Universe*, 25 May 1961.

30. "Political Vista," *Daily Universe*, 23 June 1961.

31. Jim Duggan to Editor, *Daily Universe*, 19 Apr. 1962.

32. During his twenty years at BYU, Wilkinson emerged as a skillfull manager of university policy. He discovered that school trutees were often more concerned with moral questions than with "technical problems of education" and that many held "conflicting viewpoints" regarding the future of BYU (Wilkinson diary, 18 Dec. 1953, 21 May 1959). Thus in early 1955 he resolved to "take fewer things to the Board of Trustees, use my best judgment in making many decisions myself, knowing that . . . unless I make some serious mistake, the entire board would generally support me in my decision" (ibid., 4 Mar. 1955). Furthermore, he strategically cultivated a "special relationship" with David O. McKay, giving him privileged access to the church president. "If Wilkinson wanted something and was turned down by the board," explained BYU treasurer Keifer Sauls, "he'd . . . go around the board and go straight to David O. McKay" (Sauls, Oral History, 1979, 20-22, BYU archives). At the same time, in terms of his political, social, and economic agenda, Wilkinson had the virtually unqualified support of his board of trustees; the divisive factors that would later alienate him from two or three of them centered largely on differences in personality.

33. Wilkinson diary, 18 Mar. 1954. When asked two years earlier if he was interested in running for Utah governor, Wilkinson had replied, "I do not have any political ambitions. Some years ago, I did have, but I saw so much of political life in Washington, that I lost the appetite. I am frank to say to you that I think I can render much more effective service at

"When I accepted this appointment here I did so with the intention of putting all political ambitions behind me. I am still of the same opinion."[34] Still, for a strong-willed, stubborn, impatient man, accustomed to expressing his opinions freely and vigorously, Wilkinson found the restraints imposed on him—however narrowly he constructed them—confining. He noted to J. Reuben Clark that "I was quite restless under my instructions that I was not to speak out on political and economic matters." Clark, the eighty-three-year-old statesman and pragmatic churchman, thought of his own political and ecclesiastical career, and of his shattering demotion from first to second counselor in the First Presidency following McKay's ascension as president.[35] He advised Wilkinson "to restrain myself and repeated to me again his famous story of Solomon and the wise man, in which the wise man continually said, 'These things will pass.'"[36]

Wilkinson's discomfort stemmed from his anxiety that a burgeoning federal bureaucracy together with congressional and judicial reinterpretations of the Constitution were fast paving the way to socialism and ultimately Communism. His earlier exodus during the 1930s from Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal democracy, "when it became socialistic," to Republican politics had, he believed, enabled him to "see things in better perspective and more independently."[37] Illustrative of his Cold War fears is a 2 March 1955 letter to Ezra Taft Benson, at the time U.S. secretary of agriculture. A member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles of the LDS church and Wilkinson's former Washington, D.C., Mormon stake president (under whom Wilkinson had served as second counselor), Benson was a sympathetic friend and confidant who, Wilkinson knew, shared his political and economic beliefs—and may have actually helped shape them. Enumerating a lengthy list of executive and congressional actions he viewed as symptomatic of socialistic trends, Wilkinson took particular umbrage with "increases in pay and other military allowances"; multi-billion-dollar expenditures for an inter-state highway system; increasing the minimum wage from seventy-five cents to ninety cents per hour, which he termed "certainly a Socialistic New Deal measure"; the decision to provide 70,000 public housing units; "the drift toward further bureaucratic, centralized government" in the call for a federal director of public works; and the move to raise congressional salaries in which President Dwight D. Eisenhower

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the Brigham Young University than I could by being Governor" (Wilkinson to Sterling W. Sill, 28 July 1952, Wilkinson Papers).

34. Wilkinson to M. DeMar Teuscher, 25 May 1955, Wilkinson Papers. Teuscher was political writer for the Salt Lake City *Deseret News*.

35. See Quinn, 121-25.

36. Wilkinson diary, 23 Feb. 1955.

37. Ibid., 20 July 1954.

had, Wilkinson wrote, "accepted completely the New Deal theory that men are no longer to be principally motivated by high ideals, by patriotism, or by love of service, but primarily by the almighty dollar."[38]

Wilkinson reserved his most vehement criticism, however, for the social security system. "No responsible authority," he insisted, "has ever yet attempted to justify the extension of social security unless a more sound fiscal system for its payment is also provided. . . . The greatest tragedy in the history of the United States," he maintained, "is the fact that the Supreme Court was packed, and thereby the constitution was changed so as to permit the expenditure of one person's money in the interests of another. Except for that change in the constitution," he added, "we would not be having the socialism we are having today because Congress would not be permitted to legislate for one class of people at the expense of another." He admitted, in conclusion, "I recognize that the President is trying to arrest some of the more marked trends of the previous administration, but I do not think that he is standing up against the forces of reaction (falsely called liberalism) the way that he should."[39] Though also suspicious of the United Nations, Wilkinson chose not to broach the subject.[40]

In response, Benson displayed a moderation that for Wilkinson only served to underscore his own firebrand extremism. "After re-reading your letter I can only characterize it as one of extreme conservatism," Benson mildly castigated his former counselor two months later. "Apparently you . . . disapprove of President Eisenhower's middle-of-the-road program. I am inclined to the so-called conservative side myself but a rigid adherence to extreme conservatism does, in my judgement, have in it a real danger for the present, at least." Convinced that "any presidential candidate who today would run on a platform like the one you outline would face overwhelming defeat," Benson believed that if Wilkinson could escape "from the secluded and relatively quiet office of a University President" and "work in the Government in Washington for a few months you might find yourself closer to agreement with administration policies." Though the secretary confessed to harboring "some misgivings" regarding the interstate highway expansion program and the minimum wage increase, he generally supported those measures Wilkinson opposed. He favored, for example, congressional salary increases and the appointment of a director of public works. "If we do not pay reasonable salaries," he explained, "do we not run the risk of inviting graft by those holding office; or in the main

38. Wilkinson to Benson, 2 Mar. 1955, Wilkinson Papers.

39. Ibid.

40. See Wilkinson diary, 16 Oct. 1955.

getting incompetent people? . . . I'm inclined to feel we tend to get about what we pay for in the matter of public service."[41]

Of social security, Secretary Benson observed, "You seem to be opposed to the whole Social Security Program. . . . It seems to me there is a basic necessity in modern society to provide a minimum reserve to cover the necessities of life for older citizens who are no longer able to work. Furthermore, it seems to be the only effective way of combating old age pensions offered on an attractive and dangerous basis for political purposes by many States." Acknowledging the "great danger of over taxation and of too much Government," Benson nevertheless affirmed: "tomorrow's generations will not tolerate the extreme disparity of income which normally characterizes a society when Governments take only a minor role in economic life . . . In a Government such as ours there must be an endeavor to improve the lot of the average man if it is to remain in power." Benson was confident that his administration's "constructive program" would eschew "various socialistic schemes," and concluded with a gentle reminder and warning: "We must keep in mind that the principles of Constitutional Government permit change in Government structure with changing times within the framework, of course, of the Constitution. I'm sure you are not against progress, although one not acquainted with you might feel from your letter that you are against change rather than for Constitutional Government."[42] Although Benson's views would come to reflect Wilkinson's conservatism almost identically,[43] the apostle's unenthusiastic response must have been disappointing.

Wilkinson continued to chafe under the injunction that he refrain from public political entanglements and began to direct his increasing fears toward BYU and its faculty. In early January 1956, he recorded that he had

> finally got[ten] around to facing one of the real problems on the campus (although in not as aggravated a form as on other campuses)—that of false economic and political thinking. I do not mean by this the question of

41. Benson to Wilkinson, 12 May 1955, David O. McKay Papers.

42. Ibid.

43. See, for instance, his views on social security in his 1969 bestseller, *An Enemy Hath Done This* (Salt Lake City: Parliament Publishers): "Social Security is unconstitutional. Why not end it by refunding to all participants their equitable share? The Social Security system in the U.S. is compulsory, unfair and immoral . . ." (226). In fact, Benson's only criticism of Wilkinson following Wilkinson's retirement from BYU in 1971 was that he "could have given more attention to the Social Sciences, and to the philosophy of the men who were hired as leaders in those Departments" ("Summary of Glenn V. Bird Oral Interview of Ezra Taft Benson," 19 July 1977, privately circulated). For Benson's later conservatism, see D. Michael Quinn, "Ezra Taft Benson and Mormon Political Conflicts," in this issue of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.*

whether faculty members belong to one political party as opposed to the other but the false thinking that the government exists to support them rather than they to support the government. Had a conference with [two colleagues], who think very strongly on this matter, and together we decided there were five approaches that had to be taken to the problem:

1. An examination of textbooks in the social sciences.
2. Distribution of educational literature to the teachers.
3. The holding of economic and political forums for proper education of teachers.
4. A questionnaire to be used by me in the interrogation of new teachers, and
5. The publication of an economic booklet by the BYU along the lines of one published by George Benson, President of Harding College.[44]

If Wilkinson intended to follow through on his resolve to review and upgrade his school's curricula, his commitment was short-lived. Beginning in late 1955 and continuing into the early months of 1956, the university president faced his first real political temptation since moving to Provo five years earlier: the race for Utah's governorship.

A grassroots campaign, of which Salt Lake City mayor Adiel Stewart was one of the most vocal proponents, had been repeatedly calling for Wilkinson's candidacy, and some local power brokers believed the president stood a genuine chance of being elected. Wilkinson was first approached on 2 February 1956 by Richard Cardall, executive secretary to Utah's Republican senator Arthur V. Watkins, and by Merrill Davis of the Utah State senate about running for governor. Flattered, Wilkinson nonetheless was reluctant to run for office without some kind of guarantee that he could return to BYU if his bid were unsuccessful, explaining to the two men that "I had a real challenge to accept at the B.Y.U.; that the Board of Trustees had been extremely loyal and supportive of my program, and under no circumstances could I run out of my present job without at least their full consent."[45]

Joined early the next month by O. M. Malmquist, political analyst for the *Salt Lake Tribune*, and the *Tribune*'s publisher, John Fitzpatrick, Cardall called on Wilkinson at the Hotel Utah in downtown Salt Lake City to discuss Wilkinson's political options. Cardall handed the university president a "list of prominent people in the State who had pledged their support" and told him that he had firm commitments from Republican party machinery members in five Wasatch front counties. Having received no word yet from LDS headquarters as to his eligibility, or as to the likelihood of his

44. Wilkinson diary, 2 Jan. 1956.
45. Wilkinson, memo, 10 Apr. 1956, Wilkinson Papers.

being able to return to his university post, Wilkinson replied that "I still would not consent to run." Malmquist assured him that initial support in Salt Lake County for Wilkinson's nomination "had been persistent." Betraying his true feelings, Wilkinson disingenuously reiterated that "I had never had any ambition to be Governor." Malmquist, sensitive to Wilkinson's nuance, answered that if Wilkinson "were going into politics . . . [he] ought to run for the Senate." Torn, Wilkinson "told him my attitude would probably remain the same and that I would not run but that I would let him know when the final decision was made."[46]

Fitzpatrick, one of the city's most influential non-Mormons, "reminded me," Wilkinson recorded, "that he had suggested on a number of previous occasions that I should run for the Senate. He said he hoped I would not get in the Governor's race, although if I would he would support me." Fitzpatrick added that "it would be foolish for me to issue a public statement saying I was not interested—that the free publicity I was getting without any effort by myself was not hurting me." Even if he elected not to run, Fitzpatrick advised, Wilkinson should "not issue any public statement for awhile because if I were still being considered I would then be in a position to help select the man I wanted for governor."[47]

From this meeting Wilkinson called next on David O. McKay. He informed the white-haired church president that "Republican Party leaders in the State felt that Governor [J. Bracken] Lee could not be re-elected even if he should be renominated, because all of the school teachers in the state, all the labor leaders, and many other groups would be solidly against him." McKay, himself a Republican and astute behind-the-scenes observer of Utah politics, evinced little surprise. When Wilkinson reminded him of Lee's earlier campaign pledge "that no man should occupy [the governorship] for more than two terms which would mean that the Governor would have to 'eat his own words,'" McKay replied that he could guess the reason for Wilkinson's interest in the upcoming election and "expressed deep opposition" to his party's other probable candidate, Utah state senator Rendell N. Mabey.[48]

Among Democrats, Wilkinson reported that John S. Boyden and L. C. ("Rennie") Romney appeared to be the two favorites, but "many thought

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46. Wilkinson diary, 5 Mar. 1956. Wilkinson was also concerned about the reaction of his wife, Alice. "Your mother is definitely opposed to my running for Governor," he wrote to one of his sons. "She knows the vicissitudes of politics and the fact that anyone in political life is always the subject of unending criticism. I feel quite sure that in this respect I could not fare any better than anyone else" (Wilkinson to David L. Wilkinson, 8 Mar. 1956, Wilkinson Papers).

47. Wilkinson diary, 5 Mar. 1956.

48. Ibid.

that Romney would be the nominee." McKay reportedly voiced "very vigorous . . . opposition to Romney on the ground that he was not at all honest."[49] Wilkinson then explained that "I had never had any personal ambition to be the Governor but that the Republican Party was looking desperately for some candidate who would have an opportunity to be elected and that I would be willing to do whatever President McKay wanted." McKay's immediate response was that Wilkinson should remain president of BYU and administrator of the church's school system. Like Fitzpatrick, though, McKay also suggested that Wilkinson "not make any public statement declining at the present time and that we let events take their course until after the [church's] April [semi-annual General] Conference and then make a final decision." McKay liked the idea of loyal Mormons in visible positions of social, economic, and political power but disliked the bitter controversy that sometimes accompanied such jockeying. Returning to Provo, Wilkinson later telephoned Apostle Harold B. Lee who thought Wilkinson's "present position was much more important than Governor." Lee, himself a former elected public official,[50] hoped Wilkinson "would have enough sense not to run."[51]

While debating the ramifications of a bid for the Utah governorship, Wilkinson attended a campus meeting sponsored by BYU's Young Republicans at which Reed Benson, a Republican activist and eldest son of Ezra Taft Benson, was the featured speaker. Wilkinson reported that he was "greatly disappointed" with twenty-eight-year-old Benson, who "spent most of his time praising his father, vilifying the Democratic Party, and otherwise trying to amuse the crowd. Unfortunately, also, he spent a good deal of time boasting about the fact that he was doing more speaking for the Republican National Committee now than anyone else. This consummate conceit, if not checked, will in the long run completely destroy his usefulness."[52]

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49. According to J. Bracken Lee, McKay "had no use for Rennie [L. C.] Romney—he *hated* Romney with a passion" (in Dennis L. Lythgoe, *Let 'Em Holler: A Political Biography of J. Bracken Lee* [Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1982], 155).

50. See L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet & Seer* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 106-15.

51. Wilkinson diary, 6 Mar. 1956. Wilkinson was not the first BYU official to involve ecclesiastical superiors in his political aspirations. Franklin S. Harris, BYU president during the 1920s, 1930s, and into the 1940s, reported in his diary in mid-1938, "In the afternoon the First Presidency told me they would like me to make the senate race" (9 Aug. 1930, see also 2, 10 Aug., 12, 13, 14 Sept., and 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Nov. 1938, Archives and Manuscripts, Lee Library). Harris subsequently lost by more than 20,000 votes to Democrat Elbert D. Thomas.

52. Wilkinson diary, 4 Apr. 1956. Though sympathetic to Benson's politics, Wilkinson condemned his having postponed his legal studies "to do this political speaking. . . . For the building of character in him it would be much better for him in his impressionable years

Within the week following April's LDS general conference Wilkinson met as promised with McKay to remind him of his suggestion that Wilkinson not discourage newspaper speculation on his running for governor. McKay now reported that "his own feeling was that they wanted me very much to stay at the B.Y.U." Wilkinson immediately quizzed McKay as to the views of apostles Joseph Fielding Smith and Harold B. Lee who, Wilkinson wondered, may have been waning in their support of his educational agenda. "Do you mean by that," McKay asked, "that they do not want you to stay?" "I mean nothing of the kind," Wilkinson answered. "I have had no indication to that effect, but I want to make sure." McKay then said he would discuss the matter with his brethren later that morning.[53]

When Wilkinson returned to McKay's office shortly before 3:00 p.m., the president "informed me by unanimous vote of the Quorum [of Twelve Apostles] and The First Presidency it was hoped I would stay at the Brigham Young University and not get into politics this year." McKay emphasized that the resolution was unanimous, "that everyone had the same idea." He continued, however, that it was his feeling Wilkinson might later succeed Arthur V. Watkins as Utah's senator. "He felt that was where I could do the most good," Wilkinson recorded, elated that his own political ambitions were shared by his prophet. "I told them I would be happy to abide by their judgment."[54]

Six days later, on 18 April, Wilkinson announced to the press that he would not campaign for governor. When he informed McKay of his public statement the same day, McKay confessed that he had earlier been approached by the church's presiding bishop, Joseph L. Wirthlin, and been urged to allow Wilkinson to run for office. McKay told Wirthlin he had already advised Wilkinson to the contrary. Wilkinson asked McKay if he had any objection to his serving as a delegate to the national Republican convention in San Francisco. McKay replied that "not only was there no objection but he thought I should be a delegate and that he thought I should do everything possible from now on looking toward running for the Senate at the next opportunity. This," Wilkinson happily reported, "came entirely unsolicited from him." McKay quickly added that "there were a lot of things

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to be digging at the law." Instead, Wilkinson feared, "he will be acquiring other interests and will never settle down to being a first-class student in the law, which will mean that he will probably become a political lawyer, which in the eyes of the profession is not a lawyer at all" (ibid.).

53. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with David O. McKay regarding the governorship, 23 Apr. 1956, Wilkinson Papers; see also Wilkinson to McKay, 13 Apr. 1956, McKay Papers. Wilkinson met with McKay on 12 April.

54. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with David O. McKay regarding the governorship, 23 Apr. 1956.

for me to do at the B.Y.U. before that time should come." Wilkinson agreed.[55]

Throughout the following months, Wilkinson continued to contemplate his political future, though, he would explain, "I have never permitted this interest to interfere with all the time that I have available for doing my work as President and Administrator of the Unified Church School System."[56] At the Utah Republican convention later that month he lamented that "the atmosphere and the facts which motivate action in a political convention are not nearly as healthy as those which motivate action in a church school system.... I am sure," he added, "that if I ever go into politics there will be many things about it that will be distasteful to me. One of the distasteful matters in yesterday's convention was that every one nominated had to give a speech in his own behalf."[57]

When pressured less than five months later by LDS authorities LeGrand Richards, Joseph L. Wirthlin, and Thorpe B. Isaacson "to make a public statement in favor" of Utah's controversial incumbent governor, and a non-Mormon, J. Bracken Lee, Wilkinson again found himself with mixed loyalties. Although Lee had lost to George D. Clyde in the Republican primary by some 8,000 votes, he was contemplating an independent bid for the governorship.[58] Aware of Lee's "integrity, his independence of political tricks, and the fact that there had been no attack of any kind on his administration as Governor, but rather on political issues which were clearly national and therefore irrelevant," Wilkinson "desired very much" to tender his endorsement of the political maverick. But also aware of the delicate position he held both as BYU president and future senatorial hopeful, and possibly fearing repercussions from equally partisan church and Republican party leaders, Wilkinson wrote that he "felt that my usefulness might be somewhat impaired if I did so and I therefore forsook my personal desires in the interest of my position despite the pressure of some of the Brethren [Richards, Wirthlin, and Isaacson] and despite the fact that they even went to President McKay and obtained his consent for me to make a statement. My conscience kind of troubles me," he later confessed, "because it has never been in character for me to refuse to express myself on troubled issues. I hope, however, I made the right decision."[59]

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55. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with David O. McKay, 18 Apr. 1956, Wilkinson Papers; see also Wilkinson Diary, 18 Apr. 1956.

56. Wilkinson diary, 2 July 1958.

57. Ibid., 27 Apr. 1956.

58. For Lee's third-term bid for Utah's governorship, see Lythgoe, 203-23.

59. Wilkinson diary, 10 Sept. 1956. In the November election, George D. Clyde won the governor's race, with 127,297 votes; Democrat L. C. Romney came in second, with 111,297 votes; and J. Bracken Lee, who announced his independent candidacy in October,

The following January, Wilkinson, convalescing from a massive heart attack and surgery, discovered a growing movement among Republicans to submit his name in consideration for appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Justice Stanley F. Read. In February, Utah's Republican senator Watkins publicly declared his intention to present Wilkinson's name to President Eisenhower. Wilkinson, aware of the improbability that a man in his present fragile physical condition would receive serious attention, asked that Watkins not present his name at that time. "It does not seem to me timely," he explained to the press, "that I should have my friends recommend me for this appointment."[60]

The next year, his health significantly improved, Wilkinson found himself, much to his own satisfaction, the focus of fervent appeals that he challenge Watkins for the Republican nomination to the U.S. Senate. Meeting with McKay in early 1958, Wilkinson discovered that his senatorial aspirations were greeted less than enthusiastically. The previous day, McKay had given his permission to leading Utah Republican leaders to "go ahead and try to get Dr. Ernest L. Wilkinson appointed to the [U.S.] Supreme Court at the first vacancy that might occur."[61] Wilkinson tersely informed McKay that he would willingly abide by any decision made by church officials provided "they get the full facts"—which he clearly hoped would change their minds. He admitted that he "sometimes believe [I] could render more service elsewhere because of my legal background, . . . [but] recognize, however, it is more important to further the work of the Lord than of Caeser." Still, he added, "we believe our government was inspired of the Lord"—thus adding a religious aspect to the discussion.[62]

Addressing the likelihood of a Supreme Court appointment, Wilkinson admitted that his chances were remote. He was approaching the age limit for federal appointees; he had never held a judicial position; and he expressed skepticism that Watkins was as supportive as had been reported (Wilkinson probably thought Watkins had heard of his possible challenge). Unaffected by Wilkinson's pessimism, McKay "informed me that he would like very, very much in the interest of the Church to see me appointed to the United States Supreme Court[,] . . . suggest[ing] that he would be most

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took third, with 94,428 votes. Lee had previously enjoyed the support of the LDS church. However, during his second term as governor he had alienated some ranking Mormons by his criticism of President Eisenhower's administration which they interpreted as as indirect criticism of Ezra Taft Benson.

60. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 17 Feb. 1957.

61. McKay diary, 3 Jan. 1958.

62. Wilkinson, confidential memorandum with David O. McKay, 4 Jan. 1958, Wilkinson Papers.

happy to do what he could to have me appointed to the Court." The church president announced that he was "very much concerned over the Court; that he considered Chief Justice [Earl] Warren a Socialist and that I was needed to balance Warren on the Court." While not eager to have Wilkinson leave his post with the church's school system, McKay added nonetheless, "An appointment of this kind would do great honor and credit to the Church." Wilkinson pointed out that "there was little I could do myself in favor of such an appointment." McKay replied that he realized there were obstacles "but thought we should (my friends) take such action as possible to get Senator Watkins enthused about me."[63]

Concerned about his president's apparent change of heart, Wilkinson reminded McKay that two years earlier he had suggested that Wilkinson consider running for the Senate and that now "that might be the desirable thing to do." He indicated that with J. Bracken Lee's loss in 1956 as a third-party independent to Utah's current governor by only 26,000 votes, "there was serious doubt as to whether Watkins would be able to be reelected to the Senate" should Lee choose to run against him. "Many [are] therefore urging me to run," he told McKay, "on the theory I could avert a split in the party—that the Lee followers had nothing against me and would probably support me, and many of Watkins followers would prefer me to a Democrat." He admitted, however, that "I had made no decision and that I would not want to run without a leave of absence from the Church School System."

McKay, who had not given up on the prospect of a Mormon sitting on the Supreme Court, "repeated that as far as the United States Supreme Court is concerned, he would very much like to have me on that Court." As to the U.S. Senate, the Mormon president "thought things ought to take their course," much as he had suggested two years ago.[64] McKay did agree, however, that if Wilkinson succeeded in garnering the Republican nomination "we shall give you a leave of absence from your present position while you run, and let you have your freedom to do as you wish, and will not lose your position as President of the Brigham Young University."[65]

Five weeks later, mulling over the political decisions with which he was struggling, Wilkinson attended a Republican Day Banquet at which Ezra Taft Benson was the guest speaker. Finding Benson's speech "on the whole" to be fine, Wilkinson applauded the secretary's stand against "subsidies and Government controls and handouts, . . . but how his conscience permitted him to say at the same time," Wilkinson wondered, "that he wanted it definitely understood that he was not in favor of doing away with

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. McKay diary, 4 Jan. 1958.

the price support program, . . . and how, consistent with his philosophy, he could have advocated the soil bank program, which is a complete Federal handout and subsidy, only the Good Lord and a politician could understand." Wilkinson lamented: "If one has to be duplicitous in that way to be in politics, it may be good that I am not in it." Yet in fairness, he conceded, "may I record that in these days of political legalized thievery, maybe things could be worse if someone other than Benson were Secretary of Agriculture."[66]

By the end of March 1958, Wilkinson was becoming increasingly doubtful that an all-out foray into partisan politics would prove successful. He informed McKay that while "in all probability I would not run for the Senate," the question had not been entirely resolved. Still hoping for a judicial appointment, McKay answered that "he would very, very much prefer that I concentrate on my going to the Supreme Court but on the other hand he would like very much for me to be in the Senate."[67] Nine days later, McKay's unwillingness to endorse Wilkinson's participation in the Senate race had completely solidified. Telephoning Wilkinson, the president remarked, "You are in such a responsible position now, and we have our school—the greatest in the country. I feel that for you to get out and try [for the Republican nomination] and especially if you do not get it, it would lessen your dignity. I should rather," McKay announced, "you would not run this year." Also, he admitted, many General Authorities were opposed to granting Wilkinson a leave of absence, sensing that the conclusion would be drawn that the church was supporting Wilkinson over Watkins. They strongly pushed instead for a release or resignation should Wilkinson elect to run. Fearing that the church school system could permanently lose an effective administrator, McKay saw no other alternative but to ask that Wilkinson refrain for the time.[68]

Additional discouraging advice came from church leaders Hugh B. Brown and J. Reuben Clark. Brown, whose 1934 defeat in the Democratic primary for U.S. senator had been "crushing,"[69] told Wilkinson that "he got ten times more enjoyment out of his Church work [than politics]." Like McKay, Brown "strongly urged that I stay in my present assignment where I had most unusual opportunities and that I not try to run for the Senate." Clark, also an unsuccessful candidate for U.S. senator in 1922,[70] confided

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66. Wilkinson diary, 12 Feb. 1958.

67. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with David O. McKay, 31 Mar. 1958, Wilkinson Papers.

68. McKay diary, transcript of a telephone conversation, 9 Apr. 1958.

69. Eugene E. Campbell and Richard D. Poll, *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975), 109.

70. See Frank W. Fox, *J. Reuben Clark: The Public Years* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young

that he "many, many times thanked the Lord for his not having been elected. Had he gone ahead and been elected he would have had to compromise on his convictions and would have become a 'common scold' and that he would not have been able to accomplish anything affirmative and would have been very much frustrated." Clark promised Wilkinson that because of his beliefs he would find the Senate a difficult experience. Clark further reminded him that "the Church had invested millions of dollars in the Brigham Young University and that I had commitments to invest many other millions and that in view of this situation I could not run out on the Church." Wilkinson replied that he "had been disappointed in one aspect over my present job—that I sometimes, in accordance with decision, would cross certain bridges and then have the bridges torn out by the brethren through changing their minds and that I had been left stranded. I told him that I expected such things in politics but I didn't expect it in Church Administration." Clark agreed that the Lord worked with imperfect hands. Wilkinson was so disheartened after talking with Clark that he told his wife "it looked like I was not really my own agent to make this decision but that both on my own and on the advice given to me, I would not make the race."[71]

Two days after asking for McKay's opinion, Wilkinson reluctantly confirmed that he would not attempt the Senate bid, that he had again come to the conclusion that he could be of greater service in Provo than in Washington, D.C.—as well as perhaps that the likelihood of success was not yet sufficiently great to justify the risk. In response, McKay continued to press Wilkinson to consider the Supreme Court. "I have said to my associates that I should like to have you on [the] Supreme Court," McKay stressed.[72] The president's pleas likely fell on deaf ears, however, as Wilkinson not only recognized that the Senate race offered him the only real possibility for the political career and immediate impact on national policy he wanted but that the probability of a seat on the Supreme Court was virtually nonexistent. Disappointed, Wilkinson rationalized less than three months later that while "I think I am better trained for politics and have more interest in it day by day than the monotonous and routine matters of education, . . . eventually the Mormon Church will mean more to the world than the American Congress or the American Government, and . . . I feel I can probably do more good in developing a great educational system for that Church than by going to Washington."[73]

University Press, 1980), 415-19.

71. Wilkinson diary, 10 Apr. 1958.

72. McKay diary, transcript of a telephone conversation, 11 Apr. 1958.

73. Wilkinson diary, 2 July 1958. Watkins did edge out Lee in the Republican primaries, but Lee subsequently decided to run as an independent, seriously dividing the state's

Throughout the following several years Wilkinson remained almost totally devoted to BYU and the Unified Church School System, keeping overt partisan political activities to a minimum. Though thoroughly conservative, he retained an ability to examine issues he could not countenance, expressing reluctant admiration for aspects he considered positive.[74] In early 1960, he could not help venting his frustration at what he believed was the irrational Cold War suspicion of Soviet Russia harbored by some BYU trustees. Previously the board had "permitted us to work out an arrangement with the University of Moscow whereby Russian students come to the BYU and BYU students go to Russia." Wilkinson believed that the exposure to western capitalism would help convert the Russians to free-market economics. Now, however, the board refused to allow the university to participate in a national travel program in which a group of BYU students (one of seven such groups) would travel to Russia, evidently fearing that the BYU students might succumb to the lures of socialism.

J. Reuben Clark, presiding at a trustees' meeting in the absence of David O. McKay, "led out in a discussion against these programs." No doubt reflecting on his own misplaced support of Nazism, Clark pointedly asked Wilkinson if he would permit one of his sons to visit Russia on such a program. Wilkinson felt that the trip would merely reinforce the virtues of America and replied vigorously that he had a son who had recently returned from a mission to Germany and that "I assuredly would permit him to go, and not only that but I would encourage him to go." Clark countered that he would not want one of his children to travel to Russia. "In the case of my son," Wilkinson returned, "I would have complete confidence in his moral integrity." Clark won out, however, and the board ruled not to sanction the travel program. Wilkinson later wrote that in view of the board's two conflicting resolutions, "I must, therefore, take up the two inconsistent actions at some future time and have them resolved."[75]

However tolerant of cultural differences, Wilkinson was nonetheless unequivocally opposed to even the most subtle hint of socialism and Communism. In the face of increasing affronts to the stability of constitutional government and capitalist economics, which he believed were in-

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Republican majority. Consequently, the Democratic candidate, Frank E. Moss, carried the election in November.

74. After a meeting sponsored by the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce with a group of Soviet provincial governors in mid-February 1960, Wilkinson remarked, "Since in Russia there are no private businesses, every one of these individuals is, of course, interested in economic production of the state and they are all quite well versed in what is going on in their particular parts of Russia and in Russia as a whole. These political leaders in Russia have one great advantage over our political leaders because all production is done by the state" (ibid., 13 Feb. 1960).

75. Ibid., 2 Mar. 1960; cf. BYU Board of Trustees Meeting, minutes, 2 Mar. 1960.

separable and divinely inspired, his opposition grew more intense. Responding to his own fears, together with new responsibilities occasioned by the growth of the church's educational system, Wilkinson approached McKay in early 1960 with a plea that the prophet bestow upon him a special blessing of comfort and strength. Acceding to the touching request, McKay placed his hands on the head of the sixty-year-old church administrator and solemnly told him that he "had responsibilities greater than any person had borne in the educational program of the Church; greater than those borne by [the school's founding president] Karl G. Maeser or any of his successors." Referring repeatedly to Wilkinson as "beloved associate" and "esteemed friend," McKay prayed that Wilkinson "might have vision for the future of the Church School system and the ability to transform such vision into action." Thanking the Lord for Wilkinson's personal sacrifices and devotion, McKay pleaded that Wilkinson "might have vision to understand more than anyone else in educational circles the dangers of Communism and that [he] might be a leader in our schools in protecting our people against this ungodlike philosophy." McKay asked that Wilkinson "be given the vision to protect our philosophy of 'capitalism,' [and that] the threat of war with the Communist foe might be stayed." He closed with the promise that "my body would be cleansed of any impurities or health destroying elements 'for my age,' and that I would have strength to do my work."[76]

For the religiously simple and generally orthodox Wilkinson, McKay's blessing represented something far more important than wise counsel and friendly admonition. Not only the literal word of God to the university president personally, McKay's blessing also witnessed to Wilkinson that his own political views as well as attempts to promote them on- and off-campus were favored of his heavenly father. McKay's injunction against Communism was, for Wilkinson, divine confirmation and commandment.

Several months later, in the middle of the heated 1960 U.S. presidential campaign, Wilkinson confessed to McKay that "I was very much concerned about the financial solvency of our country," adding that "if something miraculous didn't happen, we would fast end up as a socialist country." McKay surprised him by quickly replying, "We already are." Wilkinson later commented, "It was apparent that he was deeply concerned."[77] Shortly afterwards, fearful of the many "socialist proposals" Democratic hopeful John F. Kennedy had endorsed, Wilkinson predictably sided with U.S. vice-president Richard M. Nixon in his unsuccessful Republican bid for the White House.[78]

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76. Wilkinson diary, 28 Apr. 1960.
77. Ibid., 8 Aug. 1960.
78. Ibid., 9 Nov. 1960.

Wilkinson's fears for the future of the United States during this period continued to mount. In October 1960 he and the president of Provo City's chamber of commerce co-sponsored a one-day Freedom Forum "to re-emphasize the important values of our American way of life." "Inasmuch as our God-given, traditional freedoms are being threatened at this point in history more than ever before," their open letter read, "it seems an appropriate time to become more keenly aware of the dangers that beset us. . . . The American people can meet the severe challenges before them only through a complete awareness of the powerful attacks now being levied against our basic liberties by Communists and others."[79] Wilkinson also bemoaned the continuing appearance of nationally-syndicated columnist Drew Pearson in the pages of the *Deseret News*, where Wilkinson served on the board of directors, and lobbied repeatedly that Pearson be replaced by conservative commentator and Arizona senator Barry Goldwater,[80] arguing that Goldwater's articles "represented [the] Mormon viewpoint."[81] Wilkinson presented his economic and political views across the country to receptive audiences and at home recommended against renewing the teaching contracts of faculty members who espoused beliefs he felt were too sympathetic to Communism and socialism.[82] Despite this, he also had to answer criticisms of alumni and friends that his school was becoming too soft on Communism.[83]

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79. Wilkinson and Perlman, open letter, 10 Oct. 1960, Wilkinson Papers. Wilkinson and Ezra Taft Benson later toyed with the idea of establishing an institute or department of freedom at BYU to "bring together our departments of Economics, History and Political Science" where "the basic concepts from the Mormon point of view [could be taught] giving proper recognition to the founding fathers" (Benson to Harold B. Lee, 13 Aug. 1962; see also Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with President David O. McKay, 7 Mar. 1962; Benson to Wilkinson, 3 Apr. 1962; Wilkinson to Benson, 6 Apr. 1962; Benson to Wilkinson, 18 June 1963, all in Wilkinson Papers).

80. See Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference held with President David O. McKay, 23 Aug. 1961; Wilkinson, memorandum of a telephone conference with President David O. McKay, 9 Jan. 1962; and Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with President David O. McKay, 19 Jan. 1962, all in Wilkinson Papers.

81. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with President David O. McKay, 7 Mar. 1962, Wilkinson Papers.

82. Wilkinson's popular talks included "Will America Remain a Free Land?," "America, The Land of Promise," "Our Patriotic Duty," "The History of Greek Independence and Its Meaning to Americans," "Washington and Lincoln—What Would They Tell Us Today?," "A New American Greatness," "One-Party State," "Will America Remain a Free Land?" and especially "The Founding, Fruition, and Future of Free Enterprise," which he delivered on more than twenty-one separate occasions from 1961 to 1963. On Wilkinson's relations with his BYU faculty, see, for example, Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with President David O. McKay, 7 Mar. 1962, Wilkinson Papers; and John T. Bernhard to Fred Jackman, 31 Jan. 1961, Bernhard Papers, BYU archives.

83. See, for example, R. S. Unice to Ezra Taft Benson, 26 Apr. 1962, Wilkinson Papers;

By late 1961 Wilkinson found himself again entertaining a future senatorial race. Facing his sixty-fifth birthday in three years, he asked McKay if the board of trustees intended to enforce its retirement policy with respect to him "so that I could decide whether I should get in some other field at the present time before it was too late."[84] He later called on J. Reuben Clark who "had heard from others that I was being urged to go into politics." Bed-ridden and suffering from bouts with depression, the first counselor recommended that Wilkinson not "smudge a distinguished career with a defeat in politics." Clark, Wilkinson wrote, "seemed to think that his views and mine were too old fashioned to get anywhere these days in politics and he said he took a dim view in his later life of 'political preferment.'"[85] At least one of Wilkinson's critics would have agreed with Clark's assessment. "Utah is the most backward and reactionary state in the union," he wrote. "As regards Wilkinson, . . . we have enough throw-backs to feudalism in this country that I am amazed that we are still a republic."[86]

Nevertheless, Wilkinson was fast becoming convinced that he could not put off his political ambitions much longer. When he discovered too late in 1961 that McKay approved his running for Republican national committeeman from Utah, he lamented, "Frankly, I didn't think the First Presidency would have permitted me to run or I might have decided [sooner]."[87] Less than four weeks later he asked Harold B. Lee if "I ought to run for the Senate now or probably . . . the next time." Lee cautiously answered that Wilkinson "should obtain advice from President McKay."[88] When Wilkinson broached the question with McKay in early March the next year, the president told him that "if I wanted to run for the Senate in 1964 he would give me a year's leave of absence to make the race." McKay recommended that Wilkinson "begin preparing for it and probably do it." Wilkinson, hedging his bets, "told him very definitely . . . that I had not made any decision in that direction." However, the two men agreed that if Wilkinson "did make such a decision" he would have McKay's support and blessing.[89]

No doubt expecting the best, Wilkinson asked McKay the following

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and Wilkinson diary, 2 Aug. 1963.

84. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with David O. McKay, 22 May 1961, Wilkinson Papers.

85. Wilkinson diary, 22 May 1961.

86. J. O. Christensen to Dean R. Brimhall, 8 May 1961, Brimhall Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

87. Wilkinson diary, 14 Oct. 1961.

88. Ibid., 9 Nov. 1961.

89. Wilkinson, memorandum of a conference with President McKay, 7 Mar. 1962, Wilkinson Papers.

month if he objected to Wilkinson's delivering an address at the Republican state convention that August. Concerned at the accusations of the church's involvement in politics that would arise if the president of BYU were to participate in a partisan rally, McKay disappointed Wilkinson by replying that "under the present circumstances I should not do so." McKay pointed out that his second counselor [in the First Presidency, Hugh B. Brown] was very politically minded as a Democrat and that while he, President McKay, personally would like me to do it, he thought it was unwise at the present time." "Having asked him," Wilkinson wrote in his diary, annoyed that McKay had permitted his Democratic counselor to address state Democrats two years earlier, "I have to follow his advice, much to my regret." McKay added, paradoxically, that "he wanted me to make as many national addresses as I could because he wanted me to do something nationally."[90] Wilkinson pressed McKay again three months later for permission to address the state convention, but McKay remained opposed to the idea, fearing criticism from his counselors.[91]

While at Utah's Republican convention that August, Wilkinson reflected on the vagaries of politics and on the political career of one of the newest contenders for congress from Utah's second congressional district. Reed Benson, now thirty-four years old, "is a rather glib speaker and for those who do not know his background, he is quite persuasive," Wilkinson recorded. "Furthermore, he is fundamentally correct on political principles and would be a strength in that respect in the Congress; but he is very immature, rash in his judgment, and has never so far held down a job for any period of time.... With this background," Wilkinson continued, "when I asked the next state chairman this morning whether Reed had any chance he wryly replied, 'I think $22,500 (the salary of a Congressman) is a pretty high price to pay a young kid out of work.' That is the feeling of all who know him.... And yet he may make a pretty good race. If he does it would be another example of the gullibility of the public."[92]

The following October Wilkinson was invited to deliver a televised address in behalf of Utah's incumbent Republican senator, Wallace F. Bennett. A long-time supporter of Bennett, Wilkinson jumped at the opportunity to express his political convictions publicly and evidently managed to secure McKay's acquiescence, although he did not personally approach the president. McKay's hot-tempered Democratic first counselor, Henry D. Moyle, who had recently succeeded J. Reuben Clark, was furious

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90. Wilkinson diary, 13 Apr. 1962.

91. Ibid., 28 July 1962.

92. Ibid., 4 Aug. 1962. Benson lost in the primaries, subsequently worked for the John Birch Society in Washington, D.C., and eventually joined the faculty of Brigham Young University.

at Wilkinson's apparent temerity. He scolded Wilkinson on the morning of this talk that the speech "stunk to high heaven," that Wilkinson's "job at the BYU as well as their job in Salt Lake was to save souls and not to destroy them." He angrily told Wilkinson, "[You] ought to keep entirely out of politics," that "it was already suspected that [you are] using the BYU as a stepping stone for political office and that this would confirm it."[93]

Wilkinson answered that he had McKay's consent. Unimpressed, Moyle countered that the educator "could not blame this on President McKay." Wilkinson reluctantly admitted that he "did not see President McKay about it myself but I had been informed President McKay had consented and I had checked back and found that was correct."[94]

Insisting that he "did not intend to give any political tirade," Wilkinson promised "that the talk I was going to give was a matter of principle and I was not going to defame anyone."

"Regardless of what [you] said," Moyle replied, "it would be construed as the Church speaking. It would be printed in the New York Times and ... [you] could not disassociate [your]self from the Church and the School. It was the height of folly and not even debatable." Moyle then informed Wilkinson that he and his brothers would no longer be making a sizeable donation to BYU. "This was the only way he had of controlling me," Wilkinson wrote, quoting Moyle, "and we would not get it, that he would give it to other institutions rather than the BYU."[95]

After their heated exchange, Wilkinson called on apostles Delbert L. Stapley and Harold B. Lee. Both men recommended that Wilkinson contact McKay. Wilkinson obediently left a message with McKay's personal secretary.

Telephoning Wilkinson from his home in Huntsville, Utah, later that afternoon, McKay advised Wilkinson, "You go right ahead and give it and if you don't get the $450,000 from the Moyles we will find some other way to give you the money." Wilkinson said that he "had had a typical Moyle dressing-down." Obviously annoyed at his counselor's handling of Wilkinson, McKay replied, "Some of the rest of us can let the fur fly also. You are a Republican, aren't you?" McKay reportedly continued. "Then go ahead and give it as a Republican."[96]

Wilkinson addressed his television audience that evening as scheduled. Less than one month later, McKay told him that "he was particularly delighted with the political address I had given during the campaign which,

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93. Wilkinson, memorandum, 29 Oct. 1962, attached to Wilkinson diary, 29 Oct. 1962.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.

of course, was very much to the consternation of his two counselors." According to Wilkinson, McKay quipped that "when it came to politics his two counselors [Democrats Henry D. Moyle and Hugh B. Brown] just couldn't separate fact from fable."[97]

Yet Wilkinson found little solace in McKay's amiable reassurances and continued to debate in his own mind the merits of remaining at BYU or making an attempt for the U.S. Senate. The following year he mentioned his quandary to McKay, who subsequently acknowledged that "he knew I had had some difficulties but that one of the two General Authorities who had given me considerable opposition was now no longer a General Authority." (Moyle had unexpectedly passed away less than two weeks earlier in Florida.) According to Wilkinson, McKay "implied also that he thought I ought not also to be too much concerned about the other one," Harold B. Lee. Wilkinson understood this to mean that McKay would not be appointing Lee as a replacement for Moyle in the First Presidency. (In fact, McKay called Canadian businessman N. Eldon Tanner as his second counselor and elevated Hugh B. Brown to first counselor.) Wilkinson commented that "with respect to President Moyle and Brother Lee that the Lord had intervened in one case and could in another." According to Wilkinson, McKay agreed.[98]

In response to Wilkinson's conundrum, McKay offered his opinion that he "probably could do more good in the school system, . . . [and] wouldn't be able to clear up the mess in Washington any way in 4 or 5 years." Wilkinson admitted that he "knew that." Finally though, and apparently appreciating Wilkinson's true feelings, McKay recommended that he "pray about it more," believing that Wilkinson "could come up with the right answer."[99]

The "right answer," Wilkinson would conclude less than two months later, followed logically from his realization that much of his mission in coming to BYU had been accomplished; that McKay's age and poor health meant that he could not count on the president's continued unflagging support; that resistance was growing to aspects of his educational agenda for the church's school system; that his stubborn personality would likely continue to clash with equally opinionated general authorities, especially an increasingly influential Harold B. Lee; that in his mind the country

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97. Wilkinson diary, 27 Nov. 1962. Wilkinson soon afterwards reported that although he had feared his friendship with Moyle had been jeopardized because of the speech, he was relieved to find Moyle "extremely friendly" during a Christmas party (ibid., 20 Dec. 1962).

98. Wilkinson, confidential memorandum, "Re: Conference with President McKay," 30 Sept. 1963, Wilkinson Papers.

99. Ibid.

seemed to be steadily drifting away from the ideals of the Founding Fathers; and that his age was becoming a serious liability.

Thus after eight soul-searching weeks Wilkinson decided he had tread political waters long enough.[100] The 1964 race for U.S. senator from Utah promised Utah's largely Republican electorate a well-defined choice between an incumbent liberal Democrat, Frank E. Moss, and a conservative Republican challenger. Filling this latter position was, Wilkinson optimistically believed, his life's destiny. Less than a year later, however, a bitterly disillusioned Ernest Wilkinson would chalk the tumultuous, humiliating experience up as one of the greatest disappointments of his life.[101]

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100. See McKay diary, 20 Nov. 1963; Wilkinson diary, 27 Nov., 4 Dec. 1963.

101. For Wilkinson's 1964 senate campaign, see Gary James Bergera, "'A Sad and Expensive Experience': Ernest L. Wilkinson's 1964 Bid for the U.S. Senate," forthcoming in *Utah Historical Quarterly.*

Warren Travels With His Father

Michael R. Collings

in the
dense Montana heat, the BLM vehicle musty
and smelling of oil, sweat, and age.

Warren
skips school for those two days—two days
alone with Dad, staying in old, decaying

motels
where floors feel slick with thin linoleum and windows
glow behind crepe-paper drapes and

single
burner kitchenettes transform outdated army
C-rations into exotic feasts and

lumpy
bedframes support old-fashioned
metal springs that squawk when

Warren's
eighty pounds and Dad's one-eighty
shift. At dawn, they load the truck,

hunker
down against an early chill, and set out for
the boondocks, Dad to hunt elusive

bench marks
and pace off invisible section lines, Warren to watch
and etch each sifting outline in

his mind, and store them to relive once they two again
return and reassume their separate lives.

Brando

Holly Welker

Marlon Brando's such a babe in *Guys and Dolls*,
it's an ideal, makes you feel
positively reverent, same as orange blossoms,
the way they delicately ask to seduce
the delicate insides of your nostrils.
Or Pre-Raphaelite women, large, lovely,
looking like they never need or want to speak,
wearing nothing or wearing clothes
made from fabric that ought to cover couches.

When I was five I had cowboy boots, I had a hat,
I had chaps and a holster for my own tiny cap gun.
The gun was smooth and silver and gave me
the bang and the odor without hassles
of targets to hit or not hit.
It was one of life's truly useful things:
It helped me change what was real
into what I wanted to believe,
like asking "Is that the Milky Way?"
when you know it's clouds,
like letting margins be the places
where we make notes and plans,
draw question marks and stars.

Now when what I believe gets too elegant,
I remember Brando in *Apocalypse Now*,
fat, angry, full of death;
I remember a roof being patched, a street resurfaced,
the scent of orange blossoms assaulted,
extinguished by the smell of hot tar.

Each in Her Own Time: Four Zinas

Maureen Ursenbach Beecher

A FAMILY STORY PROVIDES AN IMAGE which well expresses Zina Young Card. On the portico over the main entrance to the Lion House, built by her father Brigham Young for his large family, rests the stone lion, couchant, which gave the building its name. The sculpture served as railing to a second-floor balcony, accessible from the south rooms. As the story goes, mother Zina Young was looking for the active little girl, calling through the corridors, "Ziney! Ziney," as she went.

"Here I am, Mama," came the answer, and the fearful mother followed the voice through the curtained French doors to where the child sat proudly astride the lion, a precarious twenty feet above the ground below. "Ziney" clambered safely off the beast, and the crisis passed. But the image remains, the daughter of the ruling household astride the lion emblematic of her father as he was perceived by his followers. If Brigham Young was the "lion of the Lord," young Zina was certainly his whelp.

There was something imperious in the character of Zina Presendia Young Williams Card. Her approach to her family, her co-religionists, her society, seems, if not regal, certainly aristocratic. In childhood she felt herself a particular favorite, even though she was one of thirty-one of her father's daughters, ten of whom were born within three years of her. Of her mother's treatment of Zina, her only daughter, Emmeline B. Wells, wrote "no princess of royal blood was ever more fondly beloved, or more tenderly cared for than this little one."[1] This third in a series of six Zinas in one family fits in the succession of mothers and daughters each of whom provides a window on the lives of her contemporary Mormon sisters, on Mormon women generally.

More than a decade ago, listening to Jan Shipps's lecture, "In the

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1. Emmeline B. Wells, "A Distinguished Woman: Zina D. H. Young," *Woman's Exponent* 10 (15 Dec. 1881): 107.

Presence of the Past," later revised and included in her *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition,* I acknowledged with her the vast differences between nineteenth- and twentieth-century Mormonism.[2] My further study of the lives and experiences of Mormon women leads me to conclude that not only century by century, but generation by generation the religion changes. However stable the theology of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may have been, or not been, experiential Mormonism has been radically diverse for each generation. It is easily evident that no two generations of Latter-day Saints experience the same church and culture.

Seven generations of many families have participated now in the Mormon movement. What the differences have been, and how they have affected individual lives is a question far too involved for one person's study. But let me here make a tenuous beginning, narrowing the field for an initial glimpse by dealing with one gender, female, and one line of descent, the first four Zinas of the Baker-Huntington-Young-Card line.

Why these? Because each in her time was *of* her time. Because of, or despite, her originality, her personal authenticity, each represented her generation of Mormon life and experience. Born successively in 1786, 1821, 1850, and 1888, they passed through the major phases of Mormon history: conversion, gathering, migration, settlement, outward colonization, diaspora, and re-gathering. The story continues: there are two more Zinas, both still living, who in similar ways represent twentieth-century movements. This essay will leave them to finish out their lives, however, and a historian of the twenty-first century to discover their parallels.

Let me first provide a thumbnail sketch of each woman in her turn. Like her daughters after her, Zina Baker was born on what was then the frontier, the village of Plainsfield on the New Hampshire side of the border near Windsor, Vermont. She was a twin, of her mother's third of ten birthings. At the age of twenty, Zina married William Huntington, whose parents had already migrated the next step westward, to Watertown near Lake Ontario in northern New York. Of their ten children, seven survived. Zina Diantha was their eighth child, and last girl.

When the Huntingtons converted to Mormonism in 1835, Zina Baker, as we shall call this first Zina, was forty-nine years old. Her childbearing complete, her grandchildren were growing in number. Zina Diantha was then fourteen. Selling the farm, the Huntingtons followed the church to Kirtland, Ohio, where the family participated in the settlement of the town and the dedication of the temple. Through a land scam, William and Zina lost their property and had to borrow of Oliver Snow to travel with that

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2. Jan Shipps, "In and Out of Time," in *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 109-30.

family to Missouri. Not a year later the Huntingtons were again crossing Missouri, this time back to Quincy, Illinois, then to Nauvoo. By then they were depleted in health as well as wealth; mother Zina Baker died and was the third Mormon buried in the new gathering place.

Of his sister Zina Diantha, her younger brother Oliver remembered, "Zina kept house for us, and a good mother she was to us all."[3] Their father William, with three children yet at home, married and merged families with Edward Partridge's widow Lydia, who had five. Six months later, in 1841, Zina Dinatha married Henry Bailey Jacobs and bore Zebulon in 1842. In the meantime she was sealed for eternity to Joseph Smith but remained wife to Henry. In Nauvoo Zina participated in the early development of the Relief Society, became fast friends with many of the women there, and developed a reputation for her healing gifts.

As the Saints prepared to leave Nauvoo and the temple, her original sealing to Joseph Smith was confirmed, and at the same time, Henry Jacobs present and approving, she was sealed for time, as were others of Joseph's wives, to Brigham Young.[4] With Henry she began the trek west, giving birth on the Chariton River to a son whom they named for his birthplace. From Mount Pisgah, Henry went on a mission to Britain; on his return he married his second wife Aseneth, and Zina became in fact as well as by sealing a wife to Brigham Young.

Once in Utah, Zina gave birth in 1850 to her own daughter Zina, the child "Ziney" of the lion's back, best known as Zina Card. She was her mother's only child by Brigham Young. Zina Diantha reared her, her two Jacobs boys, and, on the death of their mother in 1858, four children of Brigham Young and Clara Ross. Once the children were raised, Zina Diantha increased her work among the women, extending her healing services well beyond the walls of the Lion House. She served as counselor and traveling companion to her sister wife Eliza R. Snow, and in 1888 succeeded Sister Snow as general president of Relief Society and matron of the Salt Lake temple, which offices she held until she died in 1901.

Young "Ziney" grew up in her father's household, one of his "big ten" daughters in the Lion House. Educated with her sisters, she acted from age thirteen on in the Salt Lake Theatre. There she met and married the treasurer

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3. "History of Oliver Boardman Huntington, Written by Himself," typescript, 43, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See also "Diaries of William Huntington, 1835-1846," typescript, Special Collections, Lee Library. Many of the Huntington family details are taken from these autobiographies.

4. Nauvoo Temple, Sealings, Husband and Wife (Proxy), 7 Jan.-5 Feb. 1846, archives, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS church archives).

of the theatre, one of her father's scribes, Thomas Williams. He was forty, and already twice married; she was eighteen.

Two years later their son Sterling was born and, in another three, Thomas. He had not yet turned one when his father died, leaving Zina, with her mother's help, to raise the boys. She enrolled at Brigham Young Academy in Provo, where she soon became a faculty member, then head of the young ladies' department of the school.

In 1884, at the height of the raid against polygamists, she married Charles Ora Card, president of Cache Stake in Logan, Utah. They spent much of the next three years "on the underground," he to avoid arrest for "unlawful cohabitation," and she to avoid having to testify against him (she bore Card's son Joseph in 1885). In 1887 Zina joined Card in his settlement of the Southern Alberta colony which became Cardston. There, on 12 June 1888, her own Zina was born, "another new settler for the Mormon settlement on Lee's Creek," as the *Lethbridge News* reported,[5] and later one more son, Rega. "Aunt Zina" Card was the unquestioned female leader of the Alberta colonies. Through her roles as wife to the community's founder and president of the ward and later stake YLMIA, she directed much of the social and ecclesiastical life of the group; entertained distinguished visitors; and traveled to and from Utah to assist her mother in the Relief Society work.

In 1903, because of her husband's failing health, Zina Card took him back to Logan, where he died in 1906. Once more widowed, Zina, with her three Card children, set up housekeeping again in Salt Lake City. There she became matron of the LDS College and travelled to wards and stakes as Primary board member. Eventually she became a worker in the Salt Lake temple.

In the meantime, her "little Zina" had met young Hugh B. Brown in Cardston. He followed the Cards to Logan, living in their home where, to support himself at Brigham Young College, he helped care for the aging Card. Following his mission to Britain, he became engaged to the twenty-year-old Zina. They were married in 1908, just over a hundred years from the marriage of our first Zina and her William.

Zina Brown's role was immediately circumscribed by her husband's entrepreneurial activities: retail sales, investments, ranching, insurance, and eventually the study and practice of law. His church and civic responsibilities took him often from home. During both world wars Zina was left to care for home and family—they had eight children—while he served first in the Canadian Army, then as LDS servicemen's coordinator. She served with him the third time, when he was called in 1937 to preside over the

5. *Lethbridge News*, 14 June 1888.

British Mission. In 1966, however, when Hugh was functioning in the First Presidency of the LDS church, Zina suffered a stroke. From then to her death, she was almost totally bedridden, her capacity for speech lost. She died in 1974.

So there they are, in brief outline, the first four Zinas. They share many common qualities, not the least of which is an overwhelming fondness of each for her mother: Zina Baker's letters to her mother Dorcas back in New Hampshire are replete with pleading that she come visit; Zina Diantha was so distraught at the death of her mother that when her body was exhumed four years later, Zina was still in deep mourning; Zina Card was so close to her mother that, as well as living with her during her own first marriage, she had her come the more than 800 miles from Utah to Canada to attend her at the births of her children, and returned the visits for months at a time. As Emmeline B. Wells observed in a letter addressed to both in Canada, "in a certain sense you two, mother and daughter, are one."[6] And Zina Brown, even after her marriage, spent many weeks with her mother in Salt Lake City, beginning with her first Christmas as a wife. The pain of separation was reciprocated from mother to daughter: asked by Hugh if he might propose to her daughter, Zina Young Card replied, "You can't have her. I won't let her go back to Canada."[7]

That the women bonded so completely was not unusual in nineteenth-century America, where women's world was gender-contained, their closest affections being expressed among their own sex.[8] The twentieth-century-born Zinas would demonstrate a more modern sensibility which expects of marriage partners the emotional intimacy their foremothers shared within their gender.

Documents extant demonstrate in each of these women the qualities archetypally attributed to the Mormon pioneer woman: enduring, hard working, bright, attractive (though the present age would probably find Zina Baker, as she wrote her family, grown too large), articulate, inventive, compassionate, possessed of great faith, able to lead in their own spheres, yet unquestioningly obedient to priesthood authority. To a woman they exemplified the nineteenth-century model of "true womanhood": they were pious, pure, domestic, and submissive.

Controlling, in a sense, for those qualities, let us look now at the

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6. Emmeline B. Wells to "My Dear Beloved & Precious Sisters" (Zina D. H. Young and Zina Young Card), 5 Dec. 1897, LDS church archives.

7. Eugene Campbell and Richard D. Poll, *Hugh B. Brown: His Life and Thought* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1975), 42.

8. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 53-76.

difference it made for each woman to have been born when she was, to have experienced that part of Mormonism that was available to her. Only a segment of each woman's life can be treated in so small a space, but hopefully that much will suggest the larger issues and those which throw light on the history of Mormon women generally.

Begin with Zina Baker. She married and moved to New York in 1805, the year Joseph Smith was born in Vermont. Obviously there was no Mormonism to touch her as she began her adult life. Like the boy prophet, however, she was a seeker; like him, she took what of religion she could get in her sparsely populated neighborhood, including the revival fervor of the 1820s. Unlike him, however, she was of Presbyterian bent, and sought assurance of her "calling and election" through basically Calvinist paths. In as much detail as small space permits, I would like to trace her spiritual path, not only for what light it throws on Zina Baker as an individual, but because so many women who later joined with the Saints followed similar routes before confronting Mormonism.

A splendid correspondence extant contains the letters received by Zina's mother Dorcas Baker between 1806 and 1831. Most are from Zina Baker Huntington herself, with some from William. In them one can find a gauge to the spiritual development of the two as they relate to the distant parents the state of their souls.[9] The early letters, 1806 to about 1816, report not much denominational activity in Watertown; it is "a time of dullness as to religion."[10] Zina finds herself "growing stupid," experiencing a time of spiritual dryness. Anticipating the approaching death of her sister, she writes to know whether Lina "felt resigned," to the will of God. For herself, Zina is not sure: "I believe in some measure," she writes, "and pray that my heart may not be deceived."[11] The War of 1812 intervenes, with battles at nearby Sacket's Harbor; the family moves five miles to Burrs Mills, several children are born, William's fortunes dip, and little is said of religion, except to observe again "a remarkable dying time," a "general time of coldness."[12] Then, in 1817, a change comes in the letters. No general reformation, Zina writes, but "we have reason to bless God for a few drops of his grace and mercy." The Calvinist process of sanctification, an inheritance from the

9. Typescripts of the letters were given me by Oa Jacobs Cannon. The originals, courtesy Mary Brown Firmage Woodward, are now housed in the LDS church archives. They are first addressed to "Doctor Oliver Baker," assuming also his wife Dorcas; then to "Widow Dorcas Baker," and finally to "Captain Phillip Spaulding" as Dorcas marries a second time. Since Dorcas Baker is recipient of all the letters, they will be identified below by writer and date.

10. William, 1 Mar. 1807.

11. Zina, 7 Aug. 1808.

12. Zina, 18 June 1813.

Great Awakening, is still with Zina as she recounts William's approach to conversion: "the Saviour of our souls . . . has opened the eyes of my husband to see his dreadful situation by nature and to realize his transgressions . . ." He "is about to join the Church," having "obtained a hope" four months earlier. Caught in her belief that one can but wait upon God, Zina adds: "I think sometimes I am fitting for the approach of some great event, but hope I shall ever be prepared for all that awaits me, and ever feel reconciled to God's will and rejoice in his government."[13]

William's letters reflect his state of faith: "We have reason to hope that the latter day glory is drawing nigh."[14] Secure now in William's affirmations, Zina in 1820 writes a brief sermon to her family, this time in the rhetoric of a preacher, suggesting that she has been hearing the language of the revivalists. By 1822, "there is revivals of religion all around us." Picking up the fervor, Presendia, Zina and William's eldest daughter, age eleven, "has experienced the saving change of heart, I believe," Zina writes.[15]

There comes creeping into Zina's discourse a sense that one need not wait helplessly for the own good time of the Lord; that one may take a hand in one's own salvation. Expecting her mother's disapproval, she has attended a Methodist revival: "The power of God was there," she confesses. "I tell you the way is to labour yourself."[16] Nevertheless, in her last extant letter she affirms once more the Calvinist path of her spirit:

> The Lord called me to look about myself last spring before the revival began and O, what a situation I found myself in. I felt almost in despair. Oh, what darkness I experienced, I cannot describe it. O, the goodness and mercy of God. . . His mercy has . . . made me feel deep repentance such as I thought I never felt. . . . I think, dear Mother, I can tell you that I never felt that deep work of grace in my heart before.[17]

Throughout the letters, and from Zina Diantha's later description, it is apparent that where William studies, listens, and eventually accepts, Zina moves from state to state, searching her own soul for signs of grace. Her testimony comes from within; her faith is in her sense of God's presence.

One year from that last writing the Book of Mormon was published in

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13. Zina, 5 Mar. 1817.

14. William, 10 Mar. 1918.

15. Zina, 8 June 1822. Years later, as Presendia marries, Zina comments on the absence of another such experience in the interim.

16. Zina, 12 Oct. [1823].

17. Zina, 22 Jan. 1829.

Palmyra, a hundred miles away; four years after that, Mormon missionaries visited the Huntingtons, bringing the restored gospel, the one which William had sought in scriptures and Zina had anticipated through the spirit. But before then Zina's letters had ceased. Zina Baker's final process of conversion to Mormonism remains lost to us; we can only interpolate from her spiritual autobiography as traced here that her conversion came through the spirit; that having learned humility and an openness of soul, she was teachable to the new message, and, as her actions show, received it wholeheartedly.

It is theologically important for each person to have her own religious experience, and for her to find expression of that experience in ways learned from, and acceptable to, her co-religionists, to be validated in the eyes of other believers. Hence the same spirit which manifested itself to Zina Baker in terms of an inward calm when "Everything appears right and just and my feelings are such as my pen cannot describe" would lead Zina Diantha to express her faith in the gifts of the spirit, in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, and the healing gifts. A generation later still, Zina Card, reaching for her mother's gifts, found them beyond her grasp until she was in circumstances similar to those her mother experienced in Winter Quarters and early Salt Lake City: surrounded in their wilderness isolation by a group of her sisters, and in need of assurance of God's mindfulness. Accounts of blessing meetings, healings, and washing and anointings are found in the early Cardston Ward record, and Zina Card is central to the practice. Those gifts faded as the corporate church with its large wards and planned programs replaced the settlement communities, and Zina Brown found her chief expression in devotion to her husband and family, and service to them and to the church, which by the 1930s had spelled out a more formal and restrictive structure for women.[18]

Zina Diantha became an adult in Mormon Nauvoo in one of the most exciting, most developmental, most troubled times of the church's history. Her young husband Henry Bailey Jacobs was a charismatic, enthusiastic missionary and embryonic church leader. Dashing in dress and manner, he was happiest proselytizing, preaching, conducting the affairs of the kingdom at large. Content with her smaller sphere, Zina cared for young Zebulon, attended meetings, visited with other women, and carried on the usual household tasks of the day.

A diary recently unearthed by the sixth of the Zinas, my friend and near contemporary Zina Elizabeth Brown, provides a window on the young Zina Diantha from June 1844, just prior to the death of Joseph Smith, until August 1845, as anti-Mormon mobs are beginning the violence which will

18. I am indebted to Mary Brown Woodward for this phrasing.

drive the Saints west the following spring.[19] The picture it paints of the little family is one of uncertainty, poverty, sickness. Henry suffers twice in the year with bouts of the "chills and fever"; Zina is afflicted for ten days with a painful swelling in her face, an "ague" she calls it, which finally "discharged wonderfully" when the skin broke; and three-year-old Zebulon contracts scarlet fever which continues to "prey uppon the child" for nearly three weeks. At other times Zina nurses others in her home: Apostle Amasa Lyman; a lone woman whom her brother William brought her; her brother Oliver; a child who eventually dies there.

The nursing service Zina offers seems to boost the family's meager income, along with the school she teaches for three weeks, the spinning she does "to procure an honest living," the sewing for sister Grible and others "until 12 o'clock at knight," and the palmleaf hats she learns to braid. Even so there is not enough to eat: she prays blessings on Joseph Young for the gift of a pan of flour, affirming that "if God ever blesses us with means, may we go and do like wise." She purchases a lot on which Henry plans to build a house, but short of "drawing the frame and stone for his house," he never completes the task, and they move from place to place in the city. During the fifteen months of the diary Henry becomes a Mason; goes on two missions within the state; is ordained president of the 15th Quorum of Seventy and attends its meetings; accompanies Zina and Zebulon to Lima for the berry-picking; and goes "to the fencing school or sword exercise." It is difficult to ascertain what else either spouse did; certainly there was more required of both to sustain life, but diarists typically do not elaborate on routine tasks.

Central to Zina's concern in her diary, however, is her faith. Daily entries often end with small prayers of thanks or longer psalms of praise. She summarizes sermons from the "stand" and once or twice from Henry's quorum meetings which she has attended. A most disconcerting note in the diary is an entry on 3 May 1845. Zina begins with a preamble which reads, "God onely knows my heart this day. The thoughts of my heart or the emotions of my minde causes my very head to acke." Then follows the most discouraged of all her psalm-like sentiments:

> O God be merciful unto me and let me find grace in Thine eyes and those that fear Thee. O save my sole from ruin, my body from destruction, for they handma[i]d feels to put her trust in Thee. Enlighten my minde and give my sole understanding. Let not my hart think evil, not my tongue speak vanity. O let the trew seed remain in my heart and bring forth much fruit.

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19. The diary, donated to LDS church archives, is published as "'All Things Move in Order in the City': The Nauvoo Diary of Zina Dinatha Huntington Jacobs," *Brigham Young University Studies* 19 (Spring 1979): 285-320.

The next day, Sunday, she notes "I am at home, not able to go to meting but God will be there, or his Speret, and O may the saints be edified. Amen." Friday following she makes this enigmatic comment:

> Never to be forgotten at 11 oclock, O then what shall I say. At or after 4 I went to sleep. O Lord have mercy uppon my Sole. Teache me the ways of eternal life. Give me that gift above all others. Behold this is the desire of my hart. Comfort us, yes, Henry in his trouble, for he has not repined a word. . . .

On 11 June Zina notes that Henry "went to see Pres. B. Young to be councel[ed] upon his and families situation." She follows the notation with "O God be merciful unto us, . . ." linking her own fate to that of her husband.

On 2 February 1846, as the Saints were preparing to leave Nauvoo, Zina stood in the temple, with Brigham Young as proxy for Joseph Smith, to ratify her earlier sealing to Joseph Smith. Then she was sealed to Young "husband and wife for time." "Henry B. Jacobs [present at the time] expressed his willingness that it should be so in presence of these witnesses."[20]

However less than ideal Zina's and Henry's marriage may have been, her dissatisfaction with her lot explains her sealing to the two prophets. And Young's statements justifying a woman's leaving her husband "if she can find a man holding a higher Priesthood than her husband that will take her" came much later.[21] My reading of Zina's accounts finds in her unwavering obedience, unquestioning faith in priesthood authority. "Hasten thy work O Lord in its time," she wrote in her diary, "and may I be prepared to receive all Thy Words and Obey them, *even thy Celestial Law* and thy Name shall have the Honour and Glory."[22] She would have been sealed to Joseph Smith because he asked her to, and he was the prophet.[23] What his reasons were, and why Jacobs consented, is another question for another time.

More frequent than references to her husband in the little diary are Zina's accounts of women friends, those who visit her, and whom she visits—sisters, these, in kin or in faith, with whom she shares her work, her

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20. Nauvoo Temple, Sealings, Husband and Wife (Proxy), 7 Jan.-5 Feb. 1846, LDS Family History Library, Salt Lake City.

21. Frederick Kessler diary, 8 Oct. 1861, holograph, Western Americana, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City. Kessler is recording a sermon of Brigham Young in the tabernacle that day.

22. Zina Jacobs diary, 6 Apr. 1845, emphasis mine.

23. Zina D. H. Young, Interview, n.d., carbon copy of typescript, LDS church archives. The interview, however much Zina wanted to conceal the facts of her marriages, is clear on two issues: she had a spiritual affirmation of the correctness of plural marriage, and she knew "by testimony from God that Joseph Smith was a Prophet."

thoughts, her gifts. With them she continues a religious practice which will later bear the fruits of comfort and sisterly solidarity. Begun among the women in the early meetings of the Female Relief Society, the reception and exercise of pentacostal gifts was not limited to them. Speaking and singing in tongues, interpreting tongues, prophesying, blessing and healing one another, however, were more practiced among women than among men, and Zina, especially after learning their value to her sisters in the wilderness of Winter Quarters, would encourage their practice by her example for the rest of her life.

For most of her life, Zina was self sufficient, the one on whom others depended. After her mother's death, she took over at home; when her father remarried, she moved to her older brother Dimick's house, presumably to help Fanny with the children and the household.[24] Married to Henry, she supported herself while he was on missions or involved in other things at Nauvoo.[25] Left at Mt. Pisgah with her boy and new baby in her father's care while Henry filled yet another mission, she then cared for her father until his death there. Alone of her family, she could but watch over her child and her newborn infant, hearing the wolves howling from the nearby graveyard, "those hungry monsters, who fain would have unsepulchred those sacred bones!"[26] Finally Brigham Young sent his son-in-law Charlie Decker to collect the little family and bring them to Winter Quarters where she became part of "the girls," Young's plural wives, "welcomed by President Young into his family."[27]

Even in Utah, secure under Brigham's roofs, Zina carried her share, teaching school, doctoring his family, and caring for his orphaned children. First, in the old "log row" in 1850 she gave birth to the daughter Brigham named for her mother. In 1856 they, as well as Zebulon and Chariton for a time, moved into the comfort of second-story rooms in the new Lion House, but once the children were grown, she left the Lion House to share a dwelling with her daughter, and then to live alone. Even then she took boarders to help with expenses. Perhaps such labor was not necessary for the wife of one of Utah's richest men; perhaps it was just an independent

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24. In 1841 the couple had three of their four children; one of those died a year later. That the one daughter born in Nauvoo is named Martha Zina suggests the admiration they felt for Dimick's sister.

25. "I am laboring at the [spinning] wheel to procure an honest living"; and "Sewed for Sister Grible until 12 oclock at knight," suggest the burden Zina carried. Even when Henry was home, he was not always on hand: "Henry worked on Joseph Youngs house. [I] spun 34 [k]nots of warp," she wrote.

26. Zina D. H. Young, as quoted in Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Crandell and Tullidge, 1877), 330.

27. Ibid.

streak in Zina herself, one that Brigham admired, and attempted to instill in Zina's daughter. In any case, many women of her time exemplified it.[28]

The children who grew up behind the stone walls of Brigham Young's estate seem to have had little in common with other frontier children. Nowhere in Elliott West's *Growing Up With the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier* does one find anything resembling life as the child Zina experienced it. Where their contemporaries in less favored circumstances would have been essential to the work of the family farm, house and barn, field and pasture, Brigham Young's daughters of the Lion House grew as young princesses whose main employment was to learn and to play.[29] Clarissa Young, ten years younger than Zina, has left an account of a child's life in the household, where, as she put it, "Life for us was one continual joy. There were so many of us to plan picnics in the hills, picking wild flowers, hunting pretty mossy places to play with our dolls, and build houses with sticks and stones, that the days never seemed long enough to do all the things we planned." Only at fruit harvest does Clarissa remember long hours of picking strawberries for preserves, of paring and drying peaches. But even then it was only a day at a time, since each family would be assigned its turn in the "upper garden," where the heavy work had all been done by employed gardeners.[30] Susa Young, writing later about their lives as sisters told of Zina's teaching them to "fashion clay dishes," to make "whole armies of paper dolls with bright colored dresses," telling stories of "blue-eyed, silver-tressed fairy queens and brown-eyed, curly-haired princes" to her wide-awake sisters on the sleeping porch.[31]

From Zina's own accounts comes the picture of herself and her sisters, especially the ten of them so near in age, putting on "theatres" in the yard or the barn; going to school to Karl G. Maeser, whose work they made

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28. As Vicky Burgess Olsen's work indicates, most Mormon women of this first Utah generation participated in the material support of their families.

29. Elliott West, *Growing Up With the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1898), is a superb treatise on children's responsibilities and activities in mid-century frontier communities. His evidence shows children, both boys and girls, participating in practically every settlement task necessary: hunting wild animals and gathering wild berries and greens; kitchen gardening; gathering fuel; planting, irrigating and threshing grain crops; herding and milking cows; tending smaller animals. He summarizes: "As in all aspects of the farmers' frontier, children worked at every stage and at every task of production, from the first assaults on the land to bringing in the crops" (79).

30. Clarissa Young Spencer and Mabel Harmer, *Brigham Young at Home* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1940), 57, 15-63.

31. [Susa Young Gates], "Our Picture Gallery: Zina Young Williams Card," *Young Woman's Journal* 4 (Nov. 1892): 50. Susa adds, with possible parenthetical reference to T. B. H. Stenhouse's attraction, that "Zina's princes were always dark-eyed and curly haired."

difficult by defending one another against his discipline; taking lessons in dance and elocution; and finally acting for real in the Salt Lake Theatre.

From the time she was thirteen until her marriage at eighteen, Zina was a favorite there. Among her admirers was the intelligent and urbane T. B. H. Stenhouse, then editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and ardent and articulate defender of the faith, including plural marriage. In his first wife Fanny's account, we are told that her husband pursued the young actress, and for fifteen months they courted, until the day was fixed, the wedding dress made. For whatever reason, her father's growing suspicion of Stenhouse's involvement with the schismatic Godbeite faction, or her own intuition, Zina broke off the engagement, and married instead the staid and secure Thomas Williams.[32]

The bare facts of their life together have been noted above; what happened shortly after his death is less well known. For a time the young widow stayed on with her mother in the little house on Third South and State streets, consoled by their neighbor Emmeline B. Wells. Her father, however, concerned over the boys' future, sent Zina to join her brother Chariton in Sevier County, where she could take up a homestead preemption of a quarter section. "Proving up" required that she build a house and other improvements and stay a year. George Washington Bean, a leader in the United Order enterprise there, noted in his account that his own wife Elizabeth refused to join him in the remote spot where Monroe and Glenwood now stand; that Zina lasted as long as she did does her credit.

The winter was more than she could take, however. Family memory tells of the one dark night when the wind blew so fiercely through the chinks in the log cabin that no candle would stay lit, and the young widow was left with only her three- and six-year-old boys for comfort through the long dark hours. One is not surprised that by spring Zina's letter to her mother was written from Chariton's house, where she spent her remaining time. The image remains; this experience was not a frivolous adventure, but an ordeal about which Zina herself seldom spoke, a "dark night of the soul," as it were. The documents are silent as to what she learned from it.

That was 1877, and Brigham Young and entourage, including Zina Diantha, would be travelling to St. George for the dedication of the now finished temple. Zina and the boys, it was arranged, should come too, and be sealed by proxy to their deceased husband and father. Back in the world of the Young establishment, Zina could not, would not, return to the life of a pioneer, at least not in Sevier County; she arranged for a school to teach in the north, and then found herself, at her sister Susa's suggestion, back under

32. Family memory has it that Zina dreamed vividly of a fearful serpent and woke realizing that the snake had Stenhouse's eyes, so ended the relationship.

the tutelage of their schoolmaster Maeser at the struggling Brigham Young Academy. Once again Zina found herself valued: while her mother kept her boys, she was again a schoolgirl, praised by Maeser, courted by several young hopefuls, and finally assigned with Emmeline B. Wells to represent Mormon women at the national women's congress in Washington.

Zina's diary of that venture reveals a young girl, alternately frightened and flirtatious, travelling by train the distance her mother had walked. Arriving in Washington, D.C., she faced the challenge of considering herself a woman among women; of conversing with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton; of calling on senators Thurman and Hoar, and attorney general Devins ("a crusty old man; we gave him some pretty strong evidence"); of speaking up for her people before her sisters, and feeling herself on display: "Dear me," she wrote in her diary of the congress, "what an awful thing to be an Elephant. The ladies all look at me so queer." And finally, after several tries, bearding in his den the fearsome Senator Edmunds, he who sponsored two successive bills aimed against the practice of polygamy. "We gave him a strong testimony and told him he was [crossing] arms with the almighty. . . . He gave no particular encouragement."[33]

Zina returned from Washington a woman grown, ready to take her place as a professional person. It was after that that she met and married Charles Ora Card and, with him, took leadership of a Mormon colony in a new land. No longer was she frightened by lonely nights with fierce winds blowing, nor stymied in conversation with the great ones, the occasional English nobility who came to call. The little princess had become a queen.

Zina had also dipped her toe into the mainstream of American womanhood; many of her Mormon sisters would follow, until, still in her lifetime, they would take their place in the larger sisterhood. The Americanization of Utah meant not only the political compromises necessary for statehood, but overwhelming shifts in lifestyle for individual Latter-day Saint women. Zina Diantha had come to Utah to escape the gentile world; walled in by the friendly Wasatch, she sought for union among the Saints, liberty to practice their religion, safety for her chicks in a nest of her own feathering. That she was the first of Brigham's wives to travel south in protest against Johnston's army, and the last to return bespeaks her determination. Zina Card, having suffered under the threat of gentile enforcement, was learning another defense: she would go in among the "enemy," and win them over to friendship. Her move into Canada differs from her mother's into Utah in that she was coming, not among usually peaceful

33. Zina Young Card diary, 1-30 Jan. 1879, holograph, Zina Card Brown Papers, LDS church archives.

native Americans, although there were those, too, and she learned to care for them, but among gentiles who were there first. The newspapers of Lethbridge and Fort Macleod are dotted with notices of her comings and goings among the residents there. That the first Lees Creek celebration of Dominion Day-Fourth of July holidays was so well attended by local ranchers, Blood Indians, and the RCMP served well to placate suspicious neighbors, and Zina's later salons, where invited guests from Lethbridge performed, kept feelings amicable. There were no protective mountains between Mormon Cardston and gentile Lethbridge, and the Card leadership made sure there was no need for them.

In this milieu of homegrown culture and hard-sought education, Canadian-born Zina Card (Brown) grew up, a prairie waif with aristocratic possibilities. Born in the homey "Canton flannel palace," a log cabin of her mother's improving, she was a favorite of the townsfolk, the visitors, and the Indians, one of whom once brought a papoose as a gift for the ten-year-old Zina. Her childhood, less privileged than her mother's, was nevertheless enriched with cultural activities. If she could not act in the Salt Lake Theatre, she certainly could in the frequent offerings of the Cardston Dramatic Society; and if she never heard concerts in the Tabernacle, she did participate with the young folk in song fests to her mother's accompaniment on the reed organ in the parlor.

The move to Logan when Zina was fifteen was fortuitous for the very active young girl. Her correspondence with her later-to-be husband Hugh Brown reveals a young coed eager about her possibilities. As a student at Brigham Young College, she asks his advice: should she "take up elocution entirely after this coming year of school or qualify as a Domestic Science teacher?"[34] Hugh encourages her in either, adding, "I know you will make a success of whatever you undertake." Following Hugh's mission and his return to Cardston, he proposed marriage to Zina. Her reply begs time to consider, that "I am going to college this year and would like to go a number of years more . . . to carry out my plans that I have cherished so long." One of those plans was to spend eight months in New York studying elocution, a serious endeavor at that time. Hugh respected that decision, though it is for him a "rebuff that turns earths smoothness rough." Zina recants, and announces that she will instead attend the University of Utah, under Maude May Babcock. Hugh, for his part, has been "called" to enlist in the Canadian army, to "keep our friends in the East from saying the Mormons are disloyal." The two careers seem bound in contrary directions. Hugh came to Utah at April general conference time, 1908. No correspondence is left to

34. Mary Brown Firmage, "'Dear Sister Zina' ...'Dear Brother Hugh'... ," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21 (Summer 1988): 32, letter approximately July 1905. All the letters quoted here are from this source.

detail their meeting, but his journal states succinctly "I became engaged to Miss Zina Y. Card who promised to become my wife in June." There was no question as to whose career would continue, whose be given up; they moved to the Alberta prairie town immediately following their wedding on 17 June 1908, and Zina became full-time wife and mother, a role she would continue throughout her life.

This fourth Zina was as much of her era as were her foremothers of theirs. Writing a Mormon position piece in 1926, Zina's sister Susa and daughter Leah defended the kind of choice Zina had made, to forsake the university and a career. Counting as appropriate the division of spheres, they wrote: "Yet her creative home labor ranks side by side, in earthly and heavenly importance" with her husband's. "His in the market place—hers at the hearthstone. He is the leader and she follows, not because she must, but because she will. She chooses her sphere as he chooses his."[35]

This first generation of twentieth-century women counted themselves lucky to be well supported in their homes; the Victorian separation of spheres by gender seemed to them appropriate, and to maintain a marriage well worth whatever sacrifices it required. Zina Brown's whole being, from the time of her marriage to her death found its meaning in her "Dear Hugh" and their children. Following her stroke, her daughter reported, her husband became her remaining link with meaning: she "wilted like a flower" when he was gone on church assignments.[36]

Four Zinas, then. Four "representative women" of Mormondom. Four generations during which the church of the restoration moved through stages of charisma, canonization, and developing orthodoxy, and the culture developed through radical separatism, then defensive activism, to accommodation and diehard conservatism. Century by century, generation by generation, they responded to the world as they found it, to the church as it presented itself, and in their responses created their lives.

We twentieth-century observers of their lives see them through a glass grown dark with time's passage. Prone to assume that our natures are the same as theirs, that contemporary Mormonism is as it always was, we judge their behavior by our lights, and are baffled by what we see as irrational, inauthentic, even bizarre behavior. Zina Baker's insecurity in her sense of her own salvation, her determination to experience her own and William's depravity before they can claim the gift of grace, seem strange prefaces to conversion. Zina Diantha's use of the gifts of the spirit—prophecy, tongues, blessing, healing—would embarrass most of us were they to reappear. Zina Card's confident leadership, and that of her sisters, in running their own

35. Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *Women of the "Mormon" Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1926), 5.

36. Mary Firmage Woodward, Interview, 3 June 1990.

programs with or without priesthood leadership would create a threat in a contemporary stake. And even Zina Brown's subordination of her own identity under that of her husband is called into question by a generation of career-bound Mormon women facing the expectation of necessary wage earning.

Enter the historian. He, she, I, did not create the dissonance to which we respond here. The historical reality exists independent of our knowledge or ignorance. The scholar's task is to recreate the milieu in which the people of the past lived out their lives, to see the events of the past through the eyes of those who experienced it. To scorn Zina Baker's Calvinist Presbyterianism is to disavow the way which led her to a better way; to criticise Zina Diantha for her obedience to Joseph Smith's request is to place our existential premium on private authenticity over her divinely confirmed faith that God speaks through prophets. To fault Zina Card for being a queen bee in a democratic Mormon community is to ignore the respectability and with it the goodwill of the surrounding gentiles, which she won for her coreligionists. And to accuse Zina Brown of selling out her gender's right to individual identity is to demean the familial roles she chose, and having chosen, fulfilled supremely well.

But to understand, to value, and to apply to our experience our knowledge of these people of the past we must see them in their own world, as they saw it, know the limits of their possibilities as they knew them, assess their achievements according to their own purposes.

Each in her own time, each of the first four Zinas, and, I suspect, the two who followed, has played out her life as seemed her best. God grant we all may be so true, and so blessed.

Sacrament Prayer

Lance Larsen

It's the simplicity I like, no pulpit thunder,
no fiery "Thou shalt nots" rattling the soul.
A set prayer, phrases you can roll around
your mouth all week, then string together
on the wiry voice of someone's kneeling
older brother. Stutters and pauses lift it higher.
Not even a pocketful of unrepented sins
can weigh it down. And everyone, heads bowed,
waiting for the torn bread and thimble of water.
With each tired amen, the prayer rises on the helium
of our breath, and Jesus casts down a line
to lift us from this festering darkness.

How Common the Principle? Women as Plural Wives in 1860

Marie Cornwall, Camela Courtright, and Laga Van Beek

THIS ESSAY EXAMINES HOW COMMON the practice of polygamy was in the Salt Lake Valley in 1860. We use census data, Ancestral File information, and data from family histories and biographies to estimate the number of women who were plural wives and the typical living arrangements for these women. We also ask if any differences existed based on ward characteristics. Three LDS wards are examined, the Thirteenth Ward (a well-to-do ward whose members formed the elite of Mormonism), the Twentieth Ward (a moderate income ward whose members were almost all immigrants), and the Mill Creek Ward[1] (which covered the rural area of the valley and where members lived in farming households).

Estimates of the number of women and men who actually practiced polygamy in nineteenth-century Utah are plentiful.[2] But most available research is based on non-random samples or data from the 1880s, a period of great turmoil for Latter-day Saints and at least three decades after polygamy was openly practiced in the west.[3]

Our interest in estimating the number of women in plural marriages in 1860 is primarily sociological. Contemporary scholars have wondered why women participated in a practice so apparently contrary to their own best interests. Certainly religious doctrine and devotion to "building the Kingdom" encouraged devout Mormon women to enter into "the principle." But

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1. Mill Creek Ward was the appropriate name and spelling for many years. However, by the time the history of the ward was published in pamphlet form, the spelling had changed to Millcreek Ward.

2. See Stanley S. Ivins, "Notes on Mormon Polygamy," *Western Humanities Review* 10 (1956): 229-39; Jessie L. Embry, *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987); and Lowell Bennion, "The Incident of Mormon Polygamy in 1880: 'Dixie' versus Davis Stake," *Journal of Mormon History* 11 (1984).

3. See Embry.

we suspect that one reason a woman could decide to become a plural wife was simply that it was a common practice. The principle had been introduced and practiced among the elite leaders of the church, and as the practice became more open, participation provided a measure of status and prestige within the religious community.

Religious groups exert pressure on individuals to conform to normative expectations in many ways. For example, negative sanctions discourage deviance. But individuals are also encouraged to adhere to the normative expectations of the group in positive ways. For example, devout members provide a model of appropriate behaviors for true believers. Thus the degree of conformity to religious expectations by elite group members encourages both newcomers and those striving to be "good" followers to meet the same expectations.

Social pressures to carry out religious expectations can be powerful despite a low level of observance in the general population. The contemporary LDS church setting provides some useful examples. The church encourages all young men to serve as missionaries, but in reality many do not. Typically only one in three young men actually serves as a missionary.[4] In addition, couples are strongly encouraged to marry in the temple. But the number of temple-married households in the U.S. is relatively small—less than one in three of all households, and only 45 percent of married-couple households.[5] Despite low levels of observance, these normative expectations define not only the boundaries of the religious group (e.g., membership) but also distinguish the core adherents from those on the periphery (e.g., active versus inactive). Furthermore, adherence to religious principles not only assures salvation but offers an individual a certain degree of status and prestige within the religious group.

Both Vicky Burgess-Olson[6] and Jessie Embry have examined the reasons why women entered plural marriage. Burgess-Olson noted that (1) dedication to the principle, (2) pressure from a third party, and (3) economic forces were prevalent reasons. She also reported that status was a significant motivation to marry, particularly for young women who became the third or fourth wife of a prominent local leader. Embry examined common folk justifications for the practice of plural marriage and reported a common perception that there was an insufficient number of men. Some informants said the men had been killed in the Black Hawk War or the Spanish-Ameri-

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4. Darwin L. Thomas, "Letter to the Editor—'Afterwords,'" *Brigham Young University Studies* 24 (1986): 99-103.

5. Kristen L. Goodman and Tim B. Heaton, "LDS Church Members in the U.S. and Canada: A Demographic Profile," *AMCAP Journal* 12 (1986): 88-107.

6. Vicky Burgess-Olson, "Family Structure and Dynamics in Early Utah Mormon Families—1847-1885," Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1975.

can War. This is historically inaccurate since there were few Mormons killed in either war. Others said there simply were not enough "good" men for all the "good" women. An imbalance in the male-female ratio has not been substantiated by census data. On the contrary, some have argued that there was a shortage of women.

To anyone living in a society where monogamy is *the* acceptable form of marriage, the choice to enter into a plural marriage seems particularly strange. However, making such a choice becomes more understandable when one considers how common the practice may have been—as common as missionary service or temple marriage in the contemporary LDS church.

Polygamy and Religious Practice

In August 1852, Apostle Orson Pratt spoke boldly to all members of the church at general conference about the importance of living under the new marriage covenant that many leaders of the church had been practicing for ten or more years. Pratt warned the congregation that those who did not take hold of the practice would face dire consequences: "Now, let us enquire, what will become of those who have this law taught unto them in plainness, if they reject it? [A voice in the stand, "they will be damned."] I will tell you: they will be damned, saith the Lord God Almighty, in the revelation He has given."[7]

The development of Mormon covenant making through the Nauvoo, Illinois, period is described fully by anthropologist Rex Cooper.[8] The patriarchal order established by the end of the Nauvoo period emphasized the importance of creating family kingdoms presided over by male priesthood holders. The form of these family kingdoms changed over time, but by 1860 plural marriage was a principle which *committed* Mormons were expected to live.[9] Two significant events occurred in the mid-1850s that encouraged the spread of polygamy among those who had gathered in the Salt Lake Valley. First, the Endowment House was completed in 1855. The ceremonies in which polygamous marriages were created and other religious rituals were performed in the Endowment House, a temporary substitute until a temple could be built. While such marriage ceremonies took place even before the Endowment House was built, the existence of a building

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7. Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," in *Journal of Discourses* (Liverpool: F. D. and S. W. Richards, 1854), 1:54, 56.

8. Rex E. Cooper, *Promises Made to the Fathers: Mormon Covenant Organization* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1990).

9. See Embry, 7-9.

specifically for such purposes helped to institutionalize, legitimize, and encourage the practice.[10]

Second, a vigorous reformation occurred within the church during 1856-57. Members were encouraged to purify and to rededicate themselves to living all the principles of the gospel, including polygamy. Stanley Ivins documents that there were "sixty-five percent more [polygamous] marriages during 1856 and 1857 than in any other two years . . ."[11] This dramatic increase was likely a function of the increased emphasis on plural marriage.

Despite available scholarship, folk traditions live on in contemporary society which dictate specific images of polygamy. One view (encouraged by the non-Mormon media at the turn of the century) emphasized that Mormon men married many wives who were treated only a little better than cattle, lived in constant strife with the other wives, were subject to their husband's every whim, and were generally impoverished.[12] The other view (held by many Mormons and influenced by official church reports and statements) claimed that each man had only a few wives, that only the well educated and elite Mormon leadership participated in polygamy, and that Mormon women and men were highly virtuous.

Various estimates of participation in plural marriage exist. An 1885 statement from John Taylor and George Q. Cannon reported, "As to the male members of our Church who practice plural marriage are estimated as not exceeding but little, if any, two per cent, of the entire membership of the Church . . ."[13] Another report stated that "It has been estimated that out of a community of about 200,000 people, more or less, from 10,000 to 12,000 are identified with polygamy."[14]

William E. Berrett concluded that "plural marriage was never at any time a general law for the entire church, and was never at any time practiced by over two percent of the adult male population."[15] Ivins quoted an official statement by the Mormon church that "The practice of plural marriage has never been general in the Church and at no time have more than three percent of families in the Church been polygamous." But his own estimate is higher. Using the biographies of prominent Utahns and the history of

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10. Danel Bachman and Ronald K. Esplin, "Plural Marriage," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), 3:1094.

11. Ivins, 231.

12. Davis Bitton and Gary L. Bunker, "Double Jeopardy: Visual Images of Mormon Women to 1914," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 46 (1978): 184-202.

13. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833-1964* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 3:11.

14. Ibid., 31.

15. William Edwin Berrett, *The Restored Church: A Brief History of the Growth and Doctrines for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Desert Book Co., 1953), 250-51.

Sanpete and Emery counties, he estimated between 15 and 20 percent of families were polygamous and approximately 13 percent of men.[16] Leonard Arrington and Davis Bitton also estimated female involvement:

> Based on the best information now available, we estimate that no more than 5 percent of married Mormon men had more than one wife; and since the great majority of these had only two wives, it is reasonable to suppose that about 12 percent of Mormon married women were involved in the principle. . . . These are generally figures for the period from about 1850 to 1890.[17]

We find two problems with these estimates. First, the impact of polygamy on nineteenth-century Mormonism has been generally trivialized. For example, James Allen and Glen Leonard claimed that plural marriage "played a relatively small role in the total life of most Mormon communities. Most Saints accepted the principle but did not practice it. It was not only a complicated social problem, but also a heavy economic burden, especially in times of persecution. . . . 'the principle,' as it was called, was something many avoided."[18] They also underestimated the prevalence of polygamy: "Exactly how many people married into plural marriages is impossible to determine, but probably between 10 and 15 percent of the families in pioneer Utah were involved."[19]

Second, the various attempts to estimate the numbers involved in polygamy use a different statistical base. John Taylor's "2 percent" is based on the *entire membership of the church,* which includes not only women and children, but church members not living in the Utah territories. Berrett uses the 2 percent but interprets it as 2 percent of *adult males.* Ivins quotes 3 percent, but it is 3 percent of *families,* rather than 3 percent of the membership. Other estimates use the entire membership of the church as the base but include anyone "identified" with polygamy—adult men and women as well as children in polygamous households.

This same ambiguity exists in the more recent research on polygamy rates. Lowell Bennion estimated the polygamy rate for different Utah communities and concludes that "at least one-fifth of all Mormons lived in plural homes in 1880."[20] Larry Logue offered a more precise measurement of polygamous status as a percent of "eligible person years," estimating that 31

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16. Ivins, 230.

17. Leonard J. Arrington and Davis Bitton, *The Mormon Experience: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (Boston: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1979), 199.

18. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 278, 279.

19. Ibid., 278.

20. Bennion, 38.

percent of husband person years, 62 percent of wife person years, and 57 percent of the children person years in St. George between 1861-80 were polygamous.[21] Another estimate is provided by Bean et. al. who recently examined the fertility patterns of nineteenth-century Utah women and estimates the rate of polygamy as well. Using data amassed as part of the LDS church's family-group sheet program, Bean et. al. created a marriage classification for all women who were born between 1800 and 1899 and lived in Utah. Records for about 86,000 women reveal an overall rate of only 9 percent married to a polygamous husband. However, the data indicate that between 27 and 31 percent of women born 1830 through 1844 were married to a polygamous husband during their lifetime. These women would have been of marriageable age between 1848 and 1862, the time period when women in the 1860 census would have been entering into plural marriage.[22]

Our own examination of polygamy presents a different statistical approach. First, along with Bean et. al., we focus on women and their experience with polygamy. Examining the percent of men who enter into plural marriage provides useful information but underestimates the impact of the practice on the total population—especially for women and children. Furthermore, having identified the numbers of women in plural marriage we can then examine how many lived by themselves as head of house, lived with another wife, or with many wives. Second, we take a snapshot in time. We look at how many women were married at the time of the 1860 census and how many of those were in plural marriages *at that time.* We also estimate how many eventually became plural wives.

By 1860 polygamy had been openly practiced and encouraged for almost a decade. Laws prohibiting plural marriage in U.S. territories had not yet been passed. By selecting the 1860 census, we not only capture polygamy at an early date but also at its highest peak (as suggested by the Bean et. al. data). We also are able to limit the amount of record matching required since the population of Salt Lake City in 1860 is relatively small. There were 8,191 people living in 1,496 households in Salt Lake City. Perhaps one reason the 1860 census has never been used to estimate the number living in polygamy is that marital status is not specified. Therefore, in order to estimate the numbers living in polygamy, we must pay careful attention to which individuals exist in the household and then match that information with marriage records from other sources.

By 1860 church members had been divided into twenty geographically

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21. Larry M. Logue, *A Sermon in the Desert: Belief and Behavior in Early St. George, Utah* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

22. Lee L. Bean, Geraldine P. Mineau, and Douglas L. Anderson, *Fertility Change on the American Frontier: Adaptation and Innovation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

defined wards. These wards represented different ethnic and economic configurations of the population. By selecting different geographic areas of the city for record selection and matching, we are able to identify (1) whether the practice of plural marriage was higher in wards containing the "elite" families of Mormondom, (2) whether the practice was lower in wards with a high percentage of immigrants, (3) whether the practice was higher in rural areas of the valley, and (4) whether economic factors seemed to have an influence on the extent of plural marriage in a ward.

Methodology

We selected three wards from the Salt Lake Valley—two within the city and one just outside the city. Ward selection was based on three criteria: urban versus rural, immigrant versus American-born, and the socioeconomic status of the members. Selection was based in part on data provided in Larry Draper's demographic analysis of the twenty Salt Lake wards existing between 1850 and 1870.[23]

The Thirteenth Ward was a well established ward bounded on the east by Third East and on the west by State Street, and on the north and south by South Temple and by Third South. Some of the most prominent families of the LDS church resided in the Thirteenth Ward, including the Erastus Snow, Phinias Young, George Goddard, and Daniel H. Wells households.[24] According to Draper, the Thirteenth Ward was the second largest in 1860, comprising 142 households and accounting for 9.5 percent of the total population of Salt Lake City. Draper also notes that there were only 35.2 percent foreign-born members in this ward. He ranked it second in terms of wealth, with the average head of household owning $1,672 of real wealth.

By comparison, the Twentieth Ward was a relatively new, medium-sized ward. It comprised 58 households and represented 3.9 percent of the 1860 population. It was not organized until 1857 and was located on Plat D, which is now "the Avenues" of Salt Lake City. Referred to as "the dry bench" because it lacked water, residents were of average income (the ward ranked eleventh out of twenty in terms of wealth); the average head of house owned $958 of real wealth. This ward had the highest number of

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23. Larry Wayne Draper, "A Demographic Examination of Household Heads in Salt Lake City, Utah, 1850-1870," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1988.

24. Ronald W. Walker, "'Going to Meeting' in Salt Lake City's Thirteenth Ward, 1849-1881: A Microanalysis," in *New Views of Mormon History: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Leonard Arrington*, eds. Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press), 138-61.

foreign-born (94.8 percent). By 1870, the Twentieth Ward was not only the wealthiest in the valley, but also the largest ward.[25]

We also selected the Mill Creek Ward—the only ward organized outside of Salt Lake City in 1849.[26] The original ward boundaries stretched from 2100 South to Cottonwood Creek and what is now 4800 South. On the west and east, its boundaries were the Jordan River and the Wasatch mountains. Two-thirds of Mill Creek Ward residents were foreign born. We have no comparable wealth figures for this ward.

Data were first obtained from the census records. In order to be as comprehensive as possible, all adults ages eighteen and above living within the ward boundaries were identified, whether or not they appeared on the official rolls of the church. Initially, we also noted the names of young women under the age of eighteen in case they might have already married. However, we found none of these women to be wives and therefore have restricted the sample to eighteen and above.

Having collected the data from the 1860 census, we supplemented the material primarily with Ancestral File information. We also accessed biographies and family histories which provided additional information where needed. In order to tabulate polygamy rates, we created the following three marital status categories:

1. *Women in polygamous marriages.* All women who were clearly in a polygamous marriage in 1860 were included in this group. For the majority of these women, we have concrete data from the LDS Ancestral File showing the birth, death, and marriage dates. For a small number of women, we found data suggesting their husbands had more than one wife, but because of inadequate marriage and/or death dates we were unable to verify if there had been an overlap in the marriages. If we could find no evidence indicating the marriages had been sequential rather than concurrent, we classified the woman as a plural wife. We also include women in this category if the census reported more than one woman in the same household with the same surname and available information on the husband's family indicated that the women were not related in some other way (e.g., sister or sister-in-law). Given our experience in matching records, we believe these women were most likely plural wives.

2. *Women in monogamous marriages.* All women whose Ancestral File information indicated they were the only wife of their husband in 1860 were included in this category. Also included were all women who appeared monogamous according to the census—there was only one man and one

25. Twentieth Ward History, 1856-1979, comp. Ruth J. Martin, archives, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

26. Earl E. Wright, *Millcreek Ward, 1849-1956* (Salt Lake City: Millcreek First Ward, 1956).

woman in the household. We assumed this was the only marriage at the time since we could find no evidence of other wives. However, it is likely that for some of these women there were other plural wives living in other households in other wards.

3. *Apparently unmarried or widowed women.* Women who were either never married or widowed, or women for whom we could find no information, were included in this category. These women were listed as either head of house or were living in a household with others but did not share the surname of the male head of house. When the woman shared the same surname of the male head of house but was at least twenty years his senior, we categorized the woman as a widow.

We believe this classification system produces a conservative estimate of the number of women living as plural wives.

Findings

Using data from the census, we find significant differences among the wards on a variety of variables (see Table 1). Men in the Twentieth Ward were predominantly craftsmen or skilled laborers. Men in the Mill Creek Ward were predominantly farmers or farm laborers, while men in the Thirteenth Ward were primarily businessmen, merchants, and skilled laborers.

Table 1.

Ward comparisons, 1860

	13th	*20th*	*Mill Creek*
Occupation	7 %	7 %	0 %
Professional	26	11	0
Business/merchant	28	54	12
Craftsman/skilled laborer	20	28	34
Unskilled laborer	19	0	55
Farmer	(N=188)	(N=54)	(N=191)
Foreign-born	44 %	94 %	67 %
Male	39	94	64
Female	49	91	70
	(N=473)	(N=132)	(N=410)
Male-to-female ratio			
Males	49 % (231)	41 % (54)	49 % (197)
Females	51 % (242)	59 % (78)	51 % (213)

	(N=473)	(N=132)	(N=410)
Average age (in years)			
Male	35	38	36
Female	34	32	35

The male/female ratio among adults was fairly even in the Thirteenth and Mill Creek wards; however, in the Twentieth Ward only 41 percent of the adult population were men. We also found that the ages of men and women were more balanced in the Thirteenth and Mill Creek wards (about 35 years of age), while men were somewhat older than women (38 years old compared to 32 years old) in the Twentieth Ward.

TABLE 2.

MARITAL STATUS FOR WOMEN IN 1860 CENSUS BY WARD

	13th		*20th*		*Mill Creek*		*Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Polygamous Marriage	103	43	28	35	106	50	237	44
Monogamous Marriage	81	33	35	44	75	35	191	36
Not married	57	24	16	20	33	15	106	20
Total	241	100	79	100	214	100	534	100

Table 2 presents data on marital status for women living in the three wards. Overall, we found the greatest number of women were in a polygamous marriage, more than four in ten. A little more than one-third of women were in a monogamous marriage, and 20 percent of women were not currently married. Women living in the Mill Creek Ward were most likely to be in polygamous marriages (50 percent) and least likely to be unmarried (only 15 percent). As shown in Table 3, the majority of unmarried women in Mill Creek were over 50 years of age (55 percent). By comparison, women in the Twentieth Ward were least likely to be in a polygamous marriage (35 percent), and if unmarried (20 percent) they were mostly under thirty years of age (56 percent). More than one in four women in the Thirteenth Ward were in a polygamous marriage. There were slightly more unmarried women (about one in four) in this ward, and unmarried women were also comparatively younger (42 percent under the age of 30). These women may have been temporary guests or perhaps unidentified domestics. We found no information suggesting they were married at the time or eventually married the head of house.

TABLE 3.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF UNMARRIED WOMEN IN 1860 CENSUS BY WARD

	13th		*20th*		*Mill Creek*		*Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
< 30	24	42	9	56	10	30	43	41
30-49	19	33	3	20	5	15	27	25
50+	14	25	4	25	18	55	36	34
Total	57	100	16	100	33	15	106	100

The above data suggest that unattached women in the rural area of the valley were most likely older (probably widows), while the unmarried women in the urban areas were younger. Urban centers may have been more inviting for the young unmarried woman even in 1860.

TABLE 4.

MARITAL STATUS OF MARRIED WOMEN IN 1860 CENSUS BY WARD

	13th		*20th*		*Mill Creek*		*Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Polygamous	103	56	28	44	106	59	237	56
Monogamous	76	41	25	40	67	37	168	39
Eventually	5	3	10	16	8	4	23	5
Total	184	100	63	100	181	100	428	100

As seen in Table 4, the highest rate of polygamy among *married* women is in the farming community of Mill Creek where we found 59 percent of women in a polygamous marriage. The lowest rate of plural marriage for married women in our sample is in the Twentieth Ward (44 percent), the urban ward with the most foreign born and a lower average wealth. However, note also that married women in the Twentieth Ward were more likely to become a plural wife than women in the other wards. Their immigrant status and relatively young age may account for the lower rate of polygamy. In sum, at least three out of five of the married women in these three wards eventually became plural wives. This suggests a much higher rate of plural marriage than estimated in other studies.

We also examined the living arrangements of women in plural marriages. Folk images picture men married to dozens of women, and plural wives living and maintaining their own households. Ivins's early study estimated "Of 1,784 polygamists, 66.3 per cent married only one extra wife.

Another 21.2 per cent were three-wife men, and 6.7 percent went as far as to take four wives. This left a small group of less than six per cent who married five or more women." More recently Arrington and Bitton estimate "that no more than 5 percent of married Mormon men had more than one wife; and . . . the great majority of these had only two wives . . ."[27]

TABLE 5.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR WOMEN IN POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES, 1860

	13th		*20th*		*Mill Creek*		*Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Woman head of house (husband not present)	4	4	0	0	12	11	16	7
Only wife in household	22	21	6	21	36	34	64	27
2 wives present	46	45	18	65	33	31	97	41
3 wives present	18	17	0	0	17	16	35	15
4+ wives present	13	13	4	14	8	8	25	10
Total	103		28		106		237	

As reported in Table 5, the most common arrangement for plural wives was to live with their husband and one other wife (about four in ten). This arrangement was, however, most common in the Twentieth Ward where more than three out of five women lived with their husband and one other wife. We found that three in ten plural married women in the Thirteenth Ward and one in four of plural married women in the Mill Creek Ward lived in households with two or more other wives.

We found few plural wives who were heads of house—only 4 percent in the Thirteenth Ward and none in the Twentieth. However, 11 percent of polygamous wives in the Mill Creek Ward were the head of their own household. One reason for this higher number was the many households of Archibald Gardner, a wealthy landowner and mill operator. Gardner had eleven wives, of whom seven lived in the Mill Creek Ward boundaries. One of his wives, Jane Park, age twenty-six, was head of her own household and reported a single twenty-two-year-old male farm laborer living in her home. Two other wives, living in separate dwellings, were mother and daughter. But this arrangement was rare in 1860. We found little support for the image of plural wives living in separate households, visited regularly (or irregularly) by the husband—the living arrangement of Emmeline

27. Arrington and Bitton, 199.

B. Wells, for example. At most 7 percent of plural married women were living singly in 1860, and it was most likely to occur in the farming community of Mill Creek, and only then in wealthy farm households.

TABLE 6.

MEAN NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL PLURAL WIVES FOR WOMEN IN POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES, 1860

	13th		*20th*		*Mill Creek*		*Total*	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
Total number of additional wives in same household	99	1.27	28	1.21	102	.81	229	1.06
Total number of additional wives at census	68	2.62	19	1.11	75	2.44	162	2.36
Total number of additional wives in husband's lifetime	91	3.91	23	2.74	98	3.03	212	3.38

Data in Table 6 demonstrate additional significant differences by ward. We calculated the total number of additional plural wives for each woman married to a polygamous husband. Since missing data are a problem, these numbers may not be as accurate as the rest of our estimates. We feel more confident about the accuracy of identifying which women were married to polygamous husbands than the accuracy of counting how many other wives. However, we did find that women in the Twentieth Ward had the fewest wives in the same household in 1860 (1.21 compared to 1.81 for the Mill Creek Ward and 1.27 for the Thirteenth Ward). However, women in both the Thirteenth and Mill Creek wards were more likely to have other plural wives in other households (2.62 and 2.44 respectively). Over time ward differences decreased. The total number of other plural wives during the husband's lifetime was 3.91 for the women in the Thirteenth Ward, compared to 3.03 for Mill Creek and 2.74 for the Twentieth Ward. Clearly women in the Thirteenth Ward had the most other women married to their husbands.

These statistics are based on data about all people living in ward boundaries in 1860. No attempt has been made to make comparisons with actual church membership records. The Thirteenth Ward covered a commercial and highly urban area of the city, and there were likely many non-Mormons living within the boundaries. There were at least two hotels within the boundary limits. Given the likelihood of non-Mormon residents, the polygamy rate among Mormons in the Thirteenth Ward is probably

actually higher than we have estimated. Taken together, it appears that the polygamy rate is highest in agricultural/farming areas, almost or equally high in well-to-do urban areas, and lower in less well-to-do urban areas populated with recent immigrants. However, we do find that the number of plural wives in the Twentieth Ward increased after 1860, probably as the economic stability of the households increased and the new immigrants had time to settle into Mormon society.

We found few unmarried women under thirty in the three wards: only 8 percent of the population overall, and only 5 percent in Mill Creek. We also found little evidence that men married widows as plural wives. Rather, these women were more likely to be living with adult sons and daughters.

We found a number of young men who either were not married or were not living with a spouse. These young men were most prevalent in the Thirteenth Ward where they lived in boarding houses, and in the Mill Creek Ward where they were farm laborers. Remember, the male/female ratio in these two wards was almost equal, and yet there was a high rate of polygamy. In some cases, we found an apparently unmarried man living and working as part of a polygamous household along side a young polygamous wife of similar age. For example, in the household of Caroline C. Green, age twenty-one, there was a twenty-three year old farm laborer named Richard Ingraham. But Caroline was a plural wife of Cornelius Green, age forty. Young men such as Richard owned no property, had few skills (their occupation was typically listed as unskilled laborer), and were perhaps not able to support a family.

Conclusion

These data suggest that the practice of polygamy played a significant role in shaping social relationships and culture in early Utah. Two out of five women and three out of five married women living in these three wards were in polygamous marriages. Data on the number of contemporary LDS women who are temple married is not available, but it is likely that the statistics are similar. The sheer numbers of women who were willing to enter into marriage with a polygamous husband probably encouraged other women to follow in their footsteps. The fact that plural marriage was initially introduced among the leadership of the church helped create an atmosphere of greater acceptability. Perhaps such unions provided a certain amount of status for both husband and wife which served to mitigate the stresses and strains of actually living under "the principle."

Economic factors also played a significant role. Housing more than one wife, whether in separate residences or in the same residence, must have required a certain level of economic well-being. The fact that we find more plural wives in the same household in the elite wealthy urban ward or the

wealthy landed household of Mill Creek than in less well-to-do areas like the Twentieth Ward suggests an economic factor. Women likely examined the costs and benefits of a polygamous marriage. On the other hand, we must not ignore the economic advantage additional wives provided polygamous households, both in urban and rural areas. Each additional person contributed to household production and therefore to the economic stability of the household. Even so, there must have been obvious benefits to considering marriage to a well-established, financially stable, prominent man rather than to a young man with little to offer economically.

The almost equal sex ratio in the two wards with high polygamy rates suggests that there must have been a number of marriageable young men who had difficulty competing in the marriage market. We found a great disparity between the real estate and personal property values of the male heads of house and the unskilled laborers living in the boarding houses of the Thirteenth Ward or the farm laborers living in households in Mill Creek.

We can draw only tentative conclusions from these data. More analysis must follow. However, the data seem to suggest that the practice of plural marriage was higher in wards containing the "elite" and wealthy families of Mormondom. The practice of plural marriage was initially lower in the Twentieth Ward where incomes were more moderate and where almost all members were immigrants. However, the total number of women who either were a plural wife or eventually became a plural wife was about equal for all three wards. We found a high rate of plural marriage in the rural area of the valley as well, but the rate was not much greater than in the more wealthy Thirteenth Ward.

In short, we find a high rate of plural marriage and conclude that such a common practice would encourage more women to enter into plural marriage during the next two decades. We also find, however, that about four in ten married women in these three wards never became a plural wife. We suggest that more attention be given to the differences between women who entered plural marriage and those who did not and what conflicts may have arisen among the women as they made different choices about their role in "the Kingdom." What factors encouraged women to enter plural marriage has been addressed previously. A survey of factors which discouraged women from entering into plural marriage might be even more enlightening.

Telling It Slant: Aiming for Truth in Contemporary Mormon Literature

William Mulder

EVER SINCE MORMONISM'S FOUNDING PROPHET declared that "No man knows my history," writers have been left to imagine it and all its consequences. In short, the Mormon experience is the stuff of literature. Contemporary Mormon writers (by whom I mean freelancers, whether deep in the fold or on its edges) are bringing fresh themes, talents, and techniques to their imaginings, resulting in a cornucopia of good reading. It is hard to keep up with current production, let alone catch up with what has been happening since *Exponent II* and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* and *Sunstone* and *Brigham Young University Studies* came on the scene and Signature Books, Aspen Books, and Gibbs Smith gave us an alternative press, along with some daring departures on the part of the University of Utah Press. And that is just the fruit of one half of Mormonism's two cultures (to borrow a phrase from C. P. Snow)—the critical, reflective, thinking half, the half that gave us a kind of second renaissance in Mormon letters in such collections as *A Believing People*, *Greening Wheat*, *Harvest*, and *Bright Angels and Familiars*, not quite the standard works but almost as well known.

It may be time for a Mormon equivalent of Kenneth B. Murdock's little book on *Literature and Theology in Colonial New England*, a landmark work which gave colonial literature a belated place in the sun as Murdock demonstrated how Puritan religious thought and experience, against the background of seventeenth-century English literature, found expression in their poetry, their histories and biographies, and their personal narratives—

not a bad model for our own effort to see the connections between Mormon life and letters.[1]

But Murdock had a book to expand on it, and I have some fifteen pages. Besides, Eugene England covered the ground in his Charles Redd lecture more than ten years ago, a commanding survey he called "The Dawning of a Brighter Day: Mormon Literature after 150 Years."[2] More than an outline of Mormon literary history, it is an interpretation, a critique, and a charge, reminding me in its timeliness of Ellery Channing's great address, "Remarks on a National Literature," in 1830, a time of heightened nationalism in the United States—and the very year Mormonism (and Emily Dickinson) were born. It strikes me that Mormon writers (again the thinking half of our two cultures) are equally self-conscious in striving to define and establish their literary identity today.[3] So Gene's lecture has done our work for us up to 1980, as his continuing reviews and essays have been doing it for the 1980s, another productive decade in Mormon literature.

So what is left? Perhaps a brief retrospective look at a Symposium on Mormon Culture held as the plenary session of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and letters in Logan in 1952, more than forty years ago, and thirty years before Gene's prospectus. On that occasion Juanita Brooks of Dixie College presented a portrait of St. George, Utah, Leonard Arrington of Utah State Agricultural College spoke on "Trends in Mormon Economic Policy," Gaylon Caldwell of Brigham Young University presented a paper on "The Development of Mormon Ethics," and I, a still unordained Harvard ABD (all but dissertation) teaching at the University of Utah, presumed to put "Mormonism and Literature" in historical perspective. Symposium papers circulated in mimeographed form for a while, eventually finding their way into various publications. Mine got buried in the "Notes and Comments" column of the *Western Humanities Review* in the winter of 1954-55. Karl Keller noticed it some years later and, in a provocative article of his own on "The *Delusions* of a Mormon Literature" (italics mine) in *Dialogue*'s special literary issue in 1969, gave it an approving footnote. It was the best introduction so far, he said, to "the paucity and possibilities of a Mormon literature."[4] Five years later Richard Cracroft and Neal Lambert

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1. Kenneth B. Murdock, *Literature and Theology in Colonial New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949; New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963).

2. Eugene England, "The Dawning of a Brighter Day: Mormon Literature after 150 Years," *Brigham Young University Studies* 22 (Spring 1982); also in Thomas G. Alexander and Jessie L. Embry, eds., *After 150 Years: The Latter-day Saints in Sesquicentennial Perspective* (Provo, UT: Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, 1983).

3. Bruce W. Jorgensen, "Digging the Foundation: Making and Reading Mormon Literature," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 9 (Winter 1974): 50-61.

4. Karl Keller, "On Words and the Word of God: The Delusions of a Mormon Literature," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Autumn 1969): 14.

resurrected the piece in their pathbreaking collection *A Believing People,* the essay positioned not too uncomfortably between Orson F. Whitney's 1888 *Contributor* essay on "Home Literature" and P. A. Christensen's "Mormonism: An Eternal Quest," taken from his *All in a Teacher's Day.*[5] Not bad company really.

Now after that prologue I should reproduce a few paragraphs from that hardy perennial from which we can go on to see what has happened since.

> It is not without significance that Mormonism, beginning with a book, had to make its appeal to a literate following. The proselyte had to be able to read. The Saints, be it remembered, equipped their ideal community not only with a temple and a bishop's storehouse, but with a printing press, and they appointed not only elders and bishops and teachers as their ministering officers, but an official printer to the Church. Even Winter Quarters [Iowa] had a press where was struck off what is believed to be the first printing west of the Mississippi, an epistle from the Twelve to the scattered Saints. And a people uprooted, on the move across Iowa and the great plains, carried Webster's blue-backed speller with them and heard their youngsters diligently recite their lessons in the dust of rolling wagons. Once established in Salt Lake Valley, they made an urgent request for a federal appropriation of $5,000 for a territorial library; and within short years they were promoting lyceums, a Polysophical Society, a Deseret Dramatic Association, a Universal Scientific Society, a Library Association, and an Academy of Art.
>
> It is not without significance that Joseph Smith himself, whether viewed as the divinely inspired translator or as a transcendental genius, was the product of a literate background, both in terms of an average New England schooling with its available village culture and of his own family, particularly the maternal side: his grandfather Solomon Mack had published in chapbook form a highly readable spiritual autobiography. It is not surprising that around the Prophet's millennial standard gathered school teachers and college graduates, men as gifted as Oliver Cowdery and Willard Richards, the Pratt brothers—Parley and Orson, Orson Spencer, John Taylor, William Phelps, Lorenzo Snow, and his talented sister Eliza, persuasive orators and fluent writers who founded and edited capable periodicals like the *Millennial Star* in England, the *Messenger and Advocate* in Kirtland [Ohio], the *Evening and Morning Star* in Independence [Missouri], the *Mormon* in New York, the *Seer* in Washington, the *Luminary* in St. Louis, the *Nauvoo Neighbor* and the *Times and Seasons* in Nauvoo [Illinois], and the *Frontier Guardian* in Kanesville [Iowa]—some of them brilliant, all of them fearless and eloquent. Their tradition, militant and aspiring, persisted in the columns of the early *Deseret News* and in the

5. Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert, eds., *A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-day Saints* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press 1974).

pages of the *Contributor* and the *Young Woman's Journal*, to give way at last to genteel moralizing, a tone and manner characteristic of today, with persecution subsided and the dream collapsed.

Clearly, Mormonism had literate beginnings which developed early into a distinctive literature, a rich legacy forgotten in the mediocrity of present-day Mormon expression. That legacy, to be sure, must be sought in more than belles lettres; it must be sought and recognized in the beginnings of literature, the raw materials out of which pure letters rise: in an oral tradition of salty anecdote and imaginative legend, in colorful and vigorous sermons that make the *Journal of Discourses* such fascinating reading, in personal diaries and letters which reveal the soul-searching triumphs and defeats of the convert, immigrant, and settler, in hymns breathing aspiration and desire—together, intensely moving expressions of a faith fed by millennial dreams and nourished by irrigation. These, a subliterature if you will, come closer to exhibiting the genius of Mormonism as a force and movement than the more formal literary types thrice removed from their original inspiration. It is in these themes and modes, these beginnings of literature, we should attempt to find what is, or has been, characteristic of Mormon literature and what may hold promise for the future. . . .

The burden of creating a Mormon literature in the future rests as heavily on the reader as on the writer. If a look at the Church counter in local bookstores fills us with dismay and we accuse Mormon writers of having thrown away their pens in favor of pastepot and scissors, we may well inquire whether a supine readership is after all not to blame. One of the major threats to Mormon literary growth is what may be called the uneducated literacy of the Church membership, a greater danger perhaps than downright illiteracy because adult minds, capable of growth, have been arrested, in the official literature, at the level of the Sunday School lesson and never treated to the stimulation of the mature writing the whole Mormon tradition should have ripened by our time. Mormonism is perfectly capable of its own *Christian Century* and *Commentary*. Scores of Church members are writing with distinction in their special fields, but the official literature does not recognize them because of another major threat to Mormon literary growth: the attempt to endow certain writings, however mediocre in style and spirit, with an authority extraneous to the work itself. The official preface is fatal to Mormon literary production because it invests unworthy works with false prestige while on the other hand better work not so recognized goes unread. Literature should establish its own authority. The best of Joseph Smith's revelations, linguistically speaking, have the authority of good literature; they are literature converted into authority when they speak truth unforgettably. Not "Was it inspired?" but "Is it inspiring?" is the better touchstone of authenticity. . . .

Mormon literature will move toward the promise of its highly articulate beginnings when Mormon readers demand of Mormon writers

> authentic voices, whether in fiction, in history, in biography, or in missionary tract—the authority of good writing, of truths made memorable.[6]

A document so dated calls for a sequel, an account of what's happened in the forty years since that symposium and since those literary ancestors of the 1940s (Sorensen, Whipple, Kennelly) Edward Geary calls "Mormondom's lost generation,"[7] to see whether contemporary Mormon writers, like historians writing the "new Mormon history," have brought new viewpoints and professional skills to their work as they move beyond the clichés of Mormon faith and experience. We want to know how in fiction, for example, we get from Nephi Anderson's *The Romance of a Missionary* to Franklin Fisher's *Bones* and Levi Peterson's *Backslider;* how in poetry we get from Eliza R. Snow's "O My Father" to Carol Lynn Pearson's *Mother Wove the Morning* and Emma Lou Thayne's *Poems of Survival* and Clinton Larson's "To a Dying Girl"; how in drama we get from *Saturday's Warrior* to Tom Rogers's *Huebener.* We want to know how in personal narrative and reminiscence we get from *The Boys of Springtown* to Ed Geary's *Goodbye to Poplarhaven* and Virginia Sorensen's *Where Nothing Is Long Ago* and Wayne Carver's "Plain City: Portrait of a Mormon Village." We want to know how in short fiction we get from the stories in the *Era,* the *Ensign,* and the *Relief Society Magazine* to stories by Linda Sillitoe, Pauline Mortensen, Judith Freeman, Phyllis Barber, Doug Thayer, Don Marshall, Neal Chandler, Walter Kirn, Michael Fillerup, and John Bennion. We want to know in criticism how we get from John A. Widtsoe's dismissal of Virginia Sorensen's *A Little Lower Than the Angels* to Bruce Jorgensen's illuminations of *The Evening and the Morning.* And finally we want to know how in stories for children and young adults we get from *The Juvenile Instructor* and *The Children's Friend* to Ann Cannon's *Cal Cameron by Day, Spider-Man by Night.*

As I see it there have been two, possibly three, palpable developments in contemporary Mormon writing: first, an emboldened treatment of a broadened subject matter, going far beyond, in time, the warmed-over servings of the pioneer past and, in space, beyond the confines of the Wasatch, the newer interest centering as much on the contemporary urban as the traditional rural scene, whether in Zion or among the Saints of the diaspora or the cultures encountered in mission fields abroad. And as part of this breadth and boldness has come an appreciation of the androgynous in men and women and an honest handling of sexuality, whether in married or forbidden love, the expression of it as poignant and painful as on occasion it is beautiful.

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6. William Mulder, "Mormonism and Literature," in Cracroft and Lambert, 108-11.

7. Edward A. Geary, "Mormondom's Lost Generation: The Novelists of the 1940s," *Brigham Young University Studies* 18 (Autumn 1977): 89.

A second development is the writers' realization that in treating Mormon themes "technique is discovery," Mark Schorer's term for that reconciliation of form and content that makes the *way* a thing is said ultimately *what* is said.[8] It is that triumph of style that transforms the ideas of the Declaration of Independence from platitudes into imperishable prose.

A third development is a growing body of literary criticism as a necessary adjunct to artistic advance in contemporary Mormon letters. A key to a Mormon aesthetic may lie in Karl Keller's dictum that "not art filling a religious purpose, but religion succeeding in an aesthetic way" should be the aim.[9] In this way Mormon literature, like any other literature, can become, as Ezra Pound puts it, "the news that stays news."[10] In short, today's Mormon writers are telling the truth, their truth, but telling it, as Emily Dickinson would have it, slant.

> Tell all the Truth but tell it slant—
> Success in Circuit lies
> Too bright for our infirm Delight
> The Truth's superb surprise
> As Lightning to the Children eased
> With explanation kind
> The Truth must dazzle gradually
> Or every man be blind—[11]

"God's altar," says the Preface to the *Bay Psalm Book*, "needs not our polishings,"[12] yet the altar, which I take to be a metaphor for divine truth, that Truth that dazzles, may be sighted, if it is to be seen at all, from as many angles as talents allow until that day we "get our eyes put out" by that waylaying light Dickinson fears is "Too bright for our infirm Delight."

"The Law," says a Hebrew proverb, "speaks in the tongues of men." Thomas Adams, the seventeenth-century English preacher known in his day as "the prose Shakespeare of Puritan divines," declared that "God doth sometimes draw men to him . . . by their own delights and studies . . . as fishermen fishes, with such baits as may be somewhat agreeable to them. . . . Doth Augustine love eloquence? Ambrose shall catch him at a sermon."

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8. Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery," in Ray B. West, Jr., ed., *Essays in Modern Literary Criticism* (New York: Rinehart, 1952), 189.

9. Keller, 17.

10. Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (Norfolk: New Directions, n.d.), 29.

11. Emily Dickinson, Poem 1129, in Thomas H. Johnson, ed., *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 792.

12. *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (Cambridge, MA, 1640); see also *The Bay Psalm Book*, rpt. ed. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1973).

Adams wanted his hearers to "conceive things more spiritual and remote by passions nearer to sense."[13] The American Puritans themselves practiced a range of literary strategies, from William Bradford's plain style to Edward Taylor's colonial baroque, to prepare the heart for that grace they hoped would prove irresistible. Cotton Mather, despite some misgivings about the immorality of Homer's gods, expanded the range of permissible literary allusion from the biblical to the classical and, in his handbook for the ministry, whom he did not wish to have "a soul that shall be wholly unpoetical," advised his young charges to peruse Horace's *Art of Poetry* and to discern "the beauties and rare antiquities of an Homer and a Virgil. . . . Everyman," he tells them, "will have his own style which will distinguish him as much as his gait."[14]

So my narrowed objective is to see in a very few examples by what literary circuitry contemporary Mormon writers seem to be achieving their successes as they approach God's altar. And there are as many slants or strategies, of course, as there are forms and styles.

There is the slant of form itself—the forms of fiction, poetry and drama, of sermon and meditation, of personal narrative and the personal essay, of folk-tale and oral telling, and the multiplied possibilities of structure within those forms. There is the slant of voice and tone and point of view; the slant of mood and mode, of humor and satire, parable and allegory, irony and anger. And there is the slant in all the possibilities of language itself, the instrument, of course, for all the other slantings—the figures of speech, sign and symbol, metaphor and image, both visual and auditory. Like Emily Dickinson, the Mormon writer dwells in possibility, possessing, like E. A. Robinson's "Rembrandt," if craftsman enough, "a tool too keen for timid safety."[15]

Language as wit, for instance, runs rampant in Dennis Clark's "Answer to Prayer," ringing all the changes on the Federal Archives and Records Center where Ev, as beset by concupiscence as he is by punning, is part of "the work farce"; the pun and idea of farce pervade the story.[16] A chief delight in Neal Chandler's ironically titled *Benediction* is the way he puts a new spin on clichés of Mormon thought and diction, working

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13. William Mulder, "Style and the Man: Thomas Adams, Prose Shakespeare of Puritan Divines," *Harvard Theological Review* 48 (Apr. 1955): 136-37.

14. Cotton Mather, *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726), extracted in Milton R. Stern and Seymour L. Gross, eds., *American Literature: Colonial and Federal to 1800* (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 129-34.

15. Edwin Arlington Robinson, "Rembrandt to Rembrandt," in *Collected Poems* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), 590.

16. Dennis Clark, "Answer to Prayer," in Levi S. Peterson, ed., *Greening Wheat: Fifteen Mormon Short Stories* (Midvale, UT: Orion Books, 1983), 157-74.

them into startling secular contexts, now comic, now sinister, that give familiar words and phrases new currency. Thus we get "the spiritually attuned public relations and marketing specialist" in a corporation merchandising "free-market Christianity," and we get "a sort of spiritual wellness spot check" in a teenager's interview with his bishop. We get "doctrinal punch" at Mormon socials, a smug Sunday school teacher sounding "like Dan Rather in the last days," a student "pure and unspotted from math," an executive's "zippered leather scripture case . . . so immense, so oiled and polished to so deep an Abyssinian hue, it seemed worthy of the golden plates themselves." In Chandler's creative combinations and applications, a pyramid scheme with a strong resemblance to Amway becomes "God's own plan . . . the only divinely authorized plan for financial success in this life or the next."[17] And everyone of course is familiar with what Elouise Bell can do with zucchini.[18]

Chandler's *Benediction* is an example of telling it slant, in this instance the slant of satire, with the consummate craft I find the rule rather than the exception today. Its humor is irreverent but affectionate, not disdainful, even when most devastating. Hypocrisy, cant, venality, "general authority," smugness, and bigotry among the powerful are easy targets for the aroused satirist. More difficult objects are the tender-minded faithful unaware of their own vulnerability who would be perplexed at being made fun of and whom the satirist needs to handle with care. In some stories there is no laughter, only wonder and compassion, when a character is in travail, frustrated, disappointed, faced with loss, experiencing pain. Then there is no satiric penetration of the crust of Mormon dogma or tickling of the soft underbelly of Mormon sentimentalism. Only pathos. Such stories are not faith-promoting so much as life-enhancing.

Humor with a bite is no stranger to contemporary Mormon literature. Bert Wilson and Dick Cracroft called our attention to "The Seriousness of Mormon Humor" and "The Humor of Mormon Seriousness" in an engaging pair of complementary articles in *Sunstone* a good while ago.[19] There is a motherlode of folk humor in the Mormon experience, with an especially rich vein of it among Scandinavian convert-immigrants who cope with sin and syntax in cycles of stories centering on the Word of Wisdom, polygamy, domestic troubles, natural calamities, testimony meetings, irrigation, Indians, and the Brethren, the hierarchy "vit all dat authority dey hass unter

17. Neal Chandler, *Benediction: A Book of Stories* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), *passim.*

18. Elouise Bell, "Zzzzzuchini," in *Only When I Laugh* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 1-3.

19. William A. Wilson, "The Seriousness of Mormon Humor," and Richard H. Cracroft, "The Humor of Mormon Seriousness," both in *Sunstone* 10 (1985).

deir vest." The coin of Ephraim's humor especially, the "town that laughs at itself," still circulates. I must limit myself to just one anecdote to illustrate how style and structure can operate at both the folk and formal levels.

When Lars Larsen is accused of stealing water and is confronted with one witness who says he was just fifty yards away when he saw Lars take the water and another who was sixty yards away "and he seen you," Lars tells the justice, "Dey are both liars. Dey vas more dan two hunnert yards avay ven I steal dat vater." "Then you did steal the water?" "Dat," says Lars, "remains for de yury."[20]

In the title story of Virginia Sorensen's collection *Where Nothing Is Long Ago: Memories of a Mormon Childhood,* Brother Tolsen kills a neighbor caught stealing water, one of those shovel murders not uncommon in irrigation country. Brother Tolsen turns himself in to Bishop Peterson and is acquitted by a jury to whom "stealing water is stealing life itself." When years later Brother Tolsen dies, Virginia as narrator, a young girl at the time of the murder, thinks, "Well, another one is gone; soon there won't be a real Danish accent left in the whole valley." One other memory lingers: after the trial the young Virginia is driving along with her family and sees Brother Tolsen out irrigating:

> Dad and Mother waved and called to him. He lifted an arm to answer, and I saw that he held a shovel in the other hand. "I wonder if he bought a new shovel," I said suddenly. For a minute, the air seemed to have gone dead about us, in the peculiar way it sometimes can, which is so puzzling to a child. Then Mother turned to me angrily. "Don't you ever let me hear you say a thing like that again!" she said. "Brother Tolsen is a good, kind man!"

"So until this very hour," Virginia confesses, "I never have."[21]

We have moved from the crude humor of "Dey vas more dan two hunnert yards avay ven I steal dat vater" to the unintended irony of a young girl's "I wonder if he bought a new shovel." In such literary re-creations of the Scandinavian Mormon past, the humor has undergone a sea change, to be sure, but the indigenous anecdote and the elegant reminiscence serve the same function: they are the tie that binds, the descendant learning to cope and accommodate through irony as once the ancestor did through humor.

Humor at its various levels and in its various guises is surely one of

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20. Lucille Johnson Butler, "Ephraim's Humor," M.A. thesis, University of Utah; William Mulder, "A Sense of Humus: Scandinavian Mormon Immigrant Humor," *Juanita Brooks Lectures in American History and Culture* (St. George, UT: Dixie College, 1985).

21. Virginia Sorensen, *Where Nothing Is Long Ago* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), 3-14.

Mormonism's strong suits. The personal narrative, so akin to the spiritual bookkeeping of Puritan autobiography, is certainly another, endemic in the conversion experience, the struggle between faith and doubt. Related to it is the personal essay, another form congenial to the Mormon experience, as in Gene England's *Dialogues with Myself* and Mary Bradford's "Personal Essay about Personal Essays."[22] Terry Tempest Williams has used the form to excellent advantage as she reads the natural and human landscapes in her natural history writings and in her moving personal account of "The Clan of One-Breasted Women," about the victims of the fallout of nuclear testing in Southern Utah.[23] Clifton Jolley describes the personal essay as "the beast," because the writer who chooses it, he says, "with neither comfort nor refuge in the satisfactions of pose or form . . . must face the beast [i.e., the truth about oneself] naked and alone."[24]

We can see the possibilities of "telling it slant" by taking an extended look at Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's confession of her struggle to reconcile faith and doubt, a struggle I find reminiscent of Anne Bradstreet's, whose "heart rose" with anxiety, we may remember, when she first glimpsed New England's bleak and wintry shore. In her essay "Lusterware," Laurel, our new Pulitzer celebrity, develops an image that entirely controls it.[25]

Laurel's opening startled me: "I have been thinking lately," she begins, "about an Emily Dickinson poem I first heard twenty-five years ago in an American literature class at the University of Utah. I remember feeling intrigued and somewhat troubled as the professor read the poem since he was reported to be a lapsed Mormon. 'Was that how it felt to lose faith?' I thought." I was that professor, and I need to repeat the whole of that poem to appreciate its impact on her as well as to see what she does with it:

> It dropped so low—in my Regard—
> I heard it hit the Ground—
> And go to pieces on the Stones
> At bottom of my Mind—
> Yet blamed the Fate that flung it—less
> Than I denounced Myself,

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22. Eugene England, *Dialogues with Myself: Personal Essays on Mormon Experience* (Midvale, UT: Orion Books, 1984); Mary L. Bradford, "I, Eye, Aye: A Personal Essay on Personal Essays," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 11 (Summer 1978): 81-89.

23. Terry Tempest Williams, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991), 281-90.

24. Clifton Jolley, "Mormons and the Beast: In Defense of the Personal Essay," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 11 (Autumn 1978): 137.

25. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Lusterware, " in Philip Barlow, eds., *A Thoughtful Faith: Essays on Belief by Mormon Scholars* (Centerville: Canon Press, 1986), 195-203.

For entertaining Plated Wares
Upon my Silver Shelf—[26]

"Since then," says Laurel, "I have lost faith in many things, among them Olympia typewriters, *New York Times* book reviews, and texturized vegetable protein; and yes, like most Latter-day Saints I have had to reconsider some of my deepest religious beliefs . . .

> I have always been a somewhat skeptical person [but] as I have grown older, I have become less fearful of those "stones at the bottom of my mind." In fact, I am convinced that a willingness to admit disbelief is often essential to spiritual growth. . . . Though a few people seem to have been blessed with foam rubber rather than stones at the bottom of their minds (may they rest in peace), sooner or later most of us are forced to confront our shattered beliefs.

Laurel finds Emily Dickinson's "little poem" helpful. She had not fully grasped the image of "Plated Wares" until she learned about lusterware, "the most popular 'Plated Wares' of Emily Dickinson's time":

> In the late eighteenth century British manufacturers developed a technique for decorating ceramic ware with a gold or platinum film. In one variety, a platinum luster was applied to the entire surface of the object to produce what contemporaries called "poor man's silver." Shiny, inexpensive, and easy to get, it was also fragile, as breakable as any piece of pottery or china. Only a gullible or very inexperienced person would mistake it for true silver.

Now we have the necessary information for appreciating Laurel's metaphorical distinction between a genuine and a superficial belief which is central to the rest of the essay. Here's an inkling of her application of the image:

> All of us have lusterware as well as silver on that shelf we keep at the top of our minds. A lusterware Joseph Smith, for instance, is unfailingly young, handsome, and spiritually radiant; unschooled but never superstitious, persecuted but never vengeful, human but never mistaken. A lusterware image fulfills our need for an idea without demanding a great deal from us. There are lusterware missions and marriages, lusterware friendships, lusterware histories and yes, lusterware visions of ourselves. Most of these will be tested at some point on the stones at the bottom of our minds.

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26. Emily Dickinson, Poem 747, in Johnson, 792.

Laurel then proceeds to describe at length several painful testings of her own, including agonizing differences with her bishop. Toward the end she gives an account of a three-day unofficial conference at Nauvoo which left her despairing of any hope for peace for herself or change in the church until, unbidden, on the banks of the Mississippi, she seemed to hear that voice recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 128 as "a voice of gladness! a voice of mercy from heaven; and a voice of truth out of the earth." "I am not talking here about a literal voice," she says, "but an infusion of the Spirit, a kind of Pentecost that for a moment dissolved the boundaries between heaven and earth and between present and past. I felt as though I were re-experiencing the events the early Saints had described. I am not a mystical person," she continues. "In ordinary decisions in my family I am far more likely to call for a vote than a prayer, and when other people proclaim their 'spiritual experiences' I am generally cautious. But I would gladly sift through a great trough of meal for even a little bit of that leaven."

In her conclusion Laurel gives her central image a cautionary turn: "The temptations of skepticism are real," she says. "Sweeping up the lusterware, we sometimes forget to polish and cherish the silver, not knowing that the power of discernment is one of the gifts of the Spirit, that the ability to discover counterfeit wares also gives us the power to recognize the genuine." There is not a superfluous word nor a misplaced sentence in the whole of the essay and no straining of the metaphor. A firm sentiment and sure sense of self, its vulnerabilities as well as its strengths, clothe the essay's moral armature. The figure breathes and walks.

I have dwelt at length on Laurel's essay to make her experience palpable, a crisis of belief in aesthetic terms not unlike the poetry of crisis and conversion in Jonathan Edwards's *Personal Narrative*. Have we here an example of "faithful literature," counterpart to Richard Bushman's "faithful history"?

A bare patch in the Mormon literary landscape, it seems to me, is the meditation. I do not mean the word as loosely applied to a meditation on whatever, a way of accommodating informal thoughts on love or time or faith or friendship and so on. I mean in a sense closer to Thomas Hooker's seventeenth-century definition: "Meditation is a serious intention of the mind whereby we come to search out the truth, and settle it effectually upon the heart."[27] Such meditation is a strenuous intellectual discipline, not mere daydreaming. As a boy I remember a copy of Orson F. Whitney's *Saturday Night Thoughts* in the built-in china cupboard that served as our bookcase. It was, I realized later, a Mormon version of that Puritan "preparation of

27. Thomas Hooker, *The Application of Redemption* (1659), excerpted in Russel B. Nye and Norman S. Grabo, eds., *American Thought and Writing*, Vol. 1: *The Colonial Period* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 107-11.

the heart" that had to precede communion. Here may be Mormonism's entry into that world of contemplation marked by great devotional literature, a mood and mode that gets crowded out in our almost obsessive and unreflective religious activism.

The lapse here may be linked to the lack of style and structure in Mormon sermons at every level—ward, stake, general conference. I would not want artifice to supplant sincerity or sophistication to displace substance, but in the sermon, if it is to become part of Mormon literary inheritance as it was in the days of Brigham Young's discourses, once more the way a thing is said is ultimately what is said. The meetinghouse with its plain style heritage may not be the place for eloquence (I do not undervalue the apprenticeship of the 2 1/2-minute talk or the spontaneity of the missionary farewell or the extemporaneous remarks at sacrament meeting), but is there hope for the Tabernacle with its ghostly echoing of the rude but resonant eloquence of the discourses of the pioneer generation and the structure and not unpolished addresses during those interludes when a Widtsoe, a Talmage, a B. H. Roberts, or a Hugh B. Brown took the pulpit? The temple service with its prescribed liturgy is now enhanced, I am told, by multi-media presentations but still without the elevated sacramental poetry one imagines better suited to the ceremony. In Mormon services, I am afraid, as far as the Word is concerned, the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.

We may not have a very literary liturgy, but we do have, inherent in doctrine and evolving in practice, a literary aesthetic and a growing body of discerning literary criticism crucial to the continuing health of the literature itself. James Russell Lowell in his day cautioned overzealous literary nationalists that a national literature needed more than patriotism—it required critical standards. Just so Mormon literature needs more than piety. The defense of the faith and the Saints for several generations took the form of that "Home Literature" I have already mentioned, predictably didactic. Stephen L. Tanner urges us in "The Moral Measure of Literature" to "stop fretting over the legitimacy of moral criticism and get on with the business of learning to do it well."[28] Mormon literary criticism, knowingly or not, seems to agree with Irving Howe, as I do, that "literary criticism, like literature itself, can be autonomous but hardly self-sufficient. . . . A work of literature," he insists, "acquires its interest for us through a relationship, admittedly subtle, difficult and indirect, to the whole of human experience."[29]

The critical reviews and essays in *BYU Studies, Literature and Belief,*

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28. Stephen L. Tanner, "The Moral Measure of Literature," *Brigham Young University Studies* 21 (Summer 1981): 284.

29. Irving Howe, *A World More Attractive* (Freeport, 1970), x.

Dialogue, Sunstone, Exponent II, Wasatch Review International, and such secular allies as *Quarterly West* and *Weber Studies,* and the prefaces and introductions to the collections I have already mentioned, together with the critical papers delivered at annual Association for Mormon Letters meetings, have created an educated symbiotic relationship between writer and reader, mutually supportive and nourishing. There was nothing like it in the church in my growing up. Our literary window was one-way, perversely not enabling us to look *out.* Today that window lets in light and air from the larger world of letters against which we can measure our own.

We are ready, it seems to me, for an anthology of distinctly Mormon literary criticism, counterpart to the collections of Mormon historiography our colleagues in history have already produced such as Davis Bitton and Maureen Beecher's *New Views of Mormon History,* Davis Bitton and Leonard Arrington's *Mormons and Their Historians,* Michael Quinn's *The New Mormon History,* and George D. Smith's *Faithful History: Essays on Writing Mormon History.* Borrowing from Eliot we could call it *Tradition and the Individual Talent: Essays in Mormon Literary Criticism.* Its contents are now scattered among the periodicals I have mentioned, waiting to be collected.[30]

Plato's doctrine of the soul or Sterling McMurrin's *Theological Foundations of the Mormon Religion* (1965) should probably preface the volume as an introduction to Mormon aesthetics. If souls have a pre-existence, then artist and audience have a slumbering memory of the good, the true, and the beautiful, requiring only to be awakened, with works of literature and art (including the performing arts) the means of that awakening. Art indeed is less cognition than recognition. We have a "double witness," says Robert Rees, "when our awareness of things either terrestrial or celestial is quickened by the aesthetic as well as by the spiritual imagination."[31] Given this concept the creative process is more discovery or disclosure than invention, and when the artist feels the work is "right," he will, says Merrill Bradshaw, have a sense of a "celestial kiss,"[32] which I take to be a sensory experience of artistic grace not unlike Jonathan Edwards's "sense of the heart," palpable, to use Edwards's own figure, as the taste of honey on the tongue.[33] In critical discourse we may be a bit embarrassed to apply the "celestial kiss" test, but the creative process is as mysterious as Joseph Smith's practice of

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30. Lavina Fielding Anderson informs me that such an anthology is already underway.

31. Robert A. Rees, "The Imagination's New Beginning: Thoughts on Esthetics and Religion," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Autumn 1969): 25.

32. Merrill Bradshaw, "Toward a Mormon Aesthetic," *Brigham Young University Studies* 21 (Winter 1981): 95.

33. Perry Miller, "Jonathan Edwards on the Sense of the Heart," *Harvard Theological Review* 41 (Apr. 1948): 123.

burying his face in a hat to read a luminous stone. Empirically rather than Platonically speaking, of course, Mormon writers are no more privy to God's purposes than scientists, theologians, or philosophers, though like them they are free to speculate about the mysteries. But they fall flat when they attempt to affirm the truth or falsity of the great non-empirical, which is to say metaphysical, questions like pre-existence and immortality in preachments rather than through the spiritual struggles of the characters who people their stories, plays, and poetry.

To conclude: I believe with George Santayana that "the chastity of the mind should not be yielded easily nor to the first comer." Although I find myself badly out of step with institutional Mormonism, often distressed to the point of anger with the conduct of the corporate *church*, I feel myself in tune with the Mormon *experience*, by which I mean the sum of Mormon history and culture as lay members have lived it and lay writers have striven to describe, critique, and celebrate it. I am drawn less to the sacred texts of Mormon theology handed down from on high than to the subtexts of writers who wring their truths from their daily pacing beneath the checkered canopy of Mormon belief, writers who exemplify what Robert Frost once described as "the will braving alien entanglements."[34] I relate to those writers who, experiencing all those tensions Levi Peterson names in his preface to *Greening Wheat* and entertaining all those aspirations Gene England holds out in his panoramic "Dawning of a Brighter Day," cry out, in voices as unique as their individual talents, cry out with that father recorded in St. Mark who sought a cure for a son racked by fits, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!"

Whatever my leaning toward Lucretius and his *Of the Nature of Things* as opposed to Christian and hence Mormon cosmology, I have one sure conviction about the kind of literature I have been talking about: like Chandler's precocious teenager Emmett, looking straight into the eyes of authority in his interview with the bishop and saying he thought he would like to become a writer, this literature, as Chandler says of Emmett, is "really on to something."[35]

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34. Robert Frost, "The Constant Symbol," introductory essay to *The Poems of Robert Frost* (New York: Modern Library, 1946), xvii.

35. Chandler, 5.

Double Exposure

Lewis Horne

The picture gathers from a host of things—
From giggles of remembering, not play
By play but one word lifting from another
Into a rearview record, a happy weather
That the two of them share, sisterly;
From black-and-white shapshots of friends and neighbors
Crisp with silliness and flexed in poses,
Next to cotton or to lettuce fields,
Flappers lithe and bold in stockings, heads,
Carving time out of their Sunday afternoons
Before the Monday and the Great Depression;
From yellowed letters and notes that speak of "him,"
Off with the National Guard, of California's
Buzz and the heady toil of waitressing
In Mary Pickford country—!

The picture shows
(It's only in the mind) two sisters, one
My mother, shy and reticent, the older
Buoyant with a natural confidence.
They sing together at the dishes, swim,
Each in her way, in the high school's current
Of textbook and romance, thrill on Fridays
When time for the weekly dance comes round—and walk
With their friends, all girls, from the farm to town.
("You'd never do that now. It wouldn't be safe.")
Then dance and dance. "Charleston! Charleston!"
The picture moves with an innocent self-regard.
What else would the world look upon but them—
Mama and Dad, brothers, sisters, friends!
A small world, certainly, but big enough
For them and the band and the boys and their talent for
Beautiful quick recovery. Time without end.

To this, I add an overlay. Two days
Before she was eighty, crossing the glistening floor
Of Smitty's, purse in hand, nothing to
Regret in her movement, nothing a person need
To lift her foot around, nothing slippery,
My mother fell. Not slowly. Yet, as in
Such moments, it plays itself in the history
Of my life slow-motion:—the slow pitch forward
As though something swallowed the space in front; Knee, hip,
and—I could see it coming—forehead
In a heavy landing; a cut from something on
The glossy floor, a thin trickle of blood
Across her glasses. With the manager, I checked
The spotless floor. Only a small scuff mark
With no perceptible reason for being.

How
Do you read the obscurity of such a tumble?
"Maybe I blacked out for a minute," she said.
Child number five, she's the oldest left
Of the family. Charleston? She could
Dance that into her seventies. Life
Has its overlays that sometimes make us wise,
But lathers us with a slippery fear for the fragile.

Great Basin Kingdom Revisited

Leonard J. Arrington

MY STORY MIGHT JUSTLY BE ENTITLED, to borrow a phrase from Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Epiphany in the Room of a College Dormitory." It all began in the spring of 1939, fifty-four years ago, when I was a senior at the University of Idaho. The university had sponsored a "Religion in Life" week. There were representatives of the major Christian churches and also representatives of the Jewish and Buddhist faiths. Each of the speakers was invited to stay with a particular fraternity, sorority, or dormitory to participate in evening "rump sessions" and to "hold forth" in a public discussion each afternoon at four. General assemblies at 10 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday for all students and faculty were well attended because university classes were dismissed. The most eloquent of the featured speakers was Dr. Benjamin Mays, then dean at Howard University, who presented the opening general assembly talk in our field house. The son of black sharecroppers, Dr. Mays cautioned us not to confine our minds within a narrow orthodoxy. "Keep the purposes of God and the needs of his children foremost," he urged.

I find the following account in my diary written after his talk. "The great events of history add grandeur to our lives. Like the mountains, they make us feel our insignificance, but they free the immortal mind, let it feel its greatness, and release it from the earth." Clearly whether these are Mays's words or someone else's (and I have since seen a similar statement by Hilaire Belloc), I was inspired by this man who went on to become president of Morehouse College, a black university in Atlanta founded at the end of the Civil War, and died recently at age eighty-nine. One Morehouse graduate who took his advice to heart was the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., who called Mays "My spiritual mentor and my intellectual father." Mays gave the eulogy at King's funeral.

"Religion in Life" week taught me how to present and discuss religious questions before a public body. These educators were frank, open, and informative. They were neither dogmatic nor opinionated. They listened, were respectful of students and their questions, and discussed religious issues in a manner that was serious, meaningful, and sometimes eloquent.

They did not avoid difficult problems, were willing to express personal opinions, and were skilled in utilizing humor to maintain interest and good feeling. There was no attempt to convert, no downgrading of dissenting opinions, no attempt to play on the emotions. These informal addresses were good models for me as I later made presentations to young people's groups in my own and other churches and in my articles on religious subjects for various professional and semi-professional publications.

At the end of the week, trying to reconcile my training in economics with my religious beliefs and feeling inspired, I sat at my dormitory room desk and prepared an outline for a book I proposed to write some day on the social philosophy and practices of the Latter-day Saints. I still have that outline.

That fall I enrolled in graduate school at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Two years later in the spring of 1941 I was asked to substitute for a professor of economics at North Carolina State University in Raleigh who had suffered a heart attack. As a concession for me to do this, the department at Chapel Hill allowed me credit toward the Ph.D. for courses I might take at North Carolina State in agricultural economics and rural sociology.

For these seminars at North Carolina State, I read all the works in the field of rural sociology, a relatively new discipline at the time. This reading produced two results. First, I became acquainted with the regional studies conducted by Howard Odum, founder of the Department of Sociology at Chapel Hill, who had just published the monumental *Southern Regions of the United States*, an exhaustive analysis of the black man and woman, the cotton and tobacco mill worker, the tenant and sharecropper, the small farmer, and indeed all aspects of the social economy of the South. He had followed this up with a study of *American Regionalism*, which I noted was very scanty on the Mountain West. I thought this is where I might contribute by doing a book on the human problems of the Mormon West. I envisioned studying the social economics of the West much as Odum and his associates had studied the social economics of the South. The emphasis would be on people, particularly rural people.

Second, I discovered in this reading the interest of scholars in Mormon culture. This impression was triggered by the description of the Mormon village in T. Lynn Smith's *Sociology of Rural Life*. Smith was the current president of the Rural Sociology Society, and I did not realize at the time that he had graduated from Brigham Young University and had gone to Minnesota to study under Lowry Nelson. I was delighted to find in the library copies of studies of Mormon communities in Utah by Lowry Nelson—studies that later were combined and published by the University of Utah Press as *The Mormon Village*. This led me into a search for other articles and books on the secular aspects of Mormon life—works by historians,

economists, and literary figures as well as by sociologists. I was excited, fascinated, driven. Though not a large literature, it was thrilling for me to discover. I read in *Harper's* magazine Bernard De Voto's brilliant essay on his Mormon grandfather, Samuel Dye of Uinta, Utah, near Ogden, published under the title "Jonathan Dyer, Frontiersman." Then I found, also in *Harper's*, an article by Juanita Brooks entitled "The Water's In" about Mormons in Bunkerville, Nevada. In 1942 Wallace Stegner published his marvelous little book, *Mormon Country*, with delightful essays on Mormon life. Finally I discovered an essay on the Mormons by that grand old man of economics, Richard T. Ely, "Economic Aspects of Mormonism" published in *Harper's* in 1903.

Sparse though it was, this literature set exactly the right tone. It was well written and suggested what a comprehensive treatment might be able to do.

Then came World War II, and I became involved, first as an economist for the North Carolina Office of Price Administration and then as a private in the United States Army. I was sent to North Africa for a year and a half and then to Italy for another sixteen months. During those three years overseas I inevitably experienced a certain nostalgia for the West and wanted very much to get started on a study of the economic activities of my own people. I wrote to Dr. John A. Widtsoe, formerly president of Utah State University and the University of Utah and a respected writer and scholar, about the possibilities of a doctoral dissertation on the subject. He replied with a very honest letter. It would make a great dissertation, he said. There was so much that could be said and so much in the church archives that bore on the subject. He noted that there were problems getting access to the material, but he suggested that I proceed very quietly, ask at first only for printed works, then for the Journal History of the church, and, as I build their confidence in me as a reliable scholar, gradually move into the manuscript sources. He was sure, to use his image, that I could proceed as the Arabian camel that first stuck its nose in the tent, then its face, then its front, and, moving in gradually, eventually carried away the whole tent. As you can guess, this bashful Idaho farm boy did not react against engaging in such a campaign.

After my discharge in January 1946 I accepted a teaching position at Utah State University and spent each summer for the next ten years doing research at the church archives in Salt Lake City. The archives were then more or less open, and it was exciting to be working on a new approach to Mormon history—following the economic activities, the economic programs, the way of life of the Latter-day Saint people.

I found far more than I ever supposed, far more than the church library people realized they had. There were the records of dealing in coin and currency, of the construction of irrigation canals, of church property own-

ership and management, of church farms, of building projects, of immigration. There were tithing account books of donations for this cause and that, ledger books of ZCMI, the Deseret Telegraph, railroad contracts, Relief Society enterprises, sugar companies, iron works, and coal mines. In short there was an essentially complete record of every important undertaking in which the Mormons were involved, and virtually none of them had been previously examined by any scholar. I could hardly wait to begin writing up the multitude of stories that could be told. From notes taken during the summer I wrote articles during the school year while I was teaching at Utah State and soon had more than half a dozen articles ready to submit.

But I was still a little unsure of myself. Could I write well enough? Did I know how to present the material in a way satisfactory both to scholars and to "ordinary" readers like my parents, neighbors, and non-academic friends?

Here I need to interject a word about my research. I was of course an economist, and economists are normally pictured as dry-as-dust people who are especially interested in numbers, prices, statistics, and abstract theory. I have never been able to forget the charge that economists would make marvelous lifeguards because they could go down deeper, stay down longer, and come up dryer than anybody else. But I struggled to prove that did not apply to me. My training in North Carolina had impressed me with the human drama of events. Commentators had led me to believe that pioneer Mormons were tense and humorless, that their journals were succinct, matter-of-fact, and devoid of humor. That, I am glad to say, was not my experience at all. As I went through the hundreds of diaries, record books, minutes of meetings, speeches, and letters of pioneers and church officials, I found many examples of jesting, satire, parody, wordplay, hyperbole, and jokes. This was particularly true of women pioneers, who saw the humor in situations that the men missed, or perhaps the women were more open in recording local happenings.

Every week I ran across incidents and statements that brought chuckles. I have written on this aspect of my research elsewhere, but let me give an example. I found in the archives approximately 30,000 letters signed by Brigham Young during his thirty years as Mormon leader. About 10,000 of these were responses to individuals who had asked his advice on some personal matter. It is clear that pioneer Utahns considered him to be a wise advisor, so they asked for his opinion. Did he think they should buy a certain piece of property? Should they import a bull this year? Should their daughter accept a proposal for marriage from a certain person the church leader knew? A woman's husband mistreated her, should she get a divorce? And so on. To most of these Young gave serious, well-intended answers. But he had fun in the process. When one person complained about something, Young replied, "Brother Jensen, I have already taken care of that

matter, so don't fret your gizzard about it." Stating that she had become a spiritualist, Elizabeth Green wrote to Young in 1851 to ask that her name be removed from church records. Young wrote in reply:

> Madam: We have your letter of December 28 asking that your name be erased from the records of the church. I have this day examined the records of baptisms for the remission of sins in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and not being able to find the name of Elizabeth Green recorded therein I was saved the necessity of erasing your name therefrom. You may therefore consider that your sins have not been remitted you and you are free to enjoy the benefits therefrom.

To the woman who complained that her husband had told her to go to hell, he replied simply, "Don't go, sister, don't go!" To the frontiersman who asked him to "bless me with a wife," Young said, "Brother, I know of no woman worth a groat who would be willing to put up with your wild unsocial ways."

In January 1947, shortly after I began my researches, the University of Utah inaugurated a new regional quarterly called the *Utah Humanities Review*. The first issue carried articles by Bill Mulder, just returned to the English department from service as naval communications officer in Okinawa, who wrote on C. C. A. Christensen; Albert Mitchell, just returned to the university after completing his Ph.D. in speech at the University of Wisconsin, who wrote on the pioneer players and plays of Parowan; Lester Hubbard, specialist in eighteenth-century English literature, who wrote on the songs and ballads of the Mormon pioneers; and Charles Dibble, an authority on the Aztecs, who wrote on the Mormon mission to the Shoshoni Indians. Succeeding issues carried articles by Pearl Baker, G. Homer Durham, Helen Zeese Papanikolas, Stanley Ivins, Hector Lee, Lowell Lees, Halbert Greaves, Austin Fife, Rex Skidmore, Elmer Smith, Juanita Brooks, Sterling McMurrin, Harold Folland, Meredith Wilson, Dale Morgan, Leland Creer, and others. I was fascinated and read every word. I finally worked up courage enough to pay a visit to Hal Bentley, the editor, to explain what I was doing and to ask if he would be interested in publishing one or two of my articles. He said he was interested all right, but the articles had to be well written. Knowing that I was an economist, he repeated that insistence several times in our conversation. Well, I needed someone to level with me—could I write well enough for the *Humanities Review*?

I read in our Logan paper one day that Bill Mulder, assistant editor of the *Review*, was going to present a talk in that Athens of northern Utah. I telephoned to invite him to spend the night with us. He agreed. We had a nice dinner, but before he went to bed, I trotted out one of my essays—one on the building of a dam at Deseret in Millard County. Bill presumably read it before he went to sleep and the next morning said he liked it, would accept

it provisionally, but said it could be made a little more artistic. What would Wally Stegner do with it? he asked. How would he begin it, how would he conclude it? and so on.

Well, I fussed with it a little while and then sent it in, and he published it under the title, "Taming the Turbulent Sevier: A Story of Mormon Desert Conquest." By then I had another article on "Zion's Board of Trade, a Third United Order," which he also published the same year. Soon there was one on the law of consecration and stewardship in early Mormon history that he published followed by one on the economic role of Mormon women, quite possibly the earliest attempt to introduce Mormon women into the secular study of Mormon history. At the same time I published an account of the Deseret Telegraph in the *Journal of Economic History*, an article on "Property Among the Mormons" in *Rural Sociology*, and articles on "The Transcontinental Railroad and Mormon Economic Policy" and "The Settlement of Brigham Young's Estate" in the *Pacific Historical Review*.

All of these essays were on particular episodes and practices. How to get a theme to tie it all together? The virtuosity of Mormon leadership was evident, and their articulated goal of building a Kingdom of God was also unmistakable. But how to explain it all? Identifying a unifying factor was like trying to berth an ocean liner without tugs at night. The necessary inspiration came to me also in a kind of epiphany, this also involving Bill Mulder. Bill and Sterling McMurrin had organized in 1950 the Mormon Seminar, which met every Thursday afternoon on the University of Utah campus to explore in critical fashion different aspects of Mormon life and thought. Each week they brought in authorities to talk on such subjects as Mormonism and evolution, Mormonism and psychiatry, the Book of Mormon and the pre-Columbian Indians, polygamy, Mormonism and literature, Mormonism and education, and so on. In March 1951 they invited me to talk on Mormon economic history. This "call" forced me to focus seriously on the meaning of all my research. Influenced by my readings in American history I decided that in pioneer Utah were leaders such as Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, George A. Smith, Daniel H. Wells, and others, who had been brought up in America in the decades before the Civil War, who had been imbued with American ideals prevalent during those years, and who had remained in relative isolation in the Great Basin while the rest of America struggled through the Civil War and the following period of reconstruction featuring an overweening emphasis on private property, individualism, and free enterprising capitalism. Here was a theme for my dissertation. Clearly the basic social and economic objectives of the Latter-day Saints were determined during the first three years after the founding of the church in 1830. They included the gathering of church members into one place, the village form of settlement, group economic independence, comprehensive resource development to prepare the earth

for the Millennium, unified action and solidarity, and equitable sharing of the product of cooperative endeavor. Church officials attempted the redistribution of wealth and income, were charged with the regulation of property rights, involved the church in many types of business ventures, and assumed the ultimate responsibility for the development of the Mormon economy. The institutions and devices established to implement basic church policies in general were flexible, pragmatic, and provisional.

The mobilization of capital and the application of administrative controls on the Mormon frontier may have resembled the contemporary devices of large-scale corporations and holding companies. But the continuity of organized cooperation and careful long-range group planning stood out in sharp contrast with the individualism and short-sighted exploitation that often characterized the mining, cattle, wheat, and lumber frontiers of the Far West. As one Western historian wrote, the reigning philosophy was every man for himself, comparable to what the elephant said while he was dancing among the chickens. Whereas dominant American thought after 1865 held that superior results were to be achieved by laissez-faire institutions and policies, the seemingly unique policies of Mormon leaders, emphasizing as they did the welfare of the group, were nevertheless consistent with those commonly advocated and applied by secular government in the ante-bellum America that cradled Mormonism.

So I set out during the winter of 1951-52 to write the dissertation while on six-months leave without pay from Utah State. I finished the degree in 1952. "We respect your partisanship," my major professor said at the defense, "but we particularly praise you for not letting it cloud your scholarship and judgment." The dissertation, entitled "Mormon Economic Policies and Their Implementation on the Western Frontier, 1847-1900," included eleven more or less independent essays: the historical and philosophical roots of Mormonism, the economic mind of Mormonism, the principle of consecration and church finances, the principle of stewardship and property institutions, the principle of gathering and the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, church public works, the principle of solidarity and the frontier market, the principle of economic independence and the coming of the transcontinental railroad, religious sanction and Mormon entrepreneurship, and the role of the Mormon church in the economic development of the West.

Dr. Milton S. Heath, my major professor, encouraged me to submit the dissertation for publication by the Committee on Research in Economic History, of which he was a member. I revised and expanded it and submitted it in 1954. The readers praised it and made various suggestions. As I reworked it, however, I could see that instead of focusing on economic policies I would have to do a chronological narrative that would focus on the development and evolution of Mormon institutions, practices, and

policies. I was granted a sabbatical leave from USU in 1956-57 and arranged for a fellowship at Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery to supplement my income since sabbatical pay was only 60 percent of base salary. I spent the year writing what turned out to be an economic history of the Mormons. Emerson wrote that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. My work may not have been great, but the enthusiasm was certainly there. Completing one chapter a month, I finished it in a year.

The rewritten work, originally called *Building the Kingdom* and now called *Great Basin Kingdom*, was then resubmitted in 1957 to the Committee on Research on Economic History, which arranged for its publication by Harvard University Press. The book expanded on ideas picked up from Bill Mulder on Scandinavian Mormons, Tom O'Dea on Mormon sociology, Sterling McMurrin on theology, and Feramorz Fox on Mormon economic organization. I also profited from conversations with Lowry Nelson, Hal Bentley, Richard Poll, Dale Morgan, Gene Campbell, Juanita Brooks, Gus Larson, and Ed Lyon. Above all the book built on the indescribably rich and complete Western collection of the Huntington Library. The "finished" manuscript greatly benefitted from the editorial comments of my good friend, S. George Ellsworth, professor of history at Utah State, who went over the document carefully and made many helpful suggestions. I am also indebted to the editor at Harvard Press, who provided consistency and saved me from egregious errors.

An honest, youthful assessment of the published book was made by a nephew of mine who was still in high school and who was induced to read the book by my brother. He wrote, "Dear Uncle Leonard, I think you were a pretty good writer not to make the book no duller than it was. Your loving nephew, Farr."

In general *Great Basin Kingdom* was praised by colleagues, American historians, American sociologists, and others. I will just cite one—the flattering judgment of a fellow economist, Jonathan R. T. Hughes, Distinguished Professor of Northwestern University, who says he still requires his graduate students to read it as an example of good economic history. He called *Great Basin Kingdom* "a giant structure of deep and trustworthy scholarship and judgment with an analysis that is thorough, carefully laid out, and free of theoretical error." "The economic story," he wrote, "is a masterpiece that made the Mormon Zion live again for readers all over the world and for generations to come." Wouldn't that be enough to warm the cockles of any author's heart?

The local reception was especially interesting. A. William Lund and the LDS Church Historian's Office viewed it as a secular treatment with naturalistic explanations of the people and the times. It was not down the line of traditional Mormon history, which was sprinkled with supernatural explanations. Although I received complimentary letters from people such

as John A. Widtsoe, G. Homer Durham, and Ezra Taft Benson, A. William Lund decided if it was not "pro" it must be "anti," so he put a little letter "a" on the index card in the Church Historian's Office. One day I asked someone at the Church Historian's Office what the "a" meant. He said it designated an anti-Mormon work. The label remained that way until I was appointed Church Historian, when at the request of Elder Howard Hunter, a new card was inserted without the "a." President Harold B. Lee assured me that *Great Basin Kingdom* was a monument to LDS history, the finest thing on LDS history since B. H. Roberts's *Comprehensive History* was first published beginning in 1906.

Colleagues used it in Utah history classes: at Brigham Young University Jim Allen, at Utah State University George Ellsworth, at the University of Utah David Miller. Each independently asked his students to read the book, write a report on it, and among other things speculate on whether Arrington was a Mormon. Each of the three professors then reported the students' reactions. About half of the students at each institution thought I was a Mormon, and the other half thought I could not be because the book was written so dispassionately. I regarded this as a profound compliment. There is a school today that contends that Mormon historians, if they are real Mormons, should so declare it and should engage in what my editor at Alfred Knopf called "cheerleading." I tried not to do that in *Great Basin Kingdom*.

In 1963 some five years after *Great Basin Kingdom* appeared, I received two notices that were exciting. The first was word that the book had been placed in the president's library in the White House, the only book dealing with the history of the Mountain West and one of four books on the history of the American West as a whole. The second was an invitation from the University of Texas to give two lectures on the Mormons in their television series of seventy addresses on the History of American Civilization. The Ford Foundation had agreed to finance the series to be directed by that grand old man of American history, Walter Prescott Webb. Apparently Webb had been very impressed with *Great Basin Kingdom,* and in this televised series that included such people as Arnold Toynbee, Richard Hofstadter, Arthur Schlesinger, Dumas Malone, C. Vann Woodward, Allan Nevins, Arthur Link, Henry Steel Commager, and other noted historians, he had also invited me.

My first lecture was on "The Significance of the Mormons in American History" and the second on "The Mormon System of Cooperation." The series was widely used in university classes. Many young historians in seeing my name card at a historical convention have said they saw me in the Webb American Civilization series.

A follow-up was the invitation to give the annual luncheon address to the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association held at

UCLA in 1964. Not long afterwards I received an invitation to join the UCLA faculty as Professor of Western History, to take the place of John Walton Caughey who was retiring. Wanting to stay in Utah, however, I did not accept the offer.

The hardback of *Great Basin Kingdom* was exhausted in 1965. There followed a paper reprint in the Bison series of the University of Nebraska Press. The eighth printing has now been exhausted, and the Harvard Press has asked for bids from three university presses: the University of Utah Press, Utah State University Press, and the University of Illinois Press. The University of Utah Press has announced that a new printing of the Harvard University Press edition is scheduled to appear in the summer of 1993.

In 1988 on the thirtieth anniversary of the appearance of the book, the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies at Utah State University and the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University sponsored a symposium called "*Great Basin Kingdom* Revisited." They invited prominent national historians, sociologists, economists, geographers, and literary historians to comment on the book and its impact on Western studies. The eight papers delivered at the symposium, which was held in Logan, have since been published by Utah State University Press under the symposium's title, *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited.*

The writing of this book led me in many directions. I have done studies on such federal programs in Utah as reclamation projects, defense installations, and New Deal programs. With some collaboration, I have done book-length biographies of William Spry, Charles C. Rich, David Eccles, Edwin D. Woolley, Brigham Young, Harold Silver, Charlie Redd, Alice Merrill Horne, and many shorter biographies in other books and journals.

I have done business histories of U & I Sugar Company, Tracy-Collins Bank, Hotel Utah, and Steiner Corporation. I have also been interested in women's history and in collaboration with my daughter, Susan Madsen, have published *Sunbonnet Sisters, Mothers of the Prophets,* and a study of rural LDS women. During the past two years I have written a history of my native state of Idaho commissioned by the legislature of Idaho, which will be published by the University of Idaho Press in late 1993.

My experience of almost fifty years in the field of Western economic history and biography has confirmed the worthwhileness of Mormon studies. Whether one's interest is the relation of religion to economic life, the appropriateness of certain institutions for survival in a semiarid region, the importance of the role of women, or the virtues of cooperation and community-mindedness, a study of the Mormon experience is rewarding. We now have a rich literature, one that grows richer every year. There has been a flurry of studies on the sequel, twentieth-century culture, the most recent being a history of the Mormon welfare program by Bruce Blumell and Garth Mangum, published by the University of Utah Press in 1993. I

hope myself in the years ahead to do a book on the economic programs of the New Deal of the 1930s.

All of this is the product of that epiphany in a college dormitory in 1939.

A Body That Expands

----For Lora Lee

Holly Welker

My sister sings Puccini in the shower.
A fever ripped the muscle of her heart
when she was five but now she is almost
twenty-one and lovely. She leaves music
open like an invitation at the
piano in her bedroom; she can't manage
money and loves to examine the map
of the world hanging on my bedroom wall.
She studies music: she sings soprano.
She told me, "I play the saxophone,
but my main instrument is my body."
Perhaps you already knew that. I had thought
only of vocal cords, not a whole body
that expands with air and vibrates.
The first time you heard someone produce
a series of expansive, varied tones
travelling effortlessly around you,
did it seem like a miracle or just
the only sensible way for ears, throat,
and lungs to work together? Pardon me
if I seem bewildered. My sister loves
microwave egg rolls and owns fifty pair
of shoes. She is lovely but silly though
she doesn't look frail; she doesn't know
that I leave my room in the apartment
we share to listen to her practicing,
singing Puccini in the shower because
steam makes the arias easier.
The rhythm of her heart is thump whoosh whoosh;
her blood is never sure where it is going.

God With Us

Philip White

At the baptismal Erma sings "Que grande es El,"
her voice breaking,
and the woman she has brought to Jesus,
clothed in white on the front row, weeps.

We believe in remission of sin,
in alcohol and hatred and abuse
left forever in the grave of the water.

Or Erma believes.

Her only perfect English phrase:
"You must open your heart very wide."

The Identity of Jacob's Opponent: Wrestling with Ambiguity in Genesis 32:22-32

Steven Molen

> *In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed, he wept and sought his favor (Hosea 12:3-4).*

WHO IS THE "MAN" JACOB WRESTLES at the ford of the Jabbok? Critical exegesis has traditionally identified him as an angel, with reliance upon ample evidence in the text: he appears out of nowhere and just as mysteriously disappears; he dislocates Jacob's hip at a touch; and Jacob himself, at the end of the episode, identifies his opponent as divine: "I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved" (Gen. 32:30).[1] Then why is this angel called a "man" not once but throughout the entire narrated part of the passage? Even what Jacob calls "the face of God" proves less clear than one might first expect. Before the wrestling match at night, Jacob in the larger narrative anticipates seeing the face of his brother Esau whom he has cheated of birthright and blessing. When Jacob actually encounters Esau the next morning, his response echoes the exclamation quoted above: "to see your face is like seeing the face of

1. All textual references cited are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962).

God, with such favor have you received me" (33:10). Doubtless the opponent at the Jabbok has shaped Jacob's conception of his brother; but on a closer reading, the text seems also to suggest that the man at the river has himself *been shaped* by Jacob's prior apprehension about meeting Esau.

In order to identify and understand Jacob's opponent, attention must be paid both to the passage at hand and to the larger narrative it interrupts. As I hope I have already shown, the placement of the conflict in a chapter otherwise dedicated to the reunion of the brothers is not accidental, the work of a clumsy redactor patching together unrelated tales. If the inclusion of verses 22-32 disrupts the narrative flow, the disruption is purposeful, calculated to create a fuller awareness of Jacob's relations with both Esau and God. Likewise, if the verses themselves appear confusing (how can the man both foreshadow Esau and manifest the divine?), this confusion could be intentional, a *fusion* of separate personalities drawn from the larger narrative. However connected to the rest of the Jacob cycle, verses 22-32 will be our proper focus of study; references to other parts of Genesis will be made insofar as they relate to the conflict at the river.

Our passage begins with difficulties. Significant on their own, these difficulties also anticipate the more resonant ambiguities to come:

> 22. The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had.

In his reading of the passage, Roland Barthes has pointed out that it is unclear which side of the river Jacob is on at the end of verse 23.[2] Verse 22, he argues, reads as though Jacob crosses together with his family and possessions, while verse 23 leads one to think that he remains behind. For Barthes, the verse 23 reading casts the passage in a "folkloric" light in which Jacob must confront and overcome the mythological guardian of the river before crossing; the verse 22 reading depicts Jacob as the patriarch who has already crossed over, transforming the scene that follows into the isolation of the chosen hero as he struggles with his call (cf. Ex. 4:24-26). The two scenarios, each supported by its own verse and offering a different image of Jacob, may also be read as episodes of one action: first Jacob goes or begins to go over with his family, then he returns or stays on the other side. In this unified reading, there are not alternative Jacobs but one who is reluctant, torn, so to speak, by the separate verses. Given the chronology, verse 23 decides where the indecisive Jacob ends up.

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2. "The Struggle with the Angel: Textual Analysis of Genesis 32:22-32," reprinted in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 125-41.

Such reluctance on Jacob's part accords nicely with what has preceded. Throughout 32:1-21 he seeks to divert the danger posed by Esau and his four hundred men. To do so, he divides his company into two camps, sends ahead gifts and servants to placate his brother, and prays to God for protection. Alongside the fear of Esau is perhaps the more general anxiety of returning home, of having to fulfill the vow he made to God in 28:20-22, pending his safe deliverance out of Mesopotamia. His precautions would seem complete by 32:21: "So the present passed on before him; and he himself lodged that night in camp." Verses 22-23, however, continue Jacob's division of camps to the point of his complete isolation: now not only is he free of servants and cattle, but also of family and possessions. Everything stands between him and Esau. On either side, the river has a name (the Jabbok) and a divisive geography which fit Jacob and his predicament. At the end of verse 23, he is truly his own camp: "he himself." The next verse confirms and contradicts this isolation:

> 24. And Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.

The verse begins by reiterating what we as readers have already known; but suddenly it turns a pirouette and plants us in the midst of a struggle that lasts until dawn. The effect is jarring. Some readers may wish to attribute this abrupt shift to the terse nature of biblical narrative and its frequent inattention to clear transitional devices. In Jacob's other encounters with divine beings, however, the narrative clearly states the advent and nature of the visitation. In 32:1-2, for example, Jacob comes across angels on his way toward Esau: "Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him; and when Jacob saw them he said, 'This is God's army!'" The narrative indicates the moment of meeting and identifies the visitors as angels; and Jacob's response confirms this identification. Aside from the ambiguous naming of "Mahanaim" ("two camps"), the events of this short passage are clear. Why does our much longer passage flout clarity? Why are we not told that the man first *met* Jacob before wrestling him; or if the stranger is in fact an angel, why doesn't he at least "appear," as in other passages? The biblical hallmark of "behold" is also missing. We are only told that Jacob is alone, and then suddenly he is wrestling.

Or perhaps he is alone *and* wrestling. Packed into one sentence, the isolation of verse 24a is confused with the struggle of verse 24b, which does not so much contradict as comment on the first half. Only in this reading of the verse can we adequately explain the emphasis on Jacob's isolation and the lack of any clear transition to the struggle. If actually alone, he can only be wrestling himself or a figment of his thoughts made physical—someone remembered from his past or anticipated in his future. In either case, the

wrestling match would be an externalized struggle with the psyche. We have come a long way from the "folkloric" angle mentioned earlier; in a peculiar way, however, that angle supports a psychological explanation of verse 24. As mythological guardian of the river, the man is properly linked to that river, whose name "Jabbok" bears a striking similarity to the name of Jacob. Striking, too, is the phonetic similarity of the patriarch's name to the Hebrew verb "to wrestle."[3] So even though the opponent remains unidentified, we know that he wrestles (Hebrew *ye'abeq*) with Jacob at the ford of the Jabbok.

We also know, with our eye now turned to the larger narrative, that Jacob acquired his name (translated literally "heel-grabber") in the struggle at birth with Esau and that his thoughts on the night of the river conflict are revolving around his brother. If phonetically speaking Jacob is at the appropriate place involved in the activity appropriate to his name, thematically speaking whom else but Esau would Jacob wrestle? In the twenty-one verses preceding our passage, Jacob has stalled and evaded the inevitable meeting with his brother: this is what he fears. What worse nightmare could Jacob have than an Esau turned demonically strong? And just as the abrupt introduction to the struggle might reflect Jacob's ever-present fears of what will transpire the next morning, the setting and circumstances of the struggle could hark back to how the two brothers began their rivalry. The rushing water of the Jabbok, the darkness, the length of the struggle, and almost symbiotic conflation of the contestants all suggest a return to that first struggle in the womb. Traditional exegesis must look to other verses for proof of the man being an angel.

Verse 25 at first glance seems to provide such proof. On closer inspection, however, it spins an ambiguous turn like verse 24:

> 25. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and Jacob's thigh was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

In verse 25a the struggle appears evenly matched, as suggested by its long duration in verse 24. It is not until verse 25b that the seemingly innocuous touch on Jacob's thigh proves to have dislocated the joint, and we realize that the man, however powerful, has resorted to this stroke because their strength was evenly matched. How can the man both wield this unearthly power and be vulnerable enough to need it? The last part of verse 25b sheds little light on this question but rather adds to the mystery: "he wrestled with him." Who is the subject, and who the object? There is

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3. See Jan P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis: Specimens of Stylistic and Structural Analysis* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975), 210.

no answer to this question. Both men are locked in a struggle that has lasted for hours and will continue until dawn. The floating pronouns here and elsewhere in the passage resemble the elusive and variously allusive words of the divine prophecy delivered to Rebekah while the twins struggled in her womb:

> Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger (25:23).

The "one" of the third line could refer to either of the sons, and although the "elder" must refer to Esau and his nation, which will grow in the shadow of Israel, it is Jacob who calls himself "servant" and Esau "lord" throughout chapters 32 and 33. Even where the descriptive labels and pronouns have more certain reference, readers must disentangle the options to find the one that best fits the context. Looking at the passage for the first time, one might even be unsure who is requesting release from whom as the dawn begins to break. What of the wound itself? Is there any significance in its location and severity? The last verse of our passage offers an etiology:

> 32. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the sinew of the hip which is upon the hollow of the thigh, because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh on the sinew of the hip.

Though it is impossible to say whether this taboo originated with the oral roots of our passage, the etiology occasions the first biblical use of the term "Israelites," following Jacob's own renaming. We will examine the particulars of the new name later. For now it is enough to say that this event is another momentous social distinction in Genesis, a book whose scope, beginning with a broad-canvas cosmogony and an ethnogony, gradually sharpens its focus to the origins of Israel and its relation to God. The taboo, we are told, is observed only by the Israelites; it has much the same character as a covenantal sign, a marker that commemorates a decisive point in the people's history and serves in the present to establish a sense of identity. Such a moment in history is Jacob's struggle: the outcome is a blessing diffused through him into the people and a name to identify both the patriarch and his descendants. Curiously, the Hebrew word for thigh (*yarek*) occurs in only two other Genesis passages: 24:2, where Abraham commands his servant to find a wife for Isaac outside of Canaan; and 47:29, where Jacob himself (now named Israel) commands his own son Joseph to bury him outside of Egypt. Both times the word occurs in instances of swearing, that is, in covenants involving questions of the homeland and

ultimately the future of the people. By touching the patriarch under his thigh, both Abraham's servant and Joseph are bound in oath.

In the next verse of our passage Jacob gains mastery over his opponent and makes his own demands:

> 26. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But he answered, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me."

Directly following the blow to Jacob, this plea for freedom sounds peculiar. Having met his match in verse 25a, the man dislocates Jacob's thigh only to be disabled himself. The reader's expectations have never had time to settle since the first verse: called consistently a "man," Jacob's opponent exhibits traits both divine and human, the strength to crush skin and bone with a touch and the weakness to beg for mercy in Jacob's arms. Although scholarly exegesis has rightly pointed out that the man's fear of the rising sun testifies to his original identity as a guardian spirit, the passage's roots in folklore are less crucial than its current shape and placement in Genesis. What started as a primitive tale about a river guardian developed over time into an account of how a nation's namesake acquired his title, blessing, and re-entry into the promised land. The man's fear must be explained, if it can be explained at all, within the narrative context of the passage.

If in fact there is a connection to the covenantal gestures of Abraham's servant and Joseph, Jacob's wound could be a parody of the other signs, a nightmare inversion appropriate to the struggle through the night. Ostensibly intended by the man as a blow, it only serves to prove Jacob's own prowess. But the touch could also be genuinely contractual, as suggested by what follows in verse 26. Not only does the man submit to Jacob, but his plea recalls another addressed to the patriarch. In 25:30 a starving Esau begs Jacob for food: "Let me eat some of that red pottage, for I am famished!" The speech of the man in 32:27 ("Let me go, for the day is breaking") neatly matches that of Esau in syntax and signifies a similar entreaty to Jacob. In each case he exacts a price: from Esau his birthright (*bekhorah*), and from the man a blessing (*berakhah*). We have come back to the same questions that we asked before. Could the struggle at the river be a dramatic reenactment of Jacob's memory? Is the voice of the man really Esau's, frightfully transformed but still resounding with that first request? The text remains ambiguous. How, for example, could Jacob's thigh be dislocated in a nightmare? And if the man is Esau, why is he not indicated as such? The opponent's sole designation as a "man" belies identification with either God or Esau. We can only say that verse 26 catches an echo of the earlier scene.

Verse 27 catches another such echo, this time of Jacob's theft of Esau's blessing:

And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob."

Instead of granting the blessing, the man asks Jacob his name. Gradually, the advantage has shifted from one wrestler to the other, so that now the man would appear to have the upper hand. His inquiry into Jacob's identity suggests less desperation than consideration. It implies the possibility of choice, and by extension, the option of withholding the blessing. The man's fear of the rising sun, Jacob's hold on him, and the other details of the struggle recede into the darkness as the wrestlers begin to speak. In the light of verse 27, Jacob's request/demand to be blessed in verse 26 sounds more audacious than exacting. Stated as a conditional, it is obscured by the man's direct question. Jacob's identity is now at issue.

In biblical literature a name more than signifies the named; it captures the essence of that person. Jacob, for example, is known and epitomized by his first action: grabbing the heel of Esau at birth. To ask Jacob for his name in the midst of the conflict is to ask for full self-disclosure. But Jacob's terse answer not only reveals his true nature; the name also entitles the entire scene, the river *(ybq)* and wrestling *('bq)* contained in its consonants, and the grasping for a blessing implied by its popular etymology (cf. Gen. 27:36). Jacob's confession, lying at the heart of the passage, provides an internal logic for an otherwise disjointed and senseless scene. According to the lexical logic of his name, Jacob should wrestle just as he should attempt to wrest a blessing from his opponent. That he has already wrestled with Esau and stolen his blessing contextualizes Jacob's wrestling into the framework of the larger narrative. Albeit in a nightmarish setting, he reasserts by action and name what he has been all along: an upstart and insurgent in the family. We may now ask the question: in stating his name to the stranger, is Jacob also implicitly confessing how the infamous title was acquired?

The reflection of this verse on that earlier conflict enriches our understanding of what it means for Jacob to reveal his name. In chapter 27 Isaac promises to bless Esau in exchange for that son's game. Rebekah, overhearing the commission and being as partial to Jacob as Isaac is to Esau's cooking, prepares food on the sly and directs her favored son to pretend to be Esau so that he may win the blessing. Blind Isaac can only ask Jacob if he is really Esau. As we might expect, Jacob lies: "I am Esau your first-born. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, that you may bless me" (27:19). Sensing something is amiss, Isaac inquires how he caught and prepared the game so quickly; and with characteristic daring, Jacob claims the favor of divine providence: "Because the Lord your God granted me success" (27:20). Readers of this scene should remember the divine prophecy delivered to Rebekah while the twins still wrestled in the womb. Is Jacob's theft of Esau's blessing fulfillment of the foretold ascendancy of the younger over the elder? More importantly, should the divine prophecy

be read simply as predictive or also as prescriptive? Is God's prophecy God's sanction?

These questions must be asked again in our passage. In striking counterpoint to the first scene, Jacob in 32:27 tells the truth, claiming the right to be blessed under his own name. Hidden by a darkness at night that is surely reminiscent of Isaac's blindness, Jacob is no longer inclined to play the role of Esau. He openly admits his name and the history of struggle implied by it, while the faceless man, asking the same question as Isaac and wrestling like Esau, appears as a montage image of the family figures involved in that history. Multiple identities for the man would be appropriate in a scene that has echoed so many others in the larger narrative, each verse superimposing over the last another image from Jacob's past life. Involved in these past struggles is God's ambiguous role in Jacob's affairs, a role no more certain for the supplanter's glib claim.

The next verse under consideration seems to culminate this reprise of the past and finish it through the man's gift to Jacob, the new name "Israel":

> 28. Then he said, "Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

This verse is a playground for exegetes who wish to identify the man as an angel. They point out that "Israel" literally means "God strives" or "may God strive," a definition that is played on by the explanation that follows the new name. Moreover, it is the same name which God gives or gives again to Jacob in Genesis 35:10. But the new name serves to identify the namer as much as the named.

As we have already seen, the old name Jacob was derived from the prenatal struggle with Esau. The new name Israel, derived from God's own name "*el*," effaces "Jacob" and the grasped heel of Esau which it signified. Shortly after Jacob had finagled the blessing from Isaac, Esau redefined the name of Jacob to fit the new form of his brother's aggression.

> "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and behold, now he has taken away my blessing" (Gen. 27:36).

In verse 28 of our passage Jacob is glorified with the name "Israel." Now the patriarch "strives" rather than "supplants." In his so-called "striving with God," Jacob does not darken the stain of his old name but rather cleanses himself of that ugly title. The new name changes him, displacing his former fears with a new self-assurance. Earlier Jacob alone had lingered at the back of his entourage in fear of Esau; now, however, Israel moves to

the front in order to be the first to meet his brother. As Israel, he transcends the fraternal struggle bound up in "Jacob."

One might approach the two names from another angle and ask how different they really are, how much the new supersedes the old. Struggling is implied in both names, regardless of the shift from the pejorative Jacob to the more stately Israel. His struggling, be it grabbing the heel of Esau or duping his father, has been the common thread stitching the various tales together. This thread, I would argue, is not cut at the conflict by the river; rather, a new twine is added in the opponent's explanation (a kind of etymological footnote) for the new name. In this footnote in verse 28b, Jacob's struggles with men are cited along with his immediate struggle with God: "... for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." The footnote's inclusion of "men" seems to suggest that "Israel" contains rather than cancels "Jacob," updates rather than effaces the older name's dependence on the heel of Esau. But how do the prior struggles with Esau and other men (e.g., Laban and even Isaac) support Jacob's new identity as "the one who strives with God?" The question would be less insistent were it not for the fact that Jacob's opponent in the narrative parts of our passage is only identified as a "man."

Readers may have forgotten the opponent's manhood, for it is only indicated in verses 24 and 25a. After that point the third person singular pronoun is used, always for the opponent and often for Jacob. Indeed, once the wrestlers begin to speak, the narrative is covered in a thicket of "he's" and "him's." These pronouns confuse the reference enough to deflect the original question about the actual identity of the man. By the time Jacob is named anew in verse 28, even readers who remember the opponent's entrance as a "man" may be inclined to think that such an introduction was merely a rhetorical device to instill suspense before the man was properly revealed as an angel. In a careful reading, however, the opponent's inclusion of men with God in verse 28b's footnote etymology should raise again the fundamental question of who or what is the "man."

Could the "man" be one of the "men" cited in the footnote etymology? In the mouth of Jacob's opponent, "God" need not be any more self-referential than "men." If only figuratively, Jacob has striven with the divine before this scene. His vow to God in 28:20-22 tests as much as it promises: in the manner of a bargain, Jacob says he will worship God in exchange for his future providence. Another instance of *striving* is Jacob's audacious claim of being divinely aided in the brisk preparation of food that wins the blessing. Might not the opponent be referring to these scenes as much as to the one now taking place at the river? Stated in the present perfect, the footnote etymology reads like an overview of Jacob's entire past, including the separate struggles with God and men. Joining the two in his explanation, perhaps the opponent himself joins *both*, God and man confused.

Though paradoxical, this reading would account for the divine and human traits exhibited by the opponent throughout our passage and also for the curiously inclusive footnote etymology of verse 28b.

When Jacob is renamed Israel in 35:10, this footnote is absent:

> And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name."

Although the second renaming appropriates most of its language from the first, it is subtly different. As Robert Alter and others have decisively argued, repetition shaded by slight changes is a common technique of biblical narrative for expressing shifts in tone and psychological perspective.[4] Though probably the result of separate traditions being spliced together, the paired renamings define one another, each one being appropriate to its setting and speaker. When God speaks, there is neither the question about the old name nor the footnote explaining the new. Both are notable omissions: the "what is your name?" question in verse 27 of our passage recalls the doddering voice of the blind Isaac inquiring about his son's identity, and the footnote in verse 28b, appended to a self-explanatory name, grants equal credit to the men and "God" Jacob has wrestled. While inappropriate in the mouth of God, asking about the old name and explaining the new befit the mixed accent of Jacob's opponent. The footnote etymology in particular may be seen as a conflation of the other scenes in which the names "Jacob" and "Israel" are explained separately. Only in verse 28b do struggles with God and men figure together. The speech of Jacob's opponent throughout the passage mixes the colloquial and magisterial, holding echoes of both the divine and human. Puzzled perhaps as much as we, Jacob asks the same question in verse 29 that we have been asking all along:

> 29. Then Jacob asked him, "Tell me, I pray, your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him.

In verse 27 the opponent asked about Jacob's name; now Jacob does the same. Not only are the two wrestlers evenly matched in strength, they also ask the same questions. The self-explanatory name Israel and the etymological footnote that followed were obviously insufficient for Jacob; he is still curious and uncertain about his opponent's identity. The refusal to answer may be interpreted in a variety of ways. Traditionally, it has been cited as proof of the passage's antiquity. Basic to many folktales of the time is the belief that guardian spirits such as our man may be controlled through

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4. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 88-113.

a knowledge of their names. Though different, such a belief is not totally unlike the respectful silence surrounding the name YHWH. Redactors who integrated the primitive tale may have seen how the folk belief concerning names fit in a peculiar way the Hebrew cloister around the unspeakable name, and thus they decided to keep the verse. Historical considerations, however, do not suffice. When Jacob is renamed in 35:11, the divine identity of the speaker is clear: "I am God Almighty." Why does God wait until the second renaming to identify himself? Perhaps it is to clarify that the new name Israel is divinely ordained. Clarification, however, would not be necessary were it not for the fundamental mystery of Jacob's opponent. And why should God be mysterious in the first renaming and not the second?

Matters are not made clear by verse 29b. "And there he blessed him." To the best of my knowledge, biblical commentators have taken it for granted that Jacob is the one blessed. According to the grammar, Jacob is just as qualified to do the blessing as the man. We have already seen how pronouns are equivocal elsewhere in the passage. Moreover, the structural patterns of the passage would actually persuade one that Jacob is the subject of the sentence. Starting in verse 26, the verses develop in stylistic counterpoint, the subject and speaker of each new sentence alternating from wrestler to wrestler. One speaks, and the other responds. In this scheme, if there is a narrative scheme at all, Jacob would bless the man after the latter refuses to confide his name.

The objection might be raised at this point that I am simply looking for ambiguity. After all, it was Jacob who requested the blessing in verse 26. Would it not then be safe to assume that he is the one blessed? It is safe only if we isolate our passage from the larger narrative and neglect the more distant echoes. In 33:11, after the night of wrestling, Jacob offers Esau his blessing:

> "Accept, I pray you my gift [blessing] that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." Thus he urged him, and he took it.

At first glance, this verse seems to confirm that Jacob was the one blessed in the earlier scene. In what better way could God "deal graciously" with him than to grant a blessing? That is the traditional reading. But if we view the struggle at night as Jacob's dream rehearsal for what transpires the next morning, the act of blessing the shadowy man comes to foreshadow the actual blessing given to Esau. In both instances Jacob speaks in the imperative with a gentle request, "I pray," followed by the gift of the blessing. In chapter 33 the language is more explicit: Jacob offers the blessing in the dialogue, which serves to clarify the narrative report of the actual offering and acceptance. Only Jacob could be the one urging. The

counterpart in our passage has no tag-word like "thus" to tip off the reader. It is essentially ambiguous. That either wrestler could bless and be blessed ramifies the sense that their struggle is evenly matched. Once Jacob requests the blessing, the man asks about his name. Jacob matches that question with one of his own. If we say that the man inquires after Jacob's identity to determine whether a blessing is in store, we must say the same of Jacob, that he questions the man to make his own determinations. We might well ask the very question posed to Jacob by the man, "why is it that you ask my name?" Of course, the question is evasive. Nevertheless, it points to what could be the central concern of the passage. Is Jacob perhaps asking the same question put to him earlier by Isaac? Is he attempting to return to Esau the blessing he won by guile? That he does so the next morning would incline us to say yes. But on this same morning he claims that God has dealt graciously with him. Whatever the ambiguity of our passage, we are equally inclined to believe that avowal as well.

In the next verses Jacob answers his own question about the identity of his opponent:

> 30. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved [delivered]." 31. The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his thigh.

The man's departure, like his arrival, is unseen. Skeptical readers might doubt that the man was ever there, but Jacob claims that he has seen the face of God. This study began with a brief surmise about this exclamation. We noted how in the narrative leading up to our passage Jacob dwells on his upcoming meeting with Esau: "For he thought, 'I may appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterwards I shall see his face; perhaps he will accept me'" (32:20). The next morning Jacob sees his brother's face, a face which either shaped or was shaped by the last night's experience at the river: "Jacob said, 'No, I pray you, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept your present from my hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God, with such favor you have received me'" (33:10). Both in the premonition and in Jacob's actual address to Esau, the gift precedes the sight or recognition of the brother's face. The same sequence is upheld in our passage: the blessing is given, followed by the trope about the face. In the premonition Jacob merely fears seeing the face of his brother; in the dramatic inset of the river conflict, Jacob claims to see the face of God; and finally, in the actual meeting between brothers, Jacob relates the premonition to the struggle: seeing Esau's face reminds him of the visage of the opponent. So shocking was the face, glimpsed in the light of the rising sun, that Jacob names the place Peniel, quite literally "the face of God." In the comparison he makes the next day, Jacob recalls not only the awesome sight

but also the place after which it was named, where the struggle, colloquy and blessing occurred. If the two faces are compared, so also are their respective places. In his own way Jacob is making the same kind of intertextual connection that is attempted in this study.

One cannot forget that throughout Jacob's fraternal struggles there has been a succession of subtler struggles with God: the uncertain nature of the divine prophecy (25:23), Jacob's claim of divine aid and approval (27:20), his vow/bargain made with God before departing the homeland (28:20-22), his recollection of that vow in a dream (31:11-13), and his plea for protection from Esau (32:9-12). The last of these directly affects our reading of verse 29: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and slay us all, the mothers with the children" (32:11). The same word *deliver* is used in Jacob's explanation for naming the place Peniel: "For I have seen the face of God, and yet my life is preserved [delivered]" (32:30). The repetition, however, sheds no clear light on our passage but only more shadows. A traditional reading would interpret verse 29 to mean simply that Jacob is astonished at having survived his glimpse at God. But could not the verse also mean that Jacob claims to have seen the face of God, yet, having survived the experience, is doubtful or puzzled about that identification? By the time Jacob meets Esau in the morning the identification has not only been transformed into the name of a place; it has also become a trope to describe his brother. Perhaps the real meaning of Peniel is one of confusion: in its explanation Jacob not only recognizes God's presence, but also his protection from Esau's hand.

The name Peniel, occurring in the last verses, replaces the first proper name that began our passage, the Jabbok. The two names, like the two names of the patriarch, chart a nominal shift from the human to the divine, from rejection to acceptance. Made of the same consonants as Jacob, the Jabbok might be said to connote the similar name's hint of infamy and insurgence. In contrast, Peniel provides the rhetoric that seals the rapprochement of the brothers. It is like the name Israel, which not only glorifies Jacob's past struggles but also resolves them with the past participle "prevailed" in the footnote etymology of verse 28b. Even as Jacob is in the midst of his greatest struggle, that penchant for struggle becomes formulated in the language of legend. Readers should not be surprised when Jacob and his brother Esau meet the next morning to weep in one another's arms. The struggle at the river has resolved their conflict. Resolved, too, is the vow/bargain made to God before Jacob's sojourn in Mesopotamia. One condition of the vow was that Jacob worship God in exchange for divine providence and deliverance to the homeland. After parting from a now friendly Esau, Jacob as Israel seals a pact with God, the other opponent, by building an altar. The last verse of chapter 33 reads:

"There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel [God, the God of Israel]."

But who is "man" at the river? He remains mysterious even now. I have suggested at different points that he is God, Esau, and somehow *both*. For obvious reasons the last identification is the most paradoxical; it is also the one which best responds to the ambiguities of the passage and their reverberations throughout the larger narrative. Any identification, however, must remain tentative. There is something appropriate about ending with the same question with which we began. As a *confusion* of the divine and the human, Jacob's opponent would naturally confuse our attempts to label him. Perhaps aware of these difficulties, he asks the reader along with Jacob in verse 28b, "Why is it that you ask my name?" The text of Genesis 32:22-32, ambiguous and elusive, answers at least that question.

Household of Faith

Dana Haight Cattani

From where we sat on the fourth pew
the three square windows looked like cubes
of shimmery gold
vertically stacked
like a floating crate
leaking light through the slats.
In seasons, from either side of the podium,
opaque glass filtered the grainy light
that swathed the pulpit
or held at bay the dusky darkness.

From the fourth pew, I focused between the windows
on speakers and choristers and dark-suited men.
I knew them all
my brothers
my sisters
as they blessed their babies and baptized their children,
buried their dead and remembered the body and the blood.
Listening, I learned of water turned to wine,
of loaves and fishes
and glass, darkly.
I waited for the organ pipes to breathe
before each chord.

I often sat beside my father
who rested his arm lightly on the bench behind me
as I imagined a suitor might.
I felt his breathing
sometimes heavy and deep
and heard his singing voice
resonate against me.
Down the pew sat the rest of the family
and Grandma with her purse full of candies
and behind us the familiar basses and sopranos
and children crawling underfoot after their toys.
We sat
Sunday after Sunday
in the muted light of the windows
before going home where Mom pulled from the oven
a roast with vegetables
that steamed the kitchen panes.

FICTION

The Mourning After

C. Everett Crowe

AT LEAST THE KIDS WERE GONE, settled among family for the next ten or twelve hours. That gave him some time to pull himself together, to sort things out before tomorrow, before the rest of his life.

As he pulled into the driveway, the house looked terribly familiar, even the dusk's slant of light and the shadows of the trees stretching across the front yard made everything seem normal. He glanced at his watch: 5:45. He half expected, no hoped, to see Maggie there, framed in the doorway behind the screen door, waiting to greet him. He had vowed he wouldn't, but as he got out of his car, he glanced wistfully at the doorway.

Funny, he thought, how truth and reason fail to overrule fantasy sometimes. He knew, even as he looked at the door, that she would not be there, that she would never again be there, that yesterday had been the last welcome home greeting he'd ever receive from Maggie.

As he trudged up the front steps, briefcase in hand, he was again glad the house would be quiet. Telling the kids hadn't been easy. The two youngest girls, sensing their father's grief, cried because he cried but hadn't really understood what he explained. "Can we eat at McDonalds?" the three-year-old asked when he had finished. They'd probably cry every night until they forgot her and then, except for a general sense of loss, be over it.

The two older girls concerned him more. Suzette, his moody fourth grader, had already heard (she heard and knew everything) even before he came back from the hospital. She had clutched his arm as he told them about their mother's death, how she had died, and what it meant. A quick trip to the store—no seatbelt—and some kid, some stupid careless high school kid, ran a stop sign.

Tears streamed down Suzette's face. "I'll help you, Dad," her lip quivered in a brave but forced smile. "I'll watch the girls. We'll be okay." He knew she'd try to be mature, like a kid in a Disney movie, and she'd handle it, be Daddy's brave little helper through the whole mess. He knew,

though she'd hide the hurt, hold in the pain until it would finally erupt when they least expected it.

Carrie was different. His curly-headed little six-year-old lover-girl understood the loss but not the reason. She wept out of sympathy for him and her own inner sense of loss. When he left her at his sister's house, her body still quaked with sobs. She would suffer more than any of the other children, maybe almost as much as he would.

He walked through the living room and into the kitchen, setting his briefcase in a kitchen chair on his way to the refrigerator. Taped on the freezer door was the month's ward calendar, courtesy of the Primary; the lower door was plastered with the ribbons, drawings, and bangles that a family with kids in both Primary and elementary school accumulates. He grabbed a jug of milk, poured himself a glass—it would be his only dinner that night—and sat down in his chair at the table.

He should have been thinking about a million things: funeral arrangements, figuring out what to do with the kids, even the basic stuff like laundry and groceries. But he could think only of Maggie. Sitting in the kitchen, he was surrounded with evidence of her existence; he could easily reach out and let his fingers touch the last things her fingers had touched. That would be the closest he could get to her now. The things she left behind remained his only connection to her.

For the last two hours of her life, he had been at her side, at least as close as he was able to be. She never moved—except for the rise and fall of her chest being pumped full of oxygen by the respirator—never opened her eyes, never made a sound.

He tried hard to recall the last time he had touched her living. A quick and light kiss on his way out the door that morning. Was that the last? No, hadn't he stroked her arm as she lay in the hospital bed? Now he wished he had climbed next to her in bed, ignoring the wires and tubes and nurses, to embrace her one last time, to remember how she felt alive. He would have held her tight, memorizing her and storing the memory away for good. But they pushed him out of the room when buzzers and alarms sounded, signalling, he guessed, that her spirit had finally broken free from her body. That was the last he saw of her.

Now the only way for him to take the measure of Maggie was by what she had left behind. A husband, four kids, and a house full of memories and things, her things. Tonight, he decided, he would inventory Maggie: photos, letters, her journals, special articles of clothing, sentimental or family things, the handicraft stuff she had made at Homemaking, old clothes, stacks of magazines she had saved.

And her shoes. Maggie had been a shoes horse, acquiring footwear the way other women acquire jewelry or clothes. And she kept them—all.

After they had been dating for a while, he noticed she wore a different

pair of shoes almost every day. One afternoon she showed him her closet: shoes, in boxes stacked five rows high, covered the entire floor space. She had the running shoes she had worn as a high school cheerleader, the pair she had worn to the prom—and nowhere else, a pair she used exclusively for going to the temple, a pair she'd run in, a pair she'd play volleyball or basketball in, many pairs for church and school, each assigned a specific part of her wardrobe. He, who had never owned more than two pairs of shoes at the same time, had been amazed, first at the expense and later at the fact that she had kept them all. "Some people collect stamps, others rocks; I collect shoes," she said. He smiled at the memory, his first and last smile of the day.

The house was grey now, the sun finally set behind the mountains in the west. Need to turn on some lights, he thought, but he didn't. He liked the close greyness of the house—it seemed to intensify the quiet and the smells, the atmosphere of home. He wondered how long that atmosphere would last without Maggie. He wondered if he'd even be able to bear staying in the same house, the first house they had owned.

Can't keep sitting here, he thought. Need to get moving, to do something. He stood up and walked to their bedroom. The sudden rush startled him—she was there, in the room. He could *feel* her there. His blood pounded through his brain and a tightness in his chest, his heart in a vise, made him sweat. He almost called her name, almost, but he feared it would break the spell. He sat on their bed and closed his eyes. The room pulsed with her presence; the aroma of her perfume, her watercolors on the wall, the scent of the fabric softener she always used, the bed made with the pillows on top of the comforter—her quirky way of making beds, one they had argued over lightly when they first married.

He opened his eyes and blinked to clear his vision. On the nightstand sat the two books she had been reading, an Anne Tyler novel and Bruce McConkie's last book. Maggie's toiletries were arranged neatly atop their dresser, and from where he sat he could see his own reflection in the dresser mirror they each had lined with quotations and scriptures and snatches of verse that inspired or humored them. He stood up and walked to the dresser, careful to keep his back to the closet because, he imagined, even though he knew better—he had seen her body, he knew she was dead—she might be hiding there, waiting to surprise him. And as he thought about it, the clothes hanging in there were his last, his closest contact with her. He resisted the urge to throw open the door and surprise her, or at least to embrace the clothes that once held her, to clutch the closest things he had left of her.

On her side of the mirror, where it had been for years, was a little poem he had written before Suzette was born. He read it again, even though he knew it well.

Me First

Knowing that a thousand years
are but a day in God's reckoning
can you blame me, Love,
for hoping, selfishly,
that I go first
so that I might
have to endure
only seconds,
not years,
without you.

It was the only poem he had ever written outside of school, and the idea for it had come a week before she delivered their first baby. The thought of losing Maggie in childbirth scared him, but not as much as the idea of living the rest of his life without her.

It's ironic, he thought, that she die now, so soon, leaving him with four kids and half a life left to live. No, it wasn't ironic; it was hell. How much easier it would be if *he* had been the one to go. She would have had plenty of life insurance money, and she understood the kids and how to run the house. Friends and family would have helped her out, and she would have married again, even though, when they were newlyweds, she swore she'd never marry another man, even if it meant being a widow for forty years.

Damn. Why did she die? Why now? He wanted to scream, to howl, to smash something. How could he bear it? Would he get used to living without her? Stepping backward, he sat heavily on their bed, the same bed they had used all their married lives.

How do other people do this? Do they try to forget? Is there a way to block out the memories? Does the hollow ache inside the chest fade away after a week, a month, a year? Or does the one left behind just bear it, like a cancer victim, suffering silently a pain only he can understand, accepting well-intentioned platitudes from others but knowing full well that no one really knows the depth of his suffering?

He let himself fall backwards onto their bed where, after a few minutes, he drifted into a fitful sleep. When he awoke the room was completely dark, and as he lay on the bed half-awake, half-asleep, he forgot for a split second that Maggie had died. He turned instinctively expecting to see her sleeping on her left side with her back curved away from him, knees pulled up. She, of course, wasn't there and for a moment the incongruity confused him before reality struck home once more.

Maggie's gone. Dead. And he was alone.

He glanced at their alarm clock. It wasn't yet midnight. He knew he wouldn't be able to go back to sleep that night, not with so much sorting

out left to do. He also knew that he had to unload his feelings somewhere—or if not unload them, at least put them away, close the door on them because when the kids returned home and when all the family showed up, he would have to take charge, to lead the way through the funeral, the mourning after, and the life ahead. If *he* couldn't handle it, his kids would suffer even more, and he could not allow that to happen. They had their whole lives to live and their own problems to deal with, and for their sake he had to accept her death and get on with life.

He sat up in bed, swinging his legs to the floor on Maggie's side. His foot nudged something: the running shoes Maggie had worn that morning. He tried to scoot them under the bed but they wouldn't fit because the space under their bed was filled with boxes of Maggie's shoes. Everywhere he looked, everything he touched, everything he smelled in their bedroom, in their house reminded him of her. There was too much, but not enough. Maggie was all around him, but nowhere. Her things left behind were just things, tangible but unsatisfying mementos of her.

He picked up her jogging shoes and threw them at the wicker wastebasket next to their dresser. Things, memories were not enough. He wanted Maggie, he needed her, and it ate him up to know that for the rest of his life, he couldn't have her.

Never before had he felt so utterly powerless. He hadn't been able to save her, he can't bring her back, and he felt certain he would never shake this unbearable sense of loss. Something inside him—habit—urged him to do something, to pray, to ask the bishop for a blessing, to clean up the house, but grief and helplessness paralyzed him.

Rather than do anything, he just sat on their bed, in the dark, and did nothing. Unable to pray, to call for a blessing, to even move to the closet, he sat there remembering Maggie and wept.

Toward Intellectual Anarchy

Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 4 vols. Daniel H. Ludlow, editor in chief. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992. 1,848 pp., index, maps, illustrations, appendices, and glossary.

Reviewed by Sterling M. McMurrin, Emeritus Professor of History, University of Utah.

THE *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM* provides a great wealth of information on the history and social character of Mormonism and the structure and administration of the LDS church and its institutions, but, on the whole, as a scholarly work it is severely flawed. It is an "in-house" publication, largely the product of Brigham Young University, and in many respects has an apologetic if not actually a propagandistic character. This is to be expected of what is essentially a church project, but it is something of a mystery why a publishing house of the stature of Macmillan would be identified with it.

This is not to suggest that of the agglomeration of more than a thousand articles that comprise the *Encyclopedia* there are not large numbers of high quality, useful to anyone interested in their subjects, or that many of them are not excellent as careful scholarly research and writing. Any publication that includes articles by Thomas Alexander and Leonard Arrington can't be all bad. But the reader should be advised that the work is a carefully sanitized partisan affair that, while having many strengths, is quite uneven in quality and, though it appears to face many difficult issues head on, clearly omits, distorts, and compromises wherever necessary to advance and protect a positive image of Mormons, Mormonism, and the church.

Those interested in the *Encyclopedia* should read the excellent reviews by Richard D. Poll and Eugene England. Poll's review, which appeared in the *Journal of Mormon History* (Fall 1992), gives a good account of the history, structure, and editing of the publication, as well as some of the pitfalls encountered in its production. England's review, which gives special attention to the arts and literature, is in *This People* (12 [1991], 4).

The editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopedia* was Daniel H. Ludlow, who was executive secretary of the Church Correlation Committee. Apostles Neal A. Maxwell and Dallin H. Oaks provided supervision from above. Almost all members of the large editorial board are at BYU and, according to Poll, 49 percent of the articles came from BYU.

As might be expected, the articles on social issues and church structure and the biographies are the most useful. An impressive number of biographies are of women prominent in church history and in the leadership of church organization. There are some excellent pieces on historical subjects, but in some cases pertinent information that could

be embarrassing to the church is carefully omitted—as, for instance, the problem of several differing accounts of Joseph Smith's first vision, acknowledgment of the temple borrowings from Free Masonry, the involvement of Masons in the assassination of Joseph Smith, local Southern Utah officials' involvement in planning the Mountain Meadows Massacre, or the officially sanctioned polygamous marriage ceremonies in Mexico after the 1890 Manifesto. Of course, we are accustomed to this kind of distortion of history in church publications, but this *Encyclopedia* should not have to be judged on the level of Sunday school literature.

The articles describing the sociological facets of Mormonism, giving vital statistics, populations, extent of missions, etc., are very well done and certainly useful, especially the extensive material by Tim B. Heaton; and, as might be expected, the articles by Leonard Arrington on economic history are excellent. The material on temples by Hugh Nibley is vintage Nibley, and the long piece on the Doctrine and Covenants by several authors should be useful for students of church literature.

The intellectual life of Mormonism does not come off as well in the *Encyclopedia* as the historical and socioeconomic. There are some good pieces on the arts and a fine article on Mormon scientists by Robert Miller, but far too little space is devoted to these subjects. But it seems to me that the *Encyclopedia* simply adds to the confusion that already exists in the church in matters pertaining to Mormon philosophy and theology. The article on philosophy by Chauncey C. Riddle, which consists of one page in a text of approximately 2,000, tells the reader very little about Mormon philosophy beyond what it is not, and beyond pointing to a variety of philosophical positions with which Mormonism finds agreement. It advocates seeking the answers to metaphysical problems in the scriptures and finding the solution to the great questions of life through prayer and personal revelation, with the possibility of seeing God face to face.

I find it difficult to make sense of such statements as "Questions about the natural world are answered by one's culture as corrected by personal revelation." Now, just what does that mean? Or, "The equivalent of epistemology in an LDS frame is the ORDINANCES, focusing on the ordinance of PRAYER." The reader interested in Mormon philosophy would be well advised to read the all-too-brief entry on "Metaphysics" by Dennis Rasmussen. Riddle's entry on "Devils" is twice as long as his piece on philosophy. I'm afraid this is a reflection of an intellectual malady that is infecting today's Mormonism. Certainly it is a commentary on the editorial policy of the *Encyclopedia* board.

But to turn to the entry on theology by Louis Midgley, here is a somewhat longer piece; with bibliography included, it covers almost two whole pages. It would require a quite uncommon talent to write a more confused or more confusing commentary on Mormon theology. Midgley vacillates back and forth on whether there is such a thing as Mormon theology. It's difficult to tell what he is driving at. His point that the Latter-day Saints' faith rests on historical events, revelation, and personal inspiration rather than on a rationally constructed philosophical system is good, and obvious. Midgley wastes part of his valuable space criticizing others who have attempted to describe and define Mormon ideas by rational methods—something which he fails to understand or appreciate. He quotes a

ridiculous definition of theology by Parley P. Pratt but fails to mention or include in his text or bibliography such major thinkers in Mormon philosophy and theology as Orson Pratt, Brigham H. Roberts, James E. Talmage, and John A. Widtsoe—writers to whom all Latter-day Saints are indebted for the rational formulations of the dominant ideas among their beliefs. Without the work of these and others interested in reasonableness in beliefs, Mormonism might well have become a vacuous affair of emotion and enthusiasm. I suppose the strange references by Riddle and Midgley and others to "LDS epistemology" refer to the belief in personal revelation which is now so prominent in the church and which runs throughout the *Encyclopedia*—a belief that already accounts for much of the lunatic fringe of the church and could very well expand into an irrationalism quite uncharacteristic of Mormonism, which could produce a kind of intellectual anarchy in the church.

The *Encyclopedia* has a good entry on Orson Pratt, but it does not deal with Pratt's ideas. There are no entries on Roberts, Talmage, or Widtsoe, although pictures of Roberts and Talmage, along with one of Bruce McConkie (with minimal factual data), appear in the piece on "Intellectual History" by Richard Haglund and David Whittaker—a good article, but one with comparatively little substance. A good piece on religion and science by Erich R. Paul gives attention to Roberts, Talmage, and Widtsoe and also to Richard R. Lyman and Joseph F. Merrill. Of course, through the index, references to the work of these writers and others can be found, but there is no substantial treatment of their ideas. The most competent of all LDS scholars to undertake serious work on Mormon philosophy, W. H. Chamberlin, one-time professor at BYU, is not mentioned in the *Encyclopedia*.

Despite Midgley's disclaimer, there are several articles on Mormon theology: subjects such as atonement, revelation, repentance, plan of salvation, and plan of redemption. Fortunately, a quite comprehensive statement by Truman G. Madsen describing the teachings of Joseph Smith is a summary of Mormon theology. But Madsen's bibliography ignores the extensive essay by B. H. Roberts on the same subject that appears in Volume Two of the *Comprehensive History*, entitled "The Prophet's Work—The New Dispensation, a System of Philosophy."

On the philosophical side, there is a fine piece by Kent Robson on time and eternity. There are articles on "God," "Godhead," and "Godhood," and competent treatments by David Paulsen of the Mormon views on divine omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. A rather strange article on truth by Terry Warner defines truth as a way of life "exemplified, prescribed, and guided by Jesus Christ." The article on "Epistemology" is both confused and confusing, but there is a worthwhile piece on "Evil" by Paulsen. I mention these simply as examples of the good and bad. The article entitled "Evolution" ignores the subject of evolution and simply reiterates the church's stand that Adam is the primal ancestor of the human race. The great 1911 fracas on evolution at BYU and the well-known hassle between Joseph Fielding Smith and B. H. Roberts, both important factors in the intellectual history of the church, are ignored.

Unfortunately, many otherwise competent articles fail to address important items. The piece on the Polynesians, for instance, ignores the fascinating Skull Valley episode; the article on Hebrews makes no mention of the impor-

tant problem of authorship. Often the reader must follow the cross-referencing and look elsewhere for the information that seemed to be promised by the title. Forcing the reader to look elsewhere is one of the *Encyclopedia*'s main problems. A person interested in Mormonism's view of the second coming of Jesus Christ, for instance, can find that title, but the entry simply refers the reader to fourteen different articles which touch on the subject. This splintering results in some consternation on the part of the reader and considerable confusion and repetition of subject matter.

Several distinguished non-LDS scholars of religion have added a touch of lustre to the *Encyclopedia* as authors or co-authors of pieces on non-Mormon subjects: among them, W. D. Davies, James H. Charlesworth, Huston Smith, John Dillenberger, Frank Moore Cross, and Krister Stendahl. An excellent piece by Jan Shipps summarizes her position that Mormonism is a new religious movement. The editors have wisely included articles by members of the Reorganized LDS church.

The *Encyclopedia* is saturated with references to the Book of Mormon, reflecting the recent church movement to give that work greater attention. In his excellent Sunstone lecture, "The Book of Mormon as Seen in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*," which should be read by anyone interested in the nature of the *Encyclopedia*, George D. Smith has indicated that the *Encyclopedia* contains about 200 articles dealing with the Book of Mormon. In his treatment of this subject, Smith writes that "editorial selectivity favoring orthodoxy prevails throughout the encyclopedia."

Apparently, the *Encyclopedia* editors and authors assumed that their readers had no questions about the literalistic orthodox interpretation of the Book of Mormon and the Bible. The authenticity of the Book of Mormon is taken for granted. The references to Jesus Christ and his teachings centuries before his birth, for instance, don't raise an eyebrow, and the most conservative fundamentalists would be at home with the treatment of Genesis. As a matter of fact, that treatment would be a bit too fundamental for Protestant fundamentalists, because here Christ is the Creator and Adam had the gospel.

An article on Isaiah which explains at length why Jesus Christ is both the Father and Son in the Book of Mormon mentions the scholarly claim of multiple authorship, but settles firmly on the one Isaiah position essential to the Book of Mormon.

The treatment of the Bible is a reading of Mormonism into both the Old and New Testaments. The *Encyclopedia* contains an entry entitled "Bible Scholarship" which has nothing to do with Bible scholarship in the usual sense—no recognition of the countless problems faced in the serious study of the Bible and the immense scholarly work done in pursuing their solutions. Rather, it is concerned primarily with what conservative Mormon writers do to and with the Bible. The *Encyclopedia* as a whole is entirely innocent of any influence whatsoever from the field of serious biblical scholarship. It clings stubbornly to the naive acceptance of traditional literalism.

LDS readers will feel at home with some of the *Encyclopedia*'s Mormony titles, such as: "Magnifying One's Calling," "Joining the Church," or "Following the Brethren." The appendices are extensive and useful, reproducing a number of important official documents, and there is a good index. The fifth volume is a collection of the LDS scriptures. Considered overall, the

Encyclopedia will reaffirm the faith of most LDS people. There are numerous highly qualified scholars among its authors, and they have produced many excellent articles; but it is difficult to suppress the suspicion that many of them have been mutilated by the editors somewhere along the line.

The church is now approaching the end of its second century, and its people are intellectually mature and firm in their faith and are able to handle things in a less sanitized form. They deserve something better. In his review, Richard Poll indicated that the very short time consumed in producing the 1,128 written articles struck the publisher as a small miracle. Perhaps Macmillan should have advised the editor to take more time. It is comforting to know from the preface that "In no sense does the *Encyclopedia* have the force and authority of scripture" (lxii).

Women's Place in the *Encyclopedia*

Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 4 vols. Daniel H. Ludlow, editor in chief. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992. 1,848 pp., index, maps, illustrations, appendices, and glossary.

Reviewed by Lavina Fielding Anderson, contemporary issues editor of the *Mormon Women's Forum Newsletter.*

WHEN THE *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM* project was first announced with its all-male board of editors, I developed a keen interest in how women's issues would be handled and was delighted when two women were later added to the board. I anticipated the appearance of the finished *Encyclopedia* and accepted with alacrity the invitation of *Dialogue* to write a review focused on women's issues.

I first scanned the list of contributors, looking for the names of women. The acknowledgements express appreciation to 738 authors; there are actually 748, a fact easy to determine from the handsomely designed list of contributors in Volume 1. Of this number, 618 are men, 127 are women, and three may have been either from their names. Women thus account for about 20.5 percent of the total, a respectable though modest number.

Of name entries, twenty-two are devoted to women while more than seventy are devoted to men. Although no living individual besides President Benson is included, the coverage is still puzzlingly spotty. Of the seven Young Women general presidents, five of whom are dead, two are featured in separate entries but the other three are not. Of the seven Primary general presidents, five of whom are dead, only one is featured. Of the twelve Relief Society general presidents, all ten dead women have separate entries. "Ruth" has a separate entry but not "Esther." I would have cheerfully exchanged such quaint topics as "burnings everlasting," "Sword of Laban," "Ezias," "lightmindedness," "strait and narrow," "theogony," and

"theodicy," for more women's biographical entries. Furthermore, the space devoted to the Book of Mormon is excessive, even for a Book of Mormon lover such as I—154 columns plus thirty-nine separate entries on books and characters.

Encouragingly, rather than being confined to a ghetto of "women's topics," women authors deal with a significant number of doctrinal and theological topics, including Elouise Bell's entry on "holiness," M. Catherine Thomas's on "hell," Vivian Paulsen's on "love," and Cheryl Brown's on "obedience" among many others.

I give the *Encyclopedia* full marks on topics. Elaine Anderson Cannon's entry on "Mother in Heaven" avers that "the belief in a living Mother in Heaven is implicit in Latter-day Saint thought" and carefully reconstructs the scriptural "hints" of such a personage (2:961). Mary Stovall Richards's evenhanded entry on feminism presents a definition to which most should be able to subscribe ("the philosophical belief that advocates the equality of women and men and seeks to remove inequities and to redress injustices against women"), acknowledges that Mormon doctrine "converges in some areas with the ideals of feminism and diverges in others," and empoweringly claims: "Such equality of women and men is based on the celestial model of heavenly parents, both Father and Mother" (2:507).

Extremely useful is the lengthy and profusely illustrated article on "Vital Statistics" by Tim B. Heaton (4:1518-37). In addition to the usual demographic information, it deals directly with women-related issues as fertility (after paralleling the U.S. curve at a considerably higher level for sixty years, it nosedived sharply, starting in 1980, while the U.S. rate was remaining level), gender ratios (women outnumber men everywhere but Africa; and for single members over thirty who attend church weekly, the ratio is 19 men per 100 women), temple marriages (percentages range from about 45 in Utah to less than 2 in Mexico), household composition (only 20 percent match the *Ensign* cover of a temple married couple with children under eighteen), and employment (about half). Unfortunately, there is no cross-reference to another extremely important article, "Single Adults," by Lawrence A. Young, which contains such illuminating information about women as: (1) only 51 percent of women between eighteen and thirty in 1981 will be in an intact first marriage by age sixty, (2) female-headed households are 2.5-5.5 times as likely to be below the poverty level as couple-headed household, (3) 42 percent of never-married women over thirty have four years of college compared to 18 percent of never-married men and 70 percent have professional occupations compared to 38 percent of men. This article also documents discrimination in callings extended to singles (3:1316-19). (See also Stephen J. Bahr's article on "Social Characteristics" which identifies the "ideal" number of children as four for more than 50 percent of Latter-day Saints, compared with "two" for every other religious group [3:1372]).

Patricia Terry Holland's entry on "Motherhood" must be read with its companion entry, "Fatherhood" (2:503-504), by A. Lynn Scoresby, since she nowhere mentions a husband/father's contributions. (Scoresby presents a much more partner-focused portrait of parenting.) Holland, in contrast, presents a romanticized and pious view of motherhood: "The ultimate responsibility of a mother, then, is to lead her child lovingly through its personal develop-

ment and toward its divine destiny. Latter-day Saints believe that if a mother is prayerful and totally committed to such a weighty responsibility, she will receive divine intuitions and spiritual whisperings to aid her in her mothering. Living as a conduit for divine instruction to her child . . . " (2:962).

A major article is the entry on "Women, Roles of." It is disappointing that this important article is limited to slightly more than seven columns while, due to lopsidedness in editorial priorities, William O. Nelson's article on "anti-Mormon literature" consumes more than twelve. The first part, by Martha Nibley Beck, "Historical and Sociological Development," is significant and clearly written. "The Church's female membership always played a central role in ensuring the success of Mormonism," she states, then documents the creation and adaptation of an ecclesiastical and social identity for Mormon women from the 1830s (they "received personal revelation, healed the sick, prophesied future events . . . ") to the present ("Secular analyses set the attainment of an individual's personal goals or advancement in opposition to dedication to the family; LDS belief defines the two as inextricably intertwined") (4:1575-76). Barbara B. Smith and Shirley W. Thomas, co-authors of the second half of the article, "Gospel Principles and the Roles of Women," present a commendably moderate and positive view of women's roles. "She may fill many roles simultaneously. . . . The companionship role . . . is not limited to the husband and wife partnership but includes women serving cooperatively with men. . . . Underlying the companionship role is the inherent equality of men and women . . . The receipt of spiritual gifts is conditional on obedience, not gender . . . Latter-day Saint women are taught from their youth to prepare for marriage and homemaking, as well as for a vocation. . . . The Church does not oppose women working outside the home per se . . . but it is hoped that whenever possible, mothers with children in the home will make home their priority career") (4:1575-77). Victor L. Brown Jr.'s companion article, "Men, Roles of," focuses intently on Jesus Christ as the model for male identity and behavior.

In contrast, the treatment of many topics is disappointingly conservative and brief. For example, the entry on abortion, authored by Mary K. Beard, consists of twenty-six lines, all but seven of them quotations from Elder Boyd K. Packer or the *General Handbook of Instructions* (1:6). (It follows an article on Abinadi, which retells the Book of Mormon story for 139 lines.) Interestingly, a later article on "social characteristics" identifies Latter-day Saints as "the least accepting" of abortion out of all religious groups but still says that 67 percent favor abortion if the fetus is deformed (3:1376)

The entry on "Premarital Sex" is a homily that includes no statistics on premarital pregnancy. The entry on "Abuse, Spouse and Child," is thirty-eight lines long and is directed exclusively at abusers—defining abuse, telling them that they are committing a sin, instructing them to counsel with "their bishops and, where necessary, [receive] professional help," but reassuring them that they "can be forgiven when they truly repent." I reread the entry three times, looking in vain for any material directed toward the victim—reassurance, for instance, of innocence, of ecclesiastical support, or of encouragement to seek professional help or of a breath of acknowledgement of the trauma and pain endured. There was

not a syllable. There was also no cross reference to "Satanism," an entry which completely ignores ritual abuse. Even more seriously, there is no cross reference to "Policies, Practices, and Procedures" where, at last, one brief quotation from the *General Handbook of Instruction* acknowledges, under the heading, "Rape or Sexual Abuse Victims," that "victims of the evil acts of others are not guilty of sin" (3:1096). A parallel passage in the entry on sexuality is not indexed (3:1307). *Incest* likewise does not appear in the index although it is briefly mentioned in both places.

The entry on "cancellation of sealings" is perfunctory (3:1290). It completely omits the humiliating and painful differential treatment of men and women. A divorced husband may, if worthy, be sealed to a second wife without the consent or even the knowledge of the first wife; but a divorced wife cannot cancel her sealing, even to an abusive or abandoning husband, without consulting him and until she is approaching another temple marriage.

The *Encyclopedia* also contains extremely interesting snippets of information about women and also omissions. The activity of U.S. adult members in 1989 stood at 48 percent with women accounting for higher rates of activity (percentage unspecified) than men (1:14). A photograph illustrating "members" of the Eket Branch in Nigeria is composed entirely of women and children (1:22). Victor Cline's entry on "pornography" correctly points out its inaccurate and unhealthy sexual information and its risk of "conditioning viewers" to accept "violence and aggression against females" as norms (3:1112). He, perhaps purposely, refers to the pornography consumer as "he." The entry on homosexuality by Victor L. Brown, Jr., defines it as "sinful . . . comparable to sexual relations between any unmarried persons" for which the church "offers counseling" but for which it may also take disciplinary action (2:656). The entry is written to apply to both men and women; there is no index entry for "lesbian." Both this entry and Terrance Olson's positively written entry on sexuality stress "legal heterosexual marriage" as the divinely ordained state (3:1306). Nephi K. Kezerian's entry on "Sick, Blessing the" contains no acknowledgement that this was historically one of the spiritual gifts practiced by Mormon women (3:1308).

The politics of such a project are, of course, intriguing. Someone will one day correlate the authors' list with the BYU catalogue to determine what percentage of the religion faculty (compared with those from other BYU departments) were contributors. Advisors to the project were Elders Neal A. Maxwell and Dallin H. Oaks. Their duties are not specified, nor are those of four Seventies "who accepted special assignments"—Elders Dean L. Larsen, Carlos E. Asay, Marlin K. Jensen, and Jeffrey R. Holland. The special assignments were not writing assignments, for only Elder Holland is also one of the eight general authorities who is also an author.

It is possible, though completely tentative without corroborating evidence, to trace in the selection of authors and topics the operation of a list of the ecclesiastically acceptable. According to the preface, articles were invited from those who had manifested "previous interest and study" (lxi) in their topics. Eugene England, whose criticism, teaching, and creating of Mormon literature, especially personal essays, has been second to none for the past fifteen years is not listed among the authors on any topic. Carol Cornwall Madsen, a superb

historian and a gifted writer, is the logical person to have written about Emmeline B. Wells, whose important diary she is preparing for publication. But she is not the logical person to write about Emma Hale Smith, given the easy accessibility of Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippets Avery, co-authors of *Emma Hale Smith: Mormon Enigma,* which is still the definitive biography on the subject. I yield to none in my admiration of Dean Jessee's historical contributions, an admiration sustained by his entries on Joseph Smith and his writings. But Thomas G. Alexander, author of the MHA-award-winning biography of Wilford Woodruff, *Things in Heaven and Earth,* not Dean Jessee, is the logical person to have written on that president of the church. D. Michael Quinn's trailbreaking works on post-Manifesto polygamy and magic world views in Joseph Smith's day are slighted; he does not appear as an author on any topic, nor is he cited in Danel Bachman and Ronald K. Esplin's entry on "plural marriage" which rather ingenuously claims, "Some new plural marriages were contracted in the 1890s . . . in Canada and northern Mexico, and a few elsewhere" (3:1095), thus leaving the impression that there were none after 1900. Claudia L. Bushman, author of a recently published book on *Christopher Columbus,* was passed over in favor of Louise G. Hanson who is identified with the line "Brigham Young University" in the author list but who is not listed in its 1992-93 directory of faculty and staff. I have been researching, writing about, and presenting papers on the history of the YWMIA/Young Women's program since 1982; but Elaine Anderson Cannon, an ecclesiastically appropriate choice as a former Young Women's general president, wrote the encyclopedia article. Sherilyn Cox Bennion's years of research on women's publications were also ignored; Shirley W. Thomas and Patrea Gillespie Kelley, neither of whom has published on their topics, wrote the entries on the *Woman's Exponent* and the *Young Woman's Journal* respectively. Although Gary Smith and Irene Bates have been collaborating on their history of the patriarchs to the church since 1980, Calvin R. Stephens wrote the bland entry on that topic. Such internal sifting and sorting according to secret criteria is ungenerous and unworthy of scholars. A future researcher will one day trace the percentage of entries whose genesis lies in the independent publications (*Dialogue* receives one paragraph in the entry on "Societies and Organizations"), with or without adequate citation. It is highly commendable that Jan Shipps can give "an independent interpretation" (and an interesting one!) of Mormonism, Richard P. Howard can describe the RLDS church and its history (Alma Blair wrote the entry on Haun's Mill and Robert Bruce Flanders on Nauvoo's economy), Krister Stendahl of Harvard Divinity School can describe ancient sources for "baptism for the dead," and R. J. Zvi Werblowky of Hebrew University can contribute his insights on ancient sources of "Elijah." But it will seem even more ludicrous to historians of the future that the hand of fellowship has been extended across religious barriers to these scholars while being denied to believing professionals.

In a lay church without professional theologians, it is not surprising to find a disproportionate number of BYU religion faculty and Church Educational System personnel (where women can be numbered on one hand) handling doctrinal topics; but it is more difficult to explain why the relatively small handful of Mormon women with serious publications on theological topics and/or

theological training were overlooked, including Melodie Moench Charles, Jolene Edmunds Rockwood (publicist Beverly Campbell is the rather improbable author of the entry on Eve and it clearly owes much to Rockwood), Bonnie Bobet, Peggy Fletcher Stack, Margaret Merrill Toscano, and Janice Merrill Allred.

The physical presentation of the *Encyclopedia* is a stunning success. Handsomely designed and laid out for maximum readability, it is generously illustrated with high-quality photographs. It is paginated continuously through the four volumes, which is helpful; but volume numbers are omitted from the contents and index, which means that the reader usually has to try at least a couple of volumes to find the right one. The technical production seems to have been carefully done with relatively few and only minor lapses. The Thrasher Foundation is unaccountably written as "Thruler" (xlix). Clarissa Smith Williams is referred to in the contents and in the entry line without her maiden name, even though maiden names are scrupulously included for every other woman, as nearly as I could determine, in the entire encyclopedia (4:1567). Jill Mulvay Derr's name is incorrectly hyphenated in the contents and on her competent articles on sisterhood and the Relief Society, coauthored with Janath R. Cannon. It is given correctly on the author list.

Carefully prepared and highly useful readers' aids are a synoptic outline (history, scriptures, doctrines, organization and government, and procedures and practices); thirteen appendices that include biographies of current officers, a historical chronology, a list of periodicals, excerpted doctrinal and historical documents, hymns, and membership figures. A glossary defines LDS terms.

Despite my reservations, I would still give high praise to the *Encyclopedia.* Of course it is a creation of its era, and the early 1990s are a time of escalating denial that there is any problem about the status and roles of Mormon women. The 1990s are also a time when the church's assertion of control over its intellectual and sociological components produce judgments about "approved" and "forbidden" topics and personnel that are frequently both nervous and unnecessary. The *Encyclopedia* will be an enduring benchmark, not only of Mormonism's fundamental doctrines and basic history, but also of the period that produced it.

"In Obedience There is Joy and Peace Unspotted"

B. Carmon Hardy. *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992. 362 pp., notes, illustrations, appendices.

Reviewed by M. Guy Bishop, who teaches California history part time for the University of Southern California.

THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH ONCE TOLD Nancy Rigdon, whom he was attempting to persuade to become his plural

wife, that whatever God required was right, no matter what it was (374). Smith went on to observe that "in obedience there is joy and peace unspotted." B. Carmon Hardy has painstakingly researched and skillfully brought to life the stories of many nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints who attempted to obey the most widely known aspect of Mormon domestic life—polygamy.

Through his plumbing of LDS church archives, family group sheets at Salt Lake City's Family History Library, and other familiar and not so familiar sources (such as the Record of Members located at the LDS historical Library and the Family History Library), Hardy has managed to compile a sizeable list of known plural marriages. It is post-Manifesto polygamous unions which most interests him. And 70 percent of *Solemn Covenant* (seven out of ten chapters) focus on this long-subdued aspect of the Mormon past which was rarely spoken or written about until the 1970s and 1980s.

While some readers (including me) may initially require some coaxing to accept Hardy's view of just how widespread and important the principle of plurality was among nineteenth-century Mormons, most will become at least partial believers by the end of *Solemn Covenant*. This turnaround is largely due to soundness of the author's research and the convincing argument carried by the narrative. He contends, and demonstrates, that plural marriage filled special Mormon needs from its beginnings in Joseph Smith's lifetime through post-Manifesto plurality and up to present-day fundamentalism. Polygamy, although never the lifestyle of the Mormon majority, was, in Hardy's words, "a departure of conspicuous proportions in Western family history" (xviii).

Why most nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints steadfastly defended the principle and *how* twentieth-century members were almost completely weaned from even wishing to acknowledge that plural marriage had ever existed in their church is what *Solemn Covenant* is really all about. In an exciting appendix essay aptly entitled "Lying for the Lord," Hardy lays out the dilemma which post-Manifesto polygamy made incumbent on the Mormon community at large. In early 1907 the First Presidency issued a major address in which it categorically denied any official involvement in post Manifesto plural marriages. Yet according to Hardy's findings and those of other scholars, such was not the case. As forthright and upstanding as Mormons may have wished to be, Hardy charges that Mormon leaders, from Joseph Smith's day on, often withheld knowledge concerning polygamy not only from the general public but from many of their own followers. In his charge to leading Saints "do not betray your *Friend*," Smith had, according to Hardy, laid down a connection between secrecy and friendship which lasted, at least, until the early twentieth century (366).

And never was the necessity of secrecy more clearly evident than in regard to post-Manifesto polygamy. Internal dissent over the use of mistruth as a defense for the ongoing practice of plural marriage tore the Mormon community asunder from the lowest levels to the highest. Some ecclesiastical leaders, such as George Q. Cannon or John Henry Smith, apparently had no qualms about lying for the Lord. Others, most notably apostles John W. Taylor and Charles W. Penrose, while supporting the continuance of plural marriages, believed such distortions were reprehensible. The Taylor and Penrose stance urging more openness found few con-

temporary disciples, however. In fact, church president Joseph F. Smith would come to label Penrose "a Judas" (372).

Solemn Covenant deserves to be read widely and discussed within and outside of the Mormon scholarly community. While it is unlikely that all will see polygamy in exactly the same light as does Carmon Hardy, it is very likely that most readers will be forced at least to reevaluate some of their opinions about polygamy. This book will make the thinking reader think further. And that, after all, is the most one can ask from any book.

Litany

Philip White

All night, all day, angels
watching over me, my Lord.

And him slipping off,
letting the door close
on mama's prayer-voice,
striking out over
fencetops, slogging
in cinders where
the tracks go down past
the high school
into the world of
blackened smokestacks
and factories.
Him
stooping among cigarettes,
a shriveled condom,
cutting mock swords
out of elm fronds,
slashing into celandine,
watching the yellow
blood flow.
Him
pitching beer cans
at mourning doves, hiding
among stink blossoms
in the tree of heaven
when the five o'clock
comes bearing his father's
face among the faces
in the windows streaming
home.

And
everywhere, everywhere,
the small sword lashing
out, the eyes lashing out,
and the tiny breath rising
over the burnt stones
and broken glass and grim
weeds of the earth,
say, *I am, I am.*

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

LEONARD J. ARRINGTON was Professor of Economics at Utah State University, 1946-72, and Lemuel Redd Professor of Western History at Brigham Young University, 1972-87. He served as LDS Church Historian, 1972-82, and is the author of many books and articles on Mormon and Western history and biography. "Great Basin Kingdom Revisited" is adapted from 1992 presentations to the Friends of the University of Utah Libraries and the Salt Lake City Sunstone Symposium. He lives in Salt Lake City with his wife Harriet.

MAUREEN URSENBACH BEECHER is Professor of English at Brigham Young University. "Each in Her Own Time: Four Zinas" was first presented at a conference of the Canadian Mormon Studies Association, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, Alberta, on 20 June 1990. She resides in Salt Lake City, Utah, with her husband Dale and their daughter Bronwyn.

GARY JAMES BERGERA is Director of Publishing at Signature Books, Inc., and Associate Editor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought.* He benefitted from the advice of F. Ross Peterson, D. Michael Quinn, and John Sillito. He lives in Salt Lake City.

JILLYN CARPENTER lives in Huntsville, Alabama, where she is a freelance writer.

DANA HAIGHT CATTANI has degrees in English and education from Stanford University. She teaches high school and directs her ward choir in Palo Alto, California.

MICHAEL R. COLLINGS is the author of three books of poetry—*A Season of Calm Weather, Naked to the Sun,* and *Dark Transformations*—as well as scholarly studies of Stephen King, Orson Scott Card, Piers Anthony, Brian W. Aldiss, and other science-fiction/fantasy/horror writers. He is a professor of English at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California.

MARIE CORNWALL is Director of the Women's Research Institute and Associate Professor of Sociology at Brigham Young University. The research for "How Common the Principle? Women as Plural Wives in 1860" was funded by the Women's Research Institute, the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, and the Religious Studies Center at BYU.

CAMELA COURTRIGHT is a graduate student in sociology and a research assistant in the Women's Research Institute at Brigham Young University.

C. EVERETT CROWE lives in Laie, Hawaii. His short story, "From Both Sides," recently appeared in *The Chaminade Literary Review.*

LEWIS HORNE is Professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. A collection of his short stories is forthcoming from Signature Books.

LANCE LARSEN recently completed a Ph.D. in literature and creative writing at the University of Houston. His poems have appeared in *New Republic, Hudson Review, Salamagundi,* and elsewhere. Currently he is poetry editor of *Gulf Coast,* a quarterly of literature and art.

STEVEN MOLEN was an undergraduate at Indiana University when he wrote "The Identity of Jacob's Opponent: Wrestling with Ambiguity in Genesis 32:22-32." It first appeared in *Shofar* 11 (Spring 1993) and is copyright by Purdue Research Foundation, West Lafayette, Indiana, 47907. It is reprinted, largely unedited from its original published form, with permission, as an example to young scholars in approaching Mormon scriptures with insight and skill.

WILLIAM MULDER is emeritus professor of English at the University of Utah, where he edited the *Western Humanities Review* for many years. "Telling It Slant: Aiming for Truth in Contemporary Mormon Literature" derives from an informal presentation to an Association for Mormon Letters home gathering in September 1991. A companion piece, "Essential Gestures: Craft and Calling in Contemporary Mormon Letters," read at the Sunstone Symposium in August 1992, is forthcoming in *Weber Studies* (Fall 1992).

D. MICHAEL QUINN is a free-lance writer living in Salt Lake City. He was Professor of History and Director of the Graduate History Program when he resigned from Brigham Young University in 1988. Since then he has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, and the Henry E. Huntington Library. "Ezra Taft Benson and Mormon Political Conflicts" is part of a forthcoming study of the Mormon hierarchy.

LAGA VAN BEEK is a graduate student in history and a research assistant in the Women's Research Institute at Brigham Young University.

HOLLY WELKER will begin work on a Ph.D. in English literature this fall.

PHILIP WHITE lives in Ashland, Massachusetts.

Postcard

----For Magen

Holly Welker

I debated hours, whether to send you a kiss
by the river or the overabundant lips
of a Rosetti madonna. You get both: See
the pansies the madonna holds? That's how I know
she thinks of the kiss I kept for myself.
Lately, even the most casual touch makes me
flinch, but I find my fingers linger too long
on every light switch. Is everything a metaphor
for something else? It's hard not to see
waking adored one morning and alone the next
as one more reason why life is ridiculous.
I am angry and confused to know there are people
who love me, until I think of you. You
are the friend I remember with hosannas and
crossed fingers. Please send me a beautiful picture
with nothing but ten outrageous words
written on the back. As always, yours.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

As the picturesque countryside around Arles, France, inspired Van Gogh, Gauguin, and other artists in the 1890s, so do rural village scenes in the early Mormon settlements of Sanpete County, Utah, inspire artists in the 1990s. Widely traveled Kathleen B. Peterson, a talented and versatile artist of emerging prominence, is a luminary among a growing enclave of artists who choose both to live and create in the tranquil, nearly pristine heartland of the rapidly changing Mormon cultural area. Moved by the imagery in her own rural but architecturally rich environment, while working in water color, pastel, oil, and batik, Peterson has become increasingly revered for her sensitive landscapes, portraits, and domestic art.

Born in Provo in 1951, Kathy Peterson received a B.A. in commercial art from Brigham Young University and continued her artistic studies at the University of Hawaii and Snow College. Her work has been displayed in galleries throughout Utah as well as in Malaysia, where she lived prior to her twelve-year stay with her husband, Steve, and four children in Sanpete County. Kathy's art has appeared in published works such as *Roots and Wings*, *With Singleness of Heart*, the *Ensign* magazine, and the new book, *The Stones of the Temple*, commemorating in poetic verse and pastel paintings the forty-year construction of the Salt Lake Temple.

Peterson's commitment to the value of art in society extends beyond her own work to teaching art and organizing local art groups. A popular elementary school art teacher in her hometown of Ephraim, Peterson has also been a instrumental force in creating and sustaining the Central Utah Art Center, housed in a restored, limestone, pioneer granary where she and other artists teach and exhibit their work.

A primary purpose of Peterson's artistic effort is to create works which teach us to feel. Her belief is that there is abundant information and technology in the world, but not enough feeling and clarity about what is most important and valuable in life. This view moves her to depict common, everyday events and basic, yet transcendent subjects in sympathetic treatments she believes will endure through time.

ART CREDITS

Front Cover:"Flight," 11" x 15", watercolor, 1991
Back Cover:"Out of Water," 20" x 16", pastel, 1992
p. xi: "Larsen's Sheep," 7" x 5", etching, n.d.
p. 88: "The Reader," 24" x 16", oil, n.d.
p. 117: "Sanpete Home," 22" x 14", watercolor, 1991
p. 136: "Summer Morning," 20" x 14", watercolor, 1985
p. 138: "Waiting," 8" x 10", drawing, n.d.
p. 154: "Ephriam United Order Cooperative," 24" x 18", watercolor, 1988
p. 172: "Spring City Sheep," 21" x 14", watercolor, 1992
p. 185: "Along the Road to Mt. Pleasant," 24" x 16", oil, n.d.
p. 208: "Her Dresser," 20" x 20", pastel, 1992

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A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT

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